

बालबोध सङ्ग्रहः - २

BALABODHA SANGRAHAM

(Part 2)

A Non-detailed Text book for Vedic Students

Compiled with blessings and under instructions and guidance of

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INTRODUCTION

जगत्कामकलाकारं नाभिस्थानं भुवः परम् ।
पदपद्मस्य कामाक्ष्याः महापीठमुपास्महे ॥
सदाशिवसमारम्भां शंकराचार्यमध्यमाम् ।
अस्मदाचार्यपर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरुपरम्पराम् ॥

We worship the Mahapitha of Devi Kamakshi's lotus feet, the originator of 'Kamakala' in the world, the supreme navel-spot of the earth.

We worship the Guru tradition, starting from Sadasiva, having Sankaracharya in the middle and coming down upto our present Acharya.

We published 'Balabodha Sangraham – Part 1' last year. We are happy at the good reception that the book enlisted and the interest shown in gaining basic knowledge of books of our Sanatana Dharma. This second part has therefore been prepared for boys and girls of all sections. This contains brief history of some of the great gurus in the Brahma Vidya tradition.

We are familiar with western scholars like Milton, Shakespeare and Shelley. This book provides basic information about the great poets of our land like Mahakavi Kalidasa, Bharavi, Dandi, Magha, Sriharsha and Sri Nilakantha Dikshita and introduces the reader to the great epics they wrote. It is certain that by reading this, interest will be kindled to read the epics and dramas of these great men, which in turn will create love for our Bharatiya culture.

All students, particularly students in Veda Pathasala and students of Samskrit, should go through those works well and develop into great scholars. Those who run educational institutions and teachers should read them, introduce them to the students, motivate the learners in this effort and reap good benefits. All those interested in Bharatiya culture must read these books.

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गोविन्ददेशिकमुपास्य चिराय भक्त्या
तस्मिन्स्थिते निजमहिम्नि विदेहमुक्त्या ।
अद्वैतभाष्यमुपकल्प्य दिशो विजित्य
काञ्चीपुरे स्थितिमवाप स शङ्करार्यः ॥

Adoring Guru Sri Govinda Bhagavatpada for long and after he attained Videhamukti through his own power, Sri Sankaracharya wrote commentaries to establish Advaita philosophy, won over opponents in all directions and finally rested in Kanchipuram, where his Avatara period concluded.
(From 'Patanjali Charitram' of Sri Ramabhadra Dikshitar)

अपारकरुणामूर्तिं ज्ञानदं शान्तरूपिणम् ।
श्रीचन्द्रशेखरगुरुं प्रणतोऽस्मि मुदान्वहम् ॥

I pay obeisance every day with great happiness to Sri Chandrasekhara Guru, who is the embodiment of unlimited compassion, the bestower of Gnana, the very form of peace.
(From 'Guru Stuti' of Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamiji)

Period of Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya
Kaliyuga 2593 – 2625 (B.C.509 – 477)

Lesson 1

Let us sing the praise of Sri Mahaganapathi

Poems on Mahaganapathi in Tamil by:

Sekkizhar (author of Periya Puranam, life stories of the great Saivite Nayanmars)

Tirumular (author of Tirumandiram, Saiva Siddhanta philosophy)

Viveka Chintamani

Vriddhachala Puranam

Nalvazhi – Avvaiyar (great poet-devotee-moralist)

Moodurai – Avvaiyar

Tirugnanasambandar (one of the four great Saivite Nayanmars)

Pramottara Kaandam

Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam (Account of 64 Lilas of Sundareswara Siva in Madurai)

Kaasyapar – Karyasiddhimalai

Lesson 2

Period of Time of Jagat (World)

I. Kalpas

There are 7 kalpas (Kalpa is one day of Lord Brahma, consisting of 1000 Chaturyugas):

1. Sveta Varaha Kalpam – Started on Chaitra Sukla Prathama tithi
2. Kurma Kalpam - Started on Chaitra Sukla Panchami tithi
3. Paarthiva Kalpam - Started on Vaisakha Sukla Tritiya tithi
4. Saavitra Kalpam - Started on Karthika Krishna Prathama tithi
5. Pralaya Kalpam - Started on Margasirsha Sukla Navami tithi
6. Uttama (Ananta) Kalpam - Started on Maagha Sukla Trayodasi tithi
7. Braahma Kalpam - Started on Phalguna Krishna Tritiya tithi

We are presently in Sveta Varaha Kalpam.

II. We are called 'Manushya' as we originated from Manu. Manu's period of reign is known as 'Manvantaram'.

Sastras declare that in every kalpa, there are 14 Manus who rule successively. The names of 14 Manus in the present Sveta Varaha Kalpam are as follows:

1. Svaayambhuva Manu – Period started on Aasviyuja (Asvina) Sukla Navami
2. Svaarochisha Manu - Period started on Karthika Sukla Dvadasi
3. Uttama Manu - Period started on Chaitra Sukla Tritiya
4. Tamasa Manu - Period started on Bhadrapada Sukla Tritiya
5. Raivata Manu - Period started on Pushya Sukla Ekadasi
6. Chaakshusha Manu - Period started on Aashaadha Sukla Dasami
7. Vaivasvata Manu - Period started on Maagha Sukla Saptami

(We are presently in this Manvantaram)

8. Surya Saavarni Manu - Period started on Sravana Krishna Ashtami
9. Daksha Saavarni Manu - Period started on Karthika Pournami
10. Brahma Saavarni Manu - Period started on Phalguna Pournami
11. Rudra Saavarni Manu - Period started on Phalguna Amavasya
12. Agni Saavarni Manu - Period started on Aashaadha Pournami
13. Rouchya Manu - Period started on Chaitra Pournami
14. Pouchya Manu - Period started on jyeshtha Pournami

A Chaturyuga consists of four yugas: 1.Krita yuga 2.Treta yuga 3.Dvapara yuga 4.Kali yuga. There are about 70 chaturyugas in one Manvantara.

III. The period from Prathama after Amavasya to Pournami is called 'Sukla Paksha'. The period from Prathama after Pournami to Amavasya is called 'Krishna Paksha'. Our Sukla Paksha is daytime for Pitrus and our Krishna Paksha is night time for them. It is said:

पित्र्ये रात्र्यहनी मासः प्रविभागस्तु पक्षयोः

A month consists of 30 days and nights. A 'Ritu' has two months. One 'Ayanam' has three Ritus. One year consists of two Ayanams.

IV. There are twelve months from Chitra to Phalguni (Panguni in Tamil). The measurement of time in terms of month is called 'Maanam'. It is of nine types: 1.Souram 2.Saavanam 3.Nakshatramaanam 4.Chaandramaanam 5.Baarhaspatyamaanam 6.Braahmam 7.Daivam 8.Pitriyam 9. Praajaapatyam.

In practice, however, we are using only four of these 'Maanams'. They are: 1.Chaandramaanam 2.Nakshatramaanam 3.Souramaanam 4.Saavanamaanam.

चान्द्रो नाक्षत्रिकः सौरः सावनश्च तथैव च ।
उक्ताश्चतुर्विधा मासाः लोकेषु व्यावहारिकाः ॥

1.Souramaana months

Sun halts in one 'Raasi' for one month. The month is named after the name of the Raasi. The twelve months are as follows:

Chitrai (Tamil name of month) - Mesha month (Raasi)

Vaikasi - Rishabha month (Raasi)

Aani - Mithuna month (Raasi)

Aadi - Karkataka month (Raasi)

Aavani - Simha month (Raasi)

Purattaasi - Kanya month (Raasi)

Aippasi - Tula month (Raasi)

Karthikai - Vrischika month (Raasi)

Maargazhi - Dhanur month (Raasi)

Thai - Makara month (Raasi)

Maasi - Kumbha month (Raasi)

Panguni - Meena month (Raasi)

Smartha rituals like marriages etc. are conducted based on Souramaanam.

2. Chaandramaana months

These months derive their name from the name of star on the Pournami day, which occurs in the middle of the month. The month starts from Prathama day after Amavasya (i.e.Sukla Paksha) and ends in Amavasya day. A year consists of 355 days by this Chaandramaana account.

Chitra star – Chaitra month – Madhu month

Visakha star – Vaisakha month – Madhava month

Jyeshtha star – Jyeshtha month – Sukra month

Purvashadha star – Ashadha month – Suchi month

Sravana star – Sraavana month – Nabho month

Proshtapada star – Bhadrapada month – Nabhasya month

Aswini star – Aasvayuja month – Isha month

Kriethika star – Karthika month –Urja: month

Mrigasirsha star – Margasira month – Saha: month

Pushya star – Pushya month – Sahasya month

Magha star – Maagha month – Tapo month

Phalguni star – Phaalguna month – Tapasya month

3. Saavana months

In this system each month consists of 30 days uniformly and hence a year is of 360 days. In Yagas this measurement is used. Knowledgeable people feel that the measurement of time of pregnancy of women should be based on this.

4. Nakshatramaana months

The period of 27 days and 8 hours beginning with Chandra's contact with a star in a Raasi upto the time Chandra returns to the same star is called 'Nakshatramaana' month.

चन्द्रं तु चन्द्रार्कसमागमाभ्यां नाक्षत्रमाहुश्शशिमण्डलेन ।

सौरं तु राशिं प्रति सूर्यगत्या त्रिंशद्दिनं सावनसंज्ञमाहुः ॥

Thus the above four types of measurement of month are in practical use.

5. Baarhaspatyamaana months

The period, for which Brihaspathi stays in a Rasi during his movement, is one Baarhaspatya year. The total time spent by Brihaspati in all the 12 Rasis comes to 11 years and 10 months.

Rainfall etc. are observed in Nakshatramaana and Vratas, upavasas, Yatra, Utsavas etc. in Chaandramaana system. Period of 60 years starting from Prabhava should be reckoned in Baarhaspatyamaana system.

Time is also reckoned in ancient texts in the following manner.

Time taken for batting the eye is one Nimisha.

18 Nimishas = 1 Kaashta

30 Kaashtas = 1 Kala

30 Kalas = 1 Muhurtham

30 Muhurthams = 1 Day

30 Days = 1 Maasa (Sukla Paksha + Krishna Paksha)

2 Maasas = 1 Ritu

3 Ritus = 1 Ayanam (Dakshinaayana or Uttaraayana)

2 Ayanas = 1 Varsha

Manusmriti states this in the verse:

निमेषा दश चाष्टौ च काष्ठा त्रिंशत्तु ताः कला ।
त्रिंशत्कला मुहूर्तं स्यादहोरात्रं तु तावतः ॥

Ritus are of two categories: Soura Ritus and Chaandra Ritus.

Soura ritus are: 1.Vasanta Ritu 2.Greeshma Ritu 3.Varsha Ritu 4.Sarad Ritu 5.Hemanta Ritu and 6.Sisira Ritu.

Chaandra Ritus are reckoned from Chaitra month onward, each Ritu consisting of two months.

As stated in Veda 'द्वादशा मासाः पञ्चर्तवः' there are five Ritus. There Hemanta and Sisira Ritus are together taken as one.

Earlier six Ritus were reckoned starting from Sisira Ritu; but Vasanta Ritu was later taken as the first Ritu as it was conducive to perform Soma yaga and other activities relating to yagnas.

Some Smritis take commencement of Vasanta Ritu from Soura Mesha or Panguni month. Sri Bodhayana Maharishi puts this as Mesha- Vrishabha months or Panguni- Chitra months.

Let us now look at what Amarakosam says for firming up this idea (first Kaandam- Kaala vargam).

ते तु त्रिंशदहोरात्रः पक्षस्ते दश पञ्च च ।
पक्षौ पूर्वापरौ शुक्लकृष्णौ मासस्तु तावुभौ ॥
द्वौ द्वौ मार्गादि मासौ स्यादृतुस्तैरयनं त्रिभिः ।
अयने द्वे गतिरुदादक्षिणार्कस्य वत्सरः ॥
मासेन स्यादहोरात्रः पैत्रो वर्षेण दैवतः ।
दैवं युगसहस्रे द्वे ब्राह्मः कल्पौ तु तौ नृणाम् ॥
मन्वन्तरं तु दिव्यानां युगानामेकसप्ततिः ॥

Let us now turn to Indian and English measures of time.

Indian measures: 60 vinaadis = 1 Naazhigai (Ghatika)

2½ Naazhigais = 1 Muhurtham; 3 Muhurthams (or 7½ Naazhigais) = 1 Yamam (or Jamam)

8 Yamams (or 60 Naazhigais) = 1 Day (& Night together)

1 Naazhigai (Ghatika) = 24 Minutes; 2½ Naazhigais = 1 Hour.

English measures: 60 Seconds = 1 Minute; 60 Minutes = 1 Hour;

24 Hours = 1 Day (& Night together); 7 Days = 1 week

30, 31, 28 or 29 Days = 1 Month; 12 Months = 1 Year.

Regarding Mahodaya Punyakalam and Ardhodaya Punyakalam, it is stated as follows in the compendium of Dharma Sastra 'Smriti Muktapthalam' in 'Sraadha Kaandam-Uttara bhaga':

महाभारते श्रवणाश्विनिष्ठार्द्राणागदैवतमापतेत् ।

रविवारयुतामायां व्यतीपातः स उच्यते ॥

व्यतीपाताख्ययोगोऽयं शतार्कग्रहसन्निभः ॥

In Mahabharata, if on a Sunday, Amavasya and one of the stars – Sravanam, Asvini, Avittam, Tiruvadiraai or Ayilyam, occurs, then it is called 'Vyatipatam'. This Vyatipata yogam is equal to a hundred Surya grahanas in merit.

अमार्कपातश्रवणैर्युक्ता चेत् पुष्यमाघयोः ।

अर्धोदयः स विज्ञेयः कोटिसूर्यग्रहैस्समः ॥

If in Pousha or Maagha month, Amavasya, Sunday, Vyatipata yogam and Sravana star occur, then it is called 'Ardhodaya'. It is equal in merit to a crore of Surya grahanas.

सौम्यवारेण योगोऽयं महोदय इति स्मृतः ।

If the above combination occurs on a Monday, it is called 'Mahodaya'.

Questions

1. How many Kalpas are there? Name them.
2. What is Manvantaram? How many are there?
3. Name Manvantaras.
4. How many yugas are there?
5. How many 'Maanas' or time measures are there? Name the 'Maanas' in practice.
6. Name the 12 Soura months.
7. Write the relevant Amarakosa slokas.
8. Write the Indian time measures.
9. Write the English time measures.
10. Write any seven of the Soura and Chaandra months.
11. How many Ritus are there? Name them.
12. Vyatipatam, Mahodayam, Ardhodayam – write in detail with slokas of authority.

Lesson 3

Summary of Panchanga contents

Panchangam contains five features- Tithi, Varam, Nakshatram, Yogam and Karanam.

तिथिवारं च नक्षत्रं योगः करणमेव च ।
यत्रैतत् पञ्चकं स्पष्टं पञ्चाङ्गं तन्निगद्यते ॥
नक्षत्रवारतिथयः करणानि योगाः पञ्चाङ्गमेतत् ।

तिथिर्विष्णुः तथा वारो नक्षत्रं विष्णुरेव च ।
योगश्च करणं चैव सर्वं विष्णुमयं जगत् ॥

Vishnu, the all-pervasive Bhagavan shines as Kalatma of the form of Tithi, Vara, Nakshatra, Yoga and Karana.

1. Tithis

प्रतिपच्च द्वितीया च तृतीयातदनन्तरम् ।
चतुर्थी पञ्चमी षष्ठी सप्तमी चाष्टमी तथा ।
नवमी दशमी चैवैकादशी द्वादशी ततः ।
त्रयोदशी ततो ज्ञेया ततः प्रोक्ता चतुर्दशी ।
पूर्णिमा शुक्लपक्षे तु कृष्णपक्षे त्वमा स्मृता ॥

Tithis are Prathama, Dvitiya, Tritiya, Chaturthi, Panchami, Shashti, Saptami, Ashtami, Navami, Dasami, Ekadasi, Dvadasi, Trayodasi, Chaturdasi, Pournami or Amavasya.

Tithis are based on the increase or decrease of Surya's light every day. The fifteen tithis are grouped as under:

1. Nanda – Prathama, Shashti, Ekadasi
2. Bhadra – Dvitiya, Saptami, Dvadasi
3. Jaya – Tritiya, Ashtami, Trayodasi
4. Riktaa – Chaturthi, Navami, Chaturdasi
5. Purna – Panchami, Dasami, Amavasya, pournami

Tithis extend over a time period varying from 54 Naazhigas to 67 Naazhigas, depending on Chandra's movement. Jyotisha Sastra states that Tithi lasting over 60 Naazhigas (Ghatikas) is called 'Tithivridhi'; Tithi lasting less than 60 Naazhigas is called 'Tithikshayam'.

Devatas of Tithis

Devatas of tithis starting from Prathama respectively are: 1.Agni 2.Brahma 3.Parvathi 4.Ganapathi 5.Sarpa 6.Subrahmanya 7.Surya 8.Siva 9.Vasus 10.Diggajas 11.Yama 12.Vishnu 13.Manmatha 14.Kali Purusha 15.Amavasya - Pitrus; Pournami – Chandra.

2. Vara

The time from Sunrise to Sunset is known as 'Ahas'.

Sanskrit Name	English Name	Graha Name	Devata
1. भानु वासरः	Sunday	Surya	Agni
2. सोम/ इन्दु वासरः	Monday	Chandra	Jalam
3. भौम वासरः	Tuesday	Angaraka	Bhumi
4. सौम्य वासरः	Wednesday	Budha	Hari
5. गुरु वासरः	Thursday	Guru	Indra
6. शुक्र/ भृगु वासरः	Friday	Sukra	Indraani
7. मन्द/ स्थिर वासरः	Saturday	Sani	Brahma

Navagrahas are: Surya, Chandra, Angaraka (Mangala), Budha, Guru (Brihaspati), Sukra, Sani, Rahu and Ketu.

सूर्यश्चन्द्रो मङ्गलश्च बुधश्चापि बृहस्पतिः ।
शुक्रः शनैश्चरो राहुः केतुश्चेति ग्रहा नव ॥

To remember the seven days of the week:

आदित्यश्चन्द्रमा भौमो बुधश्चाथ बृहस्पतिः ।
शुक्रः शनैश्चरश्चैव वाराः सप्त प्रकीर्तिताः ॥

3. Nakshatras and Devatas

1. अश्विनी	Asvathi	Asvini
2. अपभरणी	Bharani	Yama
3. कृत्तिका	Krittika	Agni
4. रोहिणी	Rohini	Prajapati
5. मृगशीर्षम्	Mrigasirsha	Soma
6. आर्द्रा	Tiruvadairai	Rudra

7. पुनर्वसू	Punarpoosam	Aditi
8. पुष्य	Poosam	Brihaspati
9. आश्लेषा	Ayilyam	Sarpas
10. मघा	Magham	Pitrus
11. पूर्वफल्गुनी	Pooram	Aryama
12. उत्तरफल्गुनी	Uthiram	Bhaga
13. हस्त	Hastam	Savita
14. चित्रा	Chitra	Tvashta
15. स्वाती	Swati	Vayu
16. विशाखा	Visakha	Indraagni
17. अनूराधा	Anusham	Mitra
18. ज्येष्ठा	Kettai	Indra
19. मूल	Moolam	Nirruti
20. पूर्वाषाढा	Pooradam	Jalam
21. उत्तराषाढा	Uthiradam	Visvedevas
22. श्रवणम्	Tiruvonam	Vishnu
23. श्रविष्ठा	Avittam	Ashta Vasus
24. शतभिषक्	Sadayam	Varuna
25. पूर्वप्रोष्ठपदा	Poorattadi	Aja Ekapada
26. उत्तरप्रोष्ठपदा	Uthirattadi	Ahirbudhnya
27. रेवती	Revathi	Poosha

Another Nakshatra called Abhijit also exists after Uthiradam and before Tiruvonam. Its Devata is Brahma.

अभिजिन्नाम नक्षत्रम् । पुरस्तादषाढानाम् । अवस्तात्श्रोणायै । -Taitriya sakha.

The names of Nakshatras are given in the following slokas:

नक्षत्रनामानि ॥

अश्विनीभरणी चैव कृत्तिका रोहिणी मृगः ।
 आर्द्रा पुनर्वसुः पुष्यस्ततोऽश्लेषामघास्तथा ।
 पूर्वफाल्गुनिका तस्मादुत्तराफाल्गुनिकाततः ।
 हस्तश्चित्रा ततः स्वाती विशाखा तदनन्तरम् ॥
 अनूराधा ततो ज्येष्ठा ततो मूलं निगद्यते ।
 पूर्वाषाढोत्तराषाढात्वभिजित्श्रवणस्ततः ॥
 धनिष्ठा शतताराख्य पूर्वा भाद्रपदा ततः ।

उत्तरा भाद्रपदा चैव रेवत्येतानि भानि च ॥

In Krishna Yajurveda, 2nd Kanda, 3rd Prasna, the 14 Nakshatras from Krittika to Anusham are called as Deva Nakshatras and 13 Nakshatras from Kettai to Bharani are called as Yama Nakshatras. The names of Nakshatras and respective Devatas are given in 3rd Ashtakam, 1st Prasnam. Veda commences with Krittika star – ‘अग्नि र्नः पातु कृत्तिकाः’. The effects of these Nakshatras are given in the first Ashtakam, 5th Prasnam.

4. Yogas 27

The 27 Yogas are given in the following verse:
विश्वकुम्भः प्रीतिरायुष्मान्सौभाग्यः शोभनस्तथा ।
अतिकण्ठस्सुकर्मा च धृतिः शूलस्तथैव च ॥
गण्डो वृद्धिर्धुवश्चैव व्याघातो हर्षणस्तथा ।
वज्रसिद्धिर्व्यतीपात वरीयान्परिघः शिवः ॥
सिद्धस्साध्यः शुभः शुभ्रो भ्राम्यो माहेन्द्रश्च वैधृतिः ॥

The Yogas are: 1.Visvakumbha 2.Priti 3.Ayushman 4.Soubhagyam 5.Sobhanam
6.Atikantham 7.Sukarmam 8.Dhruti 9.Sulam 10.Gandam 11.Vridhhi 12.Dhruvam
13.Vyaaghaatam 14.Harshanam 15.Vajram 16.Siddhi 17.Vyatipatam 18.Variyan
19.Parigham 20.Sivam 21.Siddham 22.Saadhyam 23.Subham 24.Subhram 25.Bhraamyam
26.Maahendram 27.Vaidhruti.

While doing Sankalpam, these names of Yogas should only be mentioned and not Siddhayoga, Amritayoga etc.

(It is stated in the book ‘Kala Prakasika’ that the nine Yogas, viz. Vyaaghaatam, Parigham, Vajram, Vyatipatam, Vaidhruti, Gandam, Atikantham, Sulam and Visvakumbham are to be avoided for auspicious rituals.)

These 27 Yogas occur owing to the union of ‘Sphutas’ of Surya and Chandra. The sum of these is calculated and Yogas like Visvakumbham, Priti etc. are assigned for every 13¹/₃ degree, like Nakshatras. Tarpanam is to be performed on days on which Yogas Vyatipatam and Vaidhruti occur.

5. Karanas

A half of Tithi is called Karanam. Tithi Sphutam is called Karana Sphutam. Jyotisha books state:

करणस्त्वर्धतिथिस्यात् |
तिथिं द्विधा करोतीति तित्यर्धं करणं स्मृतम् ।

There are seven Chara Karanas called Vyashti from the latter part of Sukla Paksha Prathama tithi till the first part of Krishna Paksha Chaturdasi tithi. They are: 1.Bhavam 2.Bhaalavam 3.Koulavam 4.Taitulam 5.Garajah 6.Vanijah 7.Bhadra or Vyashti. These occur eight times in a month.

There are four Sthira Karanas from the latter part of Krishna Paksha Chaturdasi till the first part of Sukla Paksha Prathama tithi. They are: 8.Sakunam 9.Kimstughnam 10.Chatuspaadam 11.Naagavam. These occur once a month. These four Karanas and the Karana, Vyashti (Bhadra) are to be avoided for auspicious rituals.

In a month there are totally Chala Karanas, $7 * 8 = 56$; Sthira Karanas, $4 * 1 = 4$, thus totalling to 60 Karanas, as per Jyotisha Sastra.

6. Other Aspects

Tithidvayam

Two tithis occurring on the same day is called 'Tithidvayam'. When the Tithi is not suitable for Sraadh on a particular day, 'Tithidvayam' occurs on the previous day.

Atimasam – Kshayamasam

If in one Soura month, two Amavasya tithis occur, or there is no Soura month commencement in between two Amavasya tithis, that month is known as Atimasam. (This is known as Malamasam or Adhikmaas also). Atimasam occurs once in 32 months, 16 days, 4 Nazhigais (ghatikas). Atimasam does not occur after Bhadrapada month or before Chaitra month as calculated in Jyotisha. When Atimasam occurs, what comes first is called Atimasam and the following month is known as 'Nijamasam'. Auspicious activities are not performed in Atimasam. The Chaandramaana month in which two Sankramanas occur is known as 'Kshayamasam'. This occurs in Karthika, Maargasiras, or Pushya months. Auspicious activities are not undertaken in Kshayamasam also.

Avama or Dinakshayam

If in one Soura day, three tithis occur, it is called 'Avama'. When tithi duration is less than 60 Naazhigais, Avama can occur. This is regarded as auspicious period. There can be about six 'Avamas' in one year.

Tridina Spruk

If a tithi extends over a full Soura day of 60 Naazhigais and short periods on the previous and following days, it is known as 'Tridina Spruk'.

Aa.Kaa.Maa.Vai

In the months of Aashaadha, Kaarthika, Maagha and Vaisakha, on days when Pournami tithi extends in Sunrise hours, it is very meritorious to bathe in rivers before Sunrise. It is also recommended to give danam on these days.

Kutapa Kalam

A day is divided into five parts: Praatah Kalam, Sangava Kalam, Madhyaahna Kalam, Aparaaahna Kalam and Saayankalam. In a day of 15 Muhurtas, i.e. 30 Naazhigais, the 8th Muhurta time is Kutapa kalam.

अहनो मुहूर्ता विख्याता दश पञ्च च सर्वदा ।

तत्राष्टमो मुहूर्तो यः स कालः कुतपः स्मृतः ॥

The period of 2 Naazhigais in midday (11.36 a.m. to 12.24 p.m. if Sunrise is at 6 a.m.) is Kutapa kalam. It is recommended to perform Sraadhham during this time.

Agni Nakshatram

In Chitra month, the time when Surya is conjoined with the Agni Nakshatra of Krittika and the last two paadas of the previous star Bharani and the first two paadas of the next star Rohini is known as Agni Nakshatra Kalam. Agni Nakshatram occurs after 20 days, 33 Naazhigais and 3 Vinaadis from the time Surya enters Mesha Rasi. This will happen approximately by the 21st of Chitrai month. The period of Agni Nakshatra influence will be 26 days. Griha Pravesam is avoided during this period.

We have known that Panchangam contains the five aspects of Tithi, Vara, Nakshatra, Yoga and Karana. One should learn to read Panchangam every day. Two types of Panchangams are in

vogue: Vakya Panchangam and Triganita Panchangam. Triganita Panchangam is followed in Srimatham. One should go through them in full and learn.

For benefit of comfortable and high living of mankind, Maharishis have, out of compassion, taught innumerable aspects of dharma under six heads: 1.Aahnika Kaandam 2.Aasoucha Kaandam 3.Sraadha Kaandam 4.Varnasrama Dharma Kaandam 5.Tithi Nirnaya Kaandam and 6.Praayaschitta Kaandam. They have been compiled in a book titled 'Smriti Mukta Phalam', also known as 'Vaidyanatha Dikshitiyam' after its distinguished author Vaidyanatha Dikshitar. This book has been published in six volumes by Veda Dharma Sastra Paripalana Sabha of Srimatham; it has Samskrit slokas in Devanagari and Grantha scripts and Tamil meaning.

Sage Vyasa says in 'Tithi Nirnaya Kaandam' that one, who follows the rules of Tithi, Nakshatra, Vara and Desa for performance of mandated karmas and avoidance of prohibited karmas, will attain to Swarga and that one, who, out of delusion, fails to follow the rules, will attain to despicable realms.

यत्तिथौ यत्र नक्षत्रे वारे यत्र च यद्यथा ।
विहितं वा निषिद्धं वा पालयन्त्रिदिवं व्रजेत् ॥
अपालयन् पुनर्मोहादपवित्रं पदं व्रजेत् ॥

Maharishi Gaargya states that Tithi, Nakshatra, Vara etc. are means of earning Punya and Papa (merit and sin).

तिथि नक्षत्र वारादि साधनं पुण्यपापयोः ।

Sins do not touch one who reads Panchangam every day after praying to Navagrahas and tells the details to others. 'Panchanga Pathana Phala' states that knowing and telling others of tithi bestows Lakshmi kataksham, Vara long life, Nakshatra relief from sins, Yoga relief from disease and Karana success in all endeavours.

We have heard that even a good man cannot do what a good day does. Hence any good deed should be undertaken on a good day at the auspicious hour. The tradition in our country is to perform all activities, whether it is start of ploughing in the field, or the king's coronation, on a good day in a good hour.

By gaining basic knowledge of Panchangam let us work for learning more and more of good habits and good things of life and lead a healthy life.

आरोग्यं प्रददातु नो दिनकरश्चन्द्रो यशो निर्मलम्
भूतिं भूमिसुतः सुधांशुतनयः प्रज्ञां गुरुर्गौरवम् ।

काव्यः कोमलवाग्विलासमतुलं मन्दो मुदं सर्वदा
राहुर्बाहुबालं विरोधशमनं केतुः कुलस्योन्नतिम् ॥

Let us pray every day to Navagrahas: May Surya bless us with good health; Chandra stainless fame; Angaraka wealth; Budha wisdom; Guru greatness; Sukra unparalleled beautiful speech; Sani lasting happiness; Rahu strength; Kethu uplift of the lineage.

Questions

1. What is Panchangam?
2. How many Tithis are there? Name them.
3. Write the verses naming the Nakshatras.
4. How many are the Yogas? Name them.
5. How many are the Karanas? Name them.
6. What is Atimasam?
7. What is Aa.Kaa.Maa.Vai?
8. Write a short note on Agni Nakshatram.
9. Write down the benefits of reading Panchangam.
10. Write down the names of the Kaandams teaching dharmas.

Lesson 4

Advaita Vidyacharya Sri Govinda Dikshitar

Sri Nagamamba sametha Advaita Vidyacharya Maharaja Saheb Sri Govinda Dikshitar (1515-1635 A.D.) continues to bless us even today in the kshetra of Pattiswaram near Kumbakonam in Sri Dhenupuriswara temple in the Sannidhi of Sri Gnanambika. He was the ancestor of Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Sri Sankaracharya Swamigal, 'Sri Maha Periyaval', the 68th Peethadhipathi of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham in his Purvasramam.

अद्वैतविद्या विभवालंबान् गोविन्दयज्वेन्द्रगुरुनुपासे ।
निर्मथ्य षड्दर्शननीरधीन् ये धियैव सारान् दधते बुधेभ्यः ॥

"I worship Sri Govinda Yajvendra Guru, the support of the glory of Advaita Vidya, who churned the rain-laden clouds of six Darsanas (Philosophies) and gave away the essence to wise people."

The three Thanjavur Nayak kings, Chevvappa Nayak and his son Achyutappa Nayak, followed by his own son Raghunatha Nayak ruled from 1542 to 1634 A.D. the areas of Thanjavur and Tiruchi districts in Chola Desa, Tiruvannamalai, South arcot, North Arcot, Chingleput etc., where rivers Kaveri, Tenpennai and Palar flowed. These Nayak kings' rule formed part of Vijayanagar empire. Bhagavan Sri Govinda Dikshitar was a minister of great repute to these kings. He helped them to rule without transgression of Dharma and established many rare centres of Vidya and dharmas. His father was Dasaratharama Dikshitar.

Sri Advaita Vidyacharya Sri Govinda Dikshitar was born in Mysore area in Karnataka state in a very religious Karnataka Hoysala brahmana family in the tradition of Rig Veda, Asvalayana Sutra and given to performing Sroutha karmas. Sri Govinda Dikshitar's dharmapatni (wife, who participates in dharmas of husband), or Yagnapatni (wife, who participates in yagnas performed by husband) was Sri Nagamamba Amma.

Sri Govinda Dikshitar was a Nityagnihotri (brahmana who performed Agnihotram daily), who performed all Sroutha karmas as laid down in Vedas. He was a great Karmayogi. He performed all yagas and shone as a great tapasvi. During the reign of Raghunatha Nayak, Sri Dikshitar performed a wonderful yaga, 'Sarvatomukham' with Garuda Ganam. The king Raghunatha Nayak gave half the throne to Sri Dikshitar, seating him by his side and ruled over his country.

चत्वारः कृतसर्वतोमुखमहासत्रेण गाढं शिला

यूपा येन निखानिताः प्रतिदिशं युक्तं चिरावस्थिते ।
अस्य श्रीरघुनाथभूबलरिपोरध्यासितार्धासनो ।
गोप्ता नित्यगवीरसौ विजयते गोविन्दयज्वाग्रणीः ॥

Like Raghunatha Nayak, his father Achyutappa Nayak had also seated Sri Govinda Dikshitar beside him on the throne and conducted affairs of the state. A poet who saw this sang this verse with pun.

त्रिनामाद्यन्तनामानौ महीक्षिद्दीक्षितावुभौ ।
शस्त्रे शास्त्रे च कुशलौ आह्वेषु ह्वेषु च ॥

“One who has the first of the three names, Achyuta, Anantha and Govinda, viz. Achyuta is a master in use of weapons and warfare. The other, Dikshitar, who has the third of the three names, viz. Govinda, is a master in sastras and yagnas.”

During Sri Dikshitar’s time, Thanjavur city was the jewel of Chola Desa. Poets, composers, scholars of sastras all glorified the royal assembly unmindful of language differences. “Karnataka, Andhra Prantha Nirmana Vidya Nipunaih kaichchat, Vaggeyakara pramukhaih anakaih vichitra Gitadi kala pravinaih” – so goes the description of the great poets who decorated the royal assembly in the books, ‘Sahitya Ratnakaram’ and ‘Raghunathabhyudayam’. ‘Sangita Sudha’ also gives a similar description.

Dharmas performed by Sri Govinda Dikshitar

Sri Govinda Dikshitar used to be referred respectfully as ‘Ayya’ and ‘Ayyan’. Ayyankulam and Ayyan bazaar street in Thanjavur, Ayyanpettai on the Thanjavur- Kumbakonam route, Ayyan Street in Kumbakonam and Ayyan kulam in Tiruvannamalai- all of these bear his name.

Sri Dikshitar raised Sri Ramaswamy temple in Kumbakonam and got colourful paintings of Sri Ramayanam done in the corridors. If one circumambulates the corridors three times and reads the paintings, he gets the merit of reading Srimad Ramayanam in entirety. He also constructed in Kumbakonam Sri Mangalmbikai Sannidhi Mantapam, steps and ghats in the Mahamagha Kulam and temples for 16 Sivalingams all round the pond. He carried out these services out of the gift of diamond, gold and other jewels he received in Tulabharam in adoration from the king Raghunatha Nayak. Saranatha temple in Kumbakonam bazaar street was also erected by him. One can see even today a stone sculpture showing Tulabharam in the northern side Mantapam of Mahamagha Kulam.

For teaching Vedas Sri Dikshitar established the Raja Veda Kavya Pathasala in Kumbakonam, the place where he had performed yagas; he also made grants of lands in the villages of Kavaramangalam and Ragakudi for this purpose. This Pathasala is running very well even today. That street where Sri Dikshitar performed yaga is known as 'Yagasala Street'.

The Nayak kings had deep devotion to Mannargudi Rajagopala Swamy. The grants they gave Sri Dikshitar there are depicted in the sculptures in the Swami Sannidhi in the temple. Sri Dikshitar served the people by constructing ghats on both sides of the Kaveri river and Pushya Mandapas all along the river route from Tiruvaiyaru to Mayavaram. Even today Pushyotsavas, Tirthavari etc. are being held there grandly.

Sri Mahaswamigal's mother belonged to the lineage of Sri Govinda Dikshitar's daughter's side. They belonged to the village of Eachangudi, which is on the Kumbakonam-Tiruvaiyaru route. The villages of Eachangudi, Varahur and Kandamangalam had been raised by Sri Govinda Dikshitar. Eachangudi is known as 'Ekadasi Agraharam'. Sri Dikshitar has done renovation works including construction of Pushkarinis (tanks) etc. in many kshetras like Vriddhachalam, Tiruvannamalai, Chidambaram and Rameswaram. The temples in Pattiswaram and Tiruppalatturai near Kumbakonam were renovated through his efforts. Tiruppalatturai is on the Kumbakonam-Papanasam road. Thanjavur is famously known as rice bowl, isn't it? Sri Dikshitar constructed a beautiful paddy godown in Sri Palaivananathar temple in Tiruppalatturai for preserving paddy for a number of years. Agricultural scientists wonder at this marvel. This Mantapam for storing paddy is built scientifically and is maintained well even to this date.

Sri Govinda Dikshitar has constructed the Mahamagha Kulam in Kumbakonam in the shape of 'Agnihotra Vedi'. Mahamagham is a great festival celebrated once in every 12 years. Lakhs of people congregate here from all over the world for taking bath on the auspicious day of Maasi Magham. Main deities from all temples in Kumbakonam come on Rishabha vehicle traditionally along with other deities and offer tirtham. This festival is celebrated like the 'Kumbhamela' in north and is indeed known as 'Kumbhamela of Tamil Nadu'. In addition the Maasi Magha festival is also celebrated in all Saivite and Vaishnavite temples every year.

The credit for constructing the Thanjavur fort as 'Garuda Vyuha' goes to Sri Dikshitar. As he gave 'Mahashodasa danas' to brahmanas in Mayavaram and Tiruvidaimarudur (Madhyarjunam), those streets are gloriously known as 'Mahadana Street'.

Thanjavur Nayaks were Vira Vaishnavas. Sri Govinda Dikshitar persuaded them to adopt a liberal outlook and made them construct Saiva and Vaishnava temples and renovate old places of worship. Sri Dikshitar, who had consideration for other religions, arranged to construct a beautiful mosque near the bus stand in Thanjavur and towers on the four sides of the dargah at Nagur; he allotted separate spaces for Buddhists in Ilandurai near Kumbakonam; he permitted Christians to do trading in Tarangambadi; he advised the rulers to adopt measures which were appreciated by people of all communities.

Sri Dikshitar renovated the Murugan temple at Swamimalai and raised a statue for Chevvappa Nayak. To solve the drinking water problem in Thanjavur, he constructed a large lake called 'Chevvappa Nayak lake' for storage of water and laid pipes to the town. The lake is now known as 'Cheppaneri'.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Thanjavur Nayak kingdom attained great glory because of Sri Govinda Dikshitar. His culture, mastery and sense of equality shone brilliantly in all governmental affairs. It was due to his power that minor disturbances and dangers of war that affected the Vijayanagara kingdom now and then disappeared. In Tanikkotta battle fight, when there was a great danger to Vijayanagar empire, Sri Dikshitar was a right hand to them, enthusing the Thanjavur Nayaks to join the battle and gain victory. He also saw a big victory in the Kollidam bank battle. Other chieftains betrayed the empire.

Sri Govinda Dikshitar's period in Thanjavur Nayaks' reign was indeed a golden era.

Sri Govinda Dikshitar's Family life

Sri Govinda Dikshitar's wife's name was Matusri Nagamamba. It appears they had seven sons and one daughter. Their second son Yagna Narayana Dikshitar has authored certain books including Raghunatha Vilasam, Sahitya Ratnakaram and Raghunatha Bhupa Vilasam. He was a dear friend of the king Raghunatha Nayak of Thanjavur and advised him on all matters like his father. In his book Sahitya Ratnakaram he praises and pays respects to his father.

अद्वैतविद्याविभवावलम्बान् गोविन्दयज्वेन्द्रगुरूनुपासे ।
निर्मथ्य षड्दर्शननीरधीन् ये धियैव सारान् ददते बुधेभ्यः ॥

He joined his father in all the yagas performed by him; he also performed yagas on his own. Sri Govinda Dikshitar's sons were all Nityagnihotris; they performed all yagas. His third son Sri Venkatamakhi was very famous in classical music. He wrote a book 'Vaartikaabharanam' and commentary 'Duptika' for Mimamsa philosophy. The famous Mahakavi Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar proudly calls himself a disciple of Sri Venkatamakhi.

वार्तिकाभरणग्रन्थनिर्माण-व्यक्तकौशलः ।
श्रीवेङ्कटेश्वरमखी शिष्ये मय्यनुकम्पते ॥

Sri Venkatamakhi regulated Sangita Sastra and identified 72 Melakarta Ragas. These Ragas are being followed even today in the field of classical music. His book 'Chaturdandi Prakasika' is a defining text on classical music. He praises his father in that book as incarnation of Sri Sankara; in the song 'Tati tam dimi dimi gita', he refers to him as 'Sankaramunimatha Pratishtapanakovida'. At the close of every chapter he says: 'Thus ends chapter of Chaturdandi Prakasika written by Venkatamakhi, the third son of Sri Nagamamba sametha Sri Govinda Dikshitar'.

Books by Sri Govinda Dikshitar

Sri Dikshitar shone as a great scholar in Vedas, Vedangas, Sastras and Shad darsanas with the full grace of Devi Saraswati.

1. He wrote the wonderful book 'Vivarana Darpanam' on Advaita philosophy.
2. Book 'Sangita Sudhanidhi' was written by the master in music that Sri Dikshitar was and given to king Raghunatha Nayak.

In the book 'Chaturdandi Prakasika' by Venkatamakhi, the third son of Sri Dikshitar, he says that the characteristics of 'Raghunatha Melavina' can be found in the book 'Sangita Sudhanidhi' of his father.

ततो नु रघुनाथेन्द्रमेलवीणा निरूप्यते ।
तल्लक्षणं तु संगीतसुधानिधिरिति श्रुते ॥
चेव्वयाच्युत भूपाल रघुनाथनृपाङ्किते ।
अस्मत्तातकृते ग्रन्थे प्रोक्तान् श्लोकान् लिखामिता न् ॥

Advaita Vidyacharya Sri Appayya Dikshitar, who has written a commentary on the book 'Yadavabhyudayam', says proudly while describing the song of Krishna: "The characteristics of

music enunciated by Sri Govinda Dikshitar in his book Sangita Sudhanidhi may be found here.”

He says: “तथा च सङ्गीत सुधानिधि वचनानि”.

Sri Appayya Dikshitar, in his book ‘Siddhantalesa Sangraham’, praises Sri Govinda Dikshitar with devotion in quite a few places, referring to him as Advaita Vidyacharya.

3. Sri Govinda Dikshitar wrote ‘Tiruvaiyaru Puranam’ in Tamil in 1605 A.D. A poet praises Sri Dikshitar with admiration in his Tamil poem.
4. Sri Dikshitar wrote the Jyotisha book ‘Tandava Malai’.
5. He also wrote a commentary on Sundara Kandam of Srimad Ramayanam.

Descendants of Sri Govinda Dikshitar

Sri Vanchesa Dikshitar of Tiruvisanallur, the author of ‘Bhaata Chintamani’ was the son of Sri Dikshitar’s daughter’s daughter. In his book, Sri Vanchesa Dikshitar’s son Sri Kutti Narasimha Sastri says that he belongs to the lineage of Sri Govinda Dikshitar:

‘श्रीगोविन्ददीक्षितवंश्यस्यं श्रीवाञ्छेश्वरयज्वनः कृतौ’. Sri Vanchesa Dikshitar was known as ‘Kutti Kavi’; he has written ‘Mahisha Satakam’, ‘Asirvada Satakam’, ‘Dardi Satakam’ – the three books known as ‘Satakatrayam’.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Eachangudi Agraharam actually was the abode of the members of Sri Dikshitar’s daughter’s lineage. Sri Tirumalaimahi and Iyavarmahi of Tiruvisanallur were Sri Dikshitar’s daughter’s sons. Sri Lakshmipathi was the son of Sri Iyavarmahi.

The 64th Peethadhipati of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Sri Sankaracharya Swamigal, who was Peethadhipati from 1814 to 1850, was a descendant of Sri Govinda Dikshitar. He was a master in Mantra sastra. He had performed Tatanka Pratishtha to Sri Akhilandeswari in Jambukeswaram (Tiruvanaikkaval). He had also performed Kumbhabhishekam of Sri Kamakshi Devi temple in Kanchipuram. His name in Purvasrama was Sri Venkata Subramania Dikshitar. He was the grandson of the grandson of Sri Venkatamakhi, the third son of Si Govinda Dikshitar. He attained Siddhi in Kumbakonam and his adhishtanam is in Srimatham there. The Adhishtanam is known as ‘Vadakodi Brindavanam’. Annual Aradhana is celebrated grandly. The house in which he was born is to the south of Srimatham there.

The 67th Peethadhipati of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Sri Mahadevendra Saraswathi Sri Sankaracharya Swamigal, who was Peethadhipati from 1814 to 1850, was related to Sri Kanchi

Maha Periyaval; he was the son of his mother's elder sister in Purvasrama. His Purvasrama name was Sri Lakshmikanthan or Sri Lakshmi Narasimhan. The 68th Peethadhipati of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Sri Sankaracharya Swamigal, known respectfully as Sri Maha periyaval, 'Walking God' and 'Kanchi's Great Saint', had his Purvasrama name as Sri Swaminathan. Both these great saints were descendents of the lineage of Sri Govinda Dikshitar's daughter.

Sri Govinda Dikshitar's lineage has produced many great savants, saints, scholars and Nityagnihotris, and adherents of the path of Vedic rituals.

Can destiny be conquered by intellect!

Sri Govinda Dikshitar was living with his Nityagnihotram in practice in a palace in the natural surroundings on the banks of river Tirumalairayan (Kaveri's branch) in Beriswaram (also called Pattiswaram) near Kumbakonam. He was looking after the renovation work of the Pattiswaram temple very closely; the south gopuram was about to be completed.

One day, when Sri Dikshitar was walking on the river sands, he saw his servant 'Samban' coming. He alone could see him; others could not. It was many years since Samban had died. Sri Dikshitar looked at him with surprise; he asked him how and for what purpose he had come there. Samban said: "Sir, owing to the accumulated merit earned by serving you, I was recruited after my death as a secret servant of Lord Yama. My job is to carry out Yama Dharmaraja's orders properly. As you are a great saint, I became visible to your eyes. You are now engaged in the erection of gopuram. Tomorrow the installation of the 'Gopura Kalasam' is scheduled to take place in the presence of you, the king and the public. Emissaries of Yama like me cannot be seen by ordinary people; we can be seen only by saints like you and yogis of Nishkamy Karma, who have eyes of Gnana. We are here to take away the Principal Sthapathi Viswanathan tomorrow as soon as he places the Kalasam. This decision has been taken in the assembly of Yama. Viswanathan's life is coming to an end. Though this is a divine secret, I have told you this owing to the love that I have for you as master. Perhaps Bhagavan wishes to teach some rare lesson of conduct through this event." Saying so, he paid respects to Sri Dikshitar and disappeared.

Sri Dikshitar felt disturbed to hear this from Samban, who had earned his trust. Viswanatha Sthapathi was a great master in his art; many were the temples requiring to be renovated at his hands. Sri Dikshitar wished to save his life somehow. Without disclosing the divine secret to anyone, he sent for Viswanatha Sthapathi and kept him under his personal watch. He locked him up in a room in his own palace and kept the key with himself. He was very keen to protect

Viswanathan. Viswanathan and he did not go to the temple the next day morning to inspect the renovation work.

After completing his morning duties, Sri Dikshitar was immersed in worship of God specially with the intent of securing the life of Viswanathan. His family members could not fathom his sudden change. At the appointed time the king Raghunatha Nayak came to the temple with his entourage. Not finding Sri Govinda Dikshitar, whom he regarded higher than even God, he was restless. Learning that Viswanatha Sthapathi was in the palace of Sri Dikshitar, he sent for him so that the Gopura Kalasam could be installed in time. The king's aides went to Sri Dikshitar's palace and requested him to join. Sri Dikshitar, who was totally immersed in meditation on Bhagavan's lotus feet, was unaware of what was happening around him. The aides then found the key near Sri Dikshitar and opened the room in which Viswanatha Sthapathi was held and took him away.

The South Gopura Kalasam in the Pattiswaram temple was installed by Viswanatha Sthapathi at the appointed time. At that very moment he felt dizzy and fell down from the Gopuram with head down and died. All were taken aback and cried in dismay. The king felt grieved. Sri Dikshitar was informed. He felt surprised and shocked. He realised that destiny cannot be conquered by intellect. He also felt sad that he had thought earlier that through his efforts he could ward off the inevitable. He realised:

ललाटलिखिता रेखा परिमार्ष्टुं न शक्यते ।
हरिणापि हरेणापि ब्रह्मणापि सुरैरपि ॥

“The writing on one's forehead cannot be erased by Vishnu, Siva, Brahma and Devas.” One can see even today the statue of Viswanatha Sthapathi in the South Gopura entrance of Sri Dhenupuriswarar temple. The credit for reerecting in granite stone, the Sannidhi mandapam of Sri Gnanambika in that temple goes to Sri Dikshitar. In the Sannidhi of Sri Gnanambika, the human-sized statues of Sri Govinda Dikshitar and Sri Nagamamba are worshipped to this day.

In Pattiswaram there are many weavers of silk yarns. Sri Govinda Dikshitar functioned like a walking court of justice and was justly famous. He would hear the disputes among people and deliver justice on the spot. His judgements were accepted by people as God's own decisions. Once he resolved a marital dispute arising among the weavers of silk yarn. As a mark of respect people of their community place the marriage invitation along with coconut, fruits, betelnut etc. in front of Sri Dikshitar's Sannidhi in the temple and offer worship even today. They distribute the

invitation only after such worship. On the bank of Tirumalai river, in the south gopura sannidhi of Sri Dhenupuriswarar temple, there are indications of the palace in which Sri Dikshitar had lived.

Earlier we came to know of the conversation between Yama Dharmaraja, Samban and Sri Govinda Dikshitar. Let us now look at another incident in a similar vein. Samban told Sri Dikshitar that in the assembly of Yama Dharmaraja, it was mentioned that Sri Govinda Dikshitar occupied the first place among those who perform Vedic karmas and are immersed in devotion to Bhagavan. He has performed all dharmas. The credit for performing Ishta Purtha dharmas stipulated in Vedas to full extent goes to Sri Dikshitar alone. Atri Samhita says:

अग्निहोत्रं तपः सत्यं वेदानां चानुपालनम् आतिथ्यं वैश्वदेवश्च इष्टमित्यभिधीयते ।
वापीकूपतटाकादि देवतायतनानि च अन्नप्रदानमारामः पूर्तमित्यभिधीयते ॥

“Agnihotram, austerities, truth, protection of Vedas, hospitality, Vaisvadevam etc. are known as ‘Ishta’ dharmam. Construction and renovation of reservoirs, wells, tanks and temples and organising food distribution and flower gardens are known as ‘Poortha’ dharmam.” All in Yama’s council were praising Sri Govinda Dikshitar as the very form of Ishta and Poorha dharmam. At that point Yama intervened and said that though Sri Dikshitar had performed dharmas in the spirit of offering to Bhagavan, he had failed to erect gardens with flowers for use in worship of Siva and Vishnu and that his dharmam would be complete only if he does that. Samban disclosed this to Sri Dikshitar though it was a divine secret, because of his love and respect for his master. Sri Dikshitar realised the truth of what Samban said and arranged immediately to construct tanks and flower gardens in their compounds in all temples of Siva and Vishnu.

Sri Dikshitar dedicated an entire village for flower garden for Sri Mahalinga Swamy of Tiruvidaimarudur. Today that village is known as Govindapuram after his name. It is famous for divinity and continuous bhajans. It has got the significant name of ‘Sri Ramanama Siddhanta Gramam’. That Sri Bhagavannama Bodhendral, the 59th Peethadhipathi of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham selected this village for tapas in his last days speaks volumes for the greatness of this place.

Sri Govinda Dikshitar was known with many honorifics:

“पदवाक्यप्रमाण पारावार, सर्वतन्त्रस्वतन्त्र, नित्याग्निहोत्री
आप्तवाजपेययाजी, सर्वक्रतुयाजी, अद्वैतविद्याचार्य, महाराजासाब् ”

Sri Nrisimha Yajva, the disciple of Sri Govinda Dikshitar, worships Sri Dikshitar as Bhagavan in his book 'Drashtulochanam' – “भगवान् गोविन्दयज्वा”.

गोविन्दाध्वरिणं वन्दे विशदाद्वैतवादिनम् ।
कुतकारिसिकश्रेणीमानमर्दनमीश्वरम् ॥
यत्पादश्रवणेनैव निवासो भेदवादिनाम् ।
सद्यो भवति तं वन्दे गोविन्दाध्वरिणं गुरुम् ॥

Sri Dikshitar is adored as Easwara and Guru.

Contemporary Panditas

1.Sri Ratnakheta Dikshita 2.Sri Saarbhoumakavi 3.Sri Tatachiar 4.Sri Samarapungava Dikshita 5.Sri Nrisimha Swami 6.Doddayacharya 7.Sri Vijayendra Tirtha Swamigal (whose Brindavanam is situated in Soliappa Street in Kumbakonam) 8.Sri Vyasa Bhatta 9.Sri Parasara Bhatta 10.Sri Bhattoji Dikshita 11.Sri Nilakantha Dikshita 12.Sri Gururama Kavi 13.Sri Rajachudamani Dikshita 14.Sri Girvana Yogindra 15.Sri Balakavi.

Topping this list is Advaita Vidyacharya, Sarvatantra Swatantra Sri Appayya Dikshita.

In accordance with one's horoscope, it takes a man 120 years to go through all Dasas. Chandogya Upanishad says it is 116 years: 'प्रह षोडशं वर्षं शतं जीवति य एवं वेद'. Sri Govinda Dikshita epitomised these statements, lived for 120 years and, at the end while being engaged in austerities, he merged with the Lord in the Sannidhi of Sri Adi Kumbheswara and Sri Mantra Pitheswari Sri Mangalambika in Kumbakonam along with his consort Sri Nagamamba. We can see the idols of Sri Govinda Dikshita Mahalinga Murthi and Sri Nagamamba right opposite Sri Mangalambika even today in the temple. They are worshipped by all, whose prayers they grant.

Sri Nagamamba sametha Advaita Vidyacharya Maharaja Saheb Sri Govinda Dikshitar is an unparalleled savant, who strictly followed the royal path of Advaita Siddhanta throughout his life, the Siddhanta blessed by Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada as per the instructions of Sri Veda Mata.

वेदो नित्यमधीयतां तदुदितं कर्म स्वनुष्ठीयताम् ।
तेनेशस्य विधीयतामपचितिः काम्ये मतिस्त्यज्यताम् ॥

Sri Adi Sankara has preached in Sadhana Panchakam (also known as Sopana Panchakam and Upadesa Panchakam) that Veda should be studied and the karmas stipulated therein should be performed with no desire for fruits and as an offering to Easwara. This will in due course result in

purification of mind, followed by knowledge of Bhagavan and lead to the state of freedom from birth.

प्रारब्धं त्विह भुज्यतामथ परब्रह्मात्मना स्थीयताम् ।

The Acharya continues to say that one should experience Prarabdha and merge with Parabrahman at the end. We come to know from the sacred story of Sri Govinda Dikshita that he followed the teachings of Adi Sankara in toto and merged with the Lord. He and his consort have shown us the best way. Let us follow in his path and reap the fruit of our human birth.

Questions

1. Write the names of the Nayak kings of Thanjavur. Who was their prime minister?
2. What are the Gotra and Sutra of Sri Govinda Dikshita?
3. Write with meaning the sloka referring to him and Achyutappa Nayak together.
4. Write a brief note on the dharmas performed by him.
5. What is 'Seppaneri'?
6. Write the names of the sons of Sri Govinda Dikshita.
7. What is the title of the book on music written by Sri Venkatamakhi?
8. What are the books written by Sri Govinda Dikshita?
9. Who was the 64th Peethadhipati of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham?
10. 'One cannot change destiny' - write the sloka.
11. Write the sloka giving the characteristics of 'Ishta Poortha'.
12. Where did the Govinda Dikshita couple merge?

Lesson 5

Advaita Vidyacharya Srimad Appayya Dikshitar (1520-1593)

In Sivarahasyam, chapter 72, mention has been made of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar's advent after referring to the incarnation of Sri Adi Sankaracharya and Sri Haradattacharya.

दीक्षितोपि भवेत् कश्चित् मदंशो भूसुरोऽम्बिके ।

भासुराचारनिरतः शैवश्छन्दोगवंशजः

शैवशास्त्रं तदा भूमौ लुप्तं विस्तारयिष्यति ।

.....शिवभक्ताग्रणीः सुधीः

It says that Sri Dikshitar would incarnate and revive Saivism (and other sastras), which were losing their sheen. Let us now look at the sacred story of Adayapalam Sri Vinayaka Subramanian, known as Srimad Appayya Dikshitar, who incarnated as per the above prediction.

Sri Kanchi Paramacharya says: "Adayapalam is the holy place to visit for reaping good fruit."

There is a small beautiful village known as Adayapalam in North Arcot district near Arani. Sri Dikshitar's ancestors were of Bharadwaja Gotram and masters in Sama Veda. Apart from Sama Veda, which was their own Vedic branch (Saakha), they were experts in the other Vedic branches of Rik, Yajur and Atharva, and also Itihasas and Puranas. They were blessed with the special grace of Saraswati Devi.

Their family deity (kuladeivam) was Sri Maragathavalli sametha Sri Margasahayeswara in Virinchipuram on the banks of river Palar. Their guides in life were Srutis and Smritis. They were the repositories of high virtues. They attained wide fame as masters in all Sastras. They considered virtues like 'sama' (control of mind) and 'dama' (control of sense organs) as wealth.

In this sacred lineage a great personality, Sri Acharya Dikshita, also known as Sri Vakshasthalacharya Dikshita lived in Adayapalam in 15th-16th century. He was a Grihastha, who performed all yagas with no desire for fruit. He occupied an esteemed position in the assembly of the emperor Sri Krishna Devaraya of Vijayanagar. His son through his second wife was Sri Rangarajaadhvari.

Sri Rangarajaadhvari's elder son was Sri Vinayaka Subramanian, who came to be called by the famous name of Appayya Dikshita, as everybody started calling him 'Appa' and 'Appayya'. His second son was Sri Achan Dikshita, whose pet name was Aacha. His original name was Nrisimha Dikshita.

Sri Aachan Dikshita's son was Sri Narayana Dikshita, whose son was the famous Madurai Mahakavi Sri Nilakantha Dikshita. (Lesson on him is included in the topic of Mahakavis).

Sri Appayya Dikshita praises his father Sri Rangaraja Dikshita in his book 'Parimalam':

वैकुण्ठाचार्यवंशाम्बुधि-हिमकर श्रीमद्-अद्वैतविद्याचार्य ।

श्रीरङ्गराजाह्वय-विसृतयशो-विश्वजिद्याजिसूनोः ॥

He says: "Sri Rangaraja rose up like the moon in the ocean in the famous lineage of Vaikunthacharya; he was the universal Guru of Advaita Vidya; he performed Visvajit yagna; his fame was widespread in all directions. I am his son."

Sri Rangaraja Dikshita had performed Visvajit yaga, which had been performed by the emperor Raghu as mentioned by Mahakavi Kalidasa in his 'Raghu Vamsam' in the fifth chapter. In this yaga, the yajamana (yaga performer) should give away all his possessions as dakshina. He gets the title of सर्ववेदस्.

Srimad Appayya Dikshitar pays obeisance to his father and recounts his qualities:

यं ब्रह्म निश्चितधियः प्रवदन्ति साक्षात् तद्दर्शनादखिलदर्शन-पारभाजः ।

तं सर्व वेदसमशेषबुधाधिराजं श्रीरङ्गराजमखिनं गुरुमानतोऽस्मि ॥

"A mere sight of his will bestow great mastery in all Sastras on us. Great masters in quest of truth call him 'Parabrahman'. He is famous as 'Sarvavedas' and is emperor of all scholars. He is my father and Guru, Sri Rangarajaadhvari, whom I worship".

About his grandfather Sri Acharya Dikshita:

तस्य किल कृष्णराजवन्दित चरणारविन्दस्य भरद्वाजकुल

चूडामणेः अष्टभिः क्रतुभिः अष्टभिः आयतनैः शम्भोः ।

अष्टभिग्रामैः अष्टभिस्तटाकैः अष्टभिश्च-सर्वविद्याविशारदैस्तनयैः

अष्टापि दिशो यशोभिज्वलिताः ॥

"Sri Acharya Dikshita's lotus feet were worshipped by emperor Krishnaraja; he was the crest jewel of the lineage of Bharadwaja. He performed eight yagas; built eight Siva temples; gifted away eight villages; dug eight tanks. He had eight sons, who were masters of all Sastras. The eight directions shone brilliantly with his fame." So writes Sri Nilakantha Dikshita, grandson of Sri Aachan Dikshita, brother of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar, in his work of drama 'Nala Charitram'.

What grace of Saraswathi, what grace of Lakshmi on this lineage of Vidvans! Is it not a wonder? It is plain truth that even if we think of them, we and our family will attain all good.

Srimad Appayya Dikshitar writes in his book 'Nyaya Rakshamani' at the beginning in praise of his grandfather Sri Acharya Dikshita:

आसेतुबन्धतटमा च तुषारशैलात् आचार्यदीक्षित इति प्रथिताभिधानम् ।
अद्वैतचित्मुख-महाम्बुधि-मग्नभावं अस्मत्-पितामहं-अशेषगुरुं प्रपद्ये ॥

“His fame is such that his name attracts recognition from Sethu to Himalayas. His inner mind is immersed in the ocean of bliss of Advaita. He is the Acharya of the entire world.”

Srimad Appayya Dikshitar was born in 1520 in such an illustrious family of scholars and adherents of Sastras. As his father passed away when he was still in his 9th year, he studied all Sastras from his grandfather Sri Acharya Dikshita. He became an unparalleled scholar and performed daily Agnihotra and also many yagas.

King of Vellore Chinnabomma Nayak heard of the greatness of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar and performed Kanakabhishekam in his honour. Sri Samarapungava Dikshita writes on 22.08.1551 in his book 'Champu' that he had witnessed this event in person. He also describes beautifully how Srimad Appayya Dikshitar taught lessons to his students, how his movements in chariot were heralded by men appointed for this purpose and about all aspects of his greatness.

Sri Nilakantha Dikshita writes about his grandfather's brother:

यं विद्म इति यद्ब्रून्थानभ्यस्यामोऽखिलानिति ।
यस्य शिष्याः स्म इति च श्लाघन्ते स्वं विपश्चितः ॥

“Even today scholars speak proudly that they had seen him; they have studied all his works and that they are his disciples.” Further Sri Nilakantha Dikshita refers to the great scholarship of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar:

अतिगम्भीरमनाविलमक्षोभ्यमदृष्टपारमविलङ्घ्यम् ।
अविरलतरङ्गसङ्कुलमैक्षिषि विज्ञानसागरं महताम् ॥

“His knowledge is a majestic ocean, whose depth cannot be fathomed, which cannot be disturbed by a storm, whose banks are unknown, which cannot be crossed over, whose tides never halt. I have seen that ocean.”

Srikanthacharya, a great savant, has written a commentary for Brahma Sutram of Sri Vyasacharya, focussing on Siva tatva. Sri Appayya Dikshita has written a detailed explanatory text for the same, entitled 'Sivarkamani Dipika'; it is the foundation for books of Saiva Sastra. Pleased with this work, Vellore Chinnabomman performed Kanakabhishekam for him. Utilising the gold from that Kanakabhishekam, Sri Dikshita constructed in Adayapalam a beautiful temple for Sri Kalakantheswara. We come to know of these details from the stone inscriptions of 1582 A.D. in that temple. Further Chinnabomman encouraged 500 scholars to study and propagate Sivarkamani Dipika. We learn from the stone inscription that he requested Sri Appayya Dikshita to teach them and made all arrangements for their study. Sri Nilakantha also praises Sri Appayya Dikshita for authoring the glorious Sivarkamani Dipika:

श्रीकण्ठचरणासक्तः श्रीमानप्पय्यदीक्षितः ।
श्रीमती निर्मिता येन शिवार्कमणिदीपिका ॥

Sri Vachaspati Misra has written an explanatory text called 'Bhamati' for the commentary by Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada on the Brahma sutras of Sri Vyasacharya. Sri Amalananda has written a book titled 'Kalpataru' to explain 'Bhamati' further. Sri Dikshita was explaining these texts to his disciples. A great savant Sri Nrisimha Asrami, who witnessed this said (some say it was Mullandrambal Kavi):

अप्पय्यदीक्षित किमित्यतिस्तुतिं वर्णयामि भवतो वदान्यताम् ।
सोऽपि कल्पतरुरर्थसिद्धये त्वद्भिरामवसरं प्रतीक्षते ॥

“Appayya Dikshita, what can I say of your broad-mindedness. If one wishes for wealth, he will look at the mouth of a wealthy person. Kalpataru, which gifts wealth (Artha) on all, looks at your mouth eagerly for words for gaining Artha (meaning of words).” He asked Sri Dikshita to write a gloss on 'Kalpataru'. Sri Dikshita accordingly wrote a gloss and titled it 'Parimalam', as it was Parimalam (fragrance) that glorified Kalpataru.

Sri Dikshita condemned those who hated Siva, but he had no distinction between Siva and Vishnu. He was a very great Advaita Vidyacharya. As he wrote a treatise on the commentary of Srikantha, he was acclaimed as श्रीकण्ठमतप्रतिष्ठापकः by the galaxy of scholars.

For establishing Advaitam, he condemned those aspects of Visishtadvaita, Dvaita and Saiva philosophies, which derided Advaita and wrote an excellent book चतुर्मतसारः. He established that

all philosophies, specially these four, are but stepping stones to reach Advaita. Further through his book रत्नत्रयपरीक्षा he explained the non-difference between Siva, Ambika and Vishnu.

Sri Dikshita has written a total of 104 books. He became famous as चतुरधिकशतग्रन्थ (प्रबन्ध) कर्ता. In his book न्यायमुक्तावली on Madhva philosophy he writes:

आदावानन्दतीर्थीयां-अनुसृत्य मतस्थितिम् ।
न्यायमुक्तावली रम्या विशदार्था विरच्यते ॥

He says that he writes the book 'Nyaya Muktavali' following the philosophy of Anandatirtha (Madhvacharya). Similarly in his book नयमयूखमालिका on Visishtadvaita he says:

श्रेयसां निधिमिव श्रियःपतिं प्रेप्सतां प्रियहिताध्वदर्शिनी ।
लक्ष्मणार्यहृदयानुसारिणी तन्यते नयमयूखमालिका ॥

Here again he follows the heart of Sri Lakshmanarya (Ramanuja). In his book नयमणिमाला on Saivism he says that he follows the path laid by Srikanthacharya:

सोपानपङ्क्ति कल्पा सोमाभरणपदमारुरुक्षूणाम् ।
क्रियते नयमणिमाला श्रीकण्ठाचार्यदृष्टमार्गेण ॥

In his book अधिकरणमञ्जरी on Advaita, he says:

आचार्यपाद दर्शितमाशयं-अनुसृत्य सूत्रकृतः ।
अधिकरण-मञ्जरीमहमारचयां-यात्मबोधाय ॥

He shows his devotion to the Acharya by saying that for gaining Atmagnana, he is explaining the commentary of Sri Adi Sankaracharya on the Brahma Sutras of Sri Vyasacharya. He says that in the commentary of Sri Acharya, it is the all-pervasive form of bliss that shines and asks us to worship Sri Acharya in the heart – प्रणमत हृदि तान्.

Now let us look at the titles of some of the works of Srimad Appayya Dikshita.

Books on Vedanta

1.Siddhantalesa Sangraha 2.Nyaya Rakshamani 3.Kalpataru Vyakhya Parimalam

Books condemning other Philosophies

1.Madhvatantra Mukha Mardanam 2.Madhvamatha Vidhvamsanam 3.Ramanuja Sringabhaga

Books of Glosses on Commentaries

1.Nyayamuktavali to explain Madhva philosophy based on Brahma Sutra 2.Navamayukhamalika to explain Visishtadvaita 3.Nayamanimala to explain Srikantha philosophy.

Madhvas and Vaishnavas regard these works as their own wealth and print and propagate them and encourage their study. This fact itself shows the unblemished nature of these books.

Sri Dikshita has established that the true intent of Sri Vyasacharya's Brahma sutras is explained in the commentary of Sri Adi Sankaracharya. Sri Madhvacharya, Sri Ramanujacharya and Sri Srikanthacharya have written commentaries to worship Easwara who possesses form and qualities and to be blessed by those Murthies with qualities as a result of that worship. One can attain Vaikuntham as a result of worship of Vishnu, Kailasa in case of Siva worship and Manidvipa through the grace of Devi. Various commentaries show these ways. All great rivers end in the ocean only. All fruits of worship of individual deities are but a small fraction of the infinite bliss; it is not complete. Complete bliss, undivided Brahmananda can be attained only by following the Advaita commentary. Sri Dikshita refers to various commentaries as only stepping stones to attain this. Get the following verse by heart and worship Sri Sankaracharya.

नानाभाष्यादृता सा सगुणफलगतिः वैध्वविद्याविशेषैः । तत्तदेशाप्तिरम्या सरिदिव
सकला यत्र यात्यंशभूयम् । तस्मिन्नानन्दसिन्धौ अतिमहतिफले भावविश्रान्तिमुद्रा
शास्त्रस्य उद्घाटिता यैः प्रणमत हृदि तान् नित्यमाचार्यपादान् ।

Works on Sivadvaita

1.Sikharinimala 2.Sivatatva Vivekam 3.Sivadhyana Paddhati Savyakhya 4.Sivapujavidhi
5.Sivarchana Chandrika Savyakhya 6.Sivakarnamritam 7.Sri Sivarkamani Dipika 8.Sivadvaita
Nirnayam 9.Anandalahari Chandrika 10.Bhasmavadavali 11.Sivamahimakalika Stuti
12.Atmarpana Stuti 13.Ratnatraya Pariksha 14.Maanasollasam 15.Pancharatna Stuti.

Works on Mimamsa

1.Vidhirasayanam 2.Sugopayojini 3.Mimamsa Vada Nakshatramala 4.Upakrama Parakrama
5.Chitrapata 6.Maludavali 7.Vyakarana Sastram 8.Paniniya Tantra Vada Nakshatramala.

Kavya Vyakhyanam

1.Yadavabhyudaya Vyakhyanam

Alankara Sastram

1.Kuvalayananda 2.Chitra Mimamsa 3.Vritti Vartikam 4.Abida Lakshana Vyanjana.

Stotras

1.Sikharini Mala 2.Brahmatarkastava 3.Sivamahimakalika Stuti 4.Varadarajastava
5.Apitakuchamba Stava 6.Maanasollasa 7.Nigrahashtakam 8.Harihara Stuti 9.Durga
Chandrakala Stuti 10.Aditya Stotra Ratnam 11.Sri Margabandhu Stotram 12.Sri Marga Sahaya
Linga Stuti 13.Gangadharashtakam 14.Srimad Ramayana Tatparya Sangraham 15.Bharata
Tatparya Sangraham 16.Anugrahashtakam.

Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Sankaracharya Swamigal, the 68th Acharya of Moolamnaya Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, affectionately called Sri Maha periyava and Walking God, had very high devotion to Srimad Appayya Dikshita.

In Anugraha Bhashanam of Sri Acharya

“When we look at the books of Sri Appayya Dikshita, we are surprised at how much time he would have spent in reading so much, where he would have read, where he could have found the source books and how he could have written so much; it makes us wonder. He mentions the subtle dharmas found in the eighteen Mahapuranas and all Sastras. His analysis is the best of all extant analyses. Though immersed in philosophy, he was a supreme devotee of Siva. He performed all Yagnas and other rituals taught in Vedas. Scholars hail him even today as:

पदवाक्यप्रमाणपारावार, अद्वैतविद्याचार्य, श्रीकण्ठमत प्रतिष्ठापनाचार्य, चतुरधिकशतप्रबन्धकर्ता,
नित्याग्निहोत्री, आसवाजपेययाजी, अपरशङ्कराचार्य, सर्वतन्त्रस्वतन्त्र.

Great Scholar Contemporaries

1.Sri Gurunamakavi 2.Sri Ratnakheta Dikshita 3.Sri Nrisimhasrami, a Yatiswara 4.Sri
Nagamamba sametha Advaitacharya Maharajasaheb Bhagavan Sri Govinda Dikshita 5.Sri
Saarvabhousha Kavi 6.Mosur Suryanarayana Dikshita 7.Sri Balakavi 8.Sri Bhattoji Dikshita, the

author of grammar book, 'Siddhanta Koumudi' 9.Sri Jagannatha Panditha 10.Vijayanagara Rajaguru Sri Thathachariar.

Sri Bhattoji Dikshita, himself a great 'Lion of Grammar', came to Adayapalam in order to study from Srimad Appayya Dikshita, Vedanta and Mimamsa Sastras and enquired about Sri Appayya Dikshitar's house. Sri Dikshita was sitting in a simple attire of dhoti at the entrance. Sri Bhattoji had thought that Sri Appayya Dikshita, with his fame as author spread till Kashi, would appear pompous, surrounded by a large circle of followers. When Sri Bhattoji enquired him of the whereabouts of Sri Appayya Dikshita, he said he had that name. Sri Bhattoji Dikshita replied truculently: 'Many may have that name. But I wish to meet that great man who wrote 'Parimalam'.' Sri Appayya Dikshita replied in a verse:

अक्षराणि परीक्ष्यन्तां-अम्बारडम्बैरलम् ।
शम्भुर्-अम्बरहीनोऽपि सर्वज्ञः किं न कथ्यते ॥

"Do not go by outer appearance; examine through Sastras. Lord Siva, though unclothed, is known as omniscient, is he not?" Sri Bhattoji Dikshita apologised and asked to be accepted as disciple. Later he went to Kashi and taught Sri Appayya Dikshita's works to hundreds of students. There will be none in the entire Bharatadesa, who would not have read Sri Appayya Dikshita's books. In Vidvat Sadas (scholarly debates), scholars in Advaita, Visishtadvaita, Maadhva and Saiva philosophies debate extensively Sri Dikshitar's works.

Secret of Dharma Sastha

Once Sri Appayya Dikshita, Vellore Chinnabomma Maharaja and Sri Thathachariar went to a Siva temple. There they found an idol of Sastha giving darshan with his index finger resting on nose and looking concerned. Maharaja asked the people of that place as to the reason for this and wished to know if there was a secret behind it. They replied: "Our ancestors have told us that a great man would visit this shrine some time and explain the secret and that Sastha would take away his index finger from his nose on hearing it. But none has come so far." The king requested Sri Thathachariar to disclose the secret. He said in a verse:

विष्णोः सुतोऽहं विधिना समोऽहं धन्यस्ततोऽहं सुरसेवितोऽहम् ।
तथापि भूतेशसुतोऽहमेतैः भूतैर्वृतश्चिन्तयतीह शास्ता ॥

"Though I am fortunate to be the son of Vishnu, thus equal to Brahma and worshipped by Devas, I am the son of Siva, the Lord of Bhutas too and as such I am surrounded by Bhutas. Thus Sastha

is worried.” Sastha did not take away his index finger on hearing this verse. Now the king prayed to Sri Appayya Dikshita, who said:

अम्बेतिगौरीमहमाह्वयामि पत्न्यः पितुर्मातर एव सर्वाः ।
कथं नु लक्ष्मीमिति चिन्तयन्तं शास्तारमीडे सकलार्थसिध्यै ॥

“I can call Gowri as mother, as the wives of father are all mothers only. But Sastha is worried as to how to address Lakshmi, who is the wife of Vishnu, who happens to be his mother. I pray to Sastha for attainment of all fruits.” When Sri Dikshita said this verse humbly in the form of prayer, Sastha took off his index finger from his nose. People present there and the king praised Sri Dikshita for his greatness and paid obeisance to him.

Atmaarpanam (Self-surrender)

Once Sri Appayya Dikshita called his sons, grandsons and disciples and informed them that he would consume Doordoora Patram (which would make one dizzy). He wished to check what he would mutter while in the state of spell, which would reflect the truth. He asked them individually to note all that he said. After the specified time is over, they were to administer him the antidote.

शुभं वा यदि वा पापं यन्नृणां हृदि संस्थितम् ।
सुगूढमपि तञ्ज्ञेयं स्वप्नवाक्यात् तथा मदात् ॥

Sastra says that a person’s innermost thought, good or evil, would be clear in the state of dream or dazed spell. Whatever Sri Dikshita actually spoke in that state of spell is ‘Atmaarpana Stuti’, a rare beautiful gem of verses. It is also known as ‘Unmatta Panchasat’.

श्रवणं कीर्तनं शम्भोः स्मरणम् पादसेवनम् ।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥

Nine types of bhakti are mentioned in Sastras.

In Atmaarpana Stuti, Sri Dikshita dedicates himself, his family and his lineage to Parameswara.

अद्यैव त्वत्पदनलिनयोर्-अर्पयाम्यन्तरात्मन्
आत्मानं मे सहपरिकरैर्-अद्रिकन्याधिनाथ ।
नाहं बोद्धुं तव शिवपदं न क्रिया योगचर्याः
कर्तुं शक्नोम्यनितरगतिः केवलं त्वां प्रपद्ये ॥

“O Lord of Parvatarajakumari, O Indwelling Soul, I dedicate myself together with my followers, right today at your lotus feet. I have no capacity to know your abode; nor am I able to perform karmas as laid down in Sastras, nor yogic practices. Having no other resort, I surrender to you.”

Fifty verses like this emerged from him while he was in the state of spell. We should also learn this Stotra and dedicate it to Parameswara every day (this applies to all gods). It is certain that we and our lineage will receive the blessings of Guru Sri Appayya Dikshita and grace of Parameswara.

Merger in Sri Nataraja in Chidambaram

Srimad Appayya Dikshita performed all rituals including Siva Pooja daily without fail till his last breath. When he was running 73 years of age he said:

चिदम्बरमिदं प्रथितमेव पुण्यस्थलं
सुताश्च विनयोज्ज्वलाः सुकृतयश्च काश्चित् कृताः ।
वयांसि मम सप्ततेरुपरि नैव भोगे स्पृहा
न किञ्चिदहमर्थये शिवपदं दिदृक्षे परम् ॥

“This Chidambaram is famous as a sacred place. You, my sons, are filled with humility. Some good books have been written by me. My age has also crossed 70. I have no more desire for enjoyment. I pray for nothing except to have darshan of Siva’s supreme lotus feet.”

When he came to Chidambaram with his relatives, he had simultaneous darshan of Sri Nataraja and Sri Govindaraja. He sang:

मारमणं उमारमणं फणधरकल्पं फणाधरातल्पम् ।
मुरमथनं पुरमथनं वन्दे बाणारिं असमबाणारिम् ॥

“I prostrate to the consort of Lakshmi, Vishnu and the consort of Uma, Siva; to the one whose bed is snake and to the one whose ornaments are snakes; to the killer of Mura the demon and the vanquisher of Tripuras; to the one who fought Bana the demon and the enemy of Manmatha.”

He had darshan of Sri Nataraja’s feet. Immersed in bliss and with tears of joy in his eyes, he said:

आभाति हाटकसभा नटपाद पद्मज्योतिर्मयो मनसि मे तरुणारुणोऽयम् ।

“The radiance of the lotus feet of Nataraja shines in my mind like the rising Sun.” Saying so, he merged in the divine effulgence of Sri Nataraja.

Sri Nilakantha Dikshita and other sons and disciples completed the above verse with:

नूनं जरामरण-घोरपिशाच-कीर्णा, संसारमोह-रजनी-विरतिंप्रयाता ।

“With Sunrise, certainly the night of the delusion of samsara with its terrific goblins of old age, death etc. has come to an end.” We come to know from the history of Sri Dikshita that rituals as laid down in Sastras for Aahitagni were completed on his demise.

Srimad Appayya Dikshita, who incarnated as 'amsa' of Parameswara Sri Nataraja, merged in Sri Nataraja after completing his activities undertaken in his incarnation. However he continues to bless us all through his books of Sastras.

Even today people take pride on introducing themselves as descendants of Sri Appayya Dikshita and spread his eternal fame.

अप्पय्यदीक्षितेन्द्रानशेष-विद्यागुरुनहं नौमि ।
यत्कृति-बोधाबोधौ विद्वदविद्वद्विभाजकोपाधी ॥

Chinna Appayya Dikshita, the adopted son of Visvajit Appayya Dikshita, younger brother of Sri Nilakantha Dikshita praises as above his grandfather's brother Srimad Appayya Dikshita. He says: "One who has studied Sri Appayya Dikshita's books will be considered a scholar; one who has not, will be reckoned to be devoid of scholarship, however much he might have studied other works."

Sri Maha Periyava, the sage of Kanchi, had great devotion to Guru Sri Appayya Dikshita. He established "Srimad Appayya Dikshita Granthavali Prakasana Samithi" in order to publish his works. This Samithi, functioning in Hyderabad now, has published many books in fulfilment of Sri Acharya's wishes. About ten publications of 'Granthavali Series' have come out.

Questions

1. Write a short note on Adayapalam village.
2. What is the original name of Sri Appayya Dikshita?
3. What is the name of Sri Appayya Dikshita's father? Write his Dhyanasloka with meaning.
4. Who was known as 'Sarvavedas'?
5. Write down what Sri Nilakantha Dikshita wrote in praise of Sri Appayya Dikshita.
6. 'Parimalam'- write a short note.
7. Write down the titles of any ten of the books written by Sri Appayya Dikshita.
8. Write down the names of his great scholar contemporaries.
9. Why did 'Dharma Sastha' take away his finger from his nose and bless?
10. Where did Sri Appayya Dikshita merge finally? Write down the verse he said about Sri Nataraja and Sri Govindaraja together.

Lesson 6

Advaita Vidyacharya Sri Vachaspati Misra

In the beginning of the ninth century, a great personality in Mithila town, named Sri Vachaspati Misra researched in Advaita works and the six Darshanas and wrote many texts. His wife's name was Bhamati; not much information is available in regard to his life history.

Books authored by Sri Vachaspati Misra

1. He has written an explanatory text for the Brahma Sutra commentary of Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya; that text is known by the name of 'Bhamati'. His life story forming the backdrop of his naming the book as 'Bhamati' will shock anyone.

Sri Vachaspati Misra was living his family life with his dharmapatni Bhamati following the regulations of Dharma Sastra. He spent all his time after marriage on study of various books and writing explanatory texts. His age was approaching 60. Bhamati served her husband very diligently, considering service of husband as her prime duty. She supported her husband in such a thorough manner that he did not have to bother about family duties and could concentrate on his literary work. He said to Bhamati that those who would study his book 'Bhamati' would all be their children and that the book would shine as long as the Sun and the Moon shine. 'Bhamati' is indeed shining from then onwards. For the last 1200 years, how many lakhs would have studied his book 'Bhamati'; many are studying it even today. There is no doubt that future generations of scholars will also study it. Sri Vachaspati Misra and Bhamati are blessing all of us as our parents. Those who study 'Bhamati' should regard them with parental devotion and secure their blessings.

In the beginning of the 'Bhamati' explanatory text, Sri Misra pays obeisance to Veda Matha and Sri Bhagavatpada. He praises the Brahma sutra commentary of the Acharya as 'Prasanna Gambhiram'.

He completed his task of writing many books on Vedas, Vedanta and the six Darshanas; then he remembered the worldly life and asked his wife. This incident shows that his last text was on the Brahma Sutra commentary.

He was moved by the services rendered by Bhamati and said to her: "Bhamati, what do you require; you have served your husband for so many years, carrying the family burden singly such that my literary work proceeded unhindered. Though I feel sad, I also feel happy at your penance. Your life is a glowing example of service to husband." Bhamati felt embarrassed, prostrated and expressed her sadness at not having a son.

Sri Vachaspati Misra understood her feelings and said: “Bhamati, do not worry. Do not feel sad that we have not been blessed with a son. I have completed my explanatory text for the Sankara commentary on Brahma Sutra. I shall set your name Bhamati as the title for this book.”

In his book Bhamati Sri Misra writes:

षड्भिरङ्गैरूपेताय विविधैरव्ययैरपि ।
शाश्वताय नमस्कुर्मः वेदाय च भवाय च ॥

“We worship the eternal Veda, with six parts and bestowing various lasting fruits on us, and Parameswara, known as Bhava.”

नत्वा विशुद्धविज्ञानं शंकरं करुणाकरम् ।
भाष्यं प्रसन्नगंभीरं तत्प्रणीतं विभज्यते ॥

“Worshipping Sankara, the pure Knowledge incarnate and compassionate, and his commentary (on Brahma Sutras), pleasing and majestic, now explanation is offered on its various topics.”

आचार्यकृति निवेशनमप्यवधूतं वचोऽस्मदादीनाम् ।
रथ्योदकमिव गङ्गाप्रवाहपातः पवित्रयति ॥

“Just as water running in the street becomes pure on merging with Ganga waters, our words also attain purity in conjunction with the Ganga of the commentary of Sri Bhagavatpadacharya.”

2. Explanatory text titled ‘Nyayakanika’ for the book ‘Vidhivivekam’ of Sri Mandana Misra.
3. Explanatory text titled ‘Brahmatatva Samiksha’ for the book ‘Brahmasiddhi’ of Sri Mandana Misra.
4. ‘Tatva Bindu’ for the Purva Mimamsa doctrine ‘Bhaata Matham’.
5. ‘Nyaya Vartika Tatparya Tika’ for the book ‘Nyaya Vartikam’ of Sri Udyodakara.
6. ‘Suchinibandham’ in support of the above text.
7. ‘Sankhya Tatva Koumudi’ for ‘Sankhya Karika’ of Sri Easwara Krishna.
8. ‘Tatvavaisaradi’ for the Yoga commentary of Sri Vyasacharya (on Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras).

All the above books are in use now.

Glosses for ‘Bhamati’ – Bhamati Prasthanam

1. Amalananda, who lived in 13th century, wrote an explanatory text named ‘Kalpataru’ for ‘Bhamati’.
2. Sri Appayya Dikshita, who lived in 16th century, wrote a gloss titled ‘Parimalam’ for the above text.
3. Sri Lakshmi Nrisimha, who lived in 17th century, wrote an explanatory text titled ‘Aabhogam’.

4. Sri Akhandananda wrote 'Bhamati Vyakhya' or 'Rujuprakasika'.
5. Bhamati Tilaka.
6. Bhamati Vilasa.

After Sri Vachaspati Misra wrote 'Bhamati', Sri Sutra Bhashyam of Sri Adi Sankara became known as 'Bhamati Prasthanam'. These are based on 'Avachcheda Vada'.

After Sri Padmapadacharya wrote the explanatory text 'Panchapadika', Sri Prakasatman wrote a gloss called 'Panchapadika Vivaranam'. Sri Akhandananda wrote a further gloss titled 'Tatva Deepanam'. These books are known as 'Vivarana Prasthanam'. These are based on the 'Bimba Pratibimba Vada'.

उपायाः शिक्षमाणानां बालानामुपलालनाः ।
असत्ये वर्त्मनि स्थित्वा ततः सत्यं समीहते ॥

Just as many ways are employed to make children understand lessons, the great scholars have utilised several ways to teach us Brahma tatva. The aim is of course to teach the unity of Brahman and jiva, and Brahma tatva. The great Acharyas of earlier times have resorted to different teachings suited to the capacity of different jivas.

Questions

1. What is the name of Bhamati's husband?
2. What is the title of the explanatory text he wrote for Sutra Bhashyam?
3. What is the reason for him to give that title?
4. List the books authored by Sri Vachaspati Misra.
5. Write down the names of the glosses for Bhamati.
6. Write down the names of the explanatory texts of Bhamati Prasthanam and their authors.
7. Write down the names of the explanatory texts of Vivarana Prasthanam and their authors.

Lesson 7

Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya Pujyasri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal

वंशीविभूषितकरान्नवनीरदाभात् पीताम्बरादरुणबिम्बफलाधरोष्ठात् ।
पूर्णेन्दुसुन्दरमुखादरविन्दनेत्रात् कृष्णात्परम् किमपि तत्वमहं न जाने ॥

The above is a prayer to Krishna Paramatma, written by Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal, the Brahma Gnani immersed in Sri Krishna bhakti, towards the close of his commentary गूढार्थदीपिका 'Gudarthadipika' for Srimad Bhagavad Gita. He says: "I know not of any principle other than Krishna, who has hands decorated by the flute, is of the colour of rain-bearing clouds, wears yellow garment and has lips like the bimba fruit, beautiful face like full moon and eyes like lotus."

आत्मारामाश्च मुनयो निर्ग्रन्था अप्युरुक्रमे ।
कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्थंभूतगुणो हरिः ॥
जीवन्मुक्तिदशायां तु न भक्तेः फलकल्पना ।
अद्वेषृत्वादिवत्तेषां स्वभावो भजनं हरेः ॥

He quotes the above verses at the beginning of Gudarthadipika.

There are many Acharyas worshipped in the Advaita Vidyacharya Guru Parampara (tradition). One of them is Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya Pujyasri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal. A venerated Guru in the tradition, he had deep devotion to Bhagavan Krishna.

सगुणे संयक् अभ्यस्तं निर्गुणे पर्यवस्यति ।

As per this saying, aspirants should engage in Saguna Brahma devotion in accordance with their tendencies acquired from previous lives, while performing their ordained karmas with total dedication to Easwara in the spirit of Karmayoga. In that case, that Saguna Murthy Himself will bless them with the highest Brahma Gnana through the Guru in the tradition. This is the auspicious path handed down to us traditionally. This is the royal path of our Sanatana Dharma as taught by the Vedas and Sastras.

In the 16th century in a place called Chandradvipa in East Bengal, Sri Swamigal was born as the son of Sri Pramoda Purandara Misra in the lineage of Sri Ramachandra Bhattacharya, the great Vedic scholar. His parents fondly named him 'Kamalanayana'. He studied Veda and Vedanta under his father in a young age. He thought of approaching the famous Gouranga Deva

(Chaitanya Mahaprabhu) in Navadvipa and dedicating himself to Krishna bhakti. Those were the times when people in Bengal, specially in Navadvipa area, were immersed in Krishna bhakti. As Sri Gouranga Deva had gone to Puri Jagannatha kshetra, Kamalanayana came in touch with his disciples and was attracted to Krishna. His devotion to Krishna and advancement in the path of bhakti increased. He started to enjoy Srimad Bhagavatham very much.

In those days there were many Sanyasis and scholars in Veda and Vedanta in Kashi kshetra. Many were masters in the six Darshanas, viz. Vaisesika, Nyaya, Sankhya, Yoga, Purva Mimamsa and Vedanta. These are sastras required for one's spiritual progress; they have been handed down by Maharishis Kanaada, Goutama, Kapila, Patanjali, Jaimini and Badarayana (Veda Vyasa). Kamalanayana heard about the greatness of Kashi kshetra and the exalted status of the scholars there and went there. Sri Ramatirtha, Sri Narayana Bhatta, Sri Madhava Saraswati Swamigal and Sri Visveswara Saraswati Swamigal were some of the great scholars in Kashi at that time. Kamalanayana had darshan of Sri Ramatirtha, became his disciple and learnt Sri Sankara Bhashyas (commentaries) on Prasthanatrayi (Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Bhagavad Gita are known by this name and are the three basic foundation texts for Vedanta). He became very happy. Guru Sri Ramatirtha praised the sharp intellect of his disciple Kamalanayana and blessed him greatly.

He taught: "One cannot engage in devotion unless he knows completely about himself. Before surrendering oneself, he must feel the Self. Then he must immerse himself in bhakti. One must listen to Atma tatva from the Guru intellectually as per tradition and perform karmas ordained in Sastras in the spirit of Karmayoga with full dedication to Easwara. If he then immerses himself in devotion to Saguna Brahmam, then that Saguna Brahmam Himself will bestow on him real Brahma Gnana, devoid of all doubts, pull him ashore from the ocean of samsara and bless him with Moksha, the state of freedom from rebirth."

Bhagavan Sri Krishna also teaches the same in Bhagavad Gita:

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥
मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणाः बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥
तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।

ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥ (गी. १०-८,९,१०)

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ (गी.९-२८)

Bhagavan Sri Krishna teaches us with Arjuna as our representative: “Whatever you do, eat, offer as oblation, perform in the form of tapas, you dedicate all of it to Me. If you lead your life in this manner with dedication to Bhagavan, being the indweller, I will guide you and bless you with Buddhiyoga.”

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।

ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् । (9.11)

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।

भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥ (9.13)

Sri Krishna further says: “Those who lack devotion look at me as a man. The knowers of Truth realise me through Tatva Gnana.”

Our Acharyas have held that it is Parabrahmam who incarnated as Sri Krishna Paramatma and Sri Ramachandra Murthy for rescuing us from this ocean of samsara. In the same manner the purpose of Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal being immersed in Krishna bhakti was to encourage ignorant people like us in Bhagavad bhakti and get us the blessings of Bhagavan.

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ (3.21)

The lifestyle adopted by great men is followed by ordinary people, is it not?

Sri Sukacharya tells Parikshit Maharaja:

इदं भागवतं नाम पुराणं ब्रह्मसम्मितम् ।

अधीतवान् द्वापरादौ पितुर्द्वैपायनादहम् ॥

परिनिष्ठितोऽपि नैर्गुण्य उत्तमश्लोकलीलया ।

गृहीतचेता राजर्षे आख्यानं यदधीतवान् ॥ (Srimad Bhagavatham 2.1.8,9)

“Though immersed in the contemplation of Parabrahmam, my mind was attracted by the lilas of Krishna of supreme fame and learnt Srimad Bhagavatham from my father Sri Krishna Dvaipayana properly.”

जनस्य कृष्णाद्विमुखस्य दैवा-दधर्मशीलस्य सुदुःखितस्य ।

अनुग्रहायेह चरन्ति नूनं भूतानि भव्यानि जनार्दनस्य ॥ (Srimad Bhagavatham 3.5.3)

“Great men move about teaching devotion to the Lord only out of grace towards people immersed in sorrow without any devotion to Bhagavan and engaged in Adharma.”

Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada also echoes this in Viveka Chudamani:

शान्ता महान्तो निवसन्ति सन्तो वसन्तवल्लोकहितं चरन्तः ।

तीर्णाः स्वयं भीमभवार्षावं जनान् अहेतुनाऽन्यानपि तारयन्तः ॥(37)

“Great ascetics, full of peace, move about purely for the good of the world, like the spring season; having crossed the terrible ocean of samsara themselves, they help others cross for no reason (just out of compassion).”

Sri Ramatirtha, very pleased with Kamalanayana’s devotion, humility and complete knowledge of Sastras, said to him: “Kamalanayana, books have started appearing in condemnation of our Advaita Sastra. You write books to repudiate them with logic and on Sastra basis and bring out the greatness of Advaita Vedanta Sastra.” He also permitted him to take up the extremely pure fourth Asrama (Sanyasasrama).

Kamalanayana wrote the commentary ‘Gudhartha Dipika’ for Srimad Bhagavad Gita. Parahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya Pujyasri Visveswara Saraswati Swamigal read it and praised his deep Advaita Gnana. In fulfilment of Kamalanayana’s request, he blessed him with Sanyasasrama and bestowed on him the Diksha name of Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal.

Along with his guru, Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal had darshan of sacred places including Sri Krishna’s birthplace of Madura, his lilasthalas, banks of Yamuna, Brindavana, Govardhanagiri, Gokulam etc. He had darshan of Sri Krishna Bhagavan in the river Yamuna and was immersed in भावसमाधि. He started writing books to show that devotion to Krishna will also pave the way for Moksha.

Books authored by Sri Swamigal

1. Wonderful commentary titled ‘Siddhanta Bindu’ ‘सिद्धान्तबिंदु’ for ‘Dasasloki’, the Prakarana Grantha by Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada.

2. Commentary titled 'Gudārtha Dipika' 'गूढार्थदीपिका' for Srimad Bhagavad Gita.
3. Advaita Tatva Rakshanam.
4. Vedanta Kalpalata.
5. Sankshepa Saairaka Vyakhya Sara Sangraham.
6. Srimad Bhagavatha Tika.
7. Advaita Siddhi.
8. Commentary leaning on Sri Krishna for 'Siva Mahimna Stotram' of Pushpadanta.
9. Srimad Bhagavad Bhakti Rasayanam.
10. Tika (commentary) for 'Harilila' by Vopadeva.
11. Ananda Mandakini.
12. Atmabodha Vyakhya.
13. Saandilya Bhakti Sutra Vyakhya.
14. Sastra Siddhanta Lesa Tika.
15. Ashta Vikruti Vivaranam.
16. Krishna Kutuhala Natakam.
17. Easwara Pratipattiprakasa:

Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal's fame spread all over the country. Great men like Balabhadra Bhatta, Sri Purushottama Saraswathi Swamigal and Sri Jiva Goswami became his disciples. Emperor Akbar and Todarmal had great love and devotion to him. Tulasidasa, who wrote Srimad Ramayanam in Hindi, became his very dear friend.

When Sri Swamigal was in Kashi, more than a hundred disciples studied under him. One of them, Sri Seshagovindan has written a commentary for 'Sarva Vedanta Siddhanta Rahasyam' by Sri Bhagavatpada. He says there:

गुरुणा मधुसूदनेन यत् करुणाऽऽपूरितचेतसोपदिष्टम् ।

तदिदं प्रकटीकृतं मयाऽस्मिन् भगवच्छंकरपूज्यपादमूले ॥

He concludes his commentary saying that whatever was taught by Guru Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal out of compassion is now being dedicated at the feet of Sri Bhagavatpada Sankara Pujya Charana. He further brings out his devotion to Guru thus:

सरस्वत्यावतारं तं वन्दे श्रीमधुसूदनम् ॥

He praises his Guru as the very incarnation of Saraswathi. From time immemorial our Guru tradition has been in continuous existence with no break.

Advaita Siddhi – a short note

There is a verse on 'Advaita Siddhi' written by Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal:

सिद्धीनां इष्टनैष्कर्म्यं ब्रह्मगानां इयं चिरात् ।
अद्वैतसिद्धिरधुना चतुर्थी समजायत ॥

“A long time after the three Siddhi books on Ishta Siddhi, Naishkarmya Siddhi and Brahma Siddhi came out, now this fourth book on 'Advaita siddhi' has come out.”

It is noteworthy that in the book 'Nyaya Ratnavali' it is stated that Vedanta Darsanam celebrated by Acharyas like Sri Vyasa, Sri Sankara and Sri Sureswara is the highest Darsanam (Sri Gowda Brahmananda Swamigal)

अनात्मभूतं सर्वे मिथ्येत्याद्यर्थ-विवेचन-रोचमानं
श्रीमद्वादरायण शंकर सुरेश्वराद्याचार्यवर्यकृतमर्यादं
वेदान्तदर्शनं दर्शनेषु सर्वेषु दर्शनीयतमं दर्शनम्

This lofty Vedanta Darsanam is described by great men in three ways:

1. Path of enquiring into and determining the import of Vedanta statements. Brahma Sutras, commentary and explanatory texts on them follow this path. This is called 'Adhikaranaprasthanam'. अधिकरणप्रस्थानम्.
2. Establishing the principles of Vedanta Sastra by logical approach and refuting the opponents' arguments. This is called 'Vadaprasthanam'. वादप्रस्थानम्. Books in this category include खण्डनखण्डनखाद्यम्, तावप्रदीपिका, अद्वैतसिद्धिः, चन्द्रिका.
3. Analysing 'Pramana' and 'Prameya' (authority and the principal subject being proved) in the principles of Vedanta and explaining the conclusions. This is called 'Prakaranaprasthanam' प्रकरणप्रस्थानम्.

Sri Vyasaraaja Tirtha, in his book 'Nyayamritam', had refuted and condemned the principles of Advaita Vedanta. Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal thought that refuting the arguments

advanced in that book would amount to refuting all the arguments of all such opponents. He therefore wrote the book 'Advaita Siddhi' containing his refutations to all the arguments in the four chapters of 'Nyayamritam'.

Paramapujya Sri Gowda Brahmananda Swamigal has written two glosses 'Laghu Chandrika' and 'Guru Chandrika' for 'Advaita Siddhi'. The glosses are also known as 'Gowda Brahmaandiyam'. It is common to refer to Advaita Parampara as गौडादि गौडान्तं वेदान्तदर्शनम् . Thus Vedanta Darsanam is reckoned from the Karika on Mandukya Upanishad by Sri Gowdapadacharya till Laghu/ Guru Chandrika of Sri Gowda Brahmananda Swamigal.

Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal had unlimited love and devotion to his Gurus of Brahma Vidya. In Gudarthā Dipika, he says:

श्रीरामविश्वेश्वरमाधवानां प्रणम्य पादाम्बुज पुण्यपांसुम् ।
तेषां प्रभावात् अहमस्मि योग्यः शिलापि चैतन्यमलब्ध येश्यः ॥

He concludes Gudarthā Dipika with:

श्रीरामविश्वेश्वरमाधवानां प्रसादमासाद्य मया गुरुणाम् ।
व्याख्यानमेतद्विहितं सुबोधं समर्पितं तच्चरणाम्बुजेषु ॥

Sri Swamigal, who belonged to Gowda Saraswatha Brahmana group, lived for 107 years, it appears. It is no exaggeration to say that Sri Swamigal, a jewel in the traditional lineage of Gurus of Brahma Vidya, blesses us to this day through his works.

Very much like Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal was Nerur Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra Saraswathi Swamigal, disciple of Tiruvengadu Sri Paramasivendra Saraswathi Swamigal, the 57th Kanchi Kamakoti Peethadhipathi. Though immersed in Atmanishtha always, he composed in dedicated devotional fervour certain bhakti songs like Sivamanasa Pooja and songs on Sri Rama and Krishna.

Sri Bodhendra Saraswathi Swamigal, the 59th Peethadhipathi was ever immersed in Sri Rama bhakti and composed many books on the philosophy of Bhagavannama: 1.Namamrita Rasodayam, 2.Namamrita Rasayanam, 3.Namamrita Rasarnavam, 4.Namamrita Suryodayam, 5.Namamrita Tarangam, 6.Murtha Brahma Vivekam, 7.Harihara Bheda Dhikkaram and 8.Hariharaadvaita Bhushanam.

Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamigal, the 62nd Peethadhipathi of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, whose Brindavanam is located in Kumbakonam, composed the beautiful work, 'Sivaashtapadi' (Sivagitimala). Sri Narayana Tirtha Swamigal wrote Sri Krishna Lila Tarangini; Sri Polagam Sri Vijaya Gopala Yatigal authored traditional bhajan songs. Even today many are composing devotional songs and dedicating them to the Lord.

Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peethadhipatis, who are Jivanmuktas, are performing even today Sri Tripurasundari Sametha Sri Chandramouliswara Pooja with great devotion for the good of the world and for blessing us. To top all this, Sri Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya, the founder of Advaita Vidya, established six devotional schools: Ganapatyam (worship of Sri Ganapathi), Koumaram (Sri Subrahmanya), Saivam (Sri Parameswara), Saaktam (Sri Ambal), Vaishnavam (Sri Vishnu) and Souram (Sri Surya). He composed hundreds of stotras in praise of these divinities. Following the tradition of Sri Acharya, many great men have lighted the path of devotion. Hence for attaining complete Advaita Gnana, it is important to engage in Saguna Brahman worship, bhakti and performance of Swadharma with no desire for fruit.

स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः । (Bhagavadgita)

स्ववर्णाश्रमधर्मेण तपसा हरितोषणात् ।

साधनं प्रभवेत् पुंसां वैराग्यादिचतुष्टयम् ॥ (Aparokshanubhuti 3)

“By performing one’s Varnasrama dharmas with no desire for fruit and austerities and worshipping Bhagavan and pleasing Him, men will attain dispassion and other such essentials for spiritual pursuit.”

Questions

1. Whose name was Kamalanayana?
2. Write the names of the Gurus of Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal.
3. Which are the books written by Sri Swamigal?
4. Write a note on 'Advaita Siddhi'.
5. Write the names of great men who propagated bhakti like Sri Swamigal did.
6. Write the names of three Prasthanas in Vedanta darsanam.
7. Who wrote the commentary for 'Advaita Siddhi'? What is the name of that work?
8. Which is known as high darsanam? In which book is it stated?

Lesson 8

Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya Gowda Sri Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal

ब्रह्मानन्दसरस्वत्याः पारं वेत्ति सरस्वती ।
पारं वेत्ति सरस्वत्याः ब्रह्मानन्दसरस्वती ॥
भगवत्पूज्यपादोक्त-परिष्कार-विचक्षणान् ।
नमामि वाङ्मनःकायैः ब्रह्मानन्दयतीश्वरान् ॥

Around 1790 there lived a great saint, Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya Paramapujyasri Narayana Tirtha Swamigal. In his works Sri Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal notes that he was a disciple of Sri Narayana Tirtha Swamigal and that he studied all Sastras under him. The Turiyasrama (Sanyasa) Diksha Guru of Sri Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal was Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya Paramapujya Sri Paramanada Saraswathi Swamigal.

Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal wrote a wonderful experiential commentary called 'Siddhanta Bindu' 'सिद्धान्तबिंदु' for 'Dasa Sloki' of Sri Bhagavatpadacharya. A gloss called 'Nyaya Ratnavali' for that commentary was written by Sri Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal. Therein he cites the lineage of his Gurus. He cites similarly in his book 'Laghu Chandrika' 'लघुचन्द्रिका' also.

श्रीनारायणतीर्थानां गुरुणां चरणाम्बुजम् ।
नमामि वाङ्मनःकायैरनन्यशरणैस्सदा ॥
भजे श्रीपरमानन्दसरस्वत्याः पदाम्बुजम् ।
यदेवालंब्य संसार-सागरो गोष्पतीकृतः ॥
श्रीनारायणतीर्थानां षट्छास्त्री पारमीयुषाम् ।
चरणौ शरणीकृत्य तीर्णः सारस्वतार्णवः ॥

By learning of the devotion and humility of Sri Swamigal to his Vidya Guru and Diksha Guru and by practising the same in our life, we can reap excellent benefits. This can be averred using तप्तपरशुग्रहण (grasping red hot iron axe) practice. Sri Swamigal was of the Gowda Saraswatha brahmana community. He has rendered yeoman service in the cause of Advaita Vedanta Darsanam through his books.

Books by Sri Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal

न्यायरत्नावली – Nyaya Ratnavali

Sri Adisankara Bhagavatpadacharya blessed us with 'Dasa Sloki', a poem of ten verses bringing out the secret of Advaita. He teaches us about our reality through these ten verses starting with:

न भूमिर्न तोयं न तेजो न वायुर्नाहं इन्द्रियं वा न तेषां समूहः ।
अनैकान्तिकत्वात् सुषुप्त्येकसिद्धः तदेकोऽवशिष्टः शिवः केवलोऽहम् ॥

Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal wrote a wonderful commentary titled 'Siddhanta Bindu' for it. Sri Brahmananda Swamigal, who enjoyed reading that commentary, wrote a gloss titled 'न्यायरत्नावली' 'Nyaya Ratnavali'. He commences Nyaya Ratnavali with dedicatory verses:

अद्वैतसिद्धेष्टीकायास्तदीयाश्च संग्रहात् ।
विचित्ररचना काचिद् ब्रह्मानन्देन रच्यते ॥
शङ्करोक्तिसुधाम्भोधेर्-गुरूणां-उपदेशतः ।
उद्धृतां प्रकटीकुर्वे न्यायरत्नावलीमिह ॥

He points out in Nyaya Ratnavali the superiority of Vedanta Darsanam.

अनात्मभूतं सर्वं मिथ्येत्याद्यर्थ-विवेचनी-रोचमानं
श्रीमद्वादरायण-शङ्कर-सुरेश्वराचार्यवर्य-कृतमर्यादं
वेदान्तदर्शनं दर्शनेषु सर्वेषु दर्शनीयतमं दर्शनम्.

Referring to the statement in Vayu Purana that Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada was going to incarnate on earth along with four disciples

चतुर्भिः सहशिष्यैस्तु शङ्करोऽवतरिष्यति ।, he explains:
इति वायुपुराणोक्तेः शङ्कराचार्यस्येश्वरावतारता ।
चतुर्भिः पद्मपाद-तोटक-हस्तामलक-सुरेश्वराचार्यैः ॥

While explaining the term 'Vedanta Sastra' occurring in the benedictory verse in 'Siddhanta Bindu', Sri Swamigal says:

वेदान्तशास्त्रेति । शारीरक-मीमांसारूप-चतुरध्यायी
तद्भाष्य-तदीयटीका-वाचस्पत्य-तदीयटीका-कल्पतरु
तदीयटीका परिमलरूप-ग्रन्थ-पञ्चकेत्यर्थः ॥

"Vedanta Sastram refers to the five works: Brahma Sutras (of Veda Vyasa), called Saariraka Mimamsa, of four chapters; Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada's commentary thereon; Sri Vachaspati Misra's 'Bhamathi', the explanatory text; Sri Amalananda Swamigal's 'Kalpatru', with further explanations; Sri Appayya Dikshitar's 'Parimalam', the gloss." These texts are also known as

'Bhamathi Prasthanam'. It may be noted that the authors of these five works are alternately Grihastha and Sanyasi. Sri Brahmananda Swamigal's devotion to the traditional Acharyas is easily discernible here.

वेदान्तमुक्तावली – Vedanta Muktaavali

भाष्यार्थी निरणायि यः श्रुतिपथ-न्यायाम्बुधेः पारगैः

विज्ञैर्-निर्णयदर्पण-प्रभृतिषु ब्रह्मापरोक्षान्वितैः ।

तं बुध्वा तनुते गुरुप्रभृतिभिः तन्मात्रचेतोगतिः

ब्रह्मानन्दसरस्वती श्रुतिशिरःसूत्रेषु मुक्तावलीम् ॥

Sri Swamigal has covered all the Sutras in this commentary, including tough questions of deep import. He has brought out ideas in support of Advaitic principles, not found in Sri Sankara's commentary and other books like 'Saariraka Nyaya Sangraham' etc.

Mimamsa Chandrika

In this book Sri Swamigal explains the Sutras of Purva Mimamsa, thus showing his high mastery in Purva Mimamsa principles. This is a book applauded by all followers of Purva Mimamsa Darsanam.

Advaita Siddhanta Vidyotani

The first Pariccheda (chapter) is only available. Following the concept of 'Tamovada Sakti' from 'Gadadriyam', a work on Nyaya Sastra, this book explains with examples the principles of 'Anirvachaniyakhyati', 'Bhavabheda Gnanam', 'Avidya Nivritti' etc. of Advaita Vedanta.

Commentaries: 'Guru Chandrika' and 'Laghu Chandrika'

Sri Madhusudana Saraswathi Swamigal blessed us with a wonderful book titled 'Advaita Siddhi'. Sri Rama Tirtha of the Maadhva sampradaya (tradition) wrote an explanatory text titled 'Tarangini' to 'Nyayamritam' of Sri Vyasaraaja Tirtha; in that text he condemned the refutations contained in 'Advaita siddhi'. Sri Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal wrote glosses titled 'Guru Chandrika' and 'Laghu Chandrika' for all the four chapters (paricchedas) of 'Advaita Siddhi'; in them he roundly rebutted all arguments raised in 'Tarangini' in didactic manner and strengthened the understanding of the principles of Advaita.

All his works are collectively called 'Brahmanandiyam' and scholars reckon them to be tough.

गौडादि गौडान्तं वेदान्तदर्शनम् – scholars hail Vedanta Darsanam in this manner.

As already mentioned, Sri Gowdapadacharya wrote the Karika for Mandukya Upanishad. Sri Gowda Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal wrote books of logical argument, hailed as 'Gowda Brahmanandiyam' and put Advaita Siddhanta on firm, unshakable foundation in a manner evoking wonder in everyone and dismay in opponents. This credit goes to Sri Swamigal.

Sri Vitthalesa, Guru of Sri Krishnam Bhatta, who wrote explanatory texts like 'Jaagatisri', 'Gatatasri' etc. prays to Sri Panduranga for gaining the ability to understand Sri Brahmananda Sarawathi's books.

श्रीपाण्डुरङ्गो हृदये संवित्-रूपः प्रकाशताम् ।
येन मे संप्रसीद ब्रह्मानन्दसरस्वती ॥

Sri Vitthalesa and Sri Krishnam Bhatta, who are great logicians, have praised Sri Brahmananda Sarawathi.

Questions

1. Write down the meditative verses of Sri Brahmananda Saraswathi Swamigal.
2. Write the names of Gurus of Sri Swamigal with relevant slokas.
3. Write down the titles of the books written by Sri Swamigal.
4. Where is it stated "Vedanta Darsanam is high Darsanam". Give the citation of Sri Swamigal.
5. Brahmanandiyam- write a note.
6. Who wrote 'Siddhanta Bindu'?

Lesson 9
MAHAKAVI KALIDASA

पुरा कवीनां गणनाप्रसङ्गे कनिष्ठिकाधिष्ठित-कालिदासाः ।
अद्यापि तत्तुल्य-कवेरभावात् अनामिका सार्थवती बभूव ॥
पुष्पेषु जातिः पुरुषेषु विष्णुः नारीषु रम्भा नगरीषु काञ्ची ।
नदीषु गङ्गा नृपतेषु रामः काव्येषु माघः कवि कालिदासः ॥
कालिदासगिरां सारं कालिदासः सरस्वती ।
चतुर्मुखोऽथवा साक्षाद्-विदुर्नान्ये तु मादृशाः ॥

These are the words of Sri Mallinatha, who wrote commentaries in Samskrit on Sri Kalidasa's works.

Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyavarya Sri Purnendra Saraswathi Swamigal, who wrote a commentary on Kalidasa's 'Meghadootam' says:

पुण्यतीर्थ-देवायतनादि संकीर्तनेन दुरितक्षयः ।

“By singing about and discussing holy waters, kshetras etc., our sins are removed.”

We can observe this in Kavyas.

Our Bharatiya culture has started to wane under the influence of western cultural dominance. We know well dramatists and poets like Milton, Shelley and Shakespeare. But we while away our time without knowing anything about the scholars, poets and epics of poem of our country. What is surprising is that famous dramatists and poets of the west study our culture, poets and their works and translate those works in English. It is no exaggeration to say that it is our Bharatiya culture and Samskrit literature and epics and regional language epics that are the very foundation of everything. By reading only the English translations of our poets' epics and dramas, we lose the opportunity of knowing the beauty, depth, shades of meaning and other subtleties in the original works. The uniqueness of Samskrit lies in its divine nature.

Kavyam (Epic) – a short note

Srimad Ramayanam authored by Srimad Valmiki Maharishi is known as 'Adikavyam' (the first epic). 'श्रीमद् रामायणे आदिकाव्ये'- 'Srimad Ramayane Adikavye'- these words can be seen at the close of each Sarga (chapter) in Srimad Ramayanam. Kavyam is the work of a Kavi. Sri Valmiki Maharishi is known as 'Adikavi'. A Kavyam, which can be enjoyed by listening and reading, is

called 'Sraavya kavyam'. Srimad Ramayanam, Raghu Vamsam, Kumara Sambhavam etc. are examples of this.

A Kavyam, which is enjoyed by acting as drama, is called 'Drisya Kavyam'. Saakuntalam, Uttara Rama Charitam etc. are examples of this.

Poet Dandi has divided Kavyam into three categories: गद्यम्, prose; पद्यम्, poetry; चम्पू, mix of prose and poetry, गद्यपद्यमयीचम्पू. Kavyam is also classified as Maha (large) Kavyam and Laghu (small) Kavyam. Poet Dandi puts down the characteristics of Maha Kavya in his book 'Kavyadarsam':

सर्गबन्धो महाकाव्यमुच्यते तस्य लक्षणम् ।
आशीर्नमस्क्रियावस्तुनिर्देशो वापि तन्मुखम् ॥
इतिहासकथोद्भूतमितरद्वा सदाश्रयम् ।
चतुर्वर्गफलोपेतं चतुरोदात्तनायकम् ॥
नगरार्णवशैलर्तु-चन्द्रार्कोदय-वर्णनैः ।
उद्यान-सलिल-क्रीडा-मधुपान-रतोत्सवैः ॥
विप्रलम्भैर्विवाहैश्च कुमारोदयवर्णनैः ।
मन्त्रद्यूत-प्रयाणाजि-नायकाभ्युदयैरपि ॥
अलंकृतमसंक्षिप्तं रसभावनिरंतरम् ।
सर्गैरनतिविस्तीर्णैः श्रव्यवृत्तैः सुसन्धिभिः ॥
सर्वत्र भिन्नवृत्तान्तैर्-उपेतं लोकरञ्जकम् ।
काव्यं कल्पान्तरस्थायि जायेत सदलङ्कृति ॥
न्यूनमप्यत्र यैः कैश्चिदङ्गैः काव्यं न दुष्यति ।

Essential features of Maha Kavya are given in detail in Alankara sastras. Chapters of such a Kavya are called 'सर्गाः' Sargas. The hero of the Kavya will be a Deva or a kshatriya of good, high and valorous lineage. Like in Raghu Vamsam, many persons of the same lineage can be heroes also. The primary Rasa (sentiment) shall be one of the three: Sringara (eroticism), Vira (valour), Santha (peace). The other Rasas should be supportive. The story may be from an Itihasa or may relate to a person of high character. The kavya should condemn the lowly nature of the vile and praise the lofty characteristics of the virtuous. It should contain descriptions of town, sea, mountain, seasons, sunrise and moonrise, water sport, pastime in garden, drinking, separation and union of the lover and his beloved, marriage, birth of son etc. It should be suffused with Rasa, Bhava (emotion) and many types of figures of speech and be set to pleasing vrittis (metres) and

enchant the mind. The Mahakavya should have not less than eight sargas and not more than 32 sargas. The sargas should not be very lengthy and should end with verses of a different metre. It should clearly bring out the means of attaining the four Purusharthas: Dharma (righteous duty), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire), Moksha (Liberation). The benefits of a Kavya, in general, are listed as: wealth, fame, worldly knowledge, attaining the good leaving the bad aside, infusing the knowledge of dharma indirectly like a beloved telling her lover etc.

A Mahakavya having Rasadhvani among the three Dhvanis (style of implied meaning), viz. Rasadhvani, Alankaradhvani and Vastudhvani, is considered to be ideal. While enjoying this, the mind of the reader, whose taste agrees with that of the poet, attains boundless joy, on the lines of Brahmananda.

After analysing the epics of Sri Valmiki Maharishi, Kalidasa et al, the analysts have compiled the characteristics of Mahakavya.

Great men have stated that the two fruits, which are like nectar (amrita), on the poisonous tree of samsara are tasting the nectar of Kavya and company of and dialogue with virtuous persons.

संसारविषवृक्षस्य द्वे फले अमृतोपमे ।
काव्यामृतरसास्वादः संलापः सज्जनैस्सह ॥

It can be said that the kavyas of Kalidasa enshrine the basic 'Lakshanas' (characteristics) of Mahakavya.

Life Story of Mahakavi Kalidasa

Many are the views on the period of Mahakavi Kalidasa. The westerners have done good research on his period.

1. Sir William Jones puts Kalidasa's period as the first century. It was in the first century that the Malwa king Vikramaditya started the Vikramaditya era. Historians put that date at 56 B.C. King Pushpamitra established the Sunga dynasty in the first century. His son Agnimitra ruled from विदिशा Vidisha as his capital. Kalidasa was the poet of the royal court at that time. This has been mentioned in his drama मालविकाग्निमित्रम् Malavikagnimitram. Sir William Jones has used all this as the basis for his concluding Kalidasa's period as the first century. This has been accepted by many.

2. Prof.A.B.Keith and Vincent Smith estimate Kalidasa's period as the fourth century.
3. Prof.Max Meuller puts it at sixth century.
4. Dr.Fergusson and Dr.Fleet arrive at different conclusions on this issue.
5. There are many views as regards Kalidasa's place of residence. These vary from Ujjain to Kalingadesa and Himalayas.
6. Dr.M.R.Kale in his preface to the English translation of Kumara Sambhavam and Sri Sarada Ranjan Roy in his preface to the English translation of Abhignana Saakuntalam accept the research of Sir William Jones and conclude the period as first century. They say that the basis is the similarity in the styles of writing of Kalidasa and Asvaghosha, who lived in the first century.

Westerners are attracted to the works of Kalidasa to such an extent that they have conducted research on his period etc. Does not the very fact that Kalidasa's greatness has led to worldwide appreciation establish the importance of our Bharatiya culture?

It is noteworthy that all of Kalidasa's works have been translated into English, French, German and Russian.

Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamigal, the 68th Peethadhipathi of the Moolamnaya Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, venerably called Kanchi Maha Swamigal has advised that when a clearcut conclusion cannot be reached, it is not correct to dismiss deep rooted beliefs of long standing across the country as mere humbug; they should be honoured and accepted.

Kalidasa's Childhood

Like Sri Kanchi Maha swamigal said, Kalidasa's childhood is known only through traditional hearsay.

Saradananda was the ruler of Ujjain. He had a daughter, Vidyottama by name, who was very bad by nature, but had good scholarship. The king was looking for a bridegroom suited to her level of knowledge. Hundreds of scholars could not answer her questions and had to return in disgrace. The defeated ministers and scholars joined together and decided to tame Vidyottama's arrogance of knowledge and went to villages, looking for a fool, whom they wished to exhibit as a great scholar and get him married to her. They found a very foolish, unlettered villager, who was sitting on the outer end of a tree branch and cutting at its root. They told him that they would get him married to the princess and took him to the royal assembly. They told the king and Vidyottama that the person with them was a great scholar, who was on a vow of silence that day; he would answer all the questions of the princess through gesture.

The simpleton showed his fingers in reply to Vidyottama's questions; this was interpreted by the Pandits. Vidyottama became happy and agreed to marry the man. The marriage took place. When the princes and the simpleton were conversing, she sensed the truth. She felt sorry at having been cheated; she prayed along with him to Kali in the Ujjain temple. She left him there in the Sannidhi of Kali that night. Ambal, who was pleased with Vidyottama's devotion, wrote the bijakshara mantra of Saraswathi on the tongue of her husband and vanished. The simpleton, blessed by Kali, came to the entrance of Vidyottama's palace the next morning and said: 'अनावृत्तं कपाटं द्वारं देहि'- 'Open the door'. Devi Vidyottama spoke from inside: 'अस्ति कश्चिद्वाग्विशेषः' – 'There is something special in the speech'. Using the first word अस्ति of these words, Kalidasa commenced Kumara Sambhavam Kavya with 'अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा'. Using the word कश्चिद् he started Meghadutam with 'कश्चिद् कान्ताविरहगुरुणा'. Using the word वाक् he started Raghu Vamsam with 'वागर्थाविवसंपृक्तौ'. These first slokas of the Kavyas are known as Mangala slokas. Let us now briefly look at these Kavyas.

Kumara Sambhavam (one of Five great Epics)

Five great epics in Samskrit literature are: Kiraturjuniyam of Kavi Bharavi, Sisupalavadham of Kavi Magha, Naishadham of Sriharsha, Raghu Vamsam and Kumara Sambhavam of Kavi Kalidasa. Kalidasa had deep reverence for Adikavi Valmiki Maharshi. Taking the cue from the word कुमारसम्भवश्चैव in Srimad Valmiki Ramayanam, Bala Kadam, Sargas 37-38, Kalidasa called his Kavya कुमारसम्भवम् as it narrates the birth of Kumara, who is Lord Subrahmanya. Kumarasambhavam has 8 sargas. Though sargas numbered 9 to 17 are found, scholars do not consider sargas beyond 8 as Kalidasa's work in view of difference in the style of composition. They accord importance only to the first 8 sargas and cite them in their works. Kalidasa has considered the following as the source material for his Kumara Sambhavam. Srimad Ramayanam, Mahabharatham, Sivapuramam, Skanda Mahapuramam, Matsya Puramam, Padma Puramam, Linga Puramam etc. He has considered Kumara Utpatti (birth), Siva Parvathi Vivaham, Taraka Vadham etc. in these works for reference.

Raghu Vamsam

This tells us the history of the kings of the Solar race. In Kalidasa's time, Bharata desa was advanced in wealth, literature, arts etc. and in civilisation as well. Kalidasa sounds a stern warning in his poems about the danger of a life of empty luxury leading to destruction like an avalanche going down the mountain.

This wonderful Kavya has 19 sargas. Kavi Kalidasa, who begins to describe the great qualities of the kings of Solar race in the very first sarga, mentions truth as the first virtue and says that it should come right from birth. Being attached to Veda dharmas, he stresses yagas etc. and daily observances of karmas. He narrates the history of 29 kings from Dilipa to Agnivarna with special reference to the four Purusharthas: Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha. He covers the story of kings Dilipa, Raghu and Aja in the first 8 sargas; essence of Ramayana in the form of stories of Dasaratha, Rama and Lakshmana in the 7 sargas from 9th to 15th; Lava and Kusa in the 16th sarga; Rama's grandson Aditi in the 17th sarga; stories of 21 kings in brief in the 18th sarga; Agnivarna in the 19th sarga.

Kalidasa gave the title of Raghu Vamsam to his Kavya on the basis of अहं च रघुवंशः (Yuddha Kandam 1-11) and रघुवंशस्य चरितम् (Bala Kandam 4-9) in Srimad Valmiki Ramayanam.

Dramas of Kalidasa

1. Malavikagni Mitram 2. Abhignana Saakuntalam 3. Vikramorvasiyam.

Malavikagni Mitram

This is a drama of five chapters. This is about the love, tiff, marriage etc. between Agnimitra, the king of Vidisha and Malavika, the sister of the king of Vidarbha. Beautifully told.

Vikramorvasiyam

This is also a drama of five chapters. The story revolves around the love, marriage etc. between Puru, the king of Lunar Race and Urvasi. The story is from Rigveda (10-95) and Sathapatha Brahmanam (11-5-1).

Abhignana Saakuntalam

This drama has been translated into several languages of the world. Dramatists and poets of the west have praised this highly. In this drama of seven chapters, the love, marriage, dialogues etc. between king Dushyanta of Lunar Race and Sakuntala, daughter of sage Visvamitra, description

of sage Kanva's hermitage etc. are covered. The story of Bharata, the son of Sakuntala, is also told. It is said that our sacred Bharata desa is named after this king Bharata. The story is in Mahabharata. The preachings of sage Kanva to Sakuntala are poignant. They are very significant and are relevant even today. The Germans have praised this drama much. In 1791 the German scholar Arge Foster translated this into German.

The following are verses in praise of the drama.

वासन्तं कुसुमं फलं च युगपद् ग्रीष्मस्य सर्वं च यद्
यच्चान्यमनसो रसायनमतः सन्तर्पणं मोहनम् ।
एकीभूतं-अभूतपूर्वं-अथवा स्वर्लोक भूलोकयोर्-
ऐश्वर्यं यदि वाञ्छसि प्रियसखे शाकुन्तलं सेव्यताम् ॥

The German intellectual Goethe has written the following poem in English in praise of the drama.

'In case you desire to rejoice in the blossoms,
Of early years, the fruits of the age advanced
In case you want to have something that
Charms, something that is enchanting
In case you want to call both the heaven
And earth by a common name
I refer you to the SAKUNTHALA
AND THUS I describe these all'

Rabindranath Tagore translated 'Saakuntalam' into Bengali. The British scholar Lawrence Banyon translated it into English. Tagore says:

'The two peculiar principles of India are the beneficent bond of home life on the one hand, and liberty of the soul, abstracted from the world, on the other. In the world India is variously connected with many races and many creeds. She cannot reject any of them. But on the altar of devotion (Tapasya) India sits alone. Kalidasa has shown both in Saakuntala and Kumara Sambhava that there is a harmony between these two principles.'

The saying 'काव्येषु नाटकं रम्यं तत्रापि च शाकुन्तला' tells us about the greatness of Saakuntalam, does it not?

Ritusamharam and Meghadootam (or Meghasandesam) are the two Laghu (short) kavyas written by Kalidasa.

Ritusamharam

This book appears to have been written by Kalidasa first. There are six sargas with 144 slokas. It commences with describing the Grishma ritu (summer season) and ends with Vasantha ritu (spring season). Many western scholars have translated this into English. Kalidasa has written this book based on the descriptions of seasons in Sundara Kandam of Srimad Valmiki Ramayanam.

Meghadootam (or Meghasandesam)

This 'गीतिकाव्यम्' Gitikavyam has two sections titled 'Purvamegham' and 'Uttaramegham.' There are 67 slokas in the first section and 55 in the second, making a total of 122. This kavya tells us the story of a Yaksha sending the cloud (megha) as a messenger to his beloved.

Greatness of Kalidasa

The following is an extract of the 'Aihole' inscription of king Pulikesi in 634 A.D.

स विजयतां रविकीर्तिः कविताश्रित कालिदास भारविकीर्तिः ।

Kalidasa is praised as Kavi Sarvabhousha and Kavi Chakravarthi by the lovers of Samskrit kavyas. Mahakavi Bana, the author of great kavyas like Kadambari and Harsha Charitam, says at the beginning of Harsha Charitam:

निर्गतासु न वा कस्य कालिदासस्य सूक्तिषु ।
प्रीतिर्मधुरसान्त्रासु मञ्जरीष्विव जायते ॥

Udbhata, the scholar in Alankara Sastra says that Sri Raghukara Saraswathi would get spoiled by those who have no love for kavya and that Kalidasa's kavyas, full of 'dhwani' (figure of speech denoting implied meaning), can be enjoyed fully only by wise persons.

सीमन्तिनी च नलिनी च कुमुद्वती च
चन्द्रप्रभा च रघुकारसरस्वती च ।
कान्तोज्झिता हिमहता रविरश्मितप्ता
मेघावृता जडधियाभिहता न भाति ॥

Ananda Vardhanacharya, the author of the famous book 'Dhvanyaalokanam' says that it is only two or three poets in the whole world, who have handled ध्वनि 'dhvani' and beautified their poems; the poets are Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa.

While discussing authorities to be followed in practice, Manu says that one can also consider as authority what appears decisively to his mind as correct- आत्मनस्तुष्टिरेव च. Kumarila Bhatta in his

‘तन्त्रवार्तिकम्’ – ‘Tantravartikam’ strengthens Manu’s authority by citing Mahakavi Kalidasa’s writing in Saakuntalam:

सतां हि सन्देहपदेषु वस्तुषु प्रमाणमन्तःकरणप्रवृत्तयः ।

“When virtuous men have a doubt in a matter, they can treat as authority what their inner voice says.” It is noteworthy that calling this as ‘Abhiyuktukti’, the great writer of Sastras, Kumarila Bhatta ascribes as much greatness to Kalidasa’s sayings as to the Smritis.

In Vyasacharya’s Brahma Sutram, in the third Adhyaya, first Pada, second Adhikarana, the eighth Sutra कृतात्यत्याधिकरणम् states:

कृतात्ययेऽनुशयवान्दृष्टस्मृतिभ्या यथेतमनेवं च ।

This means: Jiva comes down from Swarga on exhaustion of the Karma, which bestowed on him the fortune of stay in Swarga. Possessed of the vasanas of the rest of the Karmas, he returns in the same way he ascended to Swarga or, in some cases, in a different manner. Srutis and Smritis state this. Sri Vachaspati Misracharya has written भामती ‘Bhamati’, the explanatory text on the commentary of Sri Adi Sankaracharya on this Brahma Sutram. Sri Amalananda Saraswathi Swamigal has authored a wonderful gloss titled कल्पतरु ‘Kalpataru’ for this text. There he interprets Smriti in ‘दृष्टस्मृतिभ्याम्’ in this Sutram as ‘Kalidasa Smriti’.

While describing Ujjain city in ‘Megha Sandesam’, Kalidasa says:

स्वल्पीभूते सुचरितफले स्वर्गिणां गां गतानाम् ।
शेषैः पुण्यैर्हृतमिव दिवः कान्तिमत् खण्डमेकम् ॥

“When virtuous people return to earth after enjoying the fruits of their merit in Swarga, a place has been created here on earth, much like Swarga, for them to enjoy the fruits of the rest of their merit.” Sri Amalananda Saraswathi Swamigal extols this verse in Megha Sandesam as ‘Kalidasa Smriti’ while explaining the reference to Smriti in the Brahma Sutram.

Mahakavi Kalidasa has shown a mirror in his epics to the culture of Bharata Desa, the lofty goals of the people, dharmas, basic conduct etc. The great scholar Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, who was president of India, praises Kalidasa in these terms: Kalidasa is the greatest representative of

India's spirit, grace and genius. The Indian national consciousness is the base from which his works grow. Kalidasa has observed India's cultural heritage, made it his own, enriched it, given it universal scope and significance.

As Kalidasa has employed the example of 'दीपशिखा' the flame of a lamp in many places in his Kavyas, emperor Vikramaditya, who was enchanted with his works, honoured him with the title 'Ratna Dipajyoti'.

'Aasetoh Aaharidvaram vidvatgoshtishu visruta; Kalidasa Kavindrasya Dipasikhedhiya.' The light from a jewel lamp never goes off; it is not dependent on oil or wick. A hurricane cannot also extinguish it. It shines eternally. Kalidasa too shines in the same way as eternal lamp.

Kalidasa has established in his Kavyas the Advaitic principle that all Saguna Murthis are one and the same. He prays to Parameswara towards the close of the drama Saakuntalam for Moksha with no rebirth.

प्रवर्ततां प्रकृतिहिताय पार्थिवः
सरस्वती श्रुतिमहतां महीयसाम् ।
ममापि च क्षपयतु नीललोहितः
पुनर्भवं परिगतशक्तिर्-आत्मभूः ॥

"May the king work for the welfare of people. May Saraswathi enhance the greatness of the learned. May the all-pervasive, self-born Parameswara remove my rebirth and grant me Liberation."

Kalidasa's desire for Liberation is also seen in Raghu Vamsam, when he says that Maharaja Raghu entrusted the kingdom to his son Aja and took to the path of Yoga.

न च योगविधेर्-नवेतरः स्थिरधीरापरमात्मदर्शनात् (८-२२)

"Raghu engaged himself continuously in Yoga for attaining Paramartha Gnana."

इतरां दहने स्वकर्मणां ववृते ज्ञानयज्ञेन वह्निना । (८-२०)

"He was engaged in burning off his past deeds, which would cause rebirth, with the fire of Atmagnana". Here Kalidasa reminds us of Sri Gitacharya's assertion:

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्-कुरुते तथा (5.37)

Such statements of Kalidasa reveal that he prayed to Parameswara for the Advaitic state of freedom from rebirth.

Let us now look at some of Kalidasa's similes.

उपमा कालिदासस्य भारवेर्-अर्थगौरवम् ।

दण्डिनः पदलालित्यं माघे सन्ति त्रयो गुणाः ॥

“Kalidasa is reputed for similes; Bharavi for brilliance of meaning; Dandi for beauty of words; Kavi Magha for all the three virtues.”

Let us therefore study Kalidasa's similes together with some great sayings.

Raghu Vamsam

1. हेमः संलक्ष्यते ह्यग्नौ विशुद्धिः श्यामिकापि वा ।

The purity and impurity of gold is noticed in fire alone.

2. क्रिया हि वस्तूपहिता प्रसीदति ।

Activities (like teaching) are useful when undertaken with right recipients.

3. भिन्नरुचिर्हि लोकः ।

The world is of various tastes, is it not?

4. विषमप्यमृतं क्वचिद्भूवेदमृतं वा विषमीश्वरेच्छया ।

If God wills, even poison will turn into nectar and nectar into poison.

5. मनो हि जन्मान्तरसङ्गतिज्ञम् ।

The mind recognises the relationship of the previous births (through vasana).

6. अपदे पदमर्पयन्ति हि श्रुतवन्तोऽपि रजोनिमीलिताः ।

Even the wise, blinded by passion (Rajoguna), step on evil path.

7. तेजसां हि न वयः समीक्ष्यते ।

Age is not reckoned in case of brilliant persons.

8. काले खलु समारब्धाः फलं बध्नन्ति नीतयः ।

Procedures undertaken in good time bear fruit.

9. वयोरूपविभूतिनामेकैकं मदकारणम् ।

Youth, beauty, wealth- any one of these causes conceit. (If all three are present together, what to say then).

10. स्वादुभिस्तु विषयैर्-दृतस्ततो दुःखमिन्द्रियगणो निवार्यते ।

It is difficult to withdraw sense organs, which have been pulled out by sense pleasures.

Kumara Sambhavam

1. एको हि दोषो गुणसन्निपाते निमज्जतीन्दोः किरणेष्विवाङ्कः ।

A single defect is not noticed among a pile of virtues, just as the blot on the moon is hidden amidst its rays.

2. विकारहेतौ सति विक्रियन्ते येषां न चेतांसि त एव धीराः ।

They alone are steadfast, whose minds do not waver even in the presence of objects that would cause wavering.

3. आत्मेश्वराणां न हि जातु विघ्नाः समाधिभेदप्रभवो भवन्ति ।

Obstacles do not shake the Samadhi (steady) state of one, who is self-controlled.

4. न धर्मवृद्धेषु वयः समीक्ष्यते ।

Age is not reckoned in case of persons ripe in dharma.

5. शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम् ।

Of the many instruments for earning dharma, the body is the prime one.

6. न केवलं यो महतोऽपभाषते शृणोति तस्मादपि यः स पापभाक् ।

It is not that sin accrues only to those who abuse great persons; but the one who is listening also partakes of the sin.

7. विक्रियायै न कल्पन्ते सम्बन्धाः सद्नुष्ठिताः ।

Association with the virtuous will not cause any misery.

8. यदध्यासितं-अर्हद्विस्-तद्वि तीर्थं प्रचक्षते ।

That place, where adorable persons had been seated, is said to be 'Tirtham' (holy place capable of granting Liberation).

9. भर्तृवल्लभतया हि मानसीं मातुरस्यति शुचं वधूजनः ।

The bride rids her mother (and father) of mental grief by being true and kind to her husband.

10. विक्रिया न खलु कालदोषजा निर्मलप्रकृतिषु स्थिरोदया ।

Change wrought by disagreeable time will not persist in pure persons.

Megha Sandesam

1. आपन्नार्ति-प्रशमन-फलाः संपदो ह्युत्तमानाम् ।

The wealths of superior persons are useful only in removal of misery of the suffering people.

2. कस्यात्यन्तं सुखमुपनतं दुःखमेकान्ततो वा

नीचैर्गच्छत्युपरि च गतिश्चक्रनेमि-क्रमेण ।

To whom does pleasure or misery alone occur? Like the wheel the fortune keeps turning up and down.

Vikramorvasiyam

1. अनुत्सेकः खलु विक्रमालङ्कारः ।

Is not absence of pride the ornament of bravery?

2. स्वार्थात्सतां गुरुतरा प्रणयिक्रियैव ।

For the virtuous, help rendered to their dependents is more important than their own work.

Malavikagnimitram

1. पुराणमित्येव न साधु सर्वम् ।

Being age - old alone does not mean it is good.

2. सर्वज्ञस्याप्येकाकिनो निर्णयाभ्युपगमो दोषाय ।

The decision of a single person, however omniscient, may lead to error.

3. प्रायस्समानविद्याः परस्परयशः पुरोभागाः ।

Those who have studied the same subject will generally be critical of one another's fame.

4. अनुरागोऽनुरागेण परीक्षितव्यः ।

Love should be tested by love alone.

Abhignana Saakuntalam

1. भवितव्यानां द्वाराणि भवन्ति सर्वत्र ।

Destiny has entrance everywhere.

2. सर्वः कान्तमात्मीयं पश्यति ।

Everyone looks at his own as beautiful.

3. लभेत वा प्रार्थयिता न वा श्रियम् ।

श्रिया दुरापः कथमीप्सितो भवेत् ॥

Whether the one who prays for wealth gets it or not, how will Lakshmi fail to reach the one whom She desires?

4. सर्वः सगन्धेषु विश्वसति ।

Everyone trusts persons like himself.

5. पूर्वावधीरितं श्रेयो दुःखं हि परिवर्तते ।

It is difficult to get back the good that was ignored earlier.

Shall we now look at some similes?

Chandalankaram is a book which describes a hundred Alankaras (figures of speech) with their characteristics. The first Alankara mentioned there is Upamalankaram (simile).

The characteristic of Upamalankara is given as:

उपमा यत्र सादृश्यलक्ष्मीरुल्लसति द्वयोः ।
हंसीव कृष्ण ते कीर्तिस्वर्गङ्गामवगाहते ॥

Here the first 'pada' (quarter) describes the characteristic and the second 'pada' the simile.

In Raghu Vamsam

1. वैवस्वतो मनुर्नाम माननीयो मनीषिणाम् ।
आसीन्महीक्षितामाद्यः प्रणवच्छन्दसामिव ॥

There was Manu named Vaivasvata, who was respected by the enlightened and was the first among kings like Pranava for Vedas. Here the phrase 'Pranava for Vedas' is the comparison for the king.

2. तदन्वये शुद्धिमति प्रसूतः शुद्धिमत्तरः ।
दिलीप इव राजेन्दुः इन्दुः क्षीरनिधाविव ॥

In that pure lineage of Manu, Dilipa, who was even purer, was born. He was the moon among kings and rose like the moon in the Ocean of Milk.

Similes like the above can be found in hundreds in the Kavyas of Kalidasa. They make us wonder if Upamalankara itself has taken the form of Kalidasa.

Readers of this lesson should study the Kavyas of Kalidasa as well as the five great Kavyas, which follow and live their lives in accordance with the guidelines shown therein with no blemish. Further, as pointed out by Sri Purnendra Saraswathi Swamigal, cited at the beginning of this lesson, there is no doubt that our sins will be washed off and we will attain the grace of the Lord by going through the histories of kings, descriptions of holy rivers, regions, forests etc. and morals and golden sayings, which occur in these Kavyas.

॥ पुण्यतीर्थदेवायतनादि संकीर्तनेन दुरितक्षयः ॥

Questions

1. Who is known as Adikavi?
2. Kavyam – write a brief note.
3. Who compiled the characteristics of Mahakavyas? Summarise them.
4. Whom do we call Mahakavi? Who are the western scholars who researched on his life history?
5. Write down the traditional hearsay story concerning Kalidasa's young age.

6. Name the Kavyas written by Kalidasa.
7. Raghu Vamsam- write a short note.
8. By whom was Abhignana Saakuntalam written? Write a short note on that kavya.
9. What is written in 'Kalpataru' about Kalidasa's greatness?
10. Name the commentaries on Brahma Sutram. Who wrote them?
11. What is the final prayer of Kalidasa to the Lord? Where is it found?
12. Which is the verse mentioning Kalidasa's simile?
13. Write any five of Kalidasa's golden sayings.
14. Write the similes in Raghu Vamsam.
15. What is the title of the book on Alankaras? Write the characteristic of Upama from that book.

Lesson 10

MAHA MAGHA KAVI, AUTHOR OF SISUPALAVADHAM (one of the five great epics in Samskrit)

Greatness of Magha Kavi

Magha Kavi's father was Dattaka Sarvacharya; grandfather Suprabhadeva Sarvacharya. Magha Kavi worked as a prime minister in the kingdom of Srivarmalakhya, the ruler of a province in Gujarat. Reference to Magha Kavi's works is found in the book 'Nagananda' of Harshavardhana of the seventh century and the book of poet Anandavardhana of the ninth century. Different views exist about the period of Magha Kavi, ranging from the latter part of the sixth century to the 7th and even 11th century.

During the childhood of Magha Kavi, expert astrologers made their predictions based on the state of planets in his horoscope. The findings included: he would be very poor in his old age; he would be known for philanthropy in his time like Maharaja Karna; he would write very wonderful Kavya; his fame as Kavi would last till Surya and Chandra exist. Worried about the prediction of poverty of the child Magha, his father Sri Dattaka made ample provision of wealth, foodgrains, lands etc. in his own lifetime to ensure troublefree living of Magha. But Sri Magha was keen on philanthropy. Hence hundreds of poor people and poets received gifts from him every day. The enormous wealth carefully provided by his father vanished in due course, thus driving Magha Kavi to destitution and starvation.

In those days भोजन् Bhoja Raja of धरत Dhara city was an inseparable friend of Magha Kavi. He took pity on Magha Kavi and honoured him by gifting him large quantities of gold, foodgrains and wealth. However how long would all this last for the king of philanthropy that Magha Kavi was? He was soon reduced to penury. One day when a poor man begged him, he had nothing to give. Hence Magha Kavi was overcome by sorrow and ended his life; his wife joined him in the funeral pyre; Bhoja Raja himself performed his last rites. We come to know of these details from 'Kavivamsa Varnana', where Magha Kavi's life story is described. The great quality of philanthropy of Magha Kavi is known through this.

Thousands of poets are spreading the message of Magha Kavi's greatness to this day through his wonderful Kavya 'Sisupala Vadham'.

Sisupala Vadham of Magha Kavi

Sisupala Vadham is considered to be one of the five great Kavyas in Samskrit. There are 21 Sargas in it. The primary Rasa (sentiment) is Virarasa; there are various verses containing descriptions of battlefield, Sringara Rasa, descriptions of nature, appropriate similes, majestic style and pun. Magha Kavi has employed 41 different metres in this Kavya.

This Kavya is based primarily on the story described in Mahabharata in Sabha Parva in chapters 33 to 45. Great scholars have hailed this Kavya as having all the characteristics of a Mahakavya. The basic story is the killing of Sisupala, the demon king of Chedi, by Bhagavan Krishna. The Kavya starts with the prayer of Narada Maharishi to Bhagavan Krishna to kill the demon king Sisupala. Sisupala opposes the honour of 'Agrasanam' to Bhagavan Krishna extended by Chakravarti Yudhishtira in the Rajasuya yagna held in his capital city of Indraprastha. Sisupala abuses Krishna. This is followed by a battle in which Sisupala is killed and attains the feet of Bhagavan. The Kavya narrates this story and is beautifully suffused with Vira rasa and Sringara rasa.

उपमा कालिदासस्य भारवेरर्थगौरवम् ।
दण्डिनः पदलालित्यं माघे सन्ति त्रयो गुणाः ॥

Scholars hail Kalidasa for Upama, Bharavi for deep meaningfulness, Dandi for felicity of words and Magha for all three qualities. In a certain way scholars place Sisupala Vadham of Magha Kavi on an even higher pedestal than Bharavi's Kiratarjuniyam and Kalidasa's Kavyas. There is a saying to convey this:

तावद्वा भारवेर्भाति यावन्माघस्य नोदयः ।
उदिते तु पुनर्माघे भारवेर्भा रवेरिव ॥

Although the credit for introducing royal ethics, dialogues and narrations for the first time in Kavya goes to Bharavi Kavi, Magha Kavi has excelled him in his Kavya; so have poets credited Magha Kavi.

It is noteworthy that Bharavi employs the term 'Lakshmi' in the last verse of each Sarga in his Kavya Kiratarjuniyam; similarly Magha kavi uses the term 'Sri' in the last verse of each Sarga in his Sisupala Vadham. He considered Kiraturjuniyam as an exemplary forerunner. Further in accordance with the ancient saying 'नवसर्गगते माघे नवशब्दो न विद्यते', if a student studies the first

nine Sargas of Sisupala Vadham properly, he will not encounter a new word in the later Sargas; so say great scholars.

Mallinatha, the commentator in Samskrit of this Kavya, says proudly: माघे मेघे गतं वयः , 'Age has vanished in the cloud, i.e. Mahakavi Magha.'

Ratnakara Kavi, the author of 'Haravijayam' having 50 chapters (kandas), stresses in his Kavyas the need for studying Sisupala Vadham of Magha Kavi well.

Harichandra, the author of 'Dharma Sramabhyudayam', a Kavya in 21 Sargas of the story of the fifteenth Tirthankara Dharmanatha, says that he has based his Kavya on Sisupala Vadham.

Vallabhadeva and Kshemendra Kavi cite many other works of Magha kavi; those are not available.

Sisupala Vadham has been translated in western languages. It is noteworthy that western scholars like Hermann Jacobi and Kielhorn have done good research on this Kavya.

Questions

1. Write down the names of Magha kavi's father and grandfather.
2. What did astrologers say about his childhood?
3. Write about the great quality of philanthropy of Magha kavi.
4. Who wrote Sisupala Vadham? How many Sargas are there in it?
5. Write about the greatness of Magha Kavi.
6. Who is the commentator of Sisupala Vadham? What does he say about the poet?

Lesson 11
MAHAKAVI DANDI

दण्डी Dandi was the great grandson of Mahakavi Bharavi. Bharavi's son was Manoratha, whose son was Viradatta. Dandi was Viradatta's son. He belonged to the seventh century. It appears he lived in Kanchipuram. Researchers have concluded that बाण Bana Kavi, famous for बाणोच्छ्रष्टम् जगत्सर्वम्, who wrote Kadambasri, describing everything in this world, and सुबन्धु Subandhu, the author of वासवदत्ता Vasavadutta, a story in prose, both were contemporaries of Dandi.

Mahakavi Dandi has characterised prose as अपादः पदसन्तानो गद्यम्.

As mentioned in त्रयो दण्डिप्रबन्धाश्च त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुताः , Mahakavi Dandi has authored three books: 1.Avantisundari Katha 2.Dasakumara Charitam 3.Kavyaadarsam. It appears he has also written another book 'Chandovichitti'; this book is not available.

1. Dasakumara Charitam दशकुमारचरितम्

We saw already: दण्डिनः पदलालित्यम् - Dandi for felicity of words. Many Mahakavis bestowed on him this honour on the basis of his style in Dasakumara Charitam. This book is based on the story in his own 'Avantisundari Katha'. This is a large Kavya, where the poet has written very beautifully in simple natural style about kings and princes, women of many types, sorcerers and scholars, people of different categories including thieves and their activities, together with many morals. As the term 'Danda' occurs in the initial prayer Mangalasloka, it appears that the author got the name of 'Dandi'. The original name of the author is under research.

Dasakumara Charitam was translated into English in 1927 for the first time with the title 'Hindu Tales: The Adventures of Ten Princes' and it attained world wide fame. It is divided into three main chapters: Purva Pithika, the Prime Story, Uttara Pithika. It is to the credit of Mahakavi Dandi that for the first time in prose he wrote of the love, tiff and marriage of the hero and heroine with many Alankaras in beautiful style.

2. Avantisundari Katha अवन्तिसुन्दरी कथा

The author has written of the beauty of Avanti in beautiful prose in the style of 'Brihatkatha'. It appears that Dasakumara Charitam was written on the basis of this book. There are many similarities in these two stories. Descriptions of regions and many morals have found a notable place in this work.

3. Kavyaadarsam काव्यादर्शः

Three great poets have written down their ideas of beauty in poetry in the form of books. They are Bamaha, Dandi and Vamana. The book 'Kavyaadarsam' by Mahakavi Dandi is the most famous of them all. Alankara sastram is about decorating (the kavya) with ornaments.

There are three styles: Vaidarbhi, Gowdi and Panchali. In 'Kavyaadarsam' the author has explained the concepts of style, Kavya structure, Gunas, Arthalankara, Sabdalankara and Ghoshas through many examples from excellent epics and his own. It is no exaggeration to say that the credit for introducing the Lakshanas (characteristics) of Mahakavya goes to Dandi alone. It is seen in Kavyaadarsam that Srimad Ramayanam of Adikavi Sri Valmiki Maharishi and the kavyas of Mahakavi Kalidasa are a fund of Lakshanas. We can at this point recall the Mahakavya characteristics that we have learnt in the lesson on Mahakavi Kalidasa. Let us now look at the other Lakshanas from 'Kavyaadarsam'.

चतुर्मुखमुखाम्भोजवनहंसवधूर्मम ।
मानसे रमतां नित्यं सर्वशुक्ला सरस्वती ॥

संस्कृतं नाम दैवी वागन्वाख्याता महर्षिभिः ।

“Maharshis say that Samskritam is the language of Devas.”

Sabdham (word) is the basis of the world of Kavya. Look at the following sayings in Kavyaadarsam:
If there were no light of Sabda, all the three worlds will become totally dark.

इदमन्धः तमं कृत्स्नं जायेत भुवनत्रयम् ।
यदि शब्दाह्वयं ज्योतिरासंसारं न दीप्यते ॥

If Sabdas are used appropriately, they are as fruitful as Kamadhenu.

गौर्गौः कामदुग्धा सम्यक् प्रयुक्ता स्मर्यते बुधैः ।

If Sabdas are used inappropriately, they reveal the foolishness of the user.

दुष्प्रयुक्ता पुनर्गोत्वं प्रयोक्तुस्सैव शंसति ।

The author therefore does not agree to accept or ignore any defect, however small, in a kavya. He proudly hails Kavyas as 'Kanta Samhita' (text as loving as a beloved). He divides Kavya Lakshanas into three basic groups of application: गद्यम्, पद्यम्, गद्यपद्यमयी चम्पुः (prose, poetry and Champu, mix of prose and poetry).

Vakprapancham, the world of speech or language is basically fourfold: Samskritam, Praakritam, Apabhramsam and Misram. The author accords a high status to Samskritam. We already saw his saying संस्कृतं नाम देवी वाक्.

Of Praakrita languages, Maharashtram belongs to high category. Souraseni, Gowdi, Laadi etc. are some regional Praakrita languages.

The author stresses that Vaidarbhi style should have ten qualities.

श्लेषः प्रसादः समता माधुर्यं सुकुमारता ।
अर्थव्यक्तिर्-उदारत्वं-ओजःकान्ति-समाधयः ॥

In Gowdi style, qualities contrary to these will appear.

एषां विपर्ययः प्रायो दृश्यते गौडवर्त्मनि ।

In a kavya in which many 'Samasa' words appear, 'Ojas' shines.

ओजस्समासभूयस्त्वं एतद्गद्यस्य जीवितम् ।

This is the lifeline for Gadyam, prose.

The quality of Samadhi is the treasure of kavya and Mahakavis like it.

तदेतत् काव्यसर्वस्वं समाधिर्नाम यो गुणः ।
कविसार्थः समग्रोऽपि तमेनमनुगच्छति ॥

A Kavi (poet) is born; he is not made. The author believes strongly that accumulated merit is required for being born a kavi. However, he admits that one can acquire the power of poetry through deep study and ceaseless effort.

श्रुतेन यत्नेन च वागुपासिता

ध्रुवं करोत्येव कमप्यनुग्रहम् ॥

He describes the form of Arthalankara in 359 verses.

He laments that poets employ changed uses of Linga (gender) and Vachana (number) through inattention.

1. हंसीव धवलश्चन्द्रः Chandra is white like a female Hamsa (swan). Here Linga (gender) is not uniform.
2. सरांसीवामलं नभः Sky is pure like tanks. Here Vachana (number) is not uniform.
3. भर्तृभक्तो भटः श्वेव The servant is loyal to his master like a dog. Here a man (high object) is compared with an animal (lowly object).
4. खद्योतो भाति भानुवत् The fire-fly shines like the Sun. Here a lowly insect is compared with Sun, a high object.

The author indicates that as these are erroneous usages, one should exercise care and avoid them.

In the third Paricheda (Section) of Kavyaadarsam, the author describes Sabdalankaras. He refers to Yamakas (like Yadukai and Monai in Tamil).

Being the great grandson of Bharavi, Mahakavi Dandi has composed a sloka using one word 'Kalakala', like Bharavi's sloka using a single letter (*which will be seen in the next lesson*).

कालकालगल कालकालमुख कालकाल
कालकालघन कालकालपनकाल! काल!
कालकाल सितकालकाल ललकालकाल
कालकाल गतु कालकाल कलिकालकाला ॥

It can be seen that the word 'Kalakala' appears at the beginning, middle and end of each line.

Meaning: "O Krishna with the power of Siva's neck and the colour of the monkey called Kalamukha, with the voice of peacock sounding in the presence of rain-laden clouds, with black complexion, remover of fear of Yama; may Vidhata (Brahma) with black tresses decorated with pearl ornaments become your headgear."

Mahakavi Dandi is of strong opinion that there should be no defect in a Kavya, just as even a small white patch on a beautiful body is intolerable.

स्याद्वपुः सुन्दरमपि श्वित्रेणैकेन दुर्भगम् ।

Riddles and 'Acharabandhas' are covered under Sabdalankaras.

As the name 'Kavyaadarsam' denotes, it lights up the path brightly for poets even to this day.

Questions

1. Who is the great grandfather of Mahakavi Dandi?
2. Write down the titles of three books authored by Mahakavi Dandi.
3. Dasakumara Charitam – write a short note.
4. Which is the language of Devas? Write the sloka in support.
5. Sabdam शब्दम् – write a short note.
6. Write down the ten qualities of Vaidarbhi style.
7. How can one get the power to write poetry?
8. Write down the sloka employing the word कालकाल with meaning.
9. Write down the sloka चतुर्मुखमुखाभोज.

Lesson 12

MAHAKAVI BHARAVI, AUTHOR OF KIRATARJUNIYAM, one of the five great epics

The original name of Mahakavi Bharavi was Damodara. He was of Kousika Gotram. His father was Sridharakavi; mother, Susila. He married Rasika, the daughter of Chandrakirithi of the region of Brik Kacha, now known as भडौच Badoch. His father Sridharakavi was a great scholar in Vedas, Vedangas and Sastras like Mimamsa, Tarkam, Vyakaranam and Sahityam. He participated in prestigious Vidvat Sabhas (assemblies of scholars) in all states and had attained great fame. He was known as 'Akshaya Kirthiman'.

Is it necessary to train the young one of a fish to swim? Bharavi learnt all Sastras from his father and became very conceited. He made fun of other scholars and was the cause of their grief and target of curse. Youth and scholarship drove him to the very pinnacle of arrogance. His father Sridharakavi became sad at this and warned him with love and rigour. He taught: "The misery and curse of other scholars will diminish our merit. Humility is the hallmark of scholarship." Sridharakavi felt strongly that we should be slaves to Sastra; it is an insult to think of making Sastra our slave. He was at the pinnacle of modesty. Everyone saw in him the ideal विद्या विनयसम्पन्नः.

Sridharakavi at last found a way of putting down his son's arrogance. He started to participate himself in all Vidvat Sadas in which Bharavi took part and defeated Bharavi in debate and humiliated him publicly. Bharavi was heart broken. He decided that he should get rid of his father and retrieve his reputation. He sat in the ceiling of the bedroom of his father with a large stone in his hand with plan to drop it on his father while he would be asleep. He was waiting.

At that time he heard his parents talking with each other. Mother Susila talked of the humiliation suffered by their son at the hands of his father and wept saying: "Don't do like this. Bharavi has not eaten or slept properly for the last two-three days. He is always brooding. It appears you are jealous of his mastery. Why should you disgrace him." Sridharakavi, who was proud of his wife's love for their son, said: "I adopted this method in order to bring our son to the right path. Scholarship should bestow humility and one should enjoy it. On the other hand, if we enslave scholarship and humiliate others, it will spoil our high status. This should be made clear to him. He should experience the grief and hatred that his detractors go through at his hands. Is there anyone who possesses the great mastery that he has? Though I am happy with this, I sought out this

approach only in order to show him the path of moral progress. He will be reformed soon. He will enjoy the fruit of his scholarship.” Saying so, he shed tears.

Bharavi, who overheard this, felt very sorry and fell at the feet of his parents and sought forgiveness. He scoffed at his own arrogance of knowledge and asked his father to suggest suitable expiation for his sin (Prayaschitta). Sridharakavi appreciated his son’s change of heart and asked him to do service to cows for six months in his father-in-law’s home. Bharavi wholeheartedly agreed and served cows along with his wife in his father-in-law’s home. It was at that time that he completed writing the wonderful Kavya ‘Kiratarjuniyam’.

Once his wife Susila brought to his attention the condition of poverty in the home and asked him to arrange foodgrains and money. He wrote on a palm leaf:

सहसा विदधीत न क्रियामविवेकः परमापदां पदम् ।

“Do not do anything in haste. Absence of discrimination will give rise to great dangers.” He sent the palm leaf through his wife to a leading trader Vardhamana in the town. As Vardhaman was out of station on business, his wife read the palm leaf, became very happy and gave a lot of wealth. She hung that palm leaf in her room.

Her husband returned home after some time; in order to surprise his wife he had not informed her of his arrival plan. He found a young man in bed along with his wife. He was furious, took out a knife and went near the bed. He then happened to read the palm leaf hanging on the wall. He felt sorry for his foolish haste. By that time his wife and son got up from bed, saw him and fell at his feet. His wife apprised him of their son’s birth after he had gone out of station. She expressed her sadness that her husband had been away for such a long time that their son had grown into a young man. They felt very happy at his return. Vardhamana felt sorry for his haste and said that they had been saved because of the palm leaf. He then sent for Bharavi and asked him to complete the second line of the verse. He handed him a lot of gold and money. Bharavi completed the sloka with the following line:

वृणते हि विमृश्यकारिणं गुणलुब्धाः स्वयमेव सम्पदः ।

“Many high attainments including wealth go on their own to the one, who engages in action after good thinking.”

These are all stories on Mahakavi Bharavi that have come down to this day through oral tradition. As advised by Sri Kanchi Mahaswamigal, it is but proper to accept all such stories.

Bharavi's life stories are seen to some extent in the book 'Avantisundari Katha' written by Dandi, the great grandson of Mahakavi Bharavi and in the book 'Avantisundarikathasaram'.

महाकविर्माघः महाकविर्भारविर्दामोदरश्च ।

It is seen that Bharavi's original name was Damodara and he got the name Bharavi through his power of poetry. It appears that Bharavi's forefathers lived in a place called Achalapuram near Nashik in Maharashtra.

Bharavi was friends with Vishnuvardhana of Chalukya dynasty, Raja Durvinita and the Pallava king Vishnuvardhana. Bharavi had three sons. The middle son Manoratha had four sons. Manoratha's last son Viradatta was married to a girl called Gowrisri. Their son was the famous Mahakavi Dandi. Thus Dandi was the great grandson of Bharavi.

One Jayaditya Vamana has written a Vritti (commentary) titled 'Kasikavritti' for Maharishi Panini's Ashtadhyayi. While explaining Ashtadhyayi Sutra 1.2.3, प्रकाशनस्थेयाख्ययोश्च, he has cited Kiratarjuniyam, 3rd Sarga, 14th sloka.

जहातु नैनं कथमर्थसिद्धिः संशय्यकर्णादिषु तिष्ठते यः ।

Prof.Max Meuller, who researched this, says that the period of Kasikavritti being 660 A.D., Bharavi's period might have been the 6th century. In Karnataka state, in a village called Aihole in Bijapur district, there is a stone inscription in the Jain Mandir there, made by the Jain poet Ravikirthi during the time of Pulikesi II. The period of that inscription is mentioned as 634 B.C.

पञ्चासत्सु कालकाले षट्सु पञ्चशतासुच ।
समासु समतीतास्तु शकानामपि भूभुजाम् ।
येनायोजि न वेश्म स्थिरमर्थविधौ विवेकिना विनवेश्म ।
स विजयतां रविकीर्तिः कविताश्रितकालिदास भारविकीर्तिः ॥

Western scholars Jacob, McDonald, Kith and Prof.Max Meuller and Indian scholars Acharya Baladev Upadhyaya and Chandrasekhara Pandeya have researched Bharavi's period and estimate it at around 600 A.D.

Kiratarjuniyam किरातार्जुनीयम्

The story is from Mahabharata, Vana Parva. Sri Parameswara blesses Arjuna and grants him पाशुपतास्त्रम् Pasupatastra. Bharavi has composed the Kavya Kiratarjuniyam very beautifully in 18 Sargas, suffused with Virarasa and employing majestic style, deep meaning, appropriate Alankaras, pun etc. and has attained eternal fame. This Kavya has earned Bharavi the honour of भारवेरर्थगौरवम्.

In Acharya Viswanatha's Sahitya Darpanam, it is stated that the title of a Kavya can be the name of the author or the hero. कवेर्वृत्तस्य वा नाम्ना नायकस्येतरस्य वा नामास्य ।

As Sri Parameswara, the hero of this Kavya came in the garb of Kirata (hunter), he was known as Kiratamurthy. Taking Arjuna's name also,

किरातश्च अर्जुनश्च इति किरातार्जुनौ तौ ।
अधिकृत्य कृतं काव्यं किरातार्जुनीयम् ॥

Bharavi titled his Kavya as Kiratarjuniyam. This is a Kavya full of all Kavya Lakshanas and hence it bestows on the reader happiness and knowledge.

Mallinatha Suri has written a beautiful Samskrit commentary for this book. There he praises the Kavya:

नेता मध्यमपाण्डवो भगवतो नारायणस्यांशजः
तस्योत्कर्षकृतेत्ववर्ण्यततरां दिव्यः किरातः पुनः ।
शृङ्गारादिरसोऽङ्गमत्र विजयी वीरः प्रधानो रसः
शैलाद्यानि च वर्णितानि बहुशो दिव्यास्त्रलाभः फलम् ॥

Bharavi has largely employed अर्थान्त्रन्यास in the Kavya. It is said that अर्थगौरवम् means that in a small word the meaning is profound. It is like small pills ridding one of a big disease.

Bharavi himself says that the grace of Saraswathi for writing Kavya descends on those who possess religious merit.

विविक्तवर्णाभरणा सुखश्रुतिः प्रसादयन्ती हृदयान्यपि द्विषाम् ।
प्रवर्तते नाकृतपुण्यकर्मणां प्रसन्नगम्भीरपदा सरस्वती ॥

Mallinatha, the commentator says: “Let lovers enjoy the Kavya as they please, like breaking a coconut and drinking the water.”

नारिकेलफलसम्मितं वचो भारवेः सपदि तद्विभज्यते ।
स्वादयन्तु रसगर्भनिर्भरं सारमस्य रसिका यथेप्सितम् ॥

In this Kavya, Bharavi has introduced a new rare शैली style. Every Kavi has a style of his own. Here the story part is not large; beautiful descriptions please the mind and bestow happiness. It attracts the minds of even opponents. The author follows the pattern of Adikavis. As said in सतां हि वाणी गुणमेव भाषते this Kavya is a heap of good qualities.

As a sample of Bharavi's poetic excellence, look at the following sloka, where the first and third 'Padas' are the same; similarly the second and fourth are the same. But they convey independent meanings.

विकाशसीयुर्जगतीशमार्गणाः ।
विकाशमीयुर्जगतीशमार्गणाः ।
विकाशसीयुर्जगतीशमार्गणाः ।
विकाशमीयुर्जगतीशमार्गणाः ।

The way Bharavi has composed a sloka (15/14) using just one letter is not only worthy of appreciation, but also generates wonder. The world of poets is all praise for Bharavi introducing this new pattern.

न नोननुन्नो नुन्नोनो नाना नानानना ननु ।
नुन्नोऽनुन्नो ननुन्नेनो नानेना नुन्ननुन्ननुत् ॥

“If one is attacked by another, lesser in valour, then he is not valorous. If one attacks or fells another, lesser in valour, then also he is not valorous. If one's master or king does not have the mark of courageous fighting in war in his body, he is not considered a valorous person. When one is lying wounded in a battle, the person who attacks him will also not be fit for forgiveness.”

See how Bharavi has composed a sloka with just one letter न, but conveying so many meanings. Poets hail him as one whose poesy is unique.

Bharavi enjoys high appellations like Desakavi and Aatapatra Kavi. As he has employed the term 'Lakshmi' in the last sloka of every Sarga, this Kavya, Kiratarjuniyam is called 'Lakshmiyangam'.

Golden Words in Bharavi's Kavya

1. न हि प्रियं प्रवक्तुमिच्छन्ति मृषा हितैषिणः ।
Those who wish for good will not like to say untrue, though kind, words.
2. हितं मनोहारि च दुर्लभं वचः ।
Salutary and attractive speech is hard to find.
3. गुणानुरोधेन विना न सत्क्रिया ।
Without practising qualities, there is no honouring them.
4. विचित्ररूपाः खलु चित्तवृत्तयः ।
Are not the mental modes (thoughts) strange?
5. भवन्ति भव्येषु हि पक्षपाताः ।
Even just persons will tilt in favour of virtuous persons.
6. विश्वासयत्याशु सतां हि योगः ।
Association with the virtuous produces faith immediately.
7. श्रेयांसि लब्धुमसुखानि विनान्तरायैः ।
Good things are difficult to attain without obstacles.
8. संधत्ते भृशमरतिं हि सद्वियोगः ।
Separation from the virtuous produces a lot of unhappiness.
9. महते रुजन्नपि गुणाय महान् ।
Huge difficulties are for attaining great virtues only.
10. सम्भावना हि अधिकृतस्य तनोति तेजः ।
Treating servants with courtesy accords them brightness.

Questions

1. What is the original name of Bharavi? Write about his parents.
2. How did Bharavi undergo change of heart? Write briefly.
3. Write down the sloka which Bharavi composed and sent through his wife.
4. What is the second line of that sloka?
5. Which is Bharavi's period?
6. What is the basis of the title 'Kiratarjuniyam'? Where is that story found?
7. Write down what Mallinatha said about Kiratarjuniyam's essence.
8. Which is the single letter used by Bharavi for composing an entire sloka? Write the sloka.
9. Write any five of Bharavi's golden sayings.

Lesson 13
MAHAKAVI SRIHARSHA

तावद्भूता भारवेर्भाति यावन्माघस्य नोदयः ।
उदिते नैषधे काव्ये क्व माघः क्व च भारविः ॥

“Bharavi shines only till the rise of Magha. Once Naishadha Kavya has come, where is Magha, where is Bharavi?”

Sriharsha is a kavi superior to Mahakavis Bharavi and Magha. His kavya is Naishadha Mahakavyam. It is hailed as ‘Sastra Mahakavyam’ by scholars. Let us now learn about such a famous kavi, Sriharsha Mahakavi.

The Jain scholar Rajasekhara has written in about 1426 A.D. the book ‘Prabandha Kosam’, where he has presented detailed research on Sriharsha.

Sriharsha’s father was Sri Hira Panditha; mother, Mamalla Devi. This is mentioned proudly by Sriharsha himself in Naishadhiya Mahakavyam at the end of every Sarga.

श्रीहर्षं कविराजराजिमुकुटालङ्कारहीरः सुतम् ।
श्रीहीरः सुषवे जितेन्द्रियचयं मामल्लदेवी च यम् ॥

Sri Hira Kavi, father of Sriharsha, shone as a scholar jewel in the royal assembly of Raja of Kashi, Jayanta Chandra (1163-1194 A.D.). There were many scholars in the assembly. Sri Hira Kavi used to take his son Sriharsha also with him to the assembly. One day a scholar disgraced Sri Hira Kavi very badly in the royal assembly. Grieved by this, Sri Hira Kavi called his son to the Sannidhi of Ambal, taught him the Chintamani mantra and told him: “By the strength of this mantra siddhi, you will become master of all Sastras. You should defeat the scholar who humiliated me and attain fame as the best among scholars in the royal assembly.” Saying so, Sri Hira Kavi breathed his last. Sriharsha vowed in his presence to act as instructed by him. With the grace of Chintamani mantra siddhi, Sriharsha attained mastery in all Sastras by approaching many excellent scholars. He radiated Saraswathi Kataksham, which he had in abundance. He defeated all scholars in the assembly of Raja Jayanta Chandra and earned distinction as the best poet. He thus fulfilled the promise given to his father.

Though Sriharsha has authored many books, Naishadham, the Mahakavya and the Vedanta text, Khandanakhandakhadyam are the most famous of them all. It appears that Naishadham might

have been written in 1163-1174 A.D. There are 22 Sargas and 2830 slokas in it. Scholars hail it as 'Sastra Kavyam'. The reason is that the master of all Sastras, Sriharsha Kavi has presented all Sastras clearly in it. Naishadham is famous as the medicine for scholars – नैषधं विद्वदौषधम्.

In Naishadham, Sriharsha has described beautifully the story of Nala-Damayanti, narrated in detail in Mahabharata, Vana Parva, chapters 58 to 78. It follows the tradition of a Mahakavya set by the earlier Acharyas and possesses all Mahakavya Lakshanas (characteristics) mentioned in the book 'Kavyaadarsam' of Mahakavi Dandi. In the book 'Sahitya Vidyadhari', Sriharsha's mastery of all Sastras is eulogized:

अष्टौ व्याकरणानि तर्कनिवहः साहित्यसारो नयो
वेदार्थावगतिः पुराणपठितिर्यस्यान्यशास्त्राण्यपि ।
नित्यं स्युः स्फुरितार्थदीपविहताज्ञानान्धकाराण्यसौ
व्याख्यातुं प्रभवत्यमुं सुविषमं सर्गं सुधीः कोविदः ॥

Naishadham shines as a treasure of knowledge – eight Vyakarana Sastras, Tarkam, Sahityam, essence of Vedas and Vedanta, Puranas, Itihasas, the six Darshanas (Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sankhya, Yoga, Purva Mimamsa and Uttara Mimamsa), censure of philosophies of Charvakam, Bouddham, Jainam etc. It makes the world of scholars wonder. It is indeed an unparalleled Mahakavya, which has stunned foreign poets and researchers. The above sloka concludes by saying that it is only a great scholar well versed in all Sastras who can explain this very tough Sarga. All Sargas are indeed of the same genre.

In this lofty Kavya we can find details of Vedic yagas mentioned in Purva Mimamsa Sastra. Sriharsha refers to details of Putra Kameshti yaga, Kariri Ishti, Darsa Pournamasa Ishtis, Agnishtomam, Somayagam, Soutramani, Sarvamedhas, Mahavrata etc. He also teaches Vedangas like Chandas, Jyotisham, Niruktam and Vyakaranam, Uttara Mimamsa details like Sravanam, Mananam and Nididhyasanam, Brahma Vicharam, means of attaining Brahman etc. We can also find Artha Sastra, Sangita Vidya, Dhanurveda etc.

कविकुलपतेः श्रीहर्षस्य प्रबन्धरसायनं पिबत (सततं)

श्रोत्रैर्-अन्तर्विभाव्य सचेतसः ।

Visvesvara Bhattacharya, the commentator of Naishadham, calls upon the readers to come and drink with complete attention the 'Prabandha Rasayanam' (nectar of the epic) of Kavikulapathi

Sriharsha. The English poet Milton refers to this Kavya in his works. The grandson of Sriharsha, Kamalakar Gupta has written a commentary for Naishadham. The famous commentator Mahamahopadhyaya Mallinatha has written a wonderful commentary titled जीवातु Jivatu for this Kavya. His commentary brings out to some extent the deep inner thoughts of Sriharsha. If we study Naishadham in the traditional manner, it is certain that we will get knowledge of our Bharatiya culture and Sastras.

In Naishadham Sriharsha mentions his other works:

1. Sthairyavichara स्थैर्यविचार in 4th Sarga
2. Vijayaprasasti विजयप्रशस्ति in 5th Sarga
3. Khandanakhandakhadyam खण्डनखण्डनखाद्यम् in 6th Sarga
4. Gowdorvisakulaprasasti गौडोर्वीशकुलप्रशस्ति in 7th Sarga
5. Arnavavarnanam अर्णववर्णनम् in 9th Sarga
6. Chindaprasasti छिन्दप्रशस्ति in 17th Sarga
7. Sivasaktisiddhi शिवशक्तिसिद्धि in 18th Sarga
8. Navasahasankacharitam नवसाहसाङ्कचरितम् in 22nd Sarga
9. Easwarabhisandhi ईश्वराभिसन्धि
10. Panchanaliyakavya पञ्चनलीयकाव्य
11. Dvirupakosa द्विरूपकोशः

Naishadham and Khandanakhandakhadyam are only available as of now. The rest are under research.

Khandanakhandakhadyam खण्डनखण्डनखाद्यम् is an important text in Advaita Vedanta Sastra. Condemnation of Nyaya Sastra and propounding Advaita Siddhanta are the main features of this book. Great men are of the view that this book is extremely tough.

पुण्यश्लोको नलो राजा पुण्यश्लोको युधिष्ठिरः ।

पुण्यश्लोका च वैदेही पुण्यश्लोको जनार्दनः ॥

Great personages worthy of being remembered early in the morning on waking up are known as 'Punya slokas'. Nala, Yudhishtira, Vaidehi and Janardana are the Punya slokas referred here. Naishadham is the Mahakavya on the Punya sloka Nala. If we think of great men, fear and Adharmic tendencies will diminish. We will get peace of mind at least for the time being. We

should continue to study their life stories for the peace to continue. The very thought of Punya slokas will motivate us to progress on the path of dharma. Listening to their life stories will bestow abundant good fruit.

In Naishadham there is a wonderful description showing Sriharsha's devotion to Acharya Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada and his assertion that Advaita Siddhanta alone is true.

Damayanti was thinking of only Nala and wished to marry him. On the day of Swayamvara, she saw five persons, all appearing like Nala. This sequence is called Panchanaliyam. Damayanti wished to identify the true Nala. Saraswathi Devi was introducing all kings assembled there one by one. Four Devas were sitting close to Nala in the disguise of Nala. Saraswathi introduces the true Nala to Damayanti through use of pun.

There are five important philosophies in our Bharata Desa. They are Sankhya, Patanjala Yoga, Pancharatra, Veda and Pasupatha. Sankhya is now not in practice. Yoga has spread everywhere. Pancharatram is Vaishnavam. Veda is the name used for Advaita Siddhanta of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada. Pasupata is Saiva. Pushpadanta, a great Siva bhakta, in his Siva Mahimna Stotram says:

त्रयी सांख्यं योगः पशुपतिमतं वैष्णवमिति
प्रभिन्ने प्रस्थाने परमिदमदः पथ्यमिति च ।
रुचीनां वैचित्र्याद्-ऋजुकुटिल-नानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णवमिव ॥

Here he refers to the five philosophies – Veda, Sankhya, Yoga, Pasupata and Vaishnava.

While describing how Damayanti was confused in identifying the true Nala, Sriharsha compares her state of mind to the confusion in identifying the true Advaita Siddhanta among the various philosophies of the world.

सामुं प्रयच्छति न पक्षचतुष्टये तां
तल्लाभशंसिनि न पञ्चमकोटिमात्रे ।
श्रद्धां दधे निषधराड्विमतौ मतानां
अद्वैततत्त्व इव सत्यतरेऽपि लोकः ॥

Just as the true Advaita Siddhanta is one among the five philosophies, the true Nala is one among the five Nalas. Here Sriharsha brings out his Acharya bhakti and devotion to philosophy through this example. He emphasizes the superiority of Advaita Siddhanta by calling it 'Satyatara'.

Sriharsha also stresses Guru bhakti practised as per Sastra tradition.

ग्रन्थग्रन्थिरिह क्वचित् क्वचिदपि न्यासि प्रयत्नान्मया
प्राज्ञमन्यमना ह्ठेन पठिती मास्मिन् खलः खेलतु ।
श्रद्धाराद्धगुरुश्लथीकृतदृढग्रन्थिः समासादय
त्वेतत्काव्यरसोर्मिमज्जनसुखव्यासज्जनं सज्जनः ॥

Sriharsha had the power of Chintamani mantra. Hence he has employed many tough usages and knots in Naishadha Kavya. He has himself said so.

In the above sloka he says: “In this Kavya I have placed ‘granthis’ (knots) here and there purposely. These knots should be untied only by approaching a Guru with faith; others cannot do it. One who wishes to see through these ‘granthis’ should worship Guru and bathe in the Kavya nectar. Arrogant and conceited persons cannot understand this. If one adamantly wishes to study himself, he will fail. One should humbly learn it from the Guru through his blessings.” This is the only sloka in Sriharsha’s kavya, which is simple. Almost all slokas are tough.

Sriharsha has written ‘Khandanakhandakhadyam’ in order to establish that there is no true Rasa other than Advaita. Truth can only be one. If there are two, they will not be real. Sriharsha has lined up all arguments against Advaita advanced through false logic, erroneous approach or otherwise and forcefully condemns all of them.

शब्दार्थनिर्वचनखण्डनया नयन्तः
सर्वत्र निर्वचनभावमखर्वगर्वान् ।
धीरा यथोक्तमपि कीरवदेतदुक्त्वा
लोकेषु दिग्विजयकौतुकमातनुध्वम् ॥

He preaches: “Intelligent people can win over all opponents everywhere just by repeating whatever I have written, even like a parrot.” This Khandanakhandakhadyam occupies a very important place in Advaita Sastra works. Apart from Sri Chitsukhacharya’s commentary, there are 11 other commentaries on this work.

हरिणापि हरेणापि ब्रह्मणापि सुरैरपि ।
ललाट लिखिता रेखा परिमार्ष्टुं न शक्यते ॥

Sriharsha firmly believed that even Hari, Hara, Brahma or other Devas cannot erase the script of destiny written on one’s forehead. He was immersed in devotion to the Lord. He stresses that

whether auspicious or otherwise, everything will happen according to the writing on one's forehead; nobody can change it.

यस्येश्वरेण यदलेखि ललाटपट्टे ।
तत्स्यादयोग्यमपि योग्यमपास्य तस्य ॥

'Policy also follows one's destiny' - भाग्यैरिव नीतिः. Many such nuggets of wisdom can be enjoyed in Naishadham.

Sriharsha had great faith and devotion to Bharata Mata and Samskrit, the Bharatiya Vani. Bharat is greater than even Swarga. Swarga is the place for enjoyment. There are no dharmas to earn merit there. In Bharat one can attain the state of no rebirth. He praises Samskrit as दैवीवाक् (10/56). One should not feel disinterested in dharma; dharma alone should be held to be prime.

कृच्छ्रं गतस्यापि दशाविपाकं धर्मान्न चेतः स्खलत् ।

Many such teachings are found.

Sriharsha entered happily into Turiyasrama (Sanyasa) on the banks of Ganga, immersed himself in Atma Vichara, attained the state of Jivanmukti and merged with Bhagavan. However he lives even today through his wonderful writings. It is no exaggeration to say that he is showing the right path to us through his works!

Questions

1. Write down the names of Sriharsha's parents.
2. Write the sloka bringing out the greatness of Sriharsha.
3. What did Sri Hira Kavi tell Sriharsha before his death? Which is the mantra taught by him?
4. Who wrote Naishadha Kavya? How many slokas and Sargas are there in it?
5. Where is the original story of Naishadha Kavya to be found?
6. Which are the subjects, whose knowledge is necessary for interpreting Naishadha Mahakavya?
7. Write the titles of any five of the books written by Sriharsha.
8. Punya slokas- write a short note.
9. Write the sloka saying 'Advaita Satyatara'.
10. What is Sriharsha's teaching?

Lesson 14

MAHAKAVI SRI NILAKANTHA DIKSHITAR

We have studied in the lineage of Brahmaavidya Gurus a brief life history of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar (1520-1593 A.D.), hailed as Advaita Vidyacharya, Srikanthamatha Pratishtapak, Chaturadhikasatha Prabandhakarta, Sarvakratuyaji, Aptavajapeyayaji, Nityagnihotri, Sarvatantrasvatantra, Padavakyapramana Paravara अद्वैतविद्याचार्य श्रीकण्ठमतप्रतिष्ठापक चतुरधिकशतप्रबन्धकर्ता सर्वक्रतुयाजी आप्तवाजपेययाजी नित्याग्निहोत्री सर्वतन्त्रस्वतन्त्र पदवाक्यप्रमाणपारावार and avatara of Parameswara.

The brother's son of that great personage was Brahmasri Narayanadhvarasri; his consort (yagnapatni, dharmapatni) was the austere Sowbhagyavathi Bhumidevi. The second son of these high-souled husband and wife was Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar. He had four siblings. There is a beautiful village called Adayapalam near Arani in Tiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu. More than a hundred Nityagnihotris and masters of Sastras were there in that village, engaged in austerities. The peaceful village had Siva and Vishnu temples of Sri Nilakantheswara, Sri Kalakantheswara and Sri Varadaraja. It is in this nice village that the avatara of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar and Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar took place. The scholarly lineage of Adayapalam Dikshitas is strikingly long. Even to this day there are hundreds belonging to this sacred lineage. Sri Kanchi Maha Periyava used to say that the sacred place to which one should go for reaping good fruit is Adayapalam.

Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar mentions his parentage in his book 'Gangavataranam' (1.49,50):

जयन्ति तनयास्तस्य पञ्च सौभ्रात्रशालिनः ।
गर्भदासा महेशस्य कवयश्च विपश्चितः ॥
तेषामहं द्वितीयोऽस्मि भूमिदेवीतनूभवाम् ।
नीलकण्ठ इति ख्यातिं नीतः शम्भोः प्रसादतः ॥

As he lost his parents and grandfather at the young age of 11-12 years, it fell to the lot of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar to rear these four children of his brother's son. Though these four brothers were harmonious, Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar had a special bond of love and respect for his grandfather's brother Sri Appayya Dikshitar, who taught him all branches of knowledge on his own. He developed a wish that he should emulate his illustrious grandfather in mastery of Sastras and observance of Vedic rituals and attain fame like him. This was reciprocated by his grandfather, who was impressed by his keen intellect and was at pains to train him. Srimad

Appayya Dikshitar wished to spend his last days at Chidambaram and took the young lad Nilakantha with him.

One day after having darshan of Sri Nataraja, Sri Sivakamasundari and Sri Govindaraja in Chidambaram, he called Nilakantha and said to him: “O child, you have my whole-hearted blessings. I am now giving you a rare article, difficult to obtain even at the cost of all wealth in the world. You should continue to do Pooja with faith to these Pancha Lingas, whom I have worshipped for long. I am also handing over to you these two bundles of palm leaves containing my manuscripts. Take these.” Saying so, he handed over the Pancha Lingas and the palm leaves of two books, Devi Mahatmyam and Raghu Vamsam and blessed Nilakantha. With tears of joy in his eyes, Nilakantha prostrated and received the rare gift. Sri Appayya Dikshita said: “I have given these palm leaves in order that you become Upasaka of Ambal. You should also become a world famous Mahakavi like Kalidasa.” This scene of transfer of the gift has been recreated by Sri Periyava in a painting in Srimatham at Rameswaram.

In those days, kshetras on the banks of river Kaveri like Thanjavur, Tiruvaiyaru, Kumbakonam, Tiruchi and Srirangam were all ‘Vidya kendras’, centres of learning. Hundreds of masters in Sastras taught Vedas and Vedanta, while practising traditional Nityakarma rituals. That was the time when it looked as if Saraswathi and Brahma were living there. Kings were then patrons of scholarship, while they themselves were masters. They had created charitable trusts of lands etc. for encouraging learning. When will we get back such a golden era?

After Srimad Appayya Dikshitar, his grandfather’s brother, merged at the radiant feet of Sri Sivakamasundari sametha Sri Nataraja at Chidambaram, Nilakantha visited the kshetras on the banks of Kaveri. At that time Thanjavur was under the rule of Achyutappa Nayak, assisted by his son Raghunatha Nayak. Their royal Guru right from the time of Achyutappa Nayak’s father, Sevappa Nayak, was the great Advaita Vidyacharya, Aptavajapeyayaji, Mahagnichit, Sarvatantrasvatantra, Padavakyapramana Paravara, Maharaja Saheb Sri Govinda Dikshitar. His yagna patni was Sri Nagamambal. In his daughter’s lineage came Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Sri Sankaracharya Swamigal, the 68th Peethadhipathi of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. (*The life story of Sri Nagamamba sametha Sri Govinda Dikshitar has been covered in an earlier lesson*). Their third son was Sri Venkatamakhi, who organised for the first time the 72 Melakartha ragas in Carnatic music. His rare discovery is being followed to this day by all

musicians. He wrote many books like 'Vaartikabharanam', 'Chaturdandi Prakasika', a commentary called 'Duptika' for Mimamsa Sastra etc. 'Chaturdandi Prakasika' is very famous in the world of music. Sri Govinda Dikshitar's knowledge of music is evident from his book 'Sangita Sudha'.

Sri Appayya Dikshitar had talked to Nilakantha many times about Sri Govinda Dikshita and his remarkable lineage. Nilakantha therefore came to Sri Venkatamakhi for his further studies. Keeping in mind the keen intellect of his valuable disciple and the greatness of Sri Appayya Dikshitar, Sri Venkatamakhi accepted Nilakantha as student and taught him music and all Sastras.

Sri Nilakantha proudly refers to his discipleship under Sri Venkatamakhi in his book 'Gangavatharanam' (1.51).

वार्तिकाभरणग्रन्थ-निर्माण-व्यक्तनैपुणः ।
श्रीवेङ्कटेश्वरमखी शिष्ये मय्यनुकम्पते ॥

Nilakantha's knowledge of Sastras and poetic ability started to grow. No information is available on his householder life. There is no doubt that like his grandfather and Guru, he must have performed all yagas.

A great soul named Sri Girvana Yogindra initiated Sri Nilakantha into Srividya. Sri Niakantha refers to this in his book 'Sivalilarnavam' (1.5):

अर्धे तनोर्-अद्रिसुतामयोऽस्मीत्यहंयुना किं फलमादियूना ।
गीर्वाणयोगीन्द्रमुपास्महे तं सर्वात्मना शैलसुतात्मको यः ॥

He has also written a book titled 'Gururajastavam' in praise of his Srividya Guru, Sri Girvana Yogindra.

Sri Nilakantha was very devoted to Meenakshi Amman of Madurai. He went to Madurai and started giving discourse on 'Devi Mahatmyam' every day on the banks of the Golden Lotus Tank. His daily routine revolved round darshan of Sri Minakshi Sundareswara, discoursing and observance of Nityakarma rituals. To this day the house in which Sri Nilakantha lived can be seen in the Sannidhi of Minakshi Amman. Thousands benefited by attending his discourses. His fame reached the palace of the Madurai king Tirumali Nayak. The king, very pleased, approached Sri Nilakantha, prostrated and requested him to accept the position of Asthana Guru of his kingdom

and help him. In due course as the king conducted his affairs in accordance with Sri Nilakantha's advice, Madurai's fame spread far and wide. The king and his minister were very friendly and their rule was dharmic and beneficial to people. The country was prosperous and people lived happily with no grievance. It was during that period that the famous Tirumalai Nayak Mahal was constructed. They renovated the Minakshi Amman temple and the Golden Lotus Tank and conducted many grand festivals, which became world famous.

Books by Sri Nilakantha Dikshita

1.Mukunda Vilasam 2.Chandi Rahasyam 3.Sivotkarshamanjari 4.Nala Charitra Natakam
5.Gururajastavam 6.Gangavataranam 7.Anyapadesa Satakam 8.Nilakantha Vijaya Champu
9.Kaiyata Vyakhyanam 10.Raghuvirastavam 11.Kalividambanam 12.Sabharanjana Satakam
13.Vairagya Satakam 14.Santhi Vilasam 15.Anada Sagarastavam 16.Sivalilarnavam
17.Sivatatva Rahasyam.

Let us now learn something at least about these books. It will motivate one to read the original books, will it not?

Kalividambanam

This is a kavya, entirely of humour. The poet assesses the nature and conduct of people in Kaliyuga and talks humorously of the state of various types of persons. The truth of these statements can be verified even now. There are a hundred verses in Anushtup vritta.

He worships Kali Purusha thus:

यत्र भार्यागिरो वेदा यत्र धर्मोऽर्थसाधनम् ।
यत्र स्वप्रतिभा मानं तस्मै श्रीकलये नमः ॥

I worship Sri Kali Purusha, in whose time the wife's words are Vedas, dharma is only for accumulation of wealth and whatever occurs in one's intellect is authority.

The poet is a master in ridiculing people who take to erroneous path and correcting them. His verses are thus a guide to people.

About fake astrologers:

पुत्र इत्येव पितरि कन्यकेत्येव मातरि ।
गर्भप्रश्नेषु कथयन्दैवज्ञो विजयी भवेत् ॥

The astrologer is ever victorious by telling the pregnant mother that she would beget a daughter and the father that he would beget a son (and telling both to keep it a secret).

अपिसागरपर्यन्ता विचेतव्या वसुन्धरा ।
देशो ह्यरत्नमात्रोऽपि नास्ति दैवज्ञवर्जितः ॥

I have seen the entire country right up to the sea. There is not even a cubit of space without astrologer.

About the state of the nouveau-rich:

प्रामाण्यबुद्धिः स्तोत्रेषु देवताबुद्धिरात्मनि ।
कीटबुद्धिर्मनुष्येषु नूतनायाः श्रियं फलम् ॥

The fruit of new wealth is strong belief in praise of himself, reckoning self to be Devata and considering other people as but worms.

The poet has written many such things humorously. It appears he might have written this while conversing with friends in evenings in humour, but with substance.

Sabharanjana Satakam सभारञ्जनशतकम्

Here Sri Nilakantha describes beautifully and subtly the greatness of education, poet's power, the significance of valour, destiny's play, greatness of patience, importance of dharma etc. There are a hundred verses in Anushtup metre here also. Let us look at some.

उद्यन्तु शतमादित्या उद्यन्तु शतमिन्दवः ।
न विना विदुषां वाक्यैर्नश्यत्याभ्यन्तरं तमः ॥

Let a hundred Suns rise. Let a hundred Moons rise. Without a wise man's words, the inner darkness in persons will not be destroyed.

कः प्रसूते पुरोवातं कः प्रेरयति वारिदम् ।
प्राप्ते तु श्रावणे मासि भवत्येकर्णवं जगत् ॥

Who drives the westerly wind? Who motivates the clouds? On the birth of 'Sravana' month the earth becomes a sea.

किं दातुरखिलैर्दोषैः किं लुब्धस्याखिलैर्गुणैः ।
न लोभादधिको दोषो न दानादधिको गुणः ॥

What if the philanthropist has many defects, what if the miser has many virtues. There is no defect higher than miserliness; there is no virtue higher than generosity.

Santhi Vilasam शान्ति विलासः

Here the poet stresses the necessity of dispassion. In 51 verses in 'Mandakrantha' metre, he expresses beautiful ideas of deep import and taking our faults as his own, he advises us on securing mental peace.

The picture he paints of the state of man in old age applies to all naturally.

चक्षुष्यन्धे चलति दशने श्वश्रुणि श्वेतमाने
सीदत्यङ्गे मनसि कलुषे कम्पमाने कराग्रे ।
द्वैतरेतैर्दिनकरभुवः शश्वदुद्धोध्यमानाः
स्त्रातुं देहं तदपि भिषजामेव सान्त्वं वदामः ॥

With eyes blind, teeth shaking, hair grey, body tired, mind confused and fingers quaking, though warned frequently by the messengers of Dharmaraja, wishing to protect the body somehow, we call the doctor with agreeable words.

नाहं याचे पदं-उडुपतेर्-नाधिकारं मघोनो
नापि ब्राह्मीं भुवनगुरुतां का कथाऽन्यप्रपञ्चे ।
अन्यस्यान्यः श्रियमभिलषन्नस्तु कस्तस्य लोको
मह्यं शंभो दिसमसृणितं मामकानन्दमेव ॥

I do not seek the position of Indra, Chandra, or the world-teacher Brahma; what to speak of other lowly positions? Will anyone seeking others' positions progress? O Sambho, I am therefore beseeching you for my own natural state, the state of unalloyed bliss.

Here the poet prays for Swaroopananda; the idea is that we should also pray for the same.

Vairagya Satakam वैराग्यशतकम्

Sri Nilakantha Mahakavi, who stresses the necessity of dispassion in Santhi Vilasam, teaches in this Vairagya Satakam in a hundred verses set to Arya, Upagiti and other metres, the characteristics of detachment and its greatness.

कुल्याः कृता विशालाः कुड्यान्युपलैर्निबद्धानि ।
क्रीता बलिनो महिषाः कृतकृत्याः स्म इति मन्यते ॥

'We have widened the water channels, constructed walls with good stones and bought strong buffaloes.' People think they have thus fulfilled their duties.

The poet bemoans the foolish attitude.

वङ्गाः कथं अङ्गाः कथमित्यनुयुङ्क्ते वृथा देशान् ।

कीदृक्कृतान्तपुरमिति कोऽपि न जिज्ञासते लोकः ॥

People enquire as to how Vangadesa is, how Angadesa is and about other regions fruitlessly. Noone in this world has the curiosity to know how the land of Yama is.

त्यज संसारमसारं भज शरणं पार्वतिरमणम् ।
विश्वसिहि श्रुतिशिखरं विश्वमिदं तव निदेशकरम् ॥

Abandon this fruitless samsara. Take refuge in Siva, consort of Parvathi. Have full faith in Upanishads (the pinnacle of Vedas). This universe will obey your orders.

The poet thus leads us to the state of dispassion.

धीसचिवं धैर्यबलं संकल्पविरोधि शान्तिधनम् ।
विश्वत्रयविषयमिदं वैराग्यं नाम साम्राज्यम् ॥

In the empire of Vairagya (dispassion), intellect is the minister. Courage is the army. Desire is the enemy. Peace is the wealth. All the three worlds are its parts.

Anandasagarastavam आनन्दसागरस्तवम्

Sri Nilakantha, being Srividya Upasaka, dedicates the book 'Anadasagarastavam' of a hundred verses to Minakshi. There he prays: "Our grandfather has stated already that our entire lineage is your slave. Hence how can you not protect us? We have taken refuge in you. Please save us." He describes Minakshi using slokas with deep import and avers that with her blessings we can easily attain Gnana and prays with tears in his eyes. If we too take refuge in Anandasagara (ocean of bliss) in Ambal, we can attain the high state in this birth itself.

त्वय्यर्पितं प्रथममप्पय्ययज्वनैव
स्वात्मार्षणं विदधता स्वकुलं समस्तम् ।
कात्वं महेशि कुलदासमुपेक्षितुं मां
को वाऽनुपासितुमहं कुलदेवतां त्वाम् ॥

Having taken refuge in Ambal, Sri Nilakantha appeals to her, expressing his mental misery.

का संसृतिः किमपचारनिबन्धनेयं
कीदृग्विधस्य तव किं क्षतमेतयेति ।
प्रश्ने तु नास्मि कुशलः प्रतिवक्तुमेव
खेदस्तु मे जननि कोऽप्ययमेवमास्ते ॥

'What is samsara? Which sin landed you in this bondage? What kind of harm has this wrought on you?' I do not have the ability to find answers to these questions. But, Mother! Some unspeakable mental anguish tortures me.

When the poet is struggling in this manner, there is a sudden flash of light. He feels that he should take refuge in Mother and that he would get answers to all his questions. He then sings of surrender:

न ज्ञायते मम हितं नितरामुपायो
दीनोऽस्मि देवि समयाचरणाक्षमोऽस्मि ।
तत्त्वामनन्यशरणः शरणं प्रपद्ये
मीनाक्षि विश्वजननीं जननीं ममैव ॥

I do not know what is beneficial for me, nor do I know the means of attaining it. Poor me, I am unable to do my duties in time. Minakshi, you are the mother of the universe, hence my mother too. Having no other refuge, I surrender at your feet.

The author has written '**Sivalilarnavam**', a Mahakavya of 22 Sargas and approximately 200 slokas set to 27 different metres. This wonderful kavya, brimming with peace and harmony, is based on 'Halasya Mahatmyam' in Skanda Mahapuram and describes beautifully the 64 lilas of Sundareswara of Madurai.

There is no doubt that if one studies all the works of Sri Nilakantha Mahakavi properly, he will attain boundless bliss.

In his book '**Nala Charitram**' Sri Nilakantha says at the beginning (sloka 11) in the words of the Sutradhara (stage-manager):

कालं जेतुमुपायौ द्वौ कलिकल्मषसंप्लुतम् ।
कथा वा निषधेशस्य काशी वा विश्वपावनी ॥

There are two means to overcome evil times ridden by Kali's troubles. One is to listen to the story of Nala Chakravarti; the other is to worship Sri Viswanatha at Kashi, the centre sanctifying the universe.

The author has written **Nilakantha Vijaya Champu**, नीलकण्ठविजयचम्पू which has 279 slokas in five Aasvasas (chapters) and is based on 'Amrita Mathanam' story. The Dhyana sloka there is:

वन्दे वाञ्छितलाभाय कर्म किं तन्न कथ्यते ।

किं दम्पतिमिति ब्रूयामुताहो दम्पती इति ॥

I worship for attaining the desired benefit. Whom? That is unsaid. Because I do not know whether I should say 'Dampatim' or 'Dampati'. (If I say 'Dampatim', it is grammatically erroneous. If I say 'Dampati', it will denote Ardhanariswara and not Minakshi alone, my Ishtadevata.)

This is called the dhvani (implied meaning) of 'vakrokti'. This is the special seal of Sri Nilakantha Kavi. Great men opine that the author indirectly teaches us this way about Brahma Svarupa.

Sri Nilakantha Dikshita, who was immersed in royal duties, felt a high level of detachment one day. This he conveys through **Santi Vilasam** (sloka 8):

आकौमाराद्गुरुचरणशुश्रूषया ब्रह्मविद्या-
स्वास्थायामहह महतीमार्जितं कौशलं यत् ।
निद्राहेतोर्निशिनिशि कथाः शृण्वतां पार्थिवानां
कालक्षेपौपयिकमिदप्याः कथं पर्यणंसीत् ॥

Whatever knowledge in lofty Brahmaidya I gathered by serving the Acharya's feet in youth, I expended it in telling stories to kings during nights for them to get sleep. O what a detestable way of spending time.

Sri Nilakantha Dikshita immediately quit his royal engagements and retired to a beautiful peaceful village called 'Palamadai' on the banks of river Tamraparani near Tirunelveli. He entered into Turiyasrama (sanyasa) and attained Videhamukti there.

The Adhishthanam of Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar can be seen even today in Palamadai. A nice temple with the idols of Sri Kashi Viswanatha and Sri Visalakshi has been built in the Adhishthanam. Daily poojas, annual Aradhana etc. are being observed grandly by devotees. Palamadai has acquired famously the name of 'Nilakantha Samudram'. The villagers are mostly of the lineage of Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar.

Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar teaches:

सा वक्ति सा वाचयति सा चेतयति सा चितिः ।
सा गतिः सा गमयति सैवेयं मीनलोचना ॥

“She speaks; She makes us speak. She is the source of consciousness in us; She is the universal Consciousness. She is movement; She makes us move. She is Minalochana.” The author teaches us to surrender at Her feet as that will get us all Gnana and the blessings of Parameswara.

He teaches that true Grihastasrama (householder’s stage) is marked by karma with no desire for fruit and with dedication to Easwara. It can lead us to Moksha.

न नित्यनैमित्तिककर्मशीलता
कदापि नैष्कर्म्यविरोधमर्हति ।
पतेदिमां प्रत्युत सन्त्यन्निति
स्मरन्ति शिष्टाः स्वयमाचरन्ति ॥

Our forefathers have emphasised that this constitutes our Sanatana Dharma. Let us take to the same beaten track and attain Easwara’s blessings.

Questions

1. Adayapalam – write a short note.
2. Which is the period of Srimad Appayya Dikshitar?
3. Who are Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar’s parents?
4. What is the special blessing Sri Appayya Dikshitar bestowed on Sri Nilakantha?
5. Write the greatness of the Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar’s Guru tradition.
6. Who was the king of Madurai in his time?
7. Write down the titles of Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar’s books.
8. Who wrote ‘Kalividambanam’? Write two slokas from it with meaning.
9. Write any two slokas from the other books of Sri Nilakantha Dikshitar with meaning.
10. How did Sri Nilakantha develop detachment? Write the relevant sloka from ‘Santhi Vilasam’.
11. Where is Sri Nilakantha’s Adhishthanam situated?

OM TAT SAT