

**BHOGA-BHAAGYA-YOGYATA LAKSHMI**  
**( FULFILLMENT AS ONE DESERVES)**

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**Other Scripts by the same Author: Essence of Puranas:-Maha Bhagavata, Vishnu Purana, Matsya Purana, Varaha Purana, Kurma Purana, Vamana Purana, Narada Purana, Padma Purana; Shiva Purana, Linga Purana, Skanda Purana, Markandeya Purana, Devi Bhagavata;Brahma Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Agni Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Nilamata Purana; Shri Kamakshi Vilasa**

**Dwadasha Divya Sahasranaama:**

**a) Devi Chaturvidha Sahasra naama: Lakshmi, Lalitha, Saraswati, Gayatri;**

**b) Chaturvidha Shiva Sahasra naama-Linga-Shiva-Brahma Puranas and Maha Bhagavata;**

**c) Trividha Vishnu and Yugala Radha-Krishna Sahasra naama-Padma-Skanda-Maha Bharata and Narada Purana.**

**Stotra Kavacha- A Shield of Prayers**

**Purana Saaraamsha; Select Stories from Puranas**

**Essence of Dharma Sindhu**

**Essence of Shiva Sahasra Lingarchana**

**Essence of Paraashara Smtiti**

**Essence of Pradhana Tirtha Mahima**

**Dharma Bindu**

**Essence of Upanishads : Brihadaranyaka , Katha, Tittiriya, Isha, Svetashwara of Yajur Veda- Chhandogya and Kena of Saama Veda-Atreya and Kausheetaki of Rig Veda-Mundaka, Mandukya and Prashna of Atharva Veda ; Also ‘Upanishad Saaraamsa’ (Quintessence of Upanishads)**

**Essence of Virat Parva of Maha Bharata**

**Essence of Bharat Yatra Smriti**

**Essence of Brahma Sutras**

**Essence of Sankhya Parijnaana- Also Essence of Knowledge of Numbers**

**Essence of Narada Charitra; Essence Neeti Chandrika-Essence of Hindu Festivals and Austerities-**

**Essence of Manu Smriti\*- Quintessence of Manu Smriti\* - \*Essence of Pratyaksha Bhaskara- Essence of Maha Narayanopanishad\*-Essence of Vidya-Vigjnaana-Vaak Devi\***

**Note: All the above Scriptures already released on [www. Kamakoti. Org/news](http://www.Kamakoti.Org/news) as also on Google by the respective references. Those with \* are under process]**

## PREFACE

*Hreescha te Lakshmischa ahoraatre paarshve Nakshatraani rupam Ashvanou vyaaktam, Ishtam manishaana, amuym manishaana sarvam manishaana/* ( Devi Lakshmi and Lord Hari are the illustrious and Sacred Couples; they are forms of the glittering Stars on the Skies and Ashvini Devatas are their mouth; this being so, may they bless us with the fulfillment of all our materialistic wishes and spiritual aspirations!) : Vaajasaneeya Samhita , Shukla Yajurveda.

Playful swings of Devi Lakshmi the Goddess of Fortune are as per the heart beats of Lord Vishnu the Preserver of Life. Indeed, as one sows so does one reaps is the quintessence of Existence! This is what pleases Bhaagya-Bhogya-Yogya Lakshmi! This certainly pleases the endless Forms of the Unknown viz. Tri Murtis, Tri Shaktis, and so on which are but the reflections of Antaratma or One's Conscience namely Paramatma! This is the fulfillment of 'varchas-aayush-aarogyam-avidyaacchadanam-dhaanyam -dhanam -pashum- bahuputra laabham-shata samvatsaram-deerghamaayu'! May the Ashta Lakshmi swarupa of 'Adi-Lakshmi-Dhanya Lakshmi-Dhairya Lakshmi-Gaja Lakshmi-Santaana Lakshmi- Vijaya Lakshmi-Vidya Lakshmi-Dhana Lakshmi' bestow fulfillment of 'iham' or the worldly aspirations and 'param' or there after of 'karma yoga' to ascend the higher plane to the 'jnaana yoga' and far further to Moksha Yoga'. Indeed, Lord Vishnu is the Owner and Preserver of One's Life Boat being ever present in the journey and stays put firmly as the Antaratma the Inner Conscience, but the Navigator of Life is the Self the 'Jeeva' as per the instruments and the engine of the boat in the form of Panchendriyas and the Mind of the Driver. The role of Devi Lakshmi is the Enforcer of the Swing of Fortune sitting pretty on the swing!

The present Script is divisioned in Four Parts : 1.Stotras with meanings and explanations viz. Lakshmi Sahasra naama , Lakshmi Ashtottara , besides Shri Sukta, Shri Kanaka Dhaaraa Stotra, Kalyana Vrishti Stotra, Shri Lakshmi Narayana Hridaya and Purusha Sukta .2) Sources of Puranas; 3) Sources of Upanishads; and 4) Other Sources.

In all these sources: there is a common message that one's pattern of life is the most accurately reflected balance-sheet of one's own 'karma' or totality of action of virtue as also vice alike.

Once, I approached the Maha Swami of Kanchi- the Walking God- with utmost humility and trepidation, mumbling sheepishly that I could hardly cope up in my the then official daily routine and there was no possibility of fulfilling duties expected of a Brahmana. He smiled and said :DO GOOD AND BE GOOD: In fact that is what Veda-Purana-Upanishads preach. Till date the words ring in my ears and Conscience; Just two words appear as the outstanding Summing up of Yogyata! To Him are my venerable prostrations, placing a 'Tulasi Dala' at His Golden Lotus Feet!

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## CONTENTS

<b>Preface</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Contents</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introducion</b>	<b>5</b>

### PART ONE

#### S T O T R A S

<b>Maha Lakshmi Sahasra Naama Stotra</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Lakshmi Ashtottara Naamas</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Shri Sukta</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Shri Kanaka Dhaaraa Stotra</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Kalyana Vrishti Stotra</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Shri Lakshmi Narayana Hridaya</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Purusha Sukta</b>	<b>61</b>

### PART TWO

#### S O U R C E S F R O M P U R A N A S

**Agni Purana-** Shri Lakshmi Stotra and benefits : **62**

**Bhavishya Purana:** ‘Ramaa-Satyanarayana Vrata’ and Six ‘Kathas’ (Episodes): **63**

**Brahma Purana:** Jagannadha Temple at Puri **69**

**Brahmanda Purana :**Why Maha Purusha could not overcome Paraa Shakti (Prakriti) ? **72**

Indra’s dethronment, Lakshmi’s exit from Swarga, Prayaschityas and Atonement: Ksheera Samudra Mathana and Mohini Avatara: Devi Lakshmi appeared and Muni Ganas and Devas hailed her praising her

**Brahma Vaivarta Purana:** Maharshi Narayana defines Pancha Prakritis, their Kalaas and mani- **75**  
festations; Lakshmi and other Devi Swarupas; Prakriti Devi has several ‘Amshas’ (Alternative Forms), ‘Kalaas’ (Features), and ‘Kalaamshas’ (Alternative Features); Mutual curses of Lakshmi, Saraswati and Ganga land them in Bharata Varsha : Mahalakshmi: her exit from Swarga and restoration, and ‘Stuti’ by Indra included): Lakshmi Puja by Indra with ‘shodashopa chaaraas’ (Sixteen Services):

<b>Devi Bhagavata:</b> Worship to Maha Lakshmi and Her Partial Extensions; Devi Bhagavati explains about Her Vibhuti ( Manifestations & Powers):	<b>84</b>
<b>Kamaakshi Vilaasa-Markandeya Purana:</b> Markandeya described Hastishaila Mahatmya- the Splendour of Varadaraja Swami-‘Bhutaabandha Janardana’: Shri Chakra Raja Puja:	<b>88</b>
<b>Kurma Purana:</b> Vishnu’s Avatara as Kurma, Lakshmi as Maya & Revelation of Tatwa Gyaana (Sage Indradyumna’s prayer to Vishnu included):	<b>93</b>
<b>Maha Bhagavata:</b> Virat Purusha’ – the Primeval Force; New Brihaspati Visvarupa teaches ‘Narayana Kavacha’ to Indra ; Was Vishnu partial to daityas?	<b>95</b>
<b>Markandya Purana:</b> Dhruva-Kavalaashva-Ashwatara : Examples of Devotion-and Duty	<b>99</b>
<b>Matsya Purana:</b> Narasimha Avatara- Varaha Deva rescues Bhu Devi, His description, Stuti and Worship- Bhagavan Varaha’s questionnaire to humanity about the roots of grief and Joy!- Varaha Deva describes ‘Aparadhas’ (Offences) to be avoided:	<b>102</b>
<b>Narada Purana:</b> Primary Creation by Maha Vishnu- Ekaadasha Vrata- Legend of Rukmanga-	<b>105</b>
<b>Padma Purana:</b> Lord Krishna’s Ashta Mahishis:	<b>108</b>
<b>Skanda Purana :</b> Danavas defeat Devas, churning of Ocean and Emergence of Maha Lakshmi and ‘Amrit’- Venkatachala ‘Mahatmya’- Eight-folded approach to Venkateswara- Purushottama Kshetra (Utkala Khanda) Mahatmya- Badari Kshetra Mahatmya- Kolhapuri Maha Lakshmi Mahatmya:	<b>109</b>
<b>Vamana Purana:</b> Vishnu Puja on Shukla Ekadashis and Vishnu Panjara Stotra - Bali Chakravarti wins and Lakshmi congratulates- Aditi conceives Vamana: Vamana Deva requests for three feet for Tapasya and occupies trilokas-- Gajendra Moksha- Vishnu Panjara, Saaraswata,Paapa Vimochana Stotras by Shiva and Gauri	<b>126</b>
<b>Varaha Purana:</b> Exemplary devotion of Priyavrata, Ashvashira, Vasu and Raibhya ( Pundari- kaaksha and Gadaadhara Mantras included)-	<b>140</b>
<b>Vishnu Purana:</b> Mutual Affinity of Vishnu and Lakshmi - Samudra Mathana, Emergence of Lakshmi and Amrita ( Stuti to Vishnu and Lakshmi ) - Dhruvopaakhyana- Prahlada Charitra- Nrisimhaavataara- Vishnu Vibhuti-Yama Gita- A Perfect Endorsement of Vishnu Bhakti	<b>146</b>

### **PART THREE**

<b>SOURCES FROM UPANISHADS</b>	<b>158</b>
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[Note: The seriatum of the Upanishads is as follows: Yajur Veda: Brihadarankya, Katha, Taittiriya, Isha, Svetashvatara; Saama Veda: Chhandogya and Kena; Rig Veda- Atreya and Kauksheetaki;Atharva Veda: Mundaka, Maandukya, and Prashna. There after the Maha Narayana Upanishad is highlighted. Each of the Upanishads referred to sums up the relevance of Maha Lakshmi and ‘Yogyata’ of Fellow Beings ]

**Brihadaranyaka:** Prajapati pair creates fathers, food, rituals, mind, speech, praana-Naama-Rupa-Karma or name-form-work of Individual Self ; Mortal and Immortal Swarupas of Individual Self and

Supreme Self; Mortal and Immortal Swarupas of Individual Self and Supreme Self; Damayita-Daana-Daya or Control-Charity-Compassion constitute the three seeds of Virtue; Austerities like fasting and detachment embolden to face death seeking better status and comfort later!; Seekers of Brahman do realise the role of food and praana as factors for seeking higher status next! Meditation to Praana by Ukta Geeta unifies the body to the Soul! Meditation to Praana by Ukta Geeta unifies the body to the Soul!

**Katha Upanishad:** This Individual Self is denoted as the Master of the Chariot, body is the chariot, charioteer is the ‘buddhi’ or the Intellect, mind is the bridle!) **163**

**Taittiriya Brahmana :** The paramountcy of Food as this is the be all and end all of Creation via Praana/Life; Be it a cosmic view or a microcosmic one, the very foundation is Food the origin-sustenance and merger! Food and water and Fire the origin for water pave the Path for Bliss or Brahman; Food, Earth and the latter’s emerging point viz.Sky enable fusion possible to lead to the path of Bliss; Meditation for human and divine achievements to help Society as also for Self fulfillment ; Worship to Brahman for material and spiritual fulfillment, attainment of Bliss by the Self; From Food to Praana to Material Wealth to Knowledge to Mind to Truth to Spiritual Awakening to Bliss.

**Ishopanishad:** Detachment and Deliberation are the rudiments of Realising the Supreme; Righteous Action irrespective of fruits begets further longevity deserving scope for further Enlightenment; Involvement of Evil Forces blinds the brightness of Truth and the pace of recovery is slow to nil; **168**

**Shvetaashvatara Upanishad:** One’s Self-generated Energy is driven by Maya and Her twenty four units of five Elements, Five each of Jnaanendra-Karmandriyas, Manas, Praana and Kaalamaana!; The Eternal Paradox of Existence -an analogy of two birds –Role of Maya/Prakriti; The ‘Karmaanubhava’ or the fall out experience of actions by the Embodied Self; **169**

**Chhandogya Upanishad:** The three branches of Dharma or Virtue viz. ‘Yagjno-Adhyaaya-Daana’ or Sacrifice-Study-Charity as also the meditation of the unique syllable of OM); Pranava and the hidden meanings of Scriptures like Upanishads analysing Brahman the Reality bestow nectar leading to material fulfillment and spiritual enlightenment; From a controlled mindset to conditioning as a confirmed embodiment of Virtue and ‘Vipratwa’ the transformation becomes gradual yet as an ever sustained conviction!; In the mortal world, justice may be delayed or even denied in place of injustice, but retributions or compensations are but True and Real; That is That as the Self and indeed Thou art Thou for ever! Narada’s attainment of knowledge was but a tool to realise Reality and hence approaches Sanatkumara; [From stanzas VII.ii.1 to VII.xxv. Sanatkumara describes in detail the required ‘inputs’ as *power of speech, mental caliber, Sankalpa or Resolve, Self Belief or conviction/ will power, Meditation, vigjnaam or enlightenment, physical strength, food or diet, water, tejas or internal fire-power, aasha or aspiration, memory power, praanam or vital energy; thought, nishtha and karyaacharana.* Then Sanatkumara sums up to Narada and provides the final Spiritual Upadesha!]

**Kenopadesha:** Who indeed is the Instructor to direct the Individual and his Mind!; To know one does not know but desires to know yet remains unknown is what all one knows! **181**

**Aitereya Upanishad:** Virat Swarupa and the Ruling Elements clamoured for food and abodes, then He conferred the concepts of ‘Karma’ and ‘prapti’ viz. desire and eligibility. Various Devas entered respective stations like Agni in the mouth’s speech, Vaayu in nose’s praana, Surya in the eyes as vision, Dishas in the ears as hearing faculty, Vanaspati in skin’s touch, Chandra in mind and heart, Mrityu **184**

as outbreath and Varuna /Jala Deva as excretions and progeny. Bhagavan accommodated also hunger and thirst to share the body organs even as Devas. ‘Kahayam Atma! or which is this Self worthy of worship! Tre reply would be that Antaratma or Inner Consciousness is permeated from Brahma to a piece of grass!

**Kaushitaki Upanishad:**[Kaushitaki Upanishad describes how a Departed Soul of extra- **188** ordinary Virtue passes by the glorious ‘Deva Yana’ upto ‘Brahma Loka’ and on his entry, Brahma asked as to who that entering Soul was and pat came the reply: Aham Brahma asmi!] Concepts of Deva Yana upto Brahma Loka: Description of Devayaana upto Brahma Loka ; As an Illustrious Individual reaches Brahma Loka, his identity explained ;What Brahma is that Praana the Life Energy of Universe is!Inner Sacrifice and Worship explained- Significance of Ukta or Recitation of Mantras; Worship of Surya to eradicate sins and Chandra for success and wealth.

**Mundaka Upanishad:** Self as the source of Brahman attainable by Yoga, Karma, **192** Tapasya and Truthful -ness; Role of ‘Maya’ and the recourse of Rebirth ; Ultimate Accomplishment, its nature, pattern and emancipation

**Prashnopanishad:** From where and whence Life is born, sustained, departs and reborn? **195**

**Maha Narayanopanishad:** Jatavedaagni invokes Mahalakshmi; Om the Essence of **197** Reality; Tapas-Daana-Dharma to attain Moksha; Other means of Bliss-Procreation, Yajna, Manasika and Sanyasa

#### SECTION FOUR FROM OTHER SOURCES

Varalashmi Vrata: P: 200; Lakshmi and Kubera Pujas: P. 206; Pradhaana Lakshmi-Vishnu Kshetras: P. 207; A few other Vishnu-Lakshmi Swarupa Temples-238; Shri Ram’s Vanavasa Parikrama: 253;

**Conclusion :P. 257**

#### ANNEXTURES:

Ashtottattara Shata Vishnu Sthalaas-259; Ashtottara Shata Divya /Vishnu Kshetras-261; Pradhaana Devi-Sthalas; 51 Siddha Kshetras: Some other Pradhaana Kshetras-261; Pradhaana Melas -262

## ESSENCE OF BHAAGYA-BHOGYA-YOGYATA LAKSHMI

*Sumanasa vandita Sudari Maadhavi Chandra sahodari hemamaye, Muniganavandita moksha pradaayani manjula bhaashini Veda nute/ Pankajavaasini Deva supujita sadguna varshini Shaanti yute, Jaya Jay hey Madhusudana kaamini **Adi Lakshmi** sadaapaalaya maam/ Ayi kalikalmashanaashani Kaamini Vaidika Rupini Vedamaye, kshaara samudbhava Mangala Rupini Mantra vaasini Mantranute/ Mangala daayini Ambujavaasidi Devaganaashrita paadayute, Jajajaya he Madhusudanakaamini **Dhaanya Lakshmi** sadaa paalayamaam/ Jayavaravarnini Vaishnavi Bhargavi Mantra swarupini Mantramaye, Suragana pujita sheeghra phalaprada jnaana vikaasini Shaastranute/ Bhava bhaya haarini Paapavimochani saadhu janaashrita paadayute, Jaya jaya he Madhusudana kaamini **Dhairya Lakshmi** sadaa paalaya maam/ Jaya Jaya durgati naashani Kaamini sarva phalaprada Shaastramaye, Radha Gaja Turuga Padaati samaavrita Parijana mandita Loka nute/ Hari Hara Brahma supujita sevita taapa nivaarana paadayute, Jaya Jaya hey Madhusudana kaamini, **Gaja Lakshmi** rupena paalayamaam/ Ayi Khaga vaahani Mohini Chakrini raaga vivardhini Jnaanamaye, Gunagana Vaaridhi Loka hitaishini swara sapta bhushita gaana nute/ Sakala Suraasura Deva Muneeswara Maanavavandita paada yute, Jaya Jaya he Madhusudana kaamini **Santaana Lakshmi** sadaa paalayamaam/ Jaya Kamalaasani sadgatidaayini Jnaana vikaasini gaana maye, Anudinamarchita kumkuma dhusara bhushita vaasita vaadyanute/ Kanaka dhaaraa stuti vaibhava vandita Shankara deshika maanya pade, Jaya Jaya hey Madhusudana kaamini, **Vijaya Lakshmi** sadaa paalaya maam/ Preeta Sureswari Bharati Bhargavi shoka vinaashani Ratna maye, Manimaya bhushita karna vibhushana kaanti samaavrita haasa mukhe/ Nava nidhidaayani kalimala haarini kaamita phalaprada hastayute, Jaya Jaya hey Madhusudana kaamini **Vidya Lakshmi** sadaa paalaya maam/ Dhimi dhimi dhindhimi dhindhimi dundhubhi naada supurnamaye, Ghuma ghuma ghinghuma Shankha ninaada suvaadyanute/ Veda Puranetihaasa supujita Vaidika maarga pradarsha - yute, Jaya Jaya hey Madhusudana Kaamini **Dhana Lakshmi** rupena paalayamaam/*

### Introduction:

Maha Lakshmi assumes innumerable forms of Materialism. Every Being in Srishti especially among human beings- be a man or woman- is essentially selfish or existent for oneself and then for the family and then for others. Indeed a drowning person seeks prioritisation to save the self foremost-then the family and friends and possibly the rest. But why does he or she follow the same principle instead of expecting in the reverse order! That is to rescue from others- the kith and kin , the Society and the Universe at large! Hence the Principle of Karma! Maha Lakshmi bestows what one deserves! The Manifestation of Bhoga- Bhaagya Maha Lakshmi could ONLY BESTOW AS PER ONE'S OWN YOGYATA!

Moreover, *Karmanyedhikaaraste maaphaleshu kadaachana, maa karma phalaheturbhuh maate sangostva karmani/* Bhagavad Gita exhorts that a Being has the liberty of performing 'Action' to one's conscience and Maha Lakshmi the 'alter ego' or the proxy of Paramatma the Unknown Maha Shakti decides on which type of Prosperity or Material End that the Individual be betowed with or to what extent or not at all! *Karmanam buddhi yuktwa hi phalamtyaktwa maneeshanah, janmabandha vinirmuktwaah padaam gacchhantya -naamayam/* Ideally indeed, 'Sat Karma' or presumably a Deed of Virtue of varying degrees in the range of one-to-ten is performed as 'Nishkaama Karma' then Maha Lakshmi alias Maha Maya surely is aware of the kind of dhana-dhaanya and so on to be granted, if so to the extent, and

if not as a negation. Now, invariably one's Karma or Action is -more often than not, performed in the typical frame of human impulses and that is how the negative path leading to one's ruin and hence to be avoided: *Dhyayato vishayaan pumsah sangaste -shuupajaayate, sangaat sanjaayate kaamah kaamaat krodhobhi jaayate, Krodhaat bhavati sammohah sammohaat smritibhramshah, smritibhramshaad buddhinaashah buddhi naashaat pranashyati/* This means that worldly affairs are the causes of desire; non fulfillment of desires leads to frustration and grief or discontentment; this mental state develops anguish and instability; such anger coupled with wrong judgment affects discretion leading to further failures! It is in this context that Upanishads describe that as a human rides on a chariot, his mind - of course aided by the vital breath and his Intellect- is the driver driven by Karmendriyas and Jnanendriyas. Then Devi Maha Lakshmi remains a mute spectator and the grand dreams of the half hearted and none too deserving devotee of hers remain unanswered!

## PART ONE

### Maha Lakshmi Sahasra Naama

*Harih Om/ Naamnaam saashta sahasram cha bruhi Gaargya Maha Matey Mahaa Mahamatey, Maha Lakshmya Maha Devyaah Bhukti Muktyartha siddhaye/ Gargya Vuvaacha: Sanat Kumara maaseenam Dwadashaaditya sannibham, Aprucchya nyogino bhaktyaa yoginaa martha siddhyaye/ Sarva loukika karmabhyo vimuktaanaam hitaaya vai, Bhukti Mukti pradam japyo manubruhi Dayanidhey/ Sanatkumara Bhagavansarvagnopi visheshatah, Aastikya siddhaye nrunaam kshipra Dharmardha saadhanam/ Khidyanti Maanavaa ssarvey Dhanaabhavena kevalam, Siddhyanti Dhaninnasya naiva Dharmartha Kaamanaah/ Daaridra dhvamsini naama keva Vidyaa prakeertitaa, Keva vaa Brahma Vidyaapi kayaa Mrityurvinashyati/ Sarvaasaam saara bhuthaikaava Vidyaanaam keva Keertitaa, Pratyaksha siddhidaam Brahman taa maachakshya Daya nidhye/ ( As Maha Munis addressed Maharshi Gargya to narrate to them the thousand and odd names of Devi Maha Lakshmi whose mere recitation should bestow worldly fulfillment and post-life redemption, in reply Gargya Maharshi addresses Sanat Kumara, the Brahma Manasa Putra, who was like the famous \*'Dwadashaadityas' or Twelve Suns in a Single Form, to enlighten since the latter was an Embodiment of the Knowledge of Chaturvidha Purusharthas or the Four Essential Human Aspirations viz. Dharma or Virtue, Artha or the Means of Accomplishment, Kaama or Objectives , and finally Moksha or the Final Redemption.*

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 [\* Dwadashadityas are Indra, Dhata , Parjanya, Mitra, Aryama, Pusha, Shakra, Varuna, Bhaga, Twashta, Visiswan , Amshuman and Vishnu as per Brahma Purana].  
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Gargya Maharshi further requested Sanat Kumara that the great opulence of Maha Lakshmi's names was such as to guide the Worthy to follow Virtue , that Wealth was the most essential input to lead to Dharma and through it to achieve the Final Goal of Salvation. *Saadhu prushtham Maha Bhaaga Sarva Loka Hithaishinaam, Mahataamesha Dharmascha naanyeshaa miti mey matih/ Brahma Vishnu Maha Deva*

*Mahendraadi Mahaatmabhih, Samproktam Kathayaa myadya Lakshmi Naama Sahasrakam/ Yasyocchaarana maatrena Daaridryaanmuchyatey Narah, Kim punasstajjapaa jnaapee Sarveshtaarthaa nnavapnuyat/* ( Sanat Kumara readily agreed to describe the names of Maha Lakshmi in the interest of Universal Welfare since indeed such requests would occur only to Distinct Category of Persons. The Lakshmi Sahasra Naama was earlier commended by Brahma, Vishnu, Maha Deva and Mahendra as its mere recitation would destroy poverty and fulfill all kinds of human objectives).

*Asya Shri Lakshmi Divya Sahasra Naama Stotra Mahaamantrasya; Ananda Kardama Chiklitendiraa Sutaadayo Mahatmaano Maharshayah; Anushtupcchandah; Vishnu Maayaa Shaktih; Maha Lakshmi Shri Paraa Devataah; Maha Lakshmi prasaada dwaaraa Sarveshtaartha Siddhyarthey Japey vinigohah; kraamityaadi shadanga Nyaasah/* (This recitation of Lakshmi Sahasra Naama Maha Mantra is commended by Maharshis Ananda and Kardama, sons of Chikleendra; is composed in Anushtup-Chanda; Vishnu Maya is the Shakti that propels it; Maha Lakshmi is the Over-All Supreme Goddess; the Objective is the Achievement of all-rounded Realization; and the Japa and Nyasa is of the Unification of Limbs and Thoughts).

**Dhyaana:** *Padmanabha Priyam Devim Padmakshim Padmavaasineem, Padma Vaktraam Padma Hastaam Vandey Padmaamaharnisham/ Purnendu Bimba Vadanaam Ratnaabharana Bhushitaam/ Varadaabhaya hastaabhyaam Dhyaayecchandra Sahodareem/ Ichaa Rupaam Bhagavatassacchida – ananda Rupinee, Sarvajnaam sarva Jananeem Vishnu Vakashathalaalayaam/Yathopadeshm Mula Mantram Japitwaa Yathaakramam Devyai Samarpya, Tatasshaambhavi Mudrayaa Bhru madhye lakshya manusandhaaya Sahasra Naama Stotram Japet/*

(Salutations to You Mother! You are the beloved of Padmanabha or the Lotus- Stalked Vishnu. You are the Lotus Eyed, Lotus Faced, Lotus-Handed, Lotus-Smiled and Lotus Surrounded Devi! You have the Countenance of a fully blossomed Moon; the most tastefully ornamented Figure of all; the renowned Sister of Chandra; always carrying a protective hand sign to all of your Devotees; sporting any Body-Form that you desire; the Omniscient; the Mother of all Beings; and the Permanent Resident of Maha Vishnu's Chest ! Now, may I meditate you with utmost attention and dedication, observing unification of my physical limbs and inner vision right on my Forehead betwixt my Eye Brows!)

*Nityaagataananta Nityaa Nandini Jana Ranjani, Nitya Prakaashini chaiva Swaprakasha Swarupini/ Maha Lakshmirmahakaali Maha Kanya Saraswati, Bhogavaibhava Sandhatri Bhaktanugrahakarini/ Ishaavashya MahaMayaa Maha Devi Maheswari, Hrillekhaa Paramaa ShaktirMaatrukaabeejarupini/ Nityaanandaa Nityabodha Naadini Janamodini, Satyapratyayani chaiva Swaprakashaatmarupini/ Tripura Bhairavi Vidyaa Hamsaa Vaagiswari Shiva, Vaagdevicha MaharaatrirKalaratrirstrilochana/ Bhadrakali Karaalicha Mahakaali Tilottama, Kaali Karaalavaktraam Kamaakshi Kamadaa Shubha/ Chandika Chandarupeshaa Chamundaa Chakradharini, Trailokyajanani Devi Trailokya Vijayottama/ SiddhaLakshmi KriyaLakshmirloka Lakshmi Prasadini, Pratyangiradharaa Vela Lokamataharipriya/ Parvati Parama Devi Brahma Vidyaa Pradaayani, Arupaa Bahurupaacha Virupaa Vishwa rupini/ Pancha Bhutaatmikaa Vaani Pancha Bhutaatmika Paraa/*

( Devi! You are the ever Dynamic and is always on the Move; the Infinite and Ever Lasting; The Origin of Joy and the Source of Contentment to one and all; The Ever Lustrous and the Self-Radiant; You are the Supreme Maha Lakshmi or the Embodiment of Prosperity; Maha Kali or the Supreme Power; Maha Kanya or the Epitome of Virginity; Saraswati or the Source of Learning; Bhoga Vaibhava Sandhatri or

the Bestower of Affluence and Luxury; Bhaktanugraha Karini or the Provider of Kindness to the Devotees; Ishaavasya or the Omni-Present; Maha Maya or the Great Illusion; Maha Devi or the Supreme Goddess; Maheswari or the Distinguished Spouse of Maheshwara; Hrullekha or The Seed of the Letter Hreem; Parama Shakti the Ultimate Energy and Matrukaa Beja Rupini or Mother-Seed of Existence in Totality; the Ever Blissful; the Permanent Instructor; the Originator of Musical Notes; the Greatest Entertainer to humanity; the Embodiment of Truth; the Extraordinary Form of Self-Radiance; the Tripureswari being the spouse of Maha Deva; Bhairavi the wife of Bhairava; the Symbol of Vidya or Knowledge; Hamsa or the Emblem of Purity; Vaagiswari or the Queen of Learning; Shiva or the Better Half of Ishwara or the Sign of Propitiousness; Vaagdevi the Power of Speech; Maharatri the Symbol of Pralaya; Kalaratri the Mark of Deluge; Trilochana or the Three Eyed Representation of Satvika-Rajasika-Tamasika features; Bhadrakali or the Great Protector; Karali the Awesome; Maha Kali the Terminator; Tilottama the most attractive; Kaali the Destroyer; Karala Vaktraam or of the Dreadful Countenance; Kamakskhi or of the Most Spellbinding Looks; Kaamada the Fulfiller of Desires; Shubha or the Bestower of Propitiousness; Chandika or Ever Irate; Chandarupesha or the Form of Dreadfulness; Chamunda the Destroyer of the Demon by that name; Chakradharini or the Possessor of the Wheel of Destiny; Trailokya Janani or the Mother Figure of the Three Worlds; Devi! Trilokya Vijayottama or the Victory Symbol of the Three Worlds: Siddha-Kriya-Loka Lakshmi or the Lakshmi of Stability, Action and of all the Lokas; Prasaadini the Bestower; Pratyangira or the Representation of Terror; Dhara or the Symbol of Endurance like of Bhudevi; Vela or the Sign of Time; Loka Maata or the Mother of the Universe; Hari Priya or the Beloved of Sri Hari; Parvati the Consort of Shiva; Parama Devi the Outstanding of the Womanhood; Brahma Vidya Pradayani or the Conferrer of Brahma Vidya or of the Unique Awareness of the Highest Knowledge; Arupa or the Formless; Bahu Rupa, yet the Assumer of Endless Forms of Beings; Virupa or the Negation of any Form; Pancha Bhutaatmika or the Epitome of The Five Elements of Earth-Water-Illumination-Ether-and the Sky; Vani the Voice and Para or the One Far Beyond the Five Elements! )

*Kalika Panchika Vaagmi Havih Pratyadhi Devata, Deva Mata Sureshana Veda Garbhambika Dhriti/ Sankhya Jaatih Kriya Shaktih Prakritirmohini Mahi, Yagnavidya Mahavidya Guhyavidya Vibhavari/ Jyotishmati MahaMaata Sarvamantraphalarada, Daaridradhwamishini Devi Hrudayagrاندhi bhedini/ Sahasraadityasamkaasha Chandrika Chandrarupini, Gayatri Somasambhutissavitri Pranavatmika/ Shaankari Vaishnavi Braahmi Sarvadeva namaskruta, Sevya Durgaa Kuberaakshi Karavira nivashini/ Jayaa Vijayaa chaiva Jayanti cha-apararajita, Kubjika Kaalika Shastri Veena Pustaka dhaarini/ Sarvagjna Shaktih Shri Shaktir Brahma Vishnu Shivaatmika, Ida Pingalikamadhya Mrinalatanturupini/ Yagneshani Prathaa Daksha Dakshina Sarvamohini, Ashtanga Yogini Devi Nirbeeja Dhyana gochara/ Sarva Tirthashita Shuddha Sarva Parvata Vasini, Veda Shastra Prama Devi Shadangaadi Padakrama/ Shivaadhatri Shubhaananda Yagnakarmaswarupini, Vratini Menakadevi Brahmaani Brahmacharini/*

(Devi Kalika assuming Dark Complexion! Panchika or manifested by the Five Elements; Vaagmi or the Solo Voice; Havih or the Form of Cooked Rice as an oblation to Agni; Pratyadhidevata or the Guardian Deity of Devas; Deva Maata or Mother Goddess; Sureshaana or the Empress of Devas; Veda Gabha or the Conceiver of Vedas; Ambika; Dhriti or the Endurer; Sankhya or the Source of Arithmetic and of Numericals; Jaati or the One who classifies groups of Society; Kriya Shakti or of Controller of Action; Prakriti- the Nature or Maya; Mohini or the Eternal Enticer or the Magician ‘par excellence’; Mahi or the Great Earth; Yagna Vidya-Maha Vidya-Guhya Vidya: the Supreme Know-how of Yagnas, the Possessor of All Round Knowledge and the Fund of Concealed Knowledge; Vibhavari or the Dispeller of Darkness or Ignorance; Jyotishmati or the Giant Fund of Luminosity; the Supreme Mother; Sarva Mantra

Phala Prada or the bestower of the Fruits of Mantras; Daaridra- dhwamsini; Devi! Hridaya Granthi bhedini or the one capable of terminating the intricate chords of anybody's heart; Devi! You are the effulgence and radiation of thousands of Sun Gods; yet Cool like Moonshine as Chandrika herself; you are Devi Gayatri, Somasambhuti or the Wearer of Moon as a Crescent; Savitri the Mother of Vedas; the Omkara Swarupini; Shankari; Vaishnavi; Braahmi; The One Saluted by all the Devas; Served with reverence by Durga Herself; Kuberaakshi or whose mere glances would make a person prosperous; Karavira nivasini or the Dweller of the charming 'Karavira' flowers; the Triumphant; the Ever Victorious; the Great Winner; and the Undefeatable; the Bala Swaripini; Kaalika Devi; Shastri the Erudite; the Ever Carrier of Books and Veena the Stringed Instrument; the Sarvagna Shakti or the Powerful Goddess of All-Round Knowledge; Shri Shakti or the Paramount Power backed up by Brahma-Vishnu and Shivaatmas; 'Idaa-Pingalika Madhya Mrinala Tantu Rupini': Devi Lakshmi is akin to the subtle 'Nadis' or the interior veins of human body (like the tubular stalk of a plant) signifying the stages of Ashtanga Yoga; Yagneshani or the Head of Yagnas; Prathaa or the Celebrity; Diksha or the one who enables to perform Yagnas; Sarva Mohini or the All-Alluring; \*Ashtanga Yogini or She who is best realisable, among others, by Ashtanga Yoga.

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[\*Ashtanga Yoga briefly constitutes the Eight Steps of Yama or Morality, Niyama or Discipline, Asana or the Right Posture of Seating, Pranayama or the Control of Life Force, Pratyahara or Withdrawal of Senses from Worldly Desires, Dharana or Hold-Up of Concentration, Dhyana or Focussed Meditation and finally the Samadhi or Alignment of the Self with the Supreme]

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Nirbeeja Dhyana Gochara or the One who is perceptible by the climactic meditation beyond Beeja Shakti or by the Mantrik Words like 'Hreem' 'Shrim' etc.; Sarva Tirtha Sthita or the Dweller of the various Tirthas; Shuddha or the Symbol of High Purity; Sarva Parvata Vaasini; Veda Shastra Prada or the Unique Enlightener of Vedas and Shastras; Devi! Shadaangaadi Padakramaa or the Classifier of the \*Veda Shadangaas or Six Branches of Vedas viz. Siksha, Chandas, Nirukta, Jyotisha, Vyakarana and Kalpa; Shiva or the impartor of Auspicious -ness; Dhaatri or the Bestower; Shubhaananda or the Provider of Pure Joy; Yagna Karma Swaripini or the Manifestation of Yagna Karyas; Vratini or the End-Receiver of Sacrifices; Menaka Devi or the Eminent Daughter of Menaka viz. Parvati; Brahmaani or the Great Shakti of Brahma Deva viz. Saraswati; Brahmachaarini or the Practitioner of high Celibacy).

*Ekaaksharaparaa Taara Bhavabandha Vinashani, Vishwambharaa Dhaara Niraadhaaradhika Swara/ Raakaa Kuhuramaavasya Purnimaanumati dyutih, Sinivaali Shiva vashya Vaishvadevi Pishangila/ Pippalaacha Vishalakshi Rakshoghni Vrishtikaarini, Dushtavidraavini Devi Sarvopadravanashani/ Sharada Sharasandhaana Sarvashastra swarupini, Yuddhamadhyasthita Devi Sarvabhutaprabhanjani/ Ayuddhaa Yuddharupaacha Shantaashantiswarupini, Ganga Sarawati Veni Yamuna Narmadaapaga/ Samudravasanaavasa Brahmmandashrenimekhala, Panchavaktradeshbhujaa Suddhasphatika sannibha/ Raktaa Krishna sitaapeeta Sarvavarnanirishvari, Kaalika Chakrika Devi Satyaatu Vatukaasthita/ Taruni Varuni Naari Jyeshtha Devi Sureswara, Vishwambharadhara Kartri Galargala Vibhanjani/ Sandhyaaraatrirdivaa jyotsnaakalakashthanimeshika, Urvi Katyayani Shubhra Samsaraarava tarini/ Kapila keelikaashokaa Mallika Nava Mallika, Devika Nandikaa Shantaa bhanjika bhaya bhanjika/*

(Devi! You are the One Word OM that could negotiate us through the Ocean of Dejection and deliver us from the shackles of ‘Samsara’; the whole Universe is hinged and held on you but you are supportless yourself; Adhiswara or Beyond Comprehension; You are the Raaka or the Brightest Moon; Kuhu or the Deity of Full Moon; Amavasya the harbinger of the Shukla Paksha or the impending phase of brightening Moon; Purnima or the Full Bloom Moon itself; Anumati or the one giving consent to the Full Moon; Dhruvi: the Sustainer of the Brilliance; Sinivali or herald of New Moon; Shiva the Symbol of Auspiciousness; Vashya or the Magnetic Force that one gets succumbed to; The representation of \*Vaishwa Devas;

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\*Dhuri and Vilochana for Kanya Shraddhas; Kaama and Kaala in Naimittika Shraddhas; Pururava-Ardra for Parvana Shraddhas; Satya and Vasu in Sapindikarana and Naimittika Shraddhas; Kratu and Daksha are the Vaishwa Devas and so on];

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Pishangila or of Indulgent Physique and of Lenient Nature; Pippala or of the Massive Form of a Banyan Tree providing relief and shade; Vishalakshi or the Broad Eyed and Visioned; Rakshoghni or the Demolisher of Evil Forces; Vrishti Karini of the very cause of Excellent Rains and Crops; Dushta Vidarini or the Dispeller of Immoralities; Devi! You are the Sarvopadrava naashani or the Great Distress Shooter; Sharada or the Bestower of Insight and Perception; Shara sandhana: The One ever-ready to press bow and arrows; Sarva Shastra Swarupini or the Profile of all kinds of Destructive Weaponry; Yuddha Madhya Sthita or the Central Figure of Battles and Sarva Bhuta Prabhanjani or the Terminator of all Evil Elements; Ayuddha or by yourself not prone to Battles; Yuddha rupa or never unhesitant to assume the Fierce Form of Destruction; but basically you are the Shanta or of Cool temperament and Shanta Swarupini or the Symbol of Peace; Devi! You are the Representation of the Holy Rivers like Ganga-Sarasvati-Veni-Yamuna-Narmada; you are the Form of Oceans and indeed of the Totality of the Worlds ornamented with Mountains as your waist-girdle; \*Pancha Vaktra or the Representation of Five Faces of Shiva ;

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[ \*Aghora looking Southwards, Ishaana looking North East, Tat Purusha visioning East, Vamadeva who is North-Faced and Sadyojata facing the West]; \*Dasha Bhujas or of Ten Hands [\* Adya Shakti, Shiva Shakti, Traana /Tri Bhuvana, Maha Lakshmi, Pancha Tatwa Shakti, Narayani, Savitri, Ananda , Nava Durga and Vijaya Shakti];

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Shuddha Sphatika Sannibha or the Devi who sparkles like a translucent crystal; Devi! You assume various complexions of blood-red, black, white, yellow and so on; you are Nireeshwari or the Goddess beyond bounds; Kaalika; Chakrika or the Bhagavati residing in Shri Chakra; Satyaa or of the Emblem of Truth; Vatuka or Brahmacharini; Taruni or an adolescent girl; Varuni or the Varuna Shakti; Naari or a fulfilled female; Jyeshtha Devi or the Elder Sister of Lakshmi who stands for Poverty and Misery; Sureshwari or the Empress of Devas; Vishwambhara Dhara or the Omni Present and the Clutch of the entire Universe; Kartri or the Emblem of Action; Galaargala vibhanjani or the sifter of poison and a clear throat in figurative sense, ie. the Distinguisher of Evil and Virtue; You are the Sandhya or the dawn / dusk; Ratri or night; Diva or day time; Jyotsna or Moon-lit night; Kala-Kashtha-Nimeshika or the

Kaalamaana or Time Calculation comprising kaashta / five nimeshas; Urvi or the Bhu Devi; Katyayani of the \* Nava Durgas viz Uma, Katyayani, Gauri, Kaali, Haimavati, Ishwari, Bhadra Kaali, Chandi and Durga; Shubhra or the Symbol of Purity; Samsaaraarava Taarini or the One who could reach a person to safety through the endless Ocean of Samsaara; Kapila or of red complexion; Keelika or the fulcrum of Existence; Ashoka or the Negation of Despondency; Mallika as the flower of cleanliness and fragrance; Nava Mallika or the garland knit with fresh flowers; Devika or a Baby Goddess; Nandika who turns any body happy; Shanta the Sign of Composure and Self Control; Bhanjika the smasher of impediments and distresses; Bhaya Bhanjika or the destroyer of fears and obstacles.)

*Koushiki Vaidiki Devi Rupaapaadikaatibha, Digvastra Navavastraa cha Kanyaka Kamalodbhavaa/  
Shrisoumyalakshanaatita Durgaa Sutraprabhodikaa, Shradhaamedhaakrutih pragnaadharanevacha/  
Shrutissmritirdhrutirdhanya Bhutirishirmanishini, Viraktirvyapini Mayaa Sarvamayaaprabhanjani/  
Mahendri Mantrini Simhichendrajala Swarupini, Avasthaatraya Nirmuktaa Gunatraya vivarjitaa/  
Ishanatraya nirmuktaa Sarvaroga vivarjita, Yogidhyaanaata gamyacha Yogadhyana paraayana/ Trayi  
Shikaa Viseshajnaa Vedanta Jnaanarupini, Bharati Kamalaabhaasha Padma Padmavati kritih/ Gautami  
Gomati Gauricheshanaa Hamsavaahini, Narayaniprabhadhaara Jahnvi Shankaraatmaja/ Chitraghanta  
Sunandashrirmanavi Shankaratmaja, Stambhini Kshobhini Maari Bhramini Shatrumarini/ Mohini Dweshini  
Veera Aghora Rudrarupini, Rudraikaadashani Punya Kalyani Laabhakarini/  
DevaDurgaMahaDurgaSwapnaDurgaashtabhairavi, Suryachandragnirupachagrahanakshatrarupini/  
Bindunaada kalaatitaa Bindunaada kalaatmikaa/ DashaVayujaakaaraa Kalaashodashasamyuta/*

(Koushiki or the Manifestation of Devi Parvati; Vaidiki or the Personification of Vedas; Devi! You are the Shakti of Surya; Rupaadhika or the One beyond Form and Substance; Atibha or far above comprehension; Digvastra or clad by the Ten Divine Directions of North-East-South-West-North East-South East-North West-South West-Skyward-Downward; Nava Vastra or Dressed by Clothes of Novelty; Kanyaka or Virgin; Kamalodbhava or Materialised from a Lotus; Shri or Bhagavati named Devi Lakshmi; Soumya Lakshana or of Tranquil Features; Ateeta Durga or the Insurmountable Fortress; Sutra prabhodika or the Famed Teacher of Veda Sutras and their Interpretations; Shradha or Forbearance and Fortitude; Medha or Intellect; Kruti or Configuration; Pragna or the Faculty of Self-Realisation; Dharana or the Capability of Memory; Kanti or Effulgence; Shruti-Smriti-Dhruti-Dhanya or the Originator-Sustainer- Approver of Vedas and Shastras; Bhuti or the Creator of Prosperity; Ishti or the Initiator of the Sacred Homa Karyas; Manishini or the Provider of Discretion and Practical Sense; Virati or the Detached or Disconnected from Mundane Activities; Vyapini or the All-Pervasive; Maya the Great Illusion; Sarva Mayaa Prabhanjani or the Destroyer of all Misconceptions and Deceptions; Devi! You are indeed superior to Mahendra; Mantrini or the Administrator of all Mantras and hymns; Simhi or the fierce Lioness that encounters all kinds of Evil; Indrajala Swarupini or the Portrait of all types of Supernatural Charms and Skills; Avasthaatraya nirmukta or the Negation / Contradiction of the Natural Features of Jagriti-Nidra-Swapna or Awakeness-Sleep and Dreams; Gunatraya vivarjita or the Subduer of the Satwika-Rajasika-Tamasika Gunas; Ishanatraya nirmukta or the Conqueror of Natural Aspirations of Wealth-Health-Fame; Sarva Roga Vivarjita or the vanquisher of diseases and physical infirmities; Yogi dhyanaanta gamya or the Ultimate Goal of Yogic Meditation; Yoga dhyana parayana or the Unique Practitioner of Yoga Dhyana; Trayishikhaa or the possessor of three tresses of hairs viz. the Ruk-Yajur-Sama Vedas; Vedanta Jnana Rupini or the Paramount Expert in the Knowledge of Vedangas as afore mentioned; Bharati or Saraswati Devi; Kamala or Devi Lakshmi whose Emblem is a Lotus; Bhasha the Incarnation of Language or the Expression of Ideas and Thoughts; Padma the manifestation of Lotus; Padmavati or the One seated and

surrounded by Lotuses; Kriti or the consequence of a Deed; Goutami the Offspring of Goutama Muni; Gomati materialised in the Form of a Sacred River; Gauri the Sign of Whiteness or Purity viz. Parvati renamed since she did Tapasya to change her body complexion from Darkness to Fairness; Ishani the Queen of Ishana Direction / North East or the Spouse of Ishwara; Hamsavahini or the One riding on Swan; Narayani; Prabhadaara the incessant flow of Illumination; Jahnvi or the daughter of Jahnu Muni in the Form of Holy Ganga; Shankaraatmaja or the materialised Soul of Maha Deva; Chitra Ghanta or the Inimitable Bell that warns the Wicked and guides the Virtuous; Sunanda or the Benefactor of Delight; Shri ot the Icon of Opulence; Maanavi the daughter of Manu or the Perfection of Womanhood; Stambhini or the Symbol of Perpetuity; Kshobini or the Fuming Dissenter of Immorality; Maarini the demolisher of Evil; Bhraamini or the Turner of the Wheel of Fortunes; Shatru Marini or the unsparing eradicator of the Opponents; Mohini the Mesmeriser; Dweshini the Detester of any thing wreched; Veera the Pictogram of Bravery; Aghora the opposite of dreadfulness or of pleasantness; Rudra rupini or the Personification of Catastrophe; Rudraikadashani or of the Unified Presentation of \*Eleven Rudras ;

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\*viz. Mahan, Mahatma, Matimaan, Bhishana, Bhayankara, Ritudhwaja, Urthwakesha, Pingalaksha, Rucha, Shuchi and Kaalagni; Punya or the Resultant Fruits of Virtue; Kalyani the Profile of Auspiciousness; Laabha Karini or the Provider of Earnings and Proceeds; Deva Durga or Insurmountable even to Devas; Maha Durga or the Profile of Inexplicability; Swapna Durga or the Utmost Mystery even in Dreams;[ alternatively explained as the Great Enigma unknown in reality or wakefulness, or in the stage of sleep or in dreams];

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\*Ashta Bhairavi;

[\*Mahakali worshipped for Shani Dosha, Neela Saraswati for Brihaspati Dosha, Chhinna mastaka worshipped for determination, Lalitha Tripura Sundari or Shodashi to correct Budha Dosha, Tripura Bhairavi / Kaala Bhairavi to accomplish Success, Dhumavati or Alakshmi worshipped by way of Black Magic, and Bagalamukhi or Peetaambari prayed to for the success of Legal Cases. In addition, Matangi is worshipped to resolve family problems and Kamala Devi to alleviate Shukra Dosha];

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Suryachandraagni Rupa or Devi Lakshmi possesses three eyes of Sun-Moon-Agni; Graha Nakhatra Rupini or the Representation of Planets and Stars on the Sky; Bindu Naada Kalaateeta or far beyond the comprehension of a Bindu or Dotted Point on a Surface in Arithmetic or a minute note or mark of Naada or Sound Wave; yet Devi! You are the Bindunaada kalaatmika or very much situated in the Bindu as well as the minute sound! \*Dasha Vayu Jayaakaara!You are the conqueror of Ten Kinds of Wind Energy ;

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[\* comprising five types of Vayu viz. Praana or breathing vital Air; Apaana or Elimination of waste; Udaana or Sound producing; Samana or digestive and Vyana which enables muscular movement of expansion and contraction; and five more Upa Vayus viz. Naaga for blurping; Kuram for blinking; Devadutta for yawning; Krikala for sneezing and Dhananjaya for opening and closing heart valves]

\*Kalaashodasha samyuta: Devi Lakshmi involves sixteen Kalas or Phases of Chandra from Amavashya (New Moon) upto Purnima (Full Moon); [ It is also stated that there are Shodasha Matrikas too viz. *Gouri Padma Shachi Medha Savitri Vijayaa Jayaa, Devasena Swadhaa Swaahaa Maaturey LokaMaturey, Shanti Pushti Dhruti Tushti Kula Devata Atma Devatah*]

*Kaashyapi Kamaladevi Naadachakranivashini, Mridhadhaaraa Sthiraa Guhyaa Devika Chakrarupini/ Avidya Sharvari Bhunja Jambhasura nibarhani, Shrikaya Shrikala Shubhra Karma nirmula karini/ Adilakshmirgunaadhara Panchabrahmatmikaparaa, Shritirbrahmamukhavaasa Sarvasampattirupini/ Mritasanjivani Maitri Kamini Kamavarjita, Nirvana margadaa Devi Hamsini Kaalika Kshamaa/ Saparya Guninibhinna Nirgunaakhandita Shubha, Swamini Vedini Shakyaa Shambhavi Chakradhaarini/ Dandini Mundini Vyaghri Shikhini Somasamhatih, Chintamanischidanandaa Panchabaanaprabodhini/ Banashrenissahasrakshi Sahasrabhujapaaduka, Sandhyabalistrisandhyakya Brahmandamanibhushana/ Vasavi Vaaruni Sevaa Kulikaa Mantraranjani, Jitapranaswarupaacha Kantaa Kamyaa Varapradaa/ Mantrabrahmana Vidyarthaa Naadarupa havishmati, Atharvanisshrutisshunyaakalpanaavarjita Sati/ Sattaajatih pramameyaapramitih pranahagatih, Aparna Panchavarnaacha Sarvadaa Bhuvaneshwari/(Devi! Kashyapi the daughter of Kashyapa Muni; Kamala Devi; You are the permanent resident of Shri Chakra from where emerges the Omkara Shabda eternally; Mridhaadhaara or the hold of Maha Deva himself; Sthira or Everlasting; Guhya or the most confidential; Devika! Chakra rupini or of the Form of Shri Chakra; Avidya or Ignorance which again is your Creation too; Sharvari or your own display of darkness in the nights; Bhunja or surfeit with physical joys; Shambasura nibarhini or the slayer of Shambhasura by assuming the Swarupa of Indra; Shrikaya with high propensity of acquiring prosperity; Shri Kala or the Symbol of Chatusshashti Kalas or Art Forms; Shubhra or the paragon of Cleanliness; Karma nirmula karini or the negation of Activities and Affections; Adi Lakshmi or the basic incarnation of Maha Lakshmi presided by \*Ashta Lakshmis viz. Dhanya-Dhairya-Santana, Vijaya-Vidya-Bhagya- Gaja and Vara Lakshmis; Gunaadhaara or the Primary Support for the Tri- Gunas of Satvika-Rajasika-Tamasika nature; \*Pancha Brahmamika paraa or beyond the Swarupas of Brahma-Vishnu-Rudra-Ishana-Sadashivas; Shrutih or the Embodiment of Vedas; Brahma Mukhaa -vaasa or the One as Saraswati residing right on the face of Brahma; Sarva Sampatti kaarini or the Provider of all types of wealth ; Mrita Sanjeevani or the One who could revive the life of the dead; Maitri or Devi you are the personification of pure friendship; Kaamini or of intense craving; yet Kama varjita or the One fully devoid of desires; Nirvana maargada or the beacon light of the path towards Salvation; Devi! Hamsini or Hamsa the Representation of Spotlessness; Kalika! Kshama or the Image of forbearance; Saparya or the most worthy of worship with \*Shodashopachaaras[\*or the proverbial Sixteen Services like Aavahana-Aasana- Padya-Arghya- Achamaniya-Shudhodaka Snaana Naivedyadaka-Vastra-Pushpa- Gandha-Dhupa-Deepa- Naivedya- Taambula-Neerajana-Prarthanaas].*

Gunini or the Fund of Excellent Traits; Bhinna or the Distinguished or Outstanding; Nirguna or Devoid of Characteristics; Akhandita or Fully Integrated or Composite; Shubha or the Auspicious; Swamini or the Illustrious Master of Life; Vedini or the One who indeed is recognizable through appropriate means like Dhyana, Yoga and devotion; Shambhari the Maya or the colossal hallucination; Chakra dharini or the Devi ever existent in the Huge Wheel of Samsara; Dandini the Unsparing Punisher; Mundini the wearer of slashed wicked heads as a garland; Vyaghri or the ferocious hunter of crooks; Shikhini or the Ever-Charming and Proud Peahen; Soma samhati or the own sister of Chandradeva; Chintaamni or the fulfiller of each and every wish; Chidananda or the Ever Happy; Pancha Bana Prabodhini or the Utiliser the legendary \*Five Arrows of Flowers (viz. Harshan, Rohan, Mohan, Soshan and Maran stated to have been

gifted by Brahma to his son Pushpavan or Manmatha instrumental to Shiva's wedding to Parvati at the latter's risk of his own Life!); Bana Shreni or the One with endless stock of Arrows ready for use against the Evil Powers; Sahasraakshi or the Devi with myriad eyes to discover traces of malevolence; Sahasra bhuja paduka or the Devi with her countless hands and feet ready to pounce on the malicious; Sandhyavali or the Controller of three Sandhyas viz. morning-noon-evening; Tri Sandhyabhyaa or the bright manifestation of the Three Sandhyas; Brahmanda mani mekhala or the One who has Universe as her girdle as an ornament; Vasavi or the might of Indradeva; Vaaruni Seva has the services of the capability of Varunadeva at her disposal; Kulika or of excellent family lineage; Mantraranjani or the One who is thrilled by the chanting of Matras; Jitaprana Swarupaacha or of the Swarupa that conquers the Inner Souls of her devotees; Kanta or has the bewitching effect on all the Souls; Kanya Varaprada or the One that grants the desires of each and everybody; Mantra Brahmana Vidyarthaa or the Scholar-Student of Brahma Vidya Mantra; Naadarupa or the Everlasting Expression of Sound called Omkara; Havishmati or the One who makes oblations of Havis to Agnideva; Atharvani Shruti of the Chaturvedas viz. Ruk-Yajur-Saama-Atharva Vedas; Shunya or Devi you are the Form of Nothingness and mere Maya; Kalpanaa Varjita or The Reality without Fanciful Imagination; Sati the Illustrative Spouse of Maha Deva called Dakshayani who was offended by her father's negligence to her husband and resorted to Self-Immolation only to be reborn as Parvati; Sattaa Jaatih or belonging to the lineage of Aristocracy and Nobility, Devi is of 'Pramameya' characteristic or capable of assesment of the sincerity of her devotees; She is 'Apramita' or has no frontier- limitations; Pranadaa or Life Provider and the Gati or the destiny and the Last Refuge! Devi! You are Aparna or Parvati, Pancha Varna or of Five Complexions; Sarvadaa or the fulfiller of every wish; \*Bhuvaneshwari or the Queen of Chaturdasha Lokas (Fourteen Bhuvanas viz Seven Adholokas of Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talaatala, Mahatala, Rasatala and Paatalas besides the Sapta Lokas of Bhuloka, Swarloka, Maharloka, Janarloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka).

*Trailokyamohini Vidyaa Sarvabhartri Kshar aakshara, Hiranyavarna Harini Sarvopadravanaashani/  
Kaivalyapadavirekha Suryamandalasamsthita, Somamandalamadyasthaa Vahnimandala samsthitaa/  
Vayumandalamadyasta Vyomamandalasamsthita Chakrikachakramadyastha Chakramargapravartini  
Kokila kulachakresha pakshatih panktipaavani, Sarva Siddhantamargastha Shadvarnaavara varjita/  
Shata Rudraharaahantri Sarvasamharanakaarini, Purusha Pourushi tushtissarva tantra prasutikaa/  
Arthanaarishwari Devi Sarva Vidyapradaayani, Bhargavi Yaajushi Vidya Sarvopanishadaasthitaa/  
Vyomakeshaakhilapraanaa Panchakoshavilakshana, Panchakoshatmika Pratyakpanchatmika Shivaa/  
Jarajjaraa Janitri cha Panchakarmaprasutika, Vaagdevyaabharanaakaaraa Sarvakamyasthita sthitih/  
Ashtadashachatusshashthipeethika Vidyayayuta, Kaashikaakarshanashyaamaa Yakshinikinnareswari/  
Ketakimallikaashokaa Varaahi Dharanidhruva, Naarasimhimahograsya Bhaktaanaamaartinaashani/*

(Devi! You are the supreme enchantress of the Trilokas or the Adho-Bhu-Urthva Lokas; the Incarnation of Vidya; Sarva Bhatri or the Preserver of One and All; Ksharaakshara or the Transient yet the Everlasting Universe; Hiranya Varna or the Gold Complexioned Entity of Distinction; Haarini or the Slayer of the Immoral; Sarvopadrava Naashani or the Extinguisher of all Calamities; Kaivalya Padavi Rekha or the Periphery of the Path of Kaivalya; You occur in the Surya Mandala; You are right at the Center of Chandra Mandala; You exist in the Agni Mandala; You are again right in the Center of Vayu Mandala and also happen to be in the Vyoma (Sky) Mandala; You are Chakrika or the Wheel of Destiny; the Chakra Madhyastha or the Center of the Wheel and Chakra Marga Pravartini or the One who travels inside as also Regulates the Wheel as its axis; Devi! You are like a Koel and all the Living Beings in Creation like Koels imitate and simply follow the regulations laid by you; Pakshatih or You are the Form

of Shukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha alike; Pankti pavani or the Liberator and Sanctifier of the Ongoing Generation of humanity; Sarva Siddhanta Margastha or the One who laid down the paths of Theories and Practices; Shadvarna or the One who is possessive of Six Complexions of Blue- Black-Red-Orange- Yellow and Green; Vara Varjita as She requires no boons but bestows them; Shata Rudra Hara or the Sacred names of Hundred Rudras [as given in Skanda -Linga-Shiva Puranas and Viveka Chintaamani]; Hantri the destroyer of the Sinful; Sarva Samhara karini or the Terminator of Srishti at the time of Pralaya; Purusha or the Sanatani of Creation; Pourushi or of the Maha Shakti; Tushti or the Emblem of Happiness; Sarva Tantra Prasutika or the One who gave birth to All kinds of Tantras; Artha Naareeswari establishing firmly that Parameshwara is both Purusha and Prakriti; Devi! You are the Vidya your self and the bestower of Vidya in all branches of Knowledge; Bhargavi or the memorable daughter of Bhrigu Maharshi; Yajushi Vidya or the Knowledge of the Sacrifices as per Vedas; Sarvopanishada sthita or Present in all Upanishads in a Subtle Forms; Vyomakeshaa or with the endless Sky expressed in your hairs! Akhila Praana or the Representation of all the animate and inanimate Beings in Creation;\* Pancha kosha Vilakshana or Unaffected by Five Sheaths of human body viz. Annamaya, Praanamaya, Manomaya, Vignaanamaya and Manonmakosha maya; in fact, Devi! You are the Pancha koshaatmika yourself as the presence of these Koshas most essential for the sheer Life of a human being; Pratyak or evidently felt in the human system; Pancha Brahmamika or the Representation of Brahma-Vishnu-Rudra-Ishana-Sadashiva as already referred to above; Shiva or the Endowment of Auspiciousness; Jagadjaraa Janatri or the Mother Figure of the Universe then and always; \*Pancha Karma Prasutika or the Mother of Creation, Growth, Preservation, Extermination, and Transition before Creation once again; Vakdevi the Goddess of Speech; ‘Aabharanaakaara’ or the tastefully ornamented Image; ‘ Sarvakaamyasthita Stithih’ or the One surely present at the fulfillment of every body’s wishes; \*Ashtaadasha Chatusshaashti Peethika: Devi Sati’s Eighteen Peethas and/ or sixty four Peethaas:

[The \*Eighteen Peethas are listed below indicating the name of the Devi, Place and Body Parts thrown at Sati Devi’s Physique viz. Shankari, Sri Lanka, Groin; Kamakshi, Kanchi, Back part; Shrunkhala, West Bengal’s Pradyumana, Stomach; Chamundi, Mysore, hair; Jogulamba, Adampur, AP, Upper Teeth; Bhramaramba, Shrishaila, AP, Neck; Maha Lakshmi, Kolar, Maharashtra, Eyes; Ekaveera, Nanded, Maharashtra, Right Hand; Maka Kali, Ujjain, MP, Upper Lip; Puruhutika, Pithapuram, AP, Left Hand; Purnagiri, Tanakpura, Uttarakhand, Navel; Manikyamba, Draksharama, AP, Left Cheek; Kamaakhya, Gauhati, Assam, Yoni; Lalitha Devi, Prayaga, UP, Fingers; Vaishnodevi, J&K, Head; Sarva Mangala, Prayaga, Vakshasthala; Vishalaakshi, Varanasi, UP, Wrist; and Saraswati, Shringeri, Karnataka, right hand. The Sixty Four Peethas include the popular Devis viz. Maha Maya at Chandanwadi near Amarnath, J&K, Throat; Shiddhida or Ambika at Jwaalamukhi, Kangram(Pathankot), Tongue; Ambaji ,Gujarat, heart; Maha Shira, Guhyeshwari, Khatmandu, Nepal, Knees; Dakshayani Manasarovara, Mt. Kailash, right hand; Bhadrakali, Kurukshetra, Haryana, ankle bone; Gayatri at Pushkara, Ajmir, Bracelets; Narayani at Shucheendram, near Cape, Tamil Nadu; Teeth and soon]; Vidyayuta or the Personification of Knowledge; Kaalika or Kaalika Devi; Aakarshana Shyama or the One who mesmerises with her Black Features; Yakshini or the Deity of Yakshinis; Kinnareshwari or the Goddess of Kinnaras famed for singing; Ketaki-Mallika-Ashoka or the Floral Representation of the concerned Flowers; Vaaraahi or the Spouse of Varaha Murti the Incarnation of Vishnu; Dharani or Bhu Devi the one Saved by Varaha Deva; Dhruva the One Ever Steadfast; Naarasimhi or of the Shakti of Narasimha, Saviour of Prahlada and the Slayer of the Demon Hiranyakashipu; Mahograasya or the Colossal Consumer and re-creator of Matter; ‘Bhaktaanaamarti -naashani’ or the Devi who destroys the distresses of the devotees].]

*Antarbala Sthiraalakshmir jaraamarana naashani, Shriranjita Mahakayaa Somasuryargni lochana/  
 Aditirdevamaatachaavyashta putrashta yogini, Ashta Prakritirashtaashata Vibhrajadvikritaakritih/  
 Durbhikshadhvamnsini Devi Sita Satyacha Rukmini, Khyatija Bhargavi Devi Devayani Tapaswini/  
 Shaakambhari Mahashona Garudoparisamsthita, Simhaga Vyaghraha Devi Vayugaacha Mahadriga/  
 Akaaraadi Kshakaaranta Sarvavidyaadhidevata, Mantravyakhyananipuna Jyotishshastraikalochana/  
 Idapingalikaamadhyasushumna grandhibhedini, Kalachakraashritopeta Kalachakraswarupini/  
 Vaisharadi Matisreshtha Varishtha Sarvadipika, Vanayaki Varaaroha Shronivela Bahirbalih/ Jambhini  
 Jrumbhini Jrumbhakarini Ganakaarika, Sharani Chakrikaanantaa Sarvavyadhi chikitsaki/ Devaki Deva  
 Sankaashaa Vaaridhih Karunakara, Sharvari Sarvasampanaa Sarvapaapa prabhanjani/  
 Ekamatradwimatratra Trimatracha tathaapara, Arthamatraapara Sukshmasukshmaarthaparapara/*

(Internally very tough, besides being sturdy physically too, Devi Lakshmi! You are ever unwavering; the terminator of the cycle of births and deaths; Shri Ranjita or dazzling due to opulence; Maha Kaya or of a Giant Figure; Suryachandraagni lochana or of the Three Eyes of Surya, Chandra and Agni; Aditi Devi / Deva Maata or the Illustrious Mother of Devas; Ashtaputra or Devi like Devaki the Mother of the Eight Sons; Ashta Yogini or the One realisable by the Eight Yogas of Yama-Niyama-Aasana-Pranayama-Pratyahara-Dharana-Dhyana-Samdhhi already referred to earlier above; \*Ashta Prakritis are the Pancha Bhutas, Sun, Moon and Paramatma as explained as follows: *Prithivyo bhava Aapassarvah Vuyu Bhimah Akashasya Mahadevah, SuryasYugrah Chandrasy Somah Atman Pashupatih/* ; Ashtashta Vibhrajadvikritaakritih or the Sixty Four Kalaas or Art Forms as illuminated by Devi; Durbhiksha dhvamnsini or the uprooter of shortages of Material Wealth; Devi! You are of the Images of Sita, Satyabhama, Rukmini, Khyatija or the daughter of Khyati, Bhrgu, Devayoni and the illustrious Tapaswini or the Murti of Intense Meditation; Shakambhari or the Deity of Shaakas or Vegetables that sustain human life; Maha Shona or of the Incarnation of Blood red complexion; Garudopari samsthita or the One carried rightfully by Garuda to Places; Devi! You assume the Forms of Lions, Tigers, fierce Wind or of huge Mountains; indeed you are the Goddess representing each alphabet in the Language right from A-kaara to Kshakaara! You are indeed the divine Personification of Vidya excelling in all Branches of Knowledge; Mantra Vyakhyana Nipuna or the Unique Interpreter of Mantras; the exceptional visualiser of Jyotisha Shastra; Devi! you are the remarkable cracker of the Sushuma Grandhi which is between the Ida and Pingalika Grandhis in the context of yogic practice; Kalachakarayopeta or the Goddess occupying Kala Chakra and are the Destiny Maker of all the Beings in Creation; indeed you are the Kala Chakra yourself; Vaisharadi or Singularly Proficient in all branches of Science and Arts; Matisreshtha or the most Superior in Mental Faculties; Varishtha or the Loftiest; Sarva Deepika or the Ultimate Provider of Brilliance; Vainayaki or possessive of the might of Vinayaka; Varaaroha or Top Boon Provider; Shroniveda or in the thick of Vedas; Bahirbalih or the Provider of physical power; Jambhini or conceited with her charm; Jrumbhini or propelled up all over; jrumbhakarini the cause of the blow up or of great magnitude; Gana kaarini or the Creator of Massive Armies; Sharani or the High Point of Refuge; Chakrika or the One Prime Mover of the Wheel of Destiny; Sarva Vyadhi Chikitsaki or the Supreme Physician of all kinds of diseases; Devi Devaki or the Mother Figure of Lord Krishna; Deva Sankaasha or of the Spondour of Devas; Vaaridhih or of the Form of Oceans; Karunakara or the One who is totally Merciful; Sharvari or ‘Shashinam punaroti Sharvari’ or the One who announces Moon is Sharvari ie Night or Darkness; Sarva Sampanna or the One who is Fully Accomplished; Sarva Paapa Prabhanjani or destroys all kinds of Sins; Ekamatra or the Single Syllable or Sound viz. ‘Om’ representing the fully conscious state; Dwimatra or the Double Syllable representing the State of Semi-Consciousness; Tri

Matra stands for Slumber or Sleep; Aparā is the Tureeya State of Swapna or of Dreams; Artha Matra is stated to be of Anuswara or a portion of Pranava; Parā is the State of Brihad or Macro Existence where the Inner Being is aligned with Paramatma; Sukshma or of Minute/ Micro Existence; Sukshmaartha or of such Speciality when the merger of the Minute with Cosmos is achieved which is of the Most Specialised Nothingness).

*Ekaveeravisheshaakhya Shashthidevi Manaswini, Naishkarmyanishkala Lokagnaanakarmaadhikaguna/  
Sabandhvaanandasandohaa Vyomakaara nirupita, Gadyapadyatimika Vani Sarvaalankaara sumyuta/  
Sadhubandhapadanyaasaa Sarvoukaaghatikaavalih, Shatkarmikarkashaakaara Sarvakarmavivarjita/  
Adityavarnaachaparnaa Kaamini Vararupini, Brahmani Brahma Santana Veda Vageswari Shiva/  
Purananyaya mimaamsa Dharmashastraagamashruta, Sadyo Vedavati Sarva Hamsi Vidyahidevata/  
Vishweshwari Jagaddhatri Vishwanirmana karini, Vaidiki Vedarupacha Kaalika Kalarupini/ Narayani  
Mahadevi Sarva Tatwa pravartini/ Hiranyavana rupacha Hiranya pada sambhava,  
Kaivalyapadavi Punya Kaivalya Gyana lakshita/ Brahma sampatti rupaacha Brahmasampatti kaarini/  
Varuni Vaarunaaradhya Sarvakarmapravartini, Ekaksharaparaayukta Sarva Daridrya bhanjani/  
Pashankushanvita Divya Veenavyakhyakshasutrabhrut, Ekamurtistrayimurtir Madhukaitabhabhanjani/  
Saankhya Sankhyavati Jwala Jwalanti Kamarupini, Jagriti Swapna sampattissushuptisweshstadaayani/*

(The one and only Icon of Bravery; with only special applications of Action; Shashthi Devi, the Goddess of Fertility worshipped by barren women and also referred as Devasena one of the two wives of Skanda Kumara the other wife being Valli Devi; Manaswini or She who is everybody's inner thoughts as wealth is sought after by one and all; Naishkarmya or She has no specific Act of her own as all actions emanate from her only; Nishkala or devoid of any specific characteristic since She is the Epitome of all Features; Loka Gnaana Karmaadhika or She is beyond the World's knowledge and Actions as she is far superior to all conceivable thoughts and Acts; Sabandhwaananda sandoha or the Promoter of Joy to all her devotees who are considered by her as her own family members; Vyomakaara or of the Form of Sky; But, She is Nirupita or has no Form; Gadyapadyatmika or the Personification of Prose or Poetry in Literature; Vani or the Image of Speech; Sarvaalankaara Samyuta or the One with all conceivable kinds of Ornamentation; Sadhubandha pada nyasa or She adjusts her own steps with those of the virtuous cadre of persons; Sarvouka ghatikaavalih: indeed Devi! You are conscious of Kalakrama of the Universe as also of the timing of actions by individuals; \*Shatkarmi or fully involved with of the proverbial Six Acts of humanity viz. learning, coaching, foregoing, beseeching, providing and acknowledging; Karkashaakara or merciless in dealing with the Evil; Sarvakarma vivarjita or She is totally devoid of all Actions as all Acts are of her own motivation; Aditya varna or of the Unique Lustre of Surya Deva; Aparna or Devi Parvati who was stated to have performed Tapasya to Shiva even without consuming leaves; Kamini or the Icon of Love; Vara rupini or the Image of Boons; Brahmani or the Shakti of Brahma; Brahma Santana the Mother of the Brahma the Creator; Veda Vageswari or the matchless reciter of Vedas; Purana Nyaya Meemaamsa Dharma Shastraagama Shruta or the Personification of all the Disciplines of Knowledge such as Puranas, Nyaya or Justice, Meemaamsa or Critical Interpretation and Reasoning; Dharma Shastra, Agamaas or Scriptures, Shrutas or Vedas; Sadyo Vedavati or the Instant Form of Vedas; Sarva or the Omni-Present; Hamsi or Swan the Symbol of Purity and the Carrier of Brahma Deva; Vidyahidevata or the Goddess of the Very Root of Knowledge; Vishweshwari or the Empress of the Universe; Jagaddhatri or the Sole Preserver of the Universe; Vishwanirmana karini or the One responsible for the Construction of the Universe; Vaidiki or the Portrait of Vedas; Veda Rupa or the Formula of Vedas; Kalika Devi; Kaala Rupini or the System of Kalamaana or Time Calculations; Narayani or the

Illustrious Partner of Narayana; Maha Devi or the Supreme Representation of Feminity; Sarva Tatwa Pravartini or the Promoting Institution of the Pancha Tatwas or the Five Elements of Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, and Sky; Kaivaya Padavi or the Regulating Authority of Kaivalya or Salvation; Punya or the Return Fruit of Worthy Deeds ; Kaivalya Jnana Lakshita or the One who is replete with the Awareness of Salvation; Devi! You are the Brahma Sampatti Rupa or of the Accomplished Form of Brahma; Brahma sampatti kaarini or the Unfailing Medium of Achieving Brahma's Unique Opulence; Vaaruni or the Shakti of Varuna Deva; Varunaradhya or worshipped by Varuna Deva; Sarva Karma pravartini or the Organiser of all Actions by various Beings; Ekaakshara para or the Personification of the Single Word OM; Aayukta or the Form of Aksharas or Alphabets; Sarva Daridya Bhanjani or the destroyer of kinds of Poverty; Paashaankushaanvita or the One with a lash and a stick to control the Beings; Divya or Celestial; Devi the possessor of Veena the musical instrument, a Book of Scriptures and a Japa Maala or a rosary; Eka Murti, the Advaita the Singular Form; Trayi Murti or the Trimurti of Brahma-Vishnu-Meheshwara viz. the Creator, Preserver and the Destroyer; Madhu kaitabha bhanjani or She who was responsible of mutual killings of the two Daitya brothers named Madhu and Kaitabha at her instance; Sankhya or the Personification of Numerical Analysis; Sankhyavati the Goddess of Numbers; Jwala or the Eternal Flame; Jwalanti or the Fund of Radiance; Kamarupini or capable of assuming any Form of her wish; Jaagriti-Swapna sampattih- Sushuptih or Devi! You are the One who is Awake, or in a state of Dreams or of Deep Slumber; but always in the Ready State of Fulfiller of One's own wishes.)

*Kapalini Mahadamshtabhrukutikutilaanana, Sarvaavaasa Suvasaacha Bruhatsrishtischa Shakvari/ ChandoganapratishthaKalmaashikarunatmika, Chakshushmatimahaghoshakhadgacharmadharashani Shilpavaichitravidyota Sarvatobhadravasini, Achintyalakshanaakaara Sutrabhashyanibhanjana/ Sarva Vedanta sampattissarva Shastrartha Maatraka, Akaaradi Kshakaaranta sarvavarna kritasthala/ Sarvalakshmi Sadanaanda Saaravidya Sadashiva, Sarvagna Sarva Shaktischa Khecharirupagocchruta/ Animadigunopeta Paraakashtha Paragatih, Hamsayuktavimanasthaa Hamsaarudha Shashiprabha/ Bhavani Vasanaa Shaktiraakritisthaakhilaakhila, Tantra heturvichitraangi Vyomaganaga Vinodini/ Varshaacha Vaarshikachaiva Rugyajussamarupini, Mahanadi Nadi punyaaganya Punyagunakriya/ Samadhigata Labhyartha Shrotavya Swapriyagrana, Namaakshara ParaadeviUpasarganakhanchita/ Nipatorudwayi janghaa MatrikaMantrarupini, Asinacha Shayaanaacha tishthanti bhavanaadhika/*

(Kapalini or the holder of a human skull; Maha damshttra or of huge and powerful jaws; Bhrukuti Kutilaanana or of twisted and thick eyebrows; Sarvaavasa or the One existent in everybody and every where; Suvasa or always existent among the Virtuous; Brihatsrishi or of unimaginably endless Creation; Shakvari or the One riding over a Bull; Chandogana pratishtha or well set in Chandogana or the innumerable variations of Prosody; Kalmashi or of myriad colours; Karunatatmika or the Manifestation of Mercifulness; Chaksushmati or the One present in Common Vision of one and all; Maha ghosha or the immense reverberation of Veda Swaras; Khadgacharma dharaashni or Armed with Sword in Sheath and a Shield suggestive of ready confrontation with the Evil; Shilpavaichitrya Vidyota or the Supreme Master of Shilpa or Sculpture; Sarvato bhadra vasini or the Provider of Security to all always; Achintya Lakshaaakaara or Devi! You are possessive of unimaginable features; the most erudite coordinator of Sutras and Bhashyas or Basic Principles of Dharma and its varied Interpretations cum Appreciations; You are indeed the invaluable richness of Vedarthaas and the Mother Figures of Shastras and their meanings in depth; You are concealed in all the Alphabet Letters ranging from 'A' to 'Ksha'; You are \* Sarva Lakshmi or of Eight kinds of Lakshmi Swarupas of Dhanya, Dhairya, Santana, Vijaya, Vidya, Bhagya, Gaja and Vara Lakshmis; Sadaananda or Ever Joyful; Saara Vidya or the Essence of Knowledge; Sada

Shiva or Ever Auspicious or of the Shiva Swarupa; Sarvajna or the Omni-Scient; \*Sarva Shakti or the varied Forms of Shakti as described in Navaavaranas or Nine Enclosures;

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[\* First Enclosure comprising the Siddhis of Anima, Laghima, Mahima, Ishwita, Vashitwa, Prakamya, Bhuti, Iccha, Prapti and Sarva Kamyas; Eight Matrukas of Brahmi, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Mahendri, Chamunda and Maha Lakshmi; Sarva Devis viz. Sankshobhini, Vidravini, Vashankari, Unmadini, Mahaankusha, Khechari, Beeja, Yoni, Tri- Khanda, Trilokya Mohana, and Prakata Yogini; Second Enclosure: Akarshini Shaktis named Kama, Buddhya, Ahankara, Shabda, Sparsha, Rupa, Rasa, Gandha, Chitta, Dhairya, Smrutya, Nama, Beeja, Atma, Amruta, Sharira, Sarva Ashaaparipuraka and Gupta Yoginis; Third Enclosure Ananga Shaktis of Kusuma, Mekhala, Madana, Madanatura, Rekha, Vegini, Ankusha, Malini, Samkshobana and Guptatara; Fourth Enclosure: Sarva Devis of Kshobhini, Vidravini, Akarshini, Ahladini, Sammohini, Stambhini, Jrumbhini, Vashankari, Ranjani, Unmadini, Sadhika, Sampatti Purana, Mantramayi, Dwandwa Kshayankari, Soubhagya daayaka, and Sampradaya Yogini; Fifth Enclosure: Sarva Devis of Siddhiprada, Sampatprada, Priyankari, Mangala kaarini, Kamaprada, Duhkha vimochani, Mrityu prashamani, Vighna niwarini, Sarvanga Sundari, Soubhagya daayani, Ardha Sadhaka Chakra Swamini and Kulottirna; Sixth Enclosure of Sarva Devis of Sarvajna, Shakti, Aishwarya pradayani, Jnaanamayi, Vyadhi Vinashani, Aadhara, Papahari, Anandamayi, Raksha Swarupini, Ipsita phala prada, Rakshakara and Nigarbha yogini; Seventh Enclosure: Vagdevis of Vashini, Kameshwari, Modhini, Vimala, Aruna, Jayani, Sarveshwari, Koulini, Sarva Rogahara, Rahasya Yogini, Baanini, Chaapini, Paashani, and Ankushani; Eighth Enclosure: Maha Devis of Kameshwari, Vajreshwari, Bhagamaalini, Siddhiprada and Atirahasya Yogini; and finally the Ninth Enclosure of Maha Devis viz. Shri Bhattarika, Sarvaanandamaya Chakra Swamini and Paraapara Rahasya Yogini] ;

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Khechari Rupa Gocchrita or Devi who indeed exists among all the species that fly on the Sky; Animadi Gunopeta or Devi is present in all kinds of Shaktis as described in the first Enclosure above; Paraa Kaashtaa or the Ultimate Destination beyond which there is none; Paraa Gati or the Final Route to the Ultimate; Hamsayuktya Vimaanastha or Devi Lakshmi! You are air borne on the flight drawn by Swans; You are seated comfortably inside the flight; You are the Spendour of Sashi or the Moon; Bhavani or of the Form of Bhava's spouse ie. Parvati; the Vaasana Shakti or of the Power of all Faculties or Aptitudes; Akrutisthaa or has the capacity of assuming any Swarupa of her choice; She is Khila or the Life Force of all the Beings ie. the Charaachara Pranis as also Akhila or the All- Pervasive; She is the Tantra hetu or the Originator of innumerable Tantras or Esoteric Doctrines and Rituals; Vichitrangi or of Strange Physical Limbs ranging from peculiar to the weird; Vyoma Ganga Vinodini or the One happy enjoying in the baths of Akasha Ganga; Varshaa or the Swarupa of Rains; Vaarshika or You cascade boons to devotees as though by rains; Rukyajursaama rupini or as the Form of the Vedas; You are the Mighty Swarupa of Sacred Ganga River bestowing Punya in return to the auspicious deeds that persons perform; You are attainable by the Ashta Yoga climaxing with the Act of Samadhi in Yoga Practice mentioned above; Shrotavya Swapriya Ghruna: it is learnt that you are Self-Esteemed but indeed you are reachable and compassionate; Devi! You maintain well nurtured hand nails and strong body parts and even as a Matrika

and of Mantra Swarupa you are well composed while being seated or in bed you are beyond thoughts and feelings that humanity could ever make guess about.)

*Lakshya lakshana yogaadhyaa taadrupyagananaakritih,Naikarupaanaikarupa sendurupa tadaakritih/  
SamasataddhitaakaaraVibhaktiVachanatmika,SwahakaraSwadhaakara Shripratyardhaanaganandini/  
Gambhira Gahanaaguhya yonilingardha dharini,Shesha Vaasukisamsevyaa chapalaapara varnini/  
Karunyakarasampattih kilakrunmantra kilika,Shaktibeejaatmika Sarvamantreshthaakshaya kaamana/  
Agyeyi Parthiva Aapya Vayavya vyopmaketana, Satwajnaanatmikananda Brahmi Brahma Sanaatani/  
Avidya Vasana Maya Prakritissarvamohini, Shaktirdharana Shaktischa Chidachicchakti yogini/  
Vakraruna Maha Maya Marichirmadamardini, Viratswaha Swadha Shudda nirupastissubhaktigaa/  
Nrupatia dwayi Vidya Nityaanitya Swarupini, Vairajamarga Sanchaaraa Sarvasatpatha darshini/  
Jalandhari mridanicha Bhavani Bhavabhanjani, Traikalika Jnaanatanustrikaala Jnanadaayani/  
Naadaatita Smritih Pragna Dhatrirupaa Tripushkara, Parajitaa Vidhaanajna Viseshitagunatmika/*

(Devi! You are identifiable and approachable by the Yoga Route either as a mere Aim without any Swarupa or in an Image Form with Lakshanas or Features; or in a swarupa of what a devotee desires or as of One Single Advaita Rupa or of Several Rupas; You are however recognisable as of Chandra Rupa or as of individual wishes; You are of the \*Form of Grammar like Samaasaas or common compounds of nouns or adjectives and Vibhaktis signifying Karakas or Functions;[viz. nominative vibhakti of Kartas, Accusative vibhakti of Karmas, Instrumental vibhakti of Kaarana; Dative Vibhakti of Sampradana, Ablative Vibhakti of Apadana; Genitive Vibhakti of Sambandha, Locative Vibhakti of Adhikarana and Vocative Vibhakti of Sambodhana] or Vachana or Narrative;

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You are of the Swarupa of Swaha Devi worshipped in Oblations to Agni or Swadha Devi worshipped in Pitru Karyas; You are Gambhira or Ever-thoughtful; Gahana or unfathomable; Guhya or enigmatic; Yoni Lingardha dharni or of Ardhanareshwari Swarupa of both male and female sexes; Sesha Vasuki Samsevyaa or attended for you in service by the Well-known Naga Devas named Sesha and Vaasuki; You are Chapala or the Unsettled and Restless; Varavarnini or of the Distinguished Class pleased to provide boons; Kaarunyaakaara sampatti or the Lavishness of distributing kindness; Keela krut or the Dividing Means of Illusion and Reality; Mantra Keelika or the Facilitator by Mantras; Shakti \*Beejatmika or the Originator or of the \*Beeja Mantras;

[\* OM Haum for Sadashiva, Dum for Durga, Kreem for Kalika, Aim for Saraswati, Kleem as Kama Beeja for Krishna, Hroom for Bhairava, Gam for Ganesha, Kshraum for Narasimha etc.; In respect of Maha Lakshmi the Beeja Mantras are : Shreem-Hreem-Aim; Lalita Devi: Ka Ye Ee La Hreem];

Sarva Mantreshtha or Fond of all types of Mantras; Akshaya Kaamana or provider of Endless Desires; You are Agneyi or the Agni Swarupi, Parthiva or of Bhu Swarupini, Aapya or of Jala Swarupini, Vayavya or of Vayu Swarupi, Vyomaketana or of the Flagship of Sky; Satya Jnaanaatikaananda or of the Symbol of Truthfulness, Knowledge and joy; Brahmi or possessive of the Energy of Saraswati, or that of Brahma and Sanatani or the Primordial; You are also Avidya, Vasana, Maya , Prakriti and Sarva Mohini or the Representation of Ignorance, Desire, Delusion, Nature or Prakriti as against Paramatma; Sarva Mohini or the Enthralling one and all; Shaktirdharana Shaktischa or Devi! You are the Embodiment of Shakti, Dharana Shakti or the Holding Capacity, Chidachicchakti or the Enormous Energy of Ignorance and

Illumination alike; Yogni the Supreme Specialist of Yoga; Vaktraruna or of the Unique Countenance of Redness; Maha Maya; Marichi or the famed Goddess of Dawn on the Chariot of the Seven Pigs; Mada mardini or the punisher of the arrogant and haughty; Virat Swarupini; Swaha Devi; Swadhadevi; Suddha or the Insignia of Transparency; Nirupasti or the Proven Existentialist or of Rationalism; Subhaktiga or has enormous Following and Devotion; Nirupita or of Proven Supremacy; Dwayi or of the dual form of Reality and Falsehood; Vidya or the Symbol of Knowledge; Natyaanitya Swarupini or the Murti of Eternal and Fleeting alike; Vairaja Marga Sanchara or the One who travels on the Path of Vairagya or of Extreme Detachment and Objectivity; Satpatha Darshani or the Visualiser of the Path of Virtue and Truth; Jaalandhari or the Slayer of Jalandhara Daitya the son of the Ocean referred to in Padma Purana; Mridani or the Spouse of Shiva; Bhavani or Parvati; Bhavabhanjani or the demolisher of Bhava or Samsara; Traikalika tantu or the regulator of the three Kalaas of the Past-Present-Future; Trikala Jnana dayani or the One who provides the Awareness of the three tenses of Time; Nadaateeta or far superior to Pranava Shabda; Smriti or the Personification of Retention Capacity or Veda Swarupi; Pragjna or Intuition or Reasoning Capacity; Dhatri Rupa or the Picture of Endurance; Tripushkara or the Manifestation of Trimurtis of Brahma-Vishnu-Maheshwara; Parajita or Conquered by Devotion; Vidhanajna or the Expert of Orderliness and Procedure; Visheshita Gunatmika or of Very Exceptional Characteristics).

*Hiranyakeshini Hema Brahmasutra vichakshana, Asankhyeya Paraardhanta Swaravyanjanavaikhari/ Madhujihva Madhumati Madhumasodaya Madhuh, Madhavicha Mahabhaga Meghagambhiraniswana/ Brahmavishnumaheshadi Jaatavrarthavisehaga, Naabhouvahnishikhaakara Lalatey Chandrasannibha/ Bhrumadhye Bhaskaraakara Sarvataraakritirhridi, Krittikadibharanyanta Nakshatreshthyarchitodaya/ Grahavidyatmika Jyotirjyotirvinmati jeevika, Brahmanda garbhini Balaa Saptavaarana Devata/ Vairajottama Saamrajya Kumara kushalodayaa, Bagala Bhramaraambaacha Shivaduti Shivatmika/ Meruvinthyadisamsthaana Kashmirapuravasini, Yoganidra Mahanidra Vinidraa Rakshasaashrita/ Suvarnada Mahaganga panchaakhya Panchasamhatih, Suprajata Suveeryacha Suposha Supatisshiva/ Sugruha Raktabeejaanta Hatakandarpajeevita, Samudravayomamadhyasta samabindusamaashriya/ Sowbhagya rasajeevatu ssaraasara Vivekadruk, Trivalyadisupushtangaa Bharati Bharataashriya/*

( Devi! You are Hiranya Keshini or of Golden Hair; you are also the Expression of Hema \*Brahma Sutras Golden Threads or Vedic Precepts;

[\*Brahma Sutras comprise Four Chapters on Samanvaya or Harmony of Paramatma and Prakriti; Avirodha or Examination of Conflict Points and Reconciliation; Sadhana or the Means to Achieve and finally the Phala of Salvation; Veda Vyasa was stated to have revived the Brahma Sutras and among others Adi Shankaracharya scripted Bhashyaa or Explanations of the Brahma Sutras];

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 Anankhyeya Paraardhanta Swaravyanjana Vaikhari or the Creator of countless words and their roots of Alphabets, consonants and vowels; Madhu Jihva or Honey tongued; Madhumati or Honey minded; Madhu masodaya or the herald of Sweet Honey Months ahead; the Symbol of Honey; Madhavi or the Spouse of Madhava; Maha bhaga or of Unique Parts comprising prosperity, fortune and happiness; Meghagambhira niswana or of Thunderous Voiced; Your incomparable qualities are well known to Trimurtis too; you carry fire in your abdomen, Chandra on your forehead, Sun God between your eyebrows, the entirety of Stardom in your heart; indeed all the Premier Nakshatras from Krittika to

Bharani are deeply engaged at your service; Graha Vidyatmika or the knowledge of Planets is in built in your psyche; Jyoti or the Incarnation of Brightness; Jyotirvinmati or the Habitation of Radiance; Jeevika or Life Itself! Brahmandha garbhini or the Great Conceiver of the Universe; Bala or the Goddess of Adolescence who is the Queen of \*Shri Chakra and of the \*Saptaavarana Devatas viz. Ananda, Sandhya, Uma, Gauri, Kaalika, Tripura and Samhara;

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\*[The Avarana Krama of Specified Devatas is as follows: Avarana I: Pancha Brahmas and AngaMurtis viz. Sadyojata, Vamadeva, Aghora, Tatpurusha, Ishana, Mrityunjaya, and Chandra Shekhara; Avarana II: as \* above viz. of the Sapta Tandava Murtis; Avarana III: Ashta Murtis: Bhava, Sharva, Ishana, Pashupati, Ugra, Rudra, Bhima and Mahadeva; Avarana IV: Ekadasha Rudras: Shambhu, Pinaki, Girisha, Sthanu, Bhargava, Sada Shiva, Shiva, Hara, Sharva, Kapali and Bhava; Avarana V: Pancha Vimshat Amrityas like Chandrashekhara, Umamaheshwara, Vrishabhaarodha, Natya Murti and so on; Avarana VI: Ganapati Rupas (32) like Bala, Siddha, Heramba, Vighna, Ekadanta, Udhama, Dundhi, Sdankatahara, Varada and so on; Avarana VII: Subhramanyas viz. Skanda, Agnijaata, Sourabhya, Kartikeya, Kumara, Shanmukha, Senaani, Guha, Brahmanya, Deshika Murti etc. Avarana VIII: Ashta Bhairavas viz. Asitanga, Ruru, Chanda, Krodha, Unmatta, Kapala Bhashana, Shambhara and Bhairava; Avarana IX: Astra Murtis viz. Aghora, Maha Paashupatastra, Shambhastra, Khadgha –ravarana, Swarnaakarshana Bhairava, Vatuka, Maha Shasta; Avarana X: Veerabhadras: Chaturbhuj, Ahshabhuj, Dashabhuj, Rana, Shodasha bhuj, Dhwatrimshadbhuj, and Aghora Veerabhadraas; Avarana XI: Parivara Murtis: Purusha, Virabhadra, Nandi, Bhringi, Siddhi Vinayaka, Maha Ganesha, Vrishabha, Skanda, Chandesha and Maha Devi; Avarana XII: Vidyeshwaras: Shikhandika, Ananta, Eka Rudra, Ekanetra, Shiva, Sukshma, Shrikantha, Trimurti; Avarana XIII: Dikpayaih: Indradaya, Vajradaya and Arivatadhya; Avarana XIV: Animadi Shiddhaya, Shanmukhadaya and Nidhi Deva; Avarana XV: Dasha Maha Vidya and Dasha Maha Bhairava; Avarana XVI : Maha Prashada Vidya, Rajata Paduka, Swarna Paduka, Ratna Paduka, Chit Paduka and Nirvana Paduka. This Maha Prashada Paddhati is stated to be practised at the Pashupatinath Temple at Khatmandu in Nepal as also at Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu as sourced from Sri Kamakoti Mandali] ;

Vairajottama Samrajya or the Queen of the Tantra Maha Rajya where Devi Viraja resides as the Odyana Peetha Nilaya or where the waist belt of Devi Sati fell and Brahma Yamala Tantra is stated to be practised; Kumara Kushalodaya or the reason of the flourish of the welfare of Skanda Kumara; -\*Bagala of the Goddess of Control or Black Magic among the \*Dasha Maha Vidyas\*viz. Kali, Tara, Shodashi, Bhuvaneshwari, Chinnamasta, Bhairavi, Dhumavati, Bala, Matanga and Kamala and Bagala; Bagala is stated to possess the powers of subduing enemies like sthambhana, jrumbhana, mohana, achalata, aakarshana and so on];

Bhramaramba the spouse of Mallikarjuna of Shrishaila fame; Shiva Duti the hand maid of Lord Shiva and the Soul of Shiva himself; Devi! You are also the Meru Vasini and Vindhya Vasini as also the Goddess of Kashmira pura; Yoga Nidra or the stage of sleep when She is engaged in the review of worldly happenings; Maha in the stage of Pralaya or Universal Extermination; Vinidra or She is the negation of Sleep or never sleeps; Rakshasaashrita or the One who is ever vigilant of the weird actions of Rakshasas so that the necessary actions are taken up; Suvarnada or the Provider of Prosperity and of Golden Opportunities; Maha Ganga or what stands for by way of depth, purity and auspiciousness; Panchakhya

or the Representation of the Five Elements of ‘Prithivya-Aapas-Tejo-Vaayura-Akaashaas’ and Pancha samhatih or the Creator and the Preserver of the Five Elements; Suprajaata or possessive of noble followers; Suveerya or of undisputed valour; Suposha or the Goddess of excellent wellbeing; Supati or possessive of an Ideal husband; Shiva the Picture of Auspiciousness; Sugriha or the Dweller of Place of Sanctity; \*Rakta beejaanta or the killer of the Demon Rakta beeja;

[\*Rakta beeja was the nephew of Shumbha-Nikumbha Brothers- who had the boon of any slash of his body creating so many of blood drops as of himself and Devi Chamundi extended her tongue so much that she lapped up all the drops and decimated the demon and Devi Ambika killed the Demon brothers too eventually];

Hata Kandarpa Jeevita or Devi Lakshmi you are Parvati yourself who revived Manmadha who sought Shiva to entice Parvati and became a heap of Ash due to the latter’s anger and opened his third Eye; SamudraVyoma madhyastha Devi! You are the Great Matter that represents the Space between the Deep Oceans and the High Skies; \*Samabindu Samaashriya or the One surrounded by Bindu Chakra;

\*Bindu the Zero, the Subtle Body or the Supreme State of Universal State of Singularity as represented by Para Shakti of Ishwara Tatwa which Creates, Withdraws and Creates again as that Para Shakti is the characterisation of Icha Shakti, Jnaana Shakti and Kriya Shakti ie of the Supreme Energy of Will-Knowledge-Action; Bindu has the inherent; Bindu has the inherent Tatwas or Aspects of Nivritti-Pratishtha-Vidya- Shanti and Shantyatita that is: Bhu Tatwa-Basis Provider-Vidya or of Restricted Knowledge or Awareness-Shanti or the Eternal Happiness and Shantyatita or Bliss;

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Soubhagya Rasa Jeevaatu or Devi is featured in various kinds of Wealth and Emotions / Mental States; Saaraasaara Vivekadruk or is the Characterisation of varied types of perception and insights; Trivalyadi supushtanga or the Emblem of Three Types of Healthiness viz. Physical, Mental and Psychological; Bharati or Saraswati; Bharataashrita or She who is close to Bharata or the Karmabhumi or alternatively stated She is of the Swarupa of Devi Sita worshipped by Bharata)

*Nadabrahmamamayi Vidyajnanabrahmamayipara, Brahmanadiniruktischa Brahmakaivalyasadhana/  
Kalakeyamahodara Virya Vikramarupini, Badabaagni shikhaa Vaktra Maha kabala tarpana/  
Mahaabhuta Mahadarpa Mahasaaraa Makakratuh, Panchabhutamahagrasaa Panchabhutadhidevata/  
Sarvapramaanasampattissarvarogapratikriya, Brammandantaravahirvyapta Vishnuvakshovibhushani/  
Shaankari vidhivaktrasthaapraravaa varahetuki, Hemamaala Shikhamala Trishikha Panchalochana/  
Sarvaagamasadaachara maryadaayatubhanjani, Punyashlokaprabandhaadhya Sarvantaryamirupini/  
Saamagaana samaraadhya shrotakarna rasaayanaa, Jeevalokaika jeevaturbhadrodaara vilokana/  
Tatitkoti lasatkaantistaruni Harisundari, Meena netraacha Sendraakshi Vishalaakshi Sumangala/  
Sarvamangalasampanna Saakshatmangaladevata, Dehruddipika Diptirbrahma paapa pranashani/  
Arthachandrollasat damshtraa Yagnavaata vilasini, Maha Durgaa Mahotsaaha Mahadeva balodaya/  
Dhakinidya Shakinidya Saakinidya Samastajut, Nirankushaa Naakavandyaa Shadaadharadhidevata/*

(\*Naada brahmamayi or the Form of Naada Brahmi;

[\*Naada or what caused the Union of Purusha and Prakriti; Naada variations are: the Panchamaya Naada or the Source of Subtle Sound, Sukshmamayi Naada or the Minutest Sound, Pashyanti Naada or the

Perceptible Inner Sound or Voice, Medhyamayi or the Intellectual Sound and Vaikhari or the Articulated Sound; again Naada encompasses Five Features viz. Samanyaya or Togetherness of Prakriti and Purusha- Maya and Reality, Sambandha or relationship, Kshobaka or Inducer / Activator; and Kshobhya or the Activated and Kshobana or the Activity or the nion referred to earlier. In brief, Naada is the resultant of Connection-Inducement, Exciter, Excited and Union]

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Vidya or the Moola Vidya or the Awareness of Reality and the Fantasy; Jnana Brahma mayi of The One who is possessive of the Awareness of the distinction; Paraa or the One Beyond of the Awareness; \*Brahma Nadi that enables the subtle flow of Prana Shakti or the Life Force and is called Sushumna Nadi between the Ida and Pingala Nadis in the Language of Yoga; Nirukti or the Inexplicable or the Guhya or the Confidential which is One of the Six Vedangaas viz. Siksha, Chhandas, Jyotisha, Vyakarana, Kalpa and Nirukta; Brahma kaivalya Sadhana or Devi! You are the Unique Means of Accomplishing Brahma Kaivalya or The Supreme Stage of Moksha; You are the Provider of the inordinate power to Demon Kalakeya as a boon; Badabagni Shikha Vaktra or the One with the Extraordinary Countenance spooking Fire; Maha kabala tarpana or the One who is contented with nothing short of large gulplings of Illusions; Maha Bhuta or of the Inimitable Physique; Maha Darpa or the Great Form of Egotism and Pride; Mahaasaara or the Essence of Existence; Maha Kratu or the Exemplary Model of Great Yagnas; Pancha bhuta Mahagraasa or the mouthful gulper of the Five Elements at the Great Deluge; Pancha Bhutaadhi Devata or the Supervisory Goddess of the Five Elements; Sarva Pramaana or the Singular Proof of Every Existence or Action; Sampatti the personification of Wealth; Sarva roga pratikriya or the Top Remedy of all types of diseases; Brahmanda antar bahir vyapta or the One who is spread all over and beyond the Universe; Vishnu Vaksho vibhushani or the Ornamental Occupant of Bhagavan Vishnu's Chest; Shaankari or of the might of Shankara; Vidhi Vaktrastha or the One present in Brahma and His Mouth Piece viz. Sarasvati; Pravara or the Magnificent; Vara hetuki or the Bestower of boons to one and all; Hema Mala or the One is adorned with golden neck lace; Shikha Maala or decked with skulls of Rakshasas; Trishikha or decorated her crown with Tri Murtis; \*Pancha Lochana or Surya Chandraagnis as her eyes besides her own;

[\*Devi is possessive of Five Means of Vision such as Pancha Jnanendriyas (Sense Organs for Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Eating, Touching); Pancha Karmendriyas (Eyes, Nose, Tongue, Mouth, Skin); Pancha Ahamkaras (Mind / Thought, Buddhi/ Understanding, Siddha or Power of Mind and Angaram or Excitement); Pancha Tanmatras ( Light, Sound, Taste, Smell and Consciousness)];

Sarvagama Sadaachara Maryada or She who is the observation and enforcement of all types of Vedic Traditions and Established Regulations; Yatu bhanjani or the destroyer of Evil Forces; Punya Shloka prabandha -dhyā or the Essence of Punya Shlokas; Sarvantaryami rupini or the Omni Present Form of Inner Consciousness; Sama gaana samaraadhya or the One who is prayed through the medium of Sama Veda; Shrotakarna rashaayana or She is happy to hear the sweet commendations of her devotees; Jeeva Lokaika Jeevaatuh or She is the One to provide security to all the Living Beings; Bhadrodaara vicochana or her mere fleeting looks shower auspiciousness; Tatitkoti Lasastkanti or She is the personified Illuminaion of countless lightnings; Taruni or the gorgeous female; Hari Sundari or the Graceful Beauty who conquered the heart of Shri Hari; Meena Netra or Her Looks are like those of glittering fishes; Sendrakshi or reminiscent of Indra's boon of his thousand eyes; Visalaakshi or of those broad and alluring eyes of Parvati Devi settled in Varanasi as Shiva's companion; Sumangala or the Insignia of

Auspiciousness; Sarvamangala Sampanna or the One who gifts away all types auspicious boons to her devotees; Sakshaat Mangala Devata or indeed She is the Readily Perceivable Essence of Auspiciousness; Dehi hriddipitika dipti or She is the personified luster of physique and Inner Self; Jihva paapa pranaashani the alleviator of tongue made vocal sins made by those who deserve; Ardha Chandrallasodramshtra or Half Moon is akin to her glittering smile of teeth; Yagna vaata vilaasini or the hallowed radiance of the Place of Yagna ushers in; her very presence there; Maha Durga or the Supreme Devi who enables the circle of her devotees to overcome all their tribulations; alternatively Maha Durga is like an insurmountable fortress; Mahotsaaha or Personification of keenness and fervour; Mahadeva Balodaya or Devi! You are the Emergence of Maha Deva's own valour; Dhakineedyaa or Dhakini Devata's manifestation of Vishuddha Chakra; Shaakineedyaa or the Rupa of Moolaadhara Chakra; Saakineedyaa or the Presentation of Saakini Devata worshipping you; Samasta jushta or All these Devis are in relentless Puja to you; Niramkusha or of Unbridled Nature; Naaki vandyaa or worshipped by one and all of the Devas; Indeed You are the \*Shadaadhara -Adhi Devata or the Moola Devata of the Six Chakras viz. \*Anaahata Chakra, Aajnaa Chakra, Manipuraka Chakra, Vishuddhi Nilaya Chakra, Moolaadhara Chakra and Swadhishtana Chakra.)

*Bhuvanajnaanisanrenir Bhuvanaakaaaravallari, Shasvatishaswataakaara Lokaangrahaakarini/ Saarasi Maanasi Hamsi Hamsalokapradayani, Chinmudraalankritakara Koti Suryasamaprabha/ Sukhapraanishirorekha Sadadrushtapradayani, Sarvasaamkaryadoshaghni Grahopadruvanashani/ Kshudrajantubhayagnicha Visharogadibhanjani, Sada Shanta Sada Suddhagrihacchidranivarini/ Kalidoshaprashamani Kolaharapurastitha, Gauri Laakshanaki mukhya jaghanyaakriti varjita/ Mayaavidya Mulabhotaa VaasaviVishnuchetana, Vaadini Vasurupaascha Vasuratna paricchida/ ChahandasiChandrahridaya Mantra swacchandabhairavi, VanamalaVijayanti Panchadivyudhakmika/ Pitaambaramayi ChanchatkuostubhaHarikaamini, Nityatathya RamaRaamaRamaniMrutyubhanjani/ JyeshthaKashthaDhanishtantaSharanginirgunapriya, Maitreya MitravindachaSeshyaseshakalashaya/ Varaanisi Vasalabhyaa saaryavartajanastuta, Jagadutpatti samsthana Samharatraya kaarana/*

(Bhuvana jnaana nisshrenih or those Jnanis of the World are enabled to use the ladder to reach Moksha; Buvakaakara Vallari or You are the Emblem of the World; Shasvati the Eternal; Shaswata-Akara or of the Everlasting Form; Lokaanbugraha karini or the Bestower of Compassion to the whole Universe; Saarasi or the Resident of Oceans; Manasi the Dweller of the minds and thoughts of all the Being; Hamsi or the Sign of Purity is in a Swan; Hamsaloka pradayani or the provider of Liberation to Yogis and Tapaswis; \*Chinmudra-Alankrutakara or Devi who is adorned with *Chin Mudra* or the Prominent Gesture of Yogic Meditation touching the hand thumb with the forefinger together signifying the union of inner consciousness with the Supreme or Individual Atma with Paramatma;

[\* Mudras or Gestures or Expressions of Inner Thoughts not only in Yoga but in Natya and various walks of Life ; in HataYoga alone there are stated to be twenty five Mudras, the prominent being *Hridaya Mudra* touching the thumb with the fore finger and the ring finger diverting Prana or Energy from hands to heart and unburden the pent up emotions and feelings in the heart; yet another Mudra is *Yoni Mudra* or the interlocking of each of the hand fingers with thumbs up and fingers down making a hollow in between thus crisscrossing of side energies of hands and balancing the body energies as though the Primal Energy is invoked from Yoni the Creation Source];

Koti Surya Samaprabha or Devi you are the Unique Reserve of the Radiance of Sun Rays; Sukha Prani Shiro Rekha or the Determinant of the Head Levels of happiness to all Beings; Sadadrushta pradayani or the Decider of the measures of Fortune or Hard Luck; Sarva Saankarya doshaghni or the eradicator of all blemishes and excesses ; Grahopadrava nashani or the Alleviator of Family Tribulations; Kshudra Jantu Bhayaghni or the demolisher of fearful hazards of Cruel Animals; Visha Rogaadi bhanjani or the eliminator of poisonous and such other severe diseases; Sadaa Shanta or the Substance of Tranquility; Sada Shuddha or Ever Clean and Impeccable; Grihacchidra nivarini or the One who prevents family break-ups and home dissolutions; Kalidosha prashamani or the Rescuer from the Excesses of Kaliyuga; Kolahala Purasthita or the Prime Occupant of Kolhapuri and the Outstanding Deity of the Famed Temple; Guari or the Gaura Varna / Parvati who was originally of Dark Colour but responding to Shiva's teasing once she resorted to severe tapasya for several years and secured the boon of changing her complexion and features of unimaginable grace and attractiveness; \*Laakshaniki or the Emblem of Lakshanas or Characteristics;

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[\*Devi Bhagavata described the names of Kumaris depending on the age of One year to Sixteen years viz. Sandhya, Sarasvati, Tridha Murti, Kalika, Shubhaga, Uma, Malini, Kubjika, Kaala Samdarbha, Aparajita, Rudrani, Bhairavi, MahaLakshmi, Pitha Nayaki, Kshetrajna, and Ambika; An alternative explanation of Dasha Lakshanas is a provided in Maha Bhagavata Purana as follows: Sarga or Creation, Visarga or Further Creation, Sthanam or Existence, Poshanam or Grace of God, Uthayah or Karma, Manvantaram, Avataras or Incarnations, Nirodha or Return to God Head, Mukti and Ashraya; the Ten Lakshanas are indeed available in Maha Bhagavata Purana while the rest of the Lakshnas are of lesser Lakshanas]

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Mukhya or the Supreme Chief; \*Jaghanyakriti varjita or literally meant that She does not possess the awkward type of physical shape;

[\*Bhagvad Gita in Chapter 14 states: *Urthwam gacchati Satvastha, Madhye tishthanti Rajasah, Jaghanya guna vrittistha Adho gacchati Taamasah/* or Those who are of Satva Guna reach the Upper Worlds, Persons of Rajasika nature tend to attain Earthly births which range from goodness to unawareness; but those with Jaghanya guna of Tamasika or ignorance and meanness are bound to land in Adholokas!];

Maya the Illusion; Avidya the Lack of knowledge; Moola Bhuta or the Very Original Cause of Life; Vasavi or the Manifestation of Indra's Shakti; Vishnu Chetana or the Enliverer of Bhagavan Vishnu from his Yoga Nidra;Vaadini or the Tarka Shastra Swarupa; Vasu Rupa or of the Icon of Affluence or alternatively the Representation of \* Ashta Vasus viz. Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Pratyusha and Prabhasa; Vasuratna paricchada or Bedecked with all kinds of \*Gems viz. Diamonds meant for Venus, Emeralds good for Budha or Mercury, Pearls for Chandra, Yellow Sapphire for Jupiter/ Guru, Red Corals for Mangala or Mars, Rubies for Surya, Gomedha for Rahu and Vaiduryam for Ketu; Chaandasi or the Swarupa of Chhandas; Chandra Hridaya or of the Tranquil Heart of Chandra Deva; \*Mantra Swacchanda Bhairavi or the One who is worshipped by Rasya Tantra -Mantra Practices:

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[\*Some 64 Yoginis have been identified as worshipped including Swacchanda, Ajaika, Chandika, Tara, Vaaruni, Gouri, Indrani, Varahi, Vaishnavi, Naarasimhi, Kaumari, Maheswari, Chamundi, Oshtagriva, Charchika, Betali, Pancha Vaaraahi, Chinna mastika, Vindhya vasini, Jalakaami,

Ghatavara, Kakarali, Virupa, Kuberi, Bhalloki, Viraja, Vikata nayana, Maha Lakshmi, Maha Maya, Rati, Karkari, Sarpasa, Aghora, Rudra -Kali, etc.];

Vanamala or the wearer of a garland of Forest Flowers; Vaijayanti or ornamented with Vishnu's beloved Vaijayanti garland; Pancha Divyaayudhatmika or the Five Celestial weapons viz. Sudarshana Chakra, Panchajanya Shankha, Koumodini Gada, Asi or sword, and Sarangam or bow and Arrows; Peetambaramayi or Devi the one dressed in yellow silk; Chanchatkoustubha or adorned by the Magnificent and ever Mobile Koustubha diamond, Hari Kamini the the Sweet Heart of Shri Hari; Nitya the Eternal; Tathya the Only Reality and Certainty; Rama or the One who mermerises Narayana; Rama or the the Better Half of Avatara Purusha Rama; Ramani or the One the Tempts one and all as the One much sought after; Mrityubhanjani or the lashes at the personification of Death; Jyeshta Devi the Elder Sister of Lakshmi but standing for Impoverishment and Insolvency; Kashtaa or insensitive wood or the Kaala Parimana; Dhanishthanta or of the high stage of Opulence, the Twenty Third Nakshatra of the Lunar System indicative of Travel; Sharangi or of the Shakti of Vishnu Bhagavan's Bow and Arrows; Nirguna Priya or the Beloved of Bhagavan who is devoid of the Three Gunas of Satvika- Rajasika- Tamasikaas; Maitreyi or a devotee of Devi like the Vedic Philosopher wife of Yagnyavalkya whom Lakshmi is fond of; \*Mitravinda or of the Forms of the 'Ashta Mahishis' or One of the Principal Queens of Lord Krishna viz.\* Rukmini, Satyabhama, Jambavati, Nagnajiti, *Mitravinda*, Lakshmana, Kalindi and Maadri; Seshyasheshakalaashaya or She allows liberties taken by her disciples; Vaaraanasi vaasavaa labhya or She grants her vision to those who are the residents of Varanaasi; Aryavarta janastuta or the Public who stay in Aryavarta or the belt area of the Sacred rivers of Ganga and Jamuna are replete with devotions and prayerful tributes to you; Jagadutpathi samsthana samhara traya kaarana or Yor are the Entire Cause of Creation, Sustenance, and Annihilation of the Universe).

*Twamamba Vishnusarvasvam Namestestu Maheswari, Namaste sarvalokanaam Jananyaipunyamurtaye/ Siddha Lakshmi mahakali Maha Lakshminamostutey, Sadyojatadipanchagnirupa Panchakapanchakam/ Yantra Lakshmir bhavatyadiraadyadyetey namonamah, Srishtyadi karanakaravitately doshavarjitey/ Jagallakshmirjagan maatarvishnu patni namostutey, Navakoti Mahashakti samupasya padaambujey/ Kanatsouvarna Ratnadhya Sarvaabharanabhushitey, Anantaniyamihishi Prapancheshwara Nayikey/ Atyucchritapadaantasthey Paramavyomanayikey, Nakaprushthagataaradhye Vishnulokavilasini/ Vaikuntharajamahishi Shriranganagaraashritey, Ranganayaki Bhuputri Krishney Varada Vallabhey/ Koti Brahmaadi samsevye Koti Rudradikirtitey, Matulungamayam khetam Souvarna chashakam tatha/ Padmadwayam Purnakumbhakeeramvaraabhaye, Pashamankusha Shankha Chakra Shula Kripanikam/ Dhanurbanouchaakshamala Chinmudramapibibrati, Ashtadashabhuje Lakshmi Mahashtadashapitha/*

(Our obeisances to you the Mother of All in the Forms of Amba, the Entirety for Bhagavan Vishnu, Maheshwari, the Mother of all Lokas, the Archetype of Auspiciousness; Siddha Lakshmi or the Everlasting Bestower, Maha Kaali, Maha Lakshmi; \*Sadyojataadi or the Five Manifestations of Rudra viz. Sadyojata representing Shrishthi Shakti or of Creation, Vama Deva representing Shiti Shakti, Aghora or of Samhara Shakti or of Dissolution, Tatpurusha or of Tirodhana Shakti or of the Power of Concealment, and Ishana or of Anugraha Shakti or the Power of Blessing; \* Panchagni Rupa or of the Pancha Mukhaagni Vidyas; in other words Devi resorts to oblations to the Panchagnis;

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[\*Chandogya Upanishad refers to the Panchagnis as follows: Antariksha or of Sun, Parjanya or Rain God

Varuna, Prithivi, Purusha and Prakriti; it details the respective oblations to these Panchaagnis are as follows: The first oblation to Agni is for Antariksha with Surya as the Aajya/ ghee or the fuel-Sun Rays as smoke-Day time as the 'Jwaala' or the flame- Chandra as the embers or coals-Nakshatra as the sparks;The Second Type of Agni is for Parjanya with Vayu as the fuel-clouds as Smoke-lightening as the flame- thunderbolts as embers-rumblings of thunderbolts as sparks; the third oblation to the Tritiyaagni is in favour of Prithvi as Fire-Kaalamaana or Time is the fuel-Akasha as the smoke- Raatri or the Night as the flame-Chatur Dishas as embers-and Upa Dishas as sparks; Man as the Chaturthaagni- Vaak or speech as the fuel-Praana or the Life Force as the smoke-tongue as the flame-netras / eyes as embers-ears as sparks; the Panchaagni is a Woman as the Fire-seed as the flame-covering membrane as the embers- Ten to Twelve Months as the sparks and finally the birth];

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Panchaka Panchakam or the Five Requisites of each of the Five Fires; \*Yantra Lakshmi or the One prayed throughMantras and Penances for several Karya Siddhis;

[ \*Examples are Sarva Karya Siddhi Yantra, Shubha Laabha Yantra, Vyapaara Vriddhi Yantra etc. Shri Yantra, Maha Lakshmi Yantra, KuberaYantra etc. are all with Prosperity Orientation; ShukraYantra, Vashikarana Yantra or for Akarshana or Attraction; Vidya Yantras like Gayatri Yantra or Saraswati Yantra; for Subduing Enemies the examples are Bagala murti Yantra or Maha Kaali Yantra; Heath oriented Maha Mrityunjaya Yantra; Nava Graha Yantras for specific shortcomings in respect of the Grahas etc.]

Bhavatyadi or Devi! You are the Primary Shakti; Adyadyedi or the Foremost of the First Shakti; Srishtaadi karanakara or the Cause of the Causes of Creation; Vitatey or of fully Expanded Manifestation; Dosha Varjitey or Blemishless; Jagallakshmi or the Unique Devi of Maha Lakshmi; Jagan Maata or the Mother of Universe; Vishnu Patni; Navakoti Maha Shakti samupasya padambujey or Devi! There are nine crore Maha Shaktis in their worship at your lotus feet; Kanatsouvarna ratnaadhya or She is ornamented with invaluable gems tastefully studded in golden jewellery; Sarvaabharana Bhushitey or Possessive of all imaginable ornaments adorned all over the Physique; Ananta Nitya Mahishi or the Paramount Queen of the Endless and Everlasting Universe; Prapacheswara Nayaki or the Inimitable Empress of the Prapancha controlling the Pancha Bhutas and beyond; Atyucchrita padaantasthye or the One realisable at the utmost top of the inconceivable of Nothingness of the Universe; Parama Vyomanayakey or the Master of all the Celestial Beings far beyond the Sky Line; Naka prishtha tataaraadhya or most sincerely worshipped by those who left for the higher Lokas; Vishnu Loka Vilasini or the Devi who is playful and spirited in Vishnuloka; the Queen of Vaikuntharaajya; \*Shriranga Nagarashritye or the Deity called Shri Ranganayaki along with Ranganatha Swamy;

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[ \*The Legend states that in course of his Tapasya, Brahma visioned a Vishnu Vimana the manifestation of Garuda, with Adishesha's hood covering it and Surya Chandras fanning Vishnu in a reclining posture; Bhagavan instructed Brahma to sustain worship of Vishnu in eight Swarupas besides Sriranga, viz. Venkatadri, Srimushnam, Saligrama,Totadri, Badari, Pushkara, and Naimisharanya and that worship be perpetuated at all these Places as per Agama Shastras; Brahma entrusted the worship to Shri Ranganatha and his consort Shri Ranga Nayaki to Surya Deva, who later on passed on to his son Vaiwaswanta further

given to Ikshwaku and Shri Rama gifted to Vibhisana at Shri Ranga; Devi is thus Ranga Nayaki, Bhuputri Sita Devi, Krishney or Rukmini, Varada Vallabhey or the Consort of Varadaraja Swami viz. Perundevi];

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Koti Brahmaadi Samsevye / Koti Rudraadi Keertitey or in the Eternal Time Calculation or Kalamana, Devi witnessed the worship of Koti Brahmas and Koti Rudras; Maatulingamayam khetam or the Holder of a Citroen Tree as her Club to punish the Evil; Souvarna Chashakam or the holder of a golden drinking glass too with the ease of which she destroys the Evil; Padma dwayam: Devi! Padma dwayam or You carry a couple of Lotuses, Purna kumbham or a Full Pot representative of a never-ending mercy; Keeram or the Paarot Couple; Varadabhaye or a gesture of shelter; \*Paashamamkusha shankham chakram shulam kripanikaam or the Holder of a Paasha or noose, Ankusha or goad, Shankha or a conchshell, Chakram or the Holy Disc, Shulam or spear and kripanikaam or a dagger; Dhanurbanou or the bow and arrows; AkshaMaala or the rosary; Chinmudra or of the Meditative Gesture of Advaita of Purusha and Prakriti or Reality and Illusion as explained in reference to Mudras earlier; Api bibhrati or gifted with all those mentioned above; \*Ashtaadasha Bhujey or Devi endowed with Eighteen Hands carrying Aksha Maala or stringed beads, battle axe, mace, arrow, thunderbolt, Lotus, Pot, Cudgel, lance, sword, shield, conchshell, Ball, drinking cup, trident, noose, discus or the wheel; you are also of Mahashtaadasha peethika or of the Eighteen Famed Temples like at Kolhapuri and at various Ashta Lakshmi Temples dotted all over in Bharat and elsewhere).

*BhumiNiladisamsevye Swamichittanuvartini, Padmey Padmalaye Padmi Purnakumbhabhishechitey/  
Indirendindiraabhakshi Kshirasagarakanyaakey, Bhargavitwam Swatantreschha vasikruta Jagatpatih/  
MangalamMangalanamtwam Devatanamchadevata, TwamuttamuttamanaamchatwamShreyahParam/  
Dhanadhanyabhivridhischa sarvabhomasukhochraya, Andolikadisowbhagyamattebhadimahodaya/  
PutrapoutraabhivridhischaVidyabhogabaladikam, Ayurarigyasampattirashtaishwaryam twamehahi/  
Parameshavibhutischa Suksmaatukshmataragatih, SadayapangasamdattaBrahmendraadi padasthitih/  
Avyahatamahabhagya twamevaakshobhyavikramah, SamanvayaschaVedhanamavirodhastwamevahi/  
Nisshreyasapadaprapti sadhanam phalamevacha, Srimantrarajaraajniccha Srividya kshemakarini/  
Shrimbijajapasantushtha AimHreemShreemBijapalika, PrapattimargasulabhaVishnuprathamakinkari/  
Kleenkaraartha Savitricha Sowmangalyaadi Devata, Shrishodashaksharividya Shriyantrapuravasini/  
Sarva Mangalamangalye Shiveysarvaarthaasadhikey, SharanyeTraimbike DeviNarayaninamostutey/  
Punah punarnamastestu saashtaangamayutam punah/*

(Devi! You are worshipped all over-be it on Earth or the Lokas in the Skies and beyond; yet you act as per the wishes of your Swami Vishnu; You are of the Form of Lotus, the Dweller of Lotus, of the prettiness and purity of Lotus; the One who is always bathed in the Sacred waters from Overflowing vessels; Indira the illustrious spouse of Srihari, Indendiraabhaakshi or brilliant and serene like Chandra; Ksheera Sagara Kanyaakey or the Maiden that emerged from the Ocean of Milk during the Churning by Deva-Danavas in their quest for Amrita the Divine Nectar; Bhargavi the dear daughter of Bhrigu Maharshi; Swatantreccha or entirely independent in your wishes and actions; Vasheekruta Jagatpathi or You are in the total spell of the Lord of the Universe Maha Vishnu Himself; Mangalam Mangalaanam cha or the Access to High Prosperity and total Auspiciousness; Devataanaam cha Devata or the Supreme of the Devas; Twamuttamottamaanaam cha or Devi! You indeed are the noblest among the Devas; twam Shreyah or you are the most accomplished; Paramamritam or the Supreme possible Nectar of Life itself; Dhana dhanyaabhivridhischa or the best benefactor of wealth and food; Sarva bhoma

sukhodraya or the provider of all kinds of happiness as though to an Emperor par excellence; Andolikadi Soubhagyam Mattebhadi Mahodayah or the grantor of Unique Fortune with endless royal luxuries indicative of intoxicating possessions and facilities symbolised with fleets of Superior Elephants and so on; You are the only one responsible for family contentment of good progeny as also of achievement of knowledge and joys; You also bestow good health, longevity and prosperity; in fact you are the only giver of Ashtaishwaryas or the Eight Kinds of Opulence of Dhana-Dhanya-Dhairyaadis mentioned already; Paramesha vibhuti cha or you are of the magnificence of Parameshwara; Sookshmaatsookshma taraa gatih or you are of the tiniest of the minute form and yet possessive of the Glorious Path of grandeur; Sadaapaanga sandattha Brahmendr -aadi pada stitih or Devi! It is due to the shower of your kindness that Brahma-Indra and other Devatas are able to sustain their positions; Avyahata Maha Bhagyam Twameva or you are one that ensures constant and breakless Fortune; Twamevaakshobhya vikramah or you are the One to sustain endless energies to them ie. Brahmedaadis; Samanvyayascha vedaanaamanivirodhah swamevahi; You are the Interpretation of Vedas as also of their sustenance without interruption; Nisshreya sapadaprapti saadhanam phalamevacha or you indeed are the final Fruit or end-result of the best possible endeavour in the form of Sadpada prapiti or the achievement of Moksha; Devi! You are the Shri Mantraraja Ragjni or the Sovereign of Mantras or the Vedic Means of Attainment; Shri Vidya Kshemakarini or the Singular and Safest Means of Shri Vidya or the Highest Form of Knowledge; You secure the best possible satisfaction by the Recitation of the Seed Mantras of Aim-Hreem-Shreem as you are the Originator of these Beeja Mantras yourself! Prapatti Marga Sulabha or Easy of Achievement even in the Prapatti or of worldly-wise manner; She is the foremost servant woman of Vishnu; Kleemkaaraatha or the Characterisation of the Kleem Mantra which is the Beja mantra of Savitri; Soumangalyadhi Devata or the Original Root Deity of Propitiousness; \*Shri Shoshakshari Vidya or the Sixteen Lettered Mantra;

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 \*Shreem Hreem Kleem Aim Saum, Om Hreem Shreem, Ka E Ila Hreem, Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hreem , Sa Ka La Hreem, Sauh Aim Kleem Hreem Shreem : Shreem (Purusha), Hreem Creative impulse, Kleem creation course, Aim Brahma with Ahamkara or Ego consciousness, Sauh Arthanareeswara, Om Prakriti/ Purusha, Hreem Saraswati and Brahma, Shreem or Lakshmi and Narayana, Ka E La Hreem Prayer to demolish Maya, Ha Sa kah La Hreem destruction of blemishes, Sau Aim the Universe of Surya Chandra Agnis; Kleem Hreem or the Pancha Bhutas ie. K for water, I for Bhumi, H for Antariksha, R for Agni and S for Merger of Atma with Paramatma;

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 \*Shri Yantra Pura Vaasini or the Resident of Shri Yantra;

[ \*Shri Yantra is a Tantrik Instrument comprising Nine Chakras or Wheels each wheel being arranged within another while all the enclosures being in an over all Circle; each wheel has formations of triangles interlinked with each another. The Nine Chakras are called respectively as Trailokya Mohana, Sarva-Aashaa paripurika, Sarva Samkshobhana, Sarva Sowbhagya Daayika, Sarvaardha Sadhika, Sarva Rakshaakara, Sarva Rogahara, Sarva Siddhi pradaayika, and Sarvanandamaya. The Interior-Most Central Point of all the Chakras is called Bindu.].

Devi! Sarvamanagala Mangalye or the One who bestows all types of Auspiciousness; Shivey the Symbol of Propitiousness; Sarvarthasaadhikey or the fulfiller of every wish of all the Beings; Sharanye or My Final Supplication for Protection; Trayambikey Devi! or the Integrated Swarupa of the Three Mothers of

Lakshmi-Durga-Saraswati; Narayani the Illustrious Spouse of Narayana; My most respectful reverences to you Lakshmi Devi! My repeated respects to you and prostrations again and again!

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Sanatkumara Vaacha: *Yevamstuta Mahalakshmir Brahma Rudraadibhissuraih Namadbhiraartair - deenascha nissatvairbhoga varjitah/ Jyeshtha jushtaischa nishreekai ssamsaartatswa paraayanaih, Vishnupatni dadou tessaam darshanam drishti tarpanam/ Sharat purnendu kotyaabha dhavalaanga veekshanaih, Sarvaam satwa samaavishtaam schakrey hrushtaa varam dadou/* (As Brahma, Vishnu and Ishwara commended Maha Lakshmi as above, the highly pleased Devi who was shimmering like countless rays of Chandra, showered her kindness by her benevolent glances and got busy with bestowing boons not only to them but all those present at the Prayers to her. In acknowledgement of her approval of the Prayers, she replied to the Tri Murtis as follows :

Maha Lakshmirvaacha: *Namnaamsashta sahasrammey pramadwaapi yassrukrut, Kirtayetkuley satyamvasaamya Chandra Taarakam/ Kim punarniyamaa jjaptur madeka sharanasyacha, Matru vatsaanu kampaaham poshikaa syaamaharnisham/ Mannama smarataam lokey durlabham naasti chintitam, Matprasaadena Sarvepi swasyeshtaartha mavaapyatha/ Luptavaishnava dharmasya madvratashwavakirninah, Bhakti prapatti heenasya vandhyo naamnaam japopimey/ Tasmaada -vashyam tairdoshairviheenah Paapavarjitah, Japetsaashtasahasram mey naamnaam pratyahamaadaraat/ Saakshaadalakshmi putropi moodhopi vikalah patitopicha, Avashaat praapnuyyaad bhaagyam matprasadena kevala/ Spruheyamachiraaddevaa Varadaanaaya jaapinah, Dadaami Sarvamishtaartham Lakshmiti smarataam dhruva/ Ityuktwaantardadhey Lakshmir Vaishnavi Bhavatkalaa/* ( May those who rendered my thousand names with complete dedication be truly blessed with name and fame till such times as Surya and Chandra shine on the firmament. Is it necessary for me to reiterate that as a mother I should protect them day in and day out since they have submitted to me with total dedication. Those who take my name with sincerity have nothing to fear and my grace shall always fulfill every wish of theirs. I assure all those who render my names are granted full contentment ,even if they disregard the Principles of Dharma that Vishnu prescribed or if they do not engage themselves in High Devotional Acts addressed even to me! Those who are illfated with poverty and penury, misfortune and lack of initiative, dull and lazy, physically challenged or mentally unsound, do deserve my Grace and Consideration, if only they are genuinely devotional taking my names with passion and intensity. Having blessed all likewise, Maha Lakshmi disappeared).

Sanatkumara Uvacha: *Ishtaapurtamcha sukrutam bhaagadevamcha chintitam, Tadetatpravadaam - yadya Lakshmi naama sahasrakam, Yoginah pathata Kshipram chintitaarthanavaapsyatha/* (Addressing the congregation of Munis, the Illustrious Son of Brahma, Maharshi Sanatkumara concluded the rendering of Shri Lakshmi Sahasra Naamaavali and stated that as far as Devatas were concerned they have the means of Yagnas to secure their shares of blessings from Paramatma; but in case of mortals, one great advantage is indeed available to Yogis and such noble beings in the form of renderings of Lakshmi Sahasra naama by means of which propitiousness is assured in their on-going lives and also the means of attaining Salvation) Gaargya Uvacha: *Sanatkumara Yogendra Ityukvaasa Dayanidhih, Anugrahyayayou Kshipram taamscha Dwadasha yoginah/ Tasmaadeydrahasyamcha gopyamjapyam prayatnatah, Ashtamya -amcha Chaturdasashyam Navamyaam Bhriгу vaasarey/ Pouramasyamamaayamcha Parvakaaley Visheshatah, Japedwaa Nitya kaaryesh Sarvaankaamaan -avaapnuyaat/* (As Maharshi made an exit after the rendering of Shri Lakshmi Sahasra Naamaavali, Garga Muni concluded his address to the Twelve Yogis that the Superlative Rendering of this most effective Supplication to Maha Lakshmi Devi is

best performed in utmost secrecy and regard, preferably on Ashtaami Tithis, Chaturdashis, Navamis, Fridays, Pournamis, Amavasyas and especially on Parva Dinis or Festival Days. Indeed such dedicated and most sincere Sahasra Naama would usher on extreme propitiousness and unreserved fulfillment of desires and ambitions.)

*Iti Shri Skaanda Puraney Santakumara Samhitaayaam Lakshmi Sahasra naama stotram/Om Tat Sat/*

### **Lakshmi Ashtottara Stotram**

*Devyu vaacha: Devadava Maha Deva, trikaalagjna Maheswara, karunaakara Devesha bhaktaanugraha-dkaaraka, Ashtottaram shatam Lakshmyaa shroturmicchhaami tatwatah/ Ishrara uvaacha: Devi saadhu Maha Bhaage maha bhaagya pradaayakam, sarvaiswaryakaram punyam sarva paapa pranaashanam/ Sarva- daariyashamanam, shravanaadbhuktidam, raajavashyakaram divyam guhyaadguhyatamam param/ Durlabham sarva devaanaam chatussashthi kalaaspadam, padmaadeenaam varaantaanaam vidheenaam nityadaayakam/ Samastadeva samsevyaat animaadyashta siddhidam, kimatra bahunoktena Devi pratyaksha daayakam/ Tava preetyaadya vakshyaami samaahitaamanaah shrunum, astottara shataa- shatashyaasya Maha Lakshmishtu Devataa/ Kleem beeja padamityuktam Shaktistu Bhuvaneshwari, anganyaasa karanyaasah sa ityaadhih prakeertitah/*

( As Devi Parvati addressed Maha Deva the Trikaalagjna- Karunaakara-Bhaktaanigraha Kaaraka and requested Him to explain to her the Maha Lakshmi Tatwa, the latter responded that indeed what Parvati Devi asked for should be such as to bestow all round prosperity, weaken all sources of misfortunes and root out sins and blemishes; further an Ashottara Shata analysing and revealing the secrets of Maha Lakshmi Tatwa as explained by Maha Deva Himself should be outstanding and simply celestial as a revelation of Sixty Four ‘Kalaas’ or the fundamental ways of Human Living and of the Eight Siddhis of what climactic Human Achievements are all about!

[ **Ashta Siddhis** or Supernatural Powers are Anima or the ability of miniaturising oneself; Mahima is turning one self giant like; Laghima is the capacity to get oneself unusually light; Garima is to make the Self too gross and heavy; Prapti is to achieve any kind of mental desire; Prakamya or providing fulfillment of other’s wishes; Vashitwa or capacity to control any other Party; Ishitwa or fully dominating over others as wished. Among many other Siddhis include Para Kaaya Pravesha or totally entering other’s body and even Soul; Doora Shravana or distant hearing, Doora Darshana or Distant Vision or ability to see things or actions any where from other places; Manojavam or reaching a place as fast as a thought as also thought reading; Kamarupa or assuming the physical form of another Being-be it a moving species or an immobile like a mountain etc; Swacchanda Maranam or the gift to die at one’s own wish; Deva Saha Kreedaa Anudarshanam or the gift to view Deva Devis playing among themselves; Yatha Sankalpa Siddhi or accomplishing any thing by a mere thought; and so on.

**Sixty Kalas** / Art Forms include Vidyas like Geeta (Singing), Vadya or Instrumental Music; Nritya or dance; Natya or Theatrical performances; Alekhya or Painting; Visheshha kacchedya or face and body painting; Tandul kusumaavali vikar or the art of preparing divine offerings from flowers and rice; Pushpapastrana or making a bed of flowers; dashanvasanang raag or the art of preparing materials for cleansing teeth, cloths and body paintings; mani bhumika karana or making the base for jewellery; shayana rachana or the art of making beds; Udaka vadya- Jala tarangini or the art of playing instrumental

music; Udaka ghata or percussion on water surface and splashing; maalya grandha vikalpa or the art of degining and making wreaths of flowers and grasses; kesha shikhara pidyोजना or setting coronets on head hairs / hair dressings; nepathya yog or the art of dressing chambers; karnapatrabhang: the art of ear piercing; Gandhayukti / Sugandhayukti or the art of the application of aromatics; Chitra yog: Art of colouring mixes; Indrajala or the Art of Magic; kouchumaaryog or the art of make belief; hasta laaghava orthe sleight of hand; chitra bhakshya vikara kriya or the mastery of preparing salads, bread, cakes and varieties of tasty culinaries; Paanaka-rasa-raagasava-yोजना or the art of making tasty drinks and eats; Suchikarma or the art of needle works and weaving; Sutrakarma or the art of thread play; Vina-damaruka-vadya or the art of playing on lute and small drums for fistful hands and fingers; prahelika or the art of making and solving riddles; pratimala or art of reciting verses by the skill of memory by way of Ashtavadhana or when eight literary luminaries posing questions in poetry in a row to be able to create replies in the order of the eight questioners; or Shatavadhaana or hundred persons posing questions and be able to provide replies to the hundred questioners in an order; durvaachaka yoga or the practice of answering difficult questions to be answered; pusteka vaacham or the art of reciting from memory or by reading; natakaakhaika darshan or the art of enacting anecdotes or plays; Kaavya samasya purti or the art of solving enigmatic verses [ an example is signified by a Telugu Poet Tenali Ramakrishna who when asked by a door keeper of the King of Vijaya Nagar as prompted by jealous co-poets was : ‘Sir! Please fill in the ‘Samaasa’ meaning a strong line of elephants walked through the throat of a mosquito, the poet replied ‘bastard! How could a line of five elephants do so! Are you drunk? ‘But when the King overheard the same question and repeated the same question then asked Ramakrishna in the open Royal Court, the reply was: Sir! The strong line of famed elephants when lost the game of chess, it looked that Pandavas of such might and fame had by the twist of fate since they lost the game of dice had necessarily entered the throught of a mosquito!]; pattika vetraban vikalpa: the art of preparing arrows, a shield and an arrow case; Turka karma or the art of spinning by spindle; takshan: the art of carpentry; Vaastu vidya: the are of civil engineering and house construction; Roupya ratna pariksha or the art of testing silver and jewellery; Dhaatu vad: the art of metallurgy; maniraagdnya or the art of examining the purity of jewels; aakaardnyan or the art of minerology; Vrikshaayurvedyog: the art of examining and treating herbs and trees; mesha-kukkuta-lavaakuydhha vidhi or the art of ascertaining the method of fighting goats-cocks-and birds; Shukasarika paripalana or the art of maintaining and understanding the conversation of parrots; utsadan or the art of healing or cleaning a person with perfumes; kesha majana koushala: the art of maintaining and combing hair; akshara mushtika kathana or the ability of talking with letters, finger gestures; Mlecchitkalaa vikalpa or the art of adopting and fabricating barbarous sophistry; desa bhaashadyan or the art form of knowing dialects of distant places; pushpa shataatika nimittadnyan: or the art of prediction by heavenly voices or the art of making toy carts by flowers; Yantra matrika or the art of machanics; dharanmatruka or the use of amulet or talisman or charm; Samvachya or the art of conversation; Maanasi Kavya or mental compositions; Dyuta Vishesha or gambling and game of dice; baala keeda karma or the art of making toys for children; Vainaayaki vaidyadnyan or the art of enforcing discipline; Vaijayaki vidyagnan or the art of gaining victory; and vyaayamuiki vidyadyan or the art of awakening master by music at dawn.]

**Dhyaanam:** 1) *Prakritim Vikritim Vidyaam srava bhuta hirapradaam shraddhaam Vibhutim Surabhim namaami Paramaatmikaam/* ( Devi Maha Lakshmi! You are the manifestation of Nature and its negation of antithesis or of Unnaturality alike. You are the Vidya or the Maturity of Mind or the symbol of Perception and of Awareness commonly called wisdom. You are the Singular source of Help to promote

happiness of each and every Being! You are the signage of Shraddha or Patience and Dedication; the Vibhuti or the Impulse to worship; Surabhi or the Celestial Cow which is an exemplary Giver and Nourisher! Maha Lakshmi! Our sincere greetings!)

2) *Vaacham Padmaalayaam Padmaam shuchim swaahaam swadhaam Sudhaam, dhanyaam Hiranmayeem Lakshmin nitya pushtam vibhaavarim/* Devi, your speech is like nectar; your residence is a lotus, you are popular as an ever fragrant Lotus Flower; you are the insignia of Purity, the Swaha or of Auspiciousness and Swadha or the dispeller of inauspiciousness- both the terms as used in oblations invoking Devas and to Pitru Devas respectively as Swaha and Swadha both the positive promoter as well as warder off negativism. In either way, Sudha or nectar is involved indeed! Maha Lakshmi! You are 'Dhanya' the signage of gratitude and her devotees too are expected to be ever grateful to Her for the kindness showered manifold on them! You are of Golden appearance, of endless prosperity, of everlasting strength and might, and of ever incremental radiance! You are indeed of the magnificence of Parvati Bhaskara and of the glory of Agni; the enormity of endurance of Vasudha the Bhu Devi and of Her Protector Prajapati Himself; our sincere salutations to you the Lotus Mother; Kaamyam the Supreme Fulfiller and the Unique Daughter of Ksheera Samudra!

3) *Aditim cha Ditim deeptam Vasudhaam Vasudhaarineem, Namaami Kamalam Kaantam Kaamyam ksheera sambhavam/* Maha Lakshmi! You are radiant like Bhaskara and ever ready to answer to the submissions of Devotees [ another explanation could be that Devi Lakshmi like the progeny of Aditi Devi is ever benevolent while like of the lineage of Diti, Lakshmi could be too harsh as a deterrent to the undeserving ]. Devi! You are 'deepta' or flame like! You are like 'vasudha' or Mother Earth with her inherent qualities of patience, bestowing, and of virtue. You are 'vasudharini' too or the protector of dharma / the cause of virtue! Our earnest greetings to you too to 'Kamala' or the personification of a Lotus! 'Kantam' or the consort of Bhagavan Vishnu! 'Kaamyam' the Unique Devata who is most sought after in Trilokaas! And 'ksheera sambhavam' or the Manifestation of the Ocean of Milk!

4) *Anugrahapradaam Buddhim anaghaam Harivallabham, Ashokam Amritam Devyam Lokashoka vinaashineem/* Mother! You are the symbol of 'Anugraha' or condescence, 'buddhim' or the essence of wisdom, 'anaghaam' or blemishlessness; 'Hari vallabham' or the darling of Maha Vishnu herself; 'Ashokam' or the symbol of everlasting pleasure; 'Amritam' or the Sweet Everlastingness; 'Devyam' or essentially the Celestial; and 'loka shoka vinaashinim' or the powerful mechanism to destroy the common anguish surrounding the Universe!

5) *Namaami Dharma nilayam Karunam Loka maataram, Padma priyam Padma hastaam Padmakshim Padma sundarim/* Devi! My salutations to you as the Seat of Virtue and Eternal Law, the flagship of benevolence, and as the Universal Mother. You are the Singular 'Be All' of Lotuses- be it as the Lover of a Lotus, the hands of a Lotus, the eyes and looks of a Lotus, and the everlasting beauty and grace of a Lotus! You are begotten of a Lotus, the face of a Lotus, the passionate lover of the Unique Lotus - navelled Maha Vishnu, 'Ramaam' the endearing and attractive Lotus Lady of one and all of the humanity; the fabulous Goddess sporting a sweet Lotus garland; 'Padmini' or the Lotus Self and of 'Padma gandhinim' the essential fragrance of Lotus!

6) *Padmodbhavam Padma mukheem Padmanabhapriyam Ramaam, Padmamaaladharam Deveem Padmineem Padma gandhineem/* Lakshmi! You are all about Lotus as born of a Lotus, Lotus Faced, the

Beloved of Padma naabha or of a Lotus - Navelled viz. Lord Vishnu Himself! You Rama Devi! You wear a lotus garland, You are the form of Lotus as Padmini and of the fragrance of Padmagantha too!

7) *Punyagandhaam suprasannaam Prasaadabhimukhim Prabhaam, Namaami Chandravadanaam Chandraam Chandra sahodareem/* Maha Lakshmi! You are of celestial fragrance, tranquil visaged, the instant provider of boons, the hall mark of radiance! Our heart felt salutations to you as of Cool Faced Moon, the incarnation of Moon Itself and the very sister of Chandra Deva!

8) *Chaturbhujam Chandra Rupaam Indiraam Indusheetalaam, Ahlaada jananeem Pushtim Shivaam Shivakareem Sateem/* The four armed Lakshmi Devi! You are pretty like a Moon, luminous like Sun, pure and cool, the bestower of ever lasting happiness, pushtim or of pink health and stamina, 'Shivaam' or the Incarnation of Auspiciousness, Shiva kareem or the spring and hold of propiciousness, 'Sateem' or the femininity incarnate!

9) *Vimalaam Vishwajananeem tushtim daaridrya naashaneem, preetim Pushkarineem Shantaam Shukla maalyaabaraam Shriyam/* Devi Maha Lakshmi! You are spotless, Mother of the Universe, Ever Contented, the destroyer of poverty and wants, the Most Lovable, Bountiful, Blissful, clean dressed, and the prosperity incarnate!

10) *Bhaskareem bilva nilayaam Varaaroaham Yashasvineem, Vasundraram mudaaraangaam harineem Hema maalineem/* Maha Lakshmi! You are lustrous like Bhaskara, 'bilva nilayaam' or the resident of bilwa tree as its sacred leaves wash off physical weakness and psychological aberrations being an excellent proactive tool in the quest for Paramaatha; Varaaroaham or the fulfiller of boons; yashaswi - neem or the incarnation of supreme reputation; Vasundharam or like Bhu Devi Herself the outstanding Provider; Mudaaraangaam or of Ever arresting physical charm; Harineem or the fastest boon fulfiller; and Hemamaalineem or She who sports Golden Garlands as of universal repute and appeal!

11) *Dhanadhaanya kareem Siddhim Sadaa Sowmyaam Shabha pradaam, nripaveshmagataam Nandaam Vara Lakshmi Vasupradaam/* Devi! You are indeed the bestower of wealth and crops as also the protector of what is awarded too. You are the all round benefactor and the one to shower auspiciousness. Your kindness to the fortunate is also to grant the joy of living in royal palaces and fulfillment ! Devi Vara Lakshmi the boon provider! You also benefit wealth to some and retain it for good to an illustrious few!

12) *Shubhaam hiranya praakaaram Samudra tanayaam ayaam, NamaamiMangalam Deveem Vishnu vakshasthalaam/* Goddess of Opulence and the Everlasting Resident of Golden Enclosures! You are also the illustrious daughter of Oceans and of invincible victories! Our prostrations to you Devi the flagship of auspiciousness besides being in the restful cosiness of the warm and broad chest of Bhagavan Vishnu Himself!

13) *Vishnu patneem prasannaaksheem Narayana samaashritaam, daaridra dhvamsineem Deveem sarvopadraava vaarineem/* Maha Lakshmi! You are the peerless better half of Bhagavan Vishnu and being in that unique status, your benevolent looks are readily spontaneous and natural! Indeed you are the unparalleled personification of energy which uproots poverty and paucity of any kind! Devi! You are the supreme protector against the stronghold barriers of all kinds of hazards of Life!

14) *Nava Durgaam Maha Kaalim Brahma Vishnu Shivatmikaam, Trikaala jnaana prasannaam Namaami Bhuvaneeswareem! Maha Lakshmi! You are most certainly the Unified Swarupa of Nava Durga or Maha Kaali too as the Creator- Sustainer -Destroyer too! You are also the Unified Swarupa of Brahma-Vishnu-Shivaatmika! You are at once the ‘Trikaala Jnaana Sampanna’ or the Embodiment of the Past-Present-and the Future or the Endless ‘Kaala maana’ or the Cycle of Births-Deaths-and Births again as the Maha Prakriti or the Maha Maya the All Pervading Bhuvaneshvareem! Our prostrations to you Loka Maata! Iti Shri Lakshmi Ashtottara Shata Naama Stotra!*

### **Shri Sukta:**

*Harih Om/ Hiranyavarnaam harinim suvarnarajatasrujaam, Chandraa hiranyamaheem Lakshnim jatavdo ma aa vaha/ Taam ma aa vaha jaatavedo Lakshmeemanapagaamaneem, yasyaa hiranmayam vindeyam gaamashvam purushaanaham/ Ashvapurvaam rathamadhyam hastinaadhaa praboddhineem, Shriyam Devimupahvaye Shrimaa Devirjushataam/ Kaam sosmitaam hiranya praakaaraam - aardhraam jvalantim truptaam tarpayantim Padma-sthitaam padma- varnaam taami-hop-havye Sriyam chandraam prabhaa-saam yash-saa jvalantim Sriyam loke dev-jushtaa- mudaaraam Taam padmini-mim sharanam- aham pra-padhye a-Lakshmir-me nashyan-taam tvaam vrune Aaditya-varane tapaso-adhi-jato vanas- pati-stava-vruksho-atha bilvaha Tasya phalaani tapasaa-nudantu maayaa-anta- raayaa-scha baahyaa a- Lakshmi-hi upeiy-tu maam Dev-sakha-ha kirti-scha maninaa saha Praadur-bhuto su-raashtre-asmin kirtim-vrudhim dadaatu me Kshutpi-paasaa-malaam jyeshthaam -a-Lakshnim naash-yaamya-ham Abhutim-a-samrudhim cha sarvaa -nirnud me gruhaat/ Gandha-dvaaraam duraa-dharshaam nitya- pushtaam karishi-nim Ishvariim sarva-bhutaanaam taami-hop-havye Sriyam/ Manasaha kaam-maa-kutim vaacha-ha satya-mashi-mahi Pashu-naam rup-manyasya mayi Srihi srayataam yasha-ha /Kardamen prajaa bhutaa mayi sambhava kardam Sriyam vaasaya me kule Maataram padma-maali-nim /Aapaha srajantu snig-dhaani chiklit vasa me gruhe ni cha Devim Maataram Sriyam vaasaya me kule/ Aardhraam push-karinim pushtim pinglaam padma maali-nim Chandraam hiranya-mayim Lakshnim jaat-vedo ma aavah /Aardhraam yah-kari-nim yastim suvarna-aam hem-maali-nim Suryaam hiranya-mayim Lakshnim jaat-vedo ma aavaha/Taam ma aavaha jaat-vedo Lakshmi-man-pagaa-nim, Yasyaam hiranyam pra-bhutam gaavo-daasyo-asvaan vindeyam purushaan-ham/ Yaha shuchi-hi preyato bhut-vaa juhu-daayaa-jya-manva-ham Suktam panch-dashar-cham cha Sri-kaam-ha satatam japet/ Sarsij-nilaye saroj-haste dhaval-taraam-shuk gandh-maalya-shobhe Bhagavati-Hari-vallabhe-mano-gne tri-bhuvan- bhuti-kari prasid mahyam/ Asva-daaye gow-daaye dhan-daaye mahaa-dhane Dhanam me jush-taam Devi sarva kaamaa-scha dehi me/ Putra poutra-dhanam dhaanyam hastya-asvaadig-veratham Prajaanaam bhavasi Maataa aayush-mantam karotu me/ Dhanam-agnir dhanam-vaayur dhanam-Suryo dhanam- vasuha Dhanam-Indro Brihaspatir-Varunam dhanam-ishvarou/ Vainate Somam piba Somam pibatu vrutra-haaSomam dhana-asya Somino mahyam dadaatu Sominaha/Na krodho na cha maatsarya na lobho na-ashubhaa mati-hi Bhavanti krun-punyaa-naam bhaktaa-naam Sri-suktam japet/ Padmaanane padma karu padma sambha-ve,Tanme bhajasi Padma-aakshi yen soukhyam labhaa-mya-ham/Vishnu patnim ksha-maam Devim Maadhavim Maadhava priyaam Vishnu priya sakhim Devim namaam-yam nyut Vallabhaam/ Mahaa Lakshamim cha vidmahe Vishnu patnim cha dhi-mahi Tanno Lakshami-hi prachodayaat/ Padmaa-nane padmini padma-patre padma-priye padma-dalaa-yataaxi Vishva-priye vishva-manonu-kule tvat-paad-padma-mayi san-nidhat-sva/ Aanand kardama-ha Sri-daha chiklit iti vi- srutaa-haa Rushaya-ha Sri-va-putraas-cha mayii Sri-Devi devtaa, runa-rogaadi daaridhra-yam paapam cha ap-mrutya-va-ha Bhaya-shouk-manas-taapaa nash-yantu mama sarva-daa/Sri-varcha-strayam- aayuyshyam-aarogya maavidhaat-pav-maanam mahi-yate Dhanam-dhaanyam pashum bahu putra-*

*laabham shat samvat-saram dirgham- aayu-hu Aum Sri Mahaa-Kaali Mahaa-Lakshmi Mahaa-Saraswati Trigunaatmikaa Chandikaaye namah/*

Agni Deva! we invoke you for Devi Maha Lakshmi who is resplendent with golden jewellery of glittering yellow and silver glows as Chandra the personification of wealth. Agni Deva, through your grace, may Devi Lakshmi provide as prosperity, excellent progeny, cattle and auspiciousness. (3-4) May Shri Lakshmi who has a line of horses in her front, a series of chariots in the middle, and with trumpets of elephants, as the insignia of celestial glory. May that unique grace bless us. She is the embodiment of absolute bliss with natural and perpetual smile on her face and though of molten gold with her residence (just from the milky ocean) who is blazing with splendour, and is the embodiment of the fulfillment of being the ocean of milk! She is indeed seated on lotus and is as attractive like a lotus. (5-6) Maha Lakshmi! You possess 'Chandra Prabhasa' or the tranquility of Moon and the radiance of a far reaching repute in the worlds as the Seat of Prosperity, as a Padmini; we all surrender as being the antithesis of Alakshmi and being the Singular High Seat of Opulence! Being of Aditya Varna or of the Splendour of Aditya Deva, your 'Tapomahima' is so surfeit that like the leaves of Vanaspati Vriksha tend to spread even remote signs of 'Alakshmi' or misery and misfortune. May such bael fruits destroy even the signs poverty and replace with affluence. Besides, may the evils of hunger and thirst be driven away at once! (7-8) 'Upaitumaam Devasakhah keertischa!' I am indeed born in a 'karma bhumi' of glory as a citizen of a Blessed Background or heritage being intimate as a 'Deva Sakha'. May my worthy and close Devas like Kubera, the Lord of wealth and fame extinguish 'kshutpipaasa' hunger and thirst, depression and desolation. May Devi Lakshmi eradicate Alakshmi by roots-tree-and sour fruits from each house hold. (9-10) *Gandhadwaaraam duraadharshaam nityapushtaam karishineem/* Devi Lakshmi! You are the gateway to 'sugandha' of plentiful sandalwood trees akin to the perception of one's desires and ambitions as reflected with the abundance of cow's wealth and plentiful cattle as the symbol of contentment and ideal human existence which truly verges into divinity! Thus may Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth and Virtue lead us to the frontiers of 'sugandha', 'nitya pushti' and 'Ishvaratva'! (11-12) Devi Lakshmi! Your next generation as the progeny Maharshi Kardama and the further lineage is certainly the residing seat of Wealth as Yourself in the ancestral link. May we therefore possess the privilege of garlanding You with a fragrant string of lotuses at our ancestral home! Chiklita Maharshi! may we entreat you too to grace such an abundantly auspicious moment when our incredible function arrives.! (13-14) Our invocation to Maha Lakshmi via Agni Deva! She is of the tranquility of Chandra, luster of gold, brilliance of Bhaskara, the symbol of fragrance! She weilds a powerful staff of sovereignty and Control of Supremacy, ever resplendent of wealth and glory! You are the lotus resident, saluted by celestial elephant hordes, with garlands of lotuses lifted up for decoration. Maha Lakshmi! You are the karuna swarupa, hema maalni, of golden hues like of Surya! (15-17) Jaataveda! We invoke you to seek Lakshmi again and again as She is the embodiment of abundance of grace, plentifulness, prospetity, cattle, horses, servants, followers, residences, and longevity and glory! Mother Lakshmi, your 'bahyanatara shuchi' is unparalleled; your 'Sixteen Shri Suktas' are such as their constant recitals reap enormous benefits of far reaching impact! Padmaasane, Padmoru, Padmaakshi, Padma sambhave! Devi! You are of Padmaasana or Seated straight with folded legs as the Parama Yogini! You are Padmaakshi or of Lotus Eyes of glittering Purity! Pamdmasambhave! or the Lotus Manifestation of Outstanding Clarity and Transparency! We are literally swimming in the constant flows of Abundance and Contentment! 18-19) 'Ashwadaayi, Godaayi, Dhana Daayi, Maha Dhane!' Devi! You are Supreme Provider of numberless horses, cows, and prosperity as you are the True Embodiment of Prosperity Yourself! You are Aishwarya the Seat of Opulence as the Acme

of Material Fulfilment! Indeed you certainly are the Sarva Kaama Pradaaayani or the Unique Bestower of Aspirations! 20-21) ‘Putrapouitra dhanam dhaanyam hastaashvaadigave ratham’: the meaning is self explanatory since Maha Lakshmi is the unique giver of excellent sin and grand sons, liquid cash, plentiful crops, elephants-horses-cattle and most significantly the blessing of longevity to enjoy the desires. ‘Dhanamagnirdhanam Vaayur dhanam Suryo Danam Vasuh, Dhanamindro Brihaspatir Varunaam Dhanamastute! Dhanam or Devi Lashmi assumes all the Forms of Devas like Agni-Vaayu-Surya-Vasu Devatas-Indra Deva-Brihaspati and Varuna! 22-23: With Maha Vishnu in the heart of any human, Garuda Deva the illustrious son of Vinata Devi and the renowned carrier of Vishnu, would be pleased to facilitate the celestial Soma Juice that bestows Eternity within the Inner-Consciousness; indeed this celestial Soma would instantly destroy the inner enemies of kaama-krodha-moha-mada-lobha-matsaryas! Mother Lakshmi, it is only you the bestower of such unparalleled Soma! The only manner that the ‘shadvargas’ or the six human weaknesses and shortcomings could be nullified is therefore to earnestly recite and absorb the Shri Sukta the fabulous! Devi! You are the Vibhavari or the radiance of Lightnings emerging of pouring rains; this is the offshoot of what copious crops are generated and thus the emergence of Life and existence of all Beings! 24-25: ‘Sarasija nilaye sarojahaste dhavala taraamshuka gandha maalya shobhe!’Devi! You are of resident of glittering Lotus; Lotus Handed; the essence of purity and white cleanliness of magnificent fragrance.Bhagavati! Hari Vallabha! Tribhuvana Sundari! Our earnest salutations to you Maha Devi! Vishnu Patni! Kshama Devi who is the symbol of Patience and Forgiveness! Madhavi -Madhava Priya! Maha Lakshmi!Standing on a lotus flower with grace with wide hips and lotuslike eyes, deep navel indicative of supreme conduct and character, with full blossomed bosom indicative of abundance and compassion, you are slightly bent forward to bless the prostrating crowds of devotees even as she is receiving them. 26-27: Devi Maha Lakshmi! While celestial elephant kings are performing ‘abhisheka’ of amrita the divine nectar from either side, do kindly grace our rest house and accept our prostrations. Mother Lakshmi! As being surfiert with your benign flashes of your side line glances of your graceful eyes, Lord Brahma, Indra Deva and Gangaadhara Parama Shiva too got mesmerised and got enriched by themselves! Devi Lakshmi! As You smile softly, three bhuvanas get mesmerised with joy and enrichment of their inner selves. May we be blessed with richness and abundance of inner contentment as we are never tired of praising your benevolence and generosity as we praise you as ‘Siddha Lakshmi- Moksha Lakshmi-Jaya Lakshmi-Saraswati-Shri Lakshmi-Vara Lakshmi’! [Ashta Lakshmis are *Adi Lakshmi-Dhanya Lakshmi-Dhairya Lakshmi-Gaja Lakshmi-Santaana Lakshmi-Vijaya Lakshmi-Vidya Lakshmi-Dhana Lakshmi*] 28-31: Maha Lakshmi! Betsow us very generously ‘Shri Varchas-Aayush-Aarogyam-Avidyacchdanam-Dhaanyam-Dhanam-Pashum-Bahuputra laabham-Shata samvatsaram- and even beyond as deerghamaatush! Our sincere commendations are countless as ‘Padmapriye, Padmini- Padmahaste-Padmaalaye-Padmadalaayataakshi- Vishvapriye-Vishnu manonukuule! May your sacred and soft feet be drawn to our hands closely and to our hearts’s contentment! Devi! You are the Household Goddesss in Trilokas of Bhur-Bhuva-Swah! Mukunda Priya! Grant us abundant benevolence- auspiciousness in all formats and chaturvidha purushardhas of Dharma-Artha- Kaama- Moksha.32-31) As ever commended and worshipped by MaharshisAnanda Kardamaadis, may Devi Lakshmi bless us to extinguish *‘runa-rogaadi daaridhra-yam paapam cha ap-mrutyava-ha Bhaya-shouk-manas-taapaa nash-yantu mama sarva-daa/Sri-varcha-strayam-aayuyshyam-aarogyaa maavidhaat-pav-maanam mahi-yate Dhanam-dhaanyam pashum bahu putra-laabham shat samvat-saram dirgham- aayu-hu Aum Sri Mahaa-Kaali Mahaa-Lakshmi Mahaa-Saraswati Trigunaatmikaa Chandikaaye namah’*

## Shri Kanaka Dhaaraa Stotra:

1) *Angan hareh pulakabhuushhanamaashrayantee, bhringaanganeva mukulaabharanan tamaalamh/ Angekrita akhila vibhootir apaangaeelaa, Maangalyadaa astu mama Mangala Devataayaah/* Devi Mahalakshmi gets joyous and the dark skinned Vishnu too is happy as the tamala tree gets to full bloom attracting the female beetle! May the Devi shower prosperity to us by her auspicious glance of her flashy and bright looks!

2) *Mugdhaa muhurvidadhatii vadane muraareh, prematrapaapranihitaani gataagataani , Maalaa drishormadhukariiva mahotpale yaa, saa me shriyam dishatu saagarasambhavaayaah/* Devi Lakshmi , the daughter of 'ksheera saagara' the Milky Ocean, shyly glances the bright lotus countenance of Muraari again and again, just as the black bee constantly approaches and flutters tirelessly the attractive blue lotus! May I beseech Her to grant prosperity to Her devotees too like such flashy glances even some times!

3) *Aameelitaakshamadhigamya mudaa Mukundam, aananda kandamanimeshhamanan gatantramh , Aakekara sthita kaneenika pakshma netram bhootyai bhavenmama bhujanga shaya anganaayaah/* Even as the amorous eyes of Mukunda remain half-closed in ecstasy, the sparkling dark eyes of Devi Lakshmi remain fixed on Him in deep love being lost in wonder and remain open without blinking. May these eyes of Devi Lakshmi befall on me and bestow prosperity and joy!

4) *Baahvantare madhujitah shritakaustubhe yaa, haaraavaliiva hariniilamayee vibhaati kaamapradaa bhagavatopi kataakshamaalaa kalyaanamaavahatu me kamalaalayaayaah/* As the continuous series of delightful glances of Maha Lakshmi are fixed on the 'Kaustubha Maala' the garland of precious blue stones of 'Indraneela' on the glorious chest of Lord Vishnu, may this string of such glances be directed towards me to so that it will bring me auspiciousness and fortunes!

5) *Kaalaambudaa lilalitorasi kaitabhaareh dhaaraadhare sphurati yaa tadidanganevamaatuh samasta jagataam mahaneeyamurtih bhadraani me dishatu bhaargavanandanaayaah/* Devi Mahalakshmi's sideway glances are like the flashes of Lightnings of dark clouds just as from the shining garland on the dark broad chest of Mahavishnu! May she, the daughter of the Bhargava Maharshi; being ever-worshipped as Mother by the universe, bring me auspiciousness and happiness!

6) *Praaptam padam prathamatah khalu yatprabhaavaatah, maangalyabhaaji madhumaathini manmathena mayyaapatet tadiha mantharameekshanaardham, mandaalasn cha makaraalayakanyakaayaah/* Since Manmadha the God of Love could gain access to Madhusudana -the destroyer of the demon Madhu- only because he was favored with such blessing glances from Mahalakshmi! Likewise, may I too be the recipient of such glances of the Devi on Maha Vishnu fall on me and with prosperity by looking at me even momentarily in passing!

7) *Vishvaamarendra padavibhrama daana daksham aananda heturadhikam Muravidvishhopi Ishhannishheedatu mayi kshanamiikshanaardham, Indeevarodara sahodaram Indiraayaah/* Devi Maha Lakshmi! Even the high status of Indra the Head of Devas could be accomplished even by a momentary glance of yours. Murari the destroyer of Mura Daitya is understandably entranced with joy as

the amorous looks from your lotus eyes always! Is it not possible to spare a benign looks of yours to kick me up to higher lokas just for a second!

8) *Iishtaavishishtamatayopi yayaa dayaardra drishtyaa trivishtha pradama sulabham labhante/  
Drishtih prahrishhta kamalodaradiiptirishhtaam/ pushim krishheeshhta mama pushkaravishtaraayaah/  
Maha Lakshmi! We are indeed aware that attainment of celestial worlds is possibly accomplished while great sacrifices need to be executed like Ashvamedha Yagna and so on. But, even the benign looks of your 'drishti' could be a sure reply to reach such top altitudes! May the quick glimpses of compassion from your lotus eyes fulfill my ambitions and impossible desires otherwise!*

9) *Dadyaaddaya anupavano dravinaambudhaaraam,asminnakijnchana vihangashishau vishhanne/  
Dushkarma dharmam apaneeya chiraaya dooram, naaraayana pranayineenayana ambuvaahah/  
Just as the dark rain clouds accentuated by monsoon winds unleash torrential rains on the parched earth and quench the thirst of the Chataka birds ushering in good crops and food on the earth, may the dark eyes of Mahalakshmi resembling the rain cloud floated by the breeze of compassion release the rain of prosperity and destruction of accumulated sins!*

10) *Geerdevateti Garudadhvasundareeti, Shaakambhareeti Shashi shekhara Vallabheti,  
Shrishti sthiti pralayakelishu sansthitaayai,tasyai namah Tribhuvanaika gurostarunyai/ Maha Lakshmi!  
You as the Supreme Maya being the consort of Bhagavan Vishnu as the Goddess of Prosperity and of Tribhuvanas ; you are also of the Goddess of Vaak-Vigjnaana- Vidya Saraswati too besides being Bhaagya-Bhogyaa-Yogyaa Lalshmi as also the consort of Maheswara as Shakambhari /Devi Parvati .  
Indeed You are the Unique Energy being the Tridevi as in charge of Srishti- Sthiti- Samhara as the Maha Shakti, the 'Paraa Shakti'!*

11. *shrutyai namostu shubhakarmaphalaprasyai,ratyai namostu ramaneeya gunaarnavaayai,  
shaktyai namostu shatapatraniketanaayai,pushtyai namostu purushhottama vallabhaayai/  
Maha Devi! You are the manifestation of Vedas, granting the fruits of virtuous deeds.You are the signage of grace and beauty like Rati Devi! You are the very ocean of qualities that are at once magnificent. You have the abode of Lotus with countless petals, and the Maha Shakti personified. The Prakriti Swarupa of Purushottama, the Singular Goddess of Opulence! My earnest obeisances to you!*

12: *Namstu naalee kanibhaananaayai, namostu dugdho dadhi janma bhumyai/ Namostu Somaamrita-sahodaraayai, namostu Naaraayana nava vallabhaayai/The truly better half of Narayana! Youe countenance is as graceful as the unique lotus in full bloom! Devi! You have the distinction of having emerged from Ksheera Saagara the Ocean of Milk along with the Chandra and Amrita; my prostrations to you!*

13. *Namostu hemaambuja peethikaayai, namostu Bhumandala naayikaayai, namostu devaadi dayaa paraayai, namostu shaarngaayudha vallabhaayai! .Maha Devi as seated on the Golden Lotus, as the Goddess of the Earth, and as the consort of Narayana being compassionate to the Devas!*

14: *Namostu Devyai Bhrigu nandanaayai,namostu Vishnorurasi sthitaayai, namostu Lakshmyai kamalaalayaayai, namostu Daamodara Vallabhaayai/My sincere greetings to you Mother! You are the*

illustrious daughter of Maharshi Bhrigu, the consort of Damadara. Devi Lakshmi, being seated on Lotus and adorning the broad chest of Mahavishnu, my salutations to you!

15. *Namostu kaantyai kamalekshanaayai, namostu Bhutyai Bhuvanaprasutyai/ Namostu devaadibhir - architaayai, namostu nandaatmaja vallabhaayai/* Devi Lakshmi! You have the distinction of being the wife of Gopala the Nanda Putra, you are the center of attraction and devotion to Devas and Humans; the incarnation of brightness, and the hall mark of prosperity and auspiciousness!. Kindly accept our heartfelt greetings!

16. *Sampat karaani sakalendriyanandanaani, Saamraajya daana vibhavaani saroruhaakshi . tvadvandanaani duritoddharanodyataani maameva maataranisham kalayantu maanye/.*

Devi the lotus eyed Mother! I am always inspired to bend my knees in veneration as you are the singular one to bestow prosperity, happiness, contentment, and auspiciousness. Worship to you always results in assured fulfillment of all my aspirations either physically, or psychologically and instantly remove my tribulations!

17. *Yatkataaksha samupaasanaavidhiih sevakasya sakalaarthasam padah, santanoti vaachaanganga maanasaih/Twaam Muraari hridayeshvareem bhaje/* Devi! any devotee of yours truly yearns for your ‘Kataaksha veekshana’ or (sidelong glances for blessings) and if fortunate is endowed with prosperity and material success. ‘Muraari hridayeshwari’ or the heart throb of Vishnu Bhagavan! My supplications to you by all the means of ‘manasa-vaacha-krmana or through word, thought and deed!

18. *Sarasija nilaye sarojahaste dhavalatamaanshuka gandhamaalyashobhe, Bhagavati Hari vallabhe manogjney, tribhuvanabhuutikari praseeda mahyam/* Bhagavati Haripriye! Seated on lotus and with a lotus flower in your hand, you are robed in gorgeous white silk, adorned with garlands and sandalwood paste, you gladden our hearts. May you, the glorious consort of Vishnu confer prosperity on all the three worlds and specially shower compassion to me!

19. *Digdhabtibhih kanakakumbha mukhaavasrishtha swaraaahi svarvaahinee vimala chaaru jalaplutaangeem/ praatarnamaami jagataam jananiimasheshah Lokaadhinaatha grihinim amritaabdhi putreem!* Loka Maata the celebrated Vishnu grihini! The ‘Dig gajaas’ or the celestial elephant kings of Eight Directions have the honour and fortune to bathe you by the Sacred Ganga Water as poured by golden vessels! ‘Ksheeraabdhi tanaye’ or the illustrious daughter of the the Ocean of Milk! Our reverential salutations to you seeking your smiles!

20. *Kamale kamalaaksha vallabhe tvam, karunaapuratarangitair apaangaih avalokaya maama kinjacha naanaam, prathamam paatramakritrimam dayaayaah/* Kamala Devi! You are the consort of of the lotus-eyed Keshava! Your constant gaze is replete with compassion for the poor and the poorest of the poor; naturally indeed I am eligible for your consideration deserving of your benign grace and benefit!

21. *Devi praseeda jagadiishvari lokamaatah, kalyaanagaatri kamalekshanajeeva naathe, daaridrya bheetiritihridayam sharanaagatam maam, aalokaya pratidinam sadayairapaangaih/Jagedeshwari ,* the Supreme Controller of the Universe and Protector of all the Beings. May your benign grace usher in auspiciousness to us, safeguard our well being and forgive our

blemishes. As I surrender myself totally to you, may your compassionate looks keep a constant watch over my well being and personal safety!

22. *Trayimayeem tribhuvana maataram ramaam, gunaadhikaa gurutarabhaagya bhaagino bhavanti te bhuvi budha bhaavitaashayaah/* Maha Lakshmi is the dearest mother of tri-bhuvanas; she blesses those devotees of utmost dedication singing her magnificence would certainly win over superior qualities, fortunes and powers of intellect.

*Iti Shrimad Shankaraachaarya krita Shri Kanaka dhaaraa stotraan sampurnam/*

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### **Kalyaana Vrishti Stotram**

[Popular like Kanaka Dhaara- Kalyaana Vrishti Stotram too was conceived by Adi Shankara; this 'shodashi' is known as Shri Vidya's Mula Mantra worthy of reciting daily for ever improving Self Purification]

1. *Kalyaana Vrishtibhirva amrita puritaabhir Lakshmi swayam varana mangala deepikaapibhuih, Lakshmi swayam varana mangaladeepikaabhih/ Sevaabhiramba tava paada saroja mule naakaari kinka manasi bhakti mataam janaanaam/* ( Amba! What indeed is not possible of achievement of wishes to those devotees who dedicate themselves at the lotus feet of your most auspicious feet lit up like unending garland of glittering lights! Indeed, is it necessary to convey to You as to what are one's aspirations!)

2. *Etaavadeva janani spruhaneeyamaaste tadvandaneshu salilasthagite cha netre,saamniddhyamudyat arunaayatasodarasya tadvigrahasya sudhayaa parayaapluputasya/* Mother! May my eyes be fully turned into flows of tears on approaching your celestial idol which resembles the red and radiant Pratyaksha Bhaskara since my natural emotions appear to have been flowded with nectar of your Sacred and unique image!

3. *Ishitwa bhava kalushaah kati naama santi Brahmaadayah pratiyugam pralayaabhibhutah, ekah sa yeva Janani sthirasiddhriraaste yah paadayostwa sakrit pranitam karoti/* Janani! Brahma and various Devataas owing to responsibilities of their royalty outlook and actions might have been corrupted eversince the process of creation and the 'kaala maana' or the passage of the time cycle, but it is only that person of steady mindedness, firm conviction and enlightenment who bends and touches your feet out of reverence and dedication swearing loyalty to you would accomplishment Life's fulfillment.

4. *Labdhvaa sakrita Tripura Sundari taavakeenam kaarunya kandalita kaanti bharam kataaksham, Kandarpa bhaava subhagaastwayi bhaktibhaajah sammohayanti taaruneerbhuvanatraveshu/* Tripura Sundari! Those very select and distinguished devotees of undying faith and dedication to you who are fortunate to attain the seeds of your compassion, then would not the most graceful and attractive beautiful maidens of 'Tri bhuvanas' akin to Kaama Devata rush to fall on the feet of such devotees!

5. *Hreenkaarameva tava naama grihanti Vedaa Maata trikona nilaye Tripure Trinetre, yatsamsratou yamabhataadi bhayam vihaaya deepyanti Nandanavane saha Lokapaalaih/* Veda Maata! You are the

singular and sacred most 'Hreenkaara Shakti' as the incarnate in 'Trikona' as the 'Trinetri' and as the 'Tripureshwari'!

6. *Hantuh puraamadhigalam paripurana maanah krurah katham nu bhavita garalasya vegah/ Aashvaasanaaya kila maataridam tavaartham dehasya shashvadamritaapluta sheetalasya/* Mother! How is this becoming possible that even as your physique is always kept cool by the continuous intake of amrita the nectar is able to withstand the heat and fire power of the 'haalaahala' poison retained by Shankara's throat thus losing its destructive energy!

7. *Sarvagjnataam sadasi vaakpatutaam prasute Devi tadanghri saraseerahyous pramaanah kim cha sphuran makutaujjvala maata patram dve chaamare cha Vasudhaam prasute Devi tadangaghni saraseerahayoo pranaamah/* Devi! My reverential greetings at the sanctity of your lotus-like feet as these generate 'sarvagjnata' or omniscience / the all knowing capability apart from 'Vaak-chaturya' or the power of speech. Simultaneously you could also bestow to me a brilliant golden 'kireeta' / head gear, a spotlessly white umbrella, two hand fans and a unique Emporership of Bhumi!

8. *Kalpadrumar abhimata pratipaadaneshu kaarunya vaaridhibhiramba bhavatkataakshaih, aalokaya Tripura sundari maamanaatham twayeva bhakti bharitam twayi dutta drishtim/* Mother Tripura Sundari! I am replete with my devotion and always tied tight with your thoughts and visions; then why are you treating me as an 'anaadha' or a helpless entity! I beseech you to fulfill all my desires and ambitions as justified by virtue by your considerate looks of approval atleast once!

9. *Hantetareshvapi manaamsi nidhaaya chaanye bhaktim vahanti kila paamara daivateshu/ Twaameve Devi manasaa vachasaa smaraami, twaameva noumi sharanam jagati twameva/* Devi Lakshmi! It is unfortunates that a large chunk of ill-informed public are lured into devotion of 'paamara daivataas' or even base gods and goddesses even at times Evil Shaktis. May I hereby swear that I shall never ever associate myself and get attracted to such Base Spirits doing more harm than good, but always stick to you or your form-variations! Tripura Sundari! I wonder if there were a case in public opinion that somebody else of the features of a so called 'Goddess' much unlike of your fame and kindness might respond with speed and generosity be revealed, that would be a travesty of truth and reality!

10. *Lakshyeshusa satsvapi tavaakshi vilokanaanaamaalokaya Tripurasundari maa kathaamchit, nyunam mayaapi sadrusham karunaikapaatram jaato janishyati jano cha jaayatecha/* Devi Tripurasundari! Indeed, you may aim at innumerable images to view but by sheer chance and coincidence happen to glance at me, I should be evergrateful to you since a devotee like me is rather rare - even perhaps neither in the past nor present - but certainly well deserved!

11. *Hreem hreemati pratidinam japataam janaanaa kim naama durlabhamiha Tripuraadhivaase, maalaa kireeta madavaarana maananeeyaamstaan sevate Madhumati swayameva Lakshmih/* Would there ever be an impossibility in the worlds that among human beings a person should be rare to perform relentless 'japa' of the beeja mantras of 'Hreem Hreem' daily by way of fixation of body and mind! If there were any such like that if at all, then Maha Lakshmi herself as decorated by flower garlands, ornamented by golden headgear studded by most precious jewellery and riding on a celestial elephant, would approach that illustrious person and bless him!

12. *Sampatti kaarini sakalendriyanandanaani, saamraajya daana kushalaani sarorahaakshi/ Twandvandanaani duritougha harodyataani,maameva maataranisham kulayantu naanyam/* ( Kamala nayani 'Mata'! My prostrations to you! You are the only bestower of 'sampatti' and 'saamraajya' or Opulence and Emperorship, besides the destroyer of thick coluds of sins; indeed even if being selfish, I beseech you to 'naanyam'!or even be partial to me alone in your blessings!

13. *Kalpopa samharana kalpita taandavasya, Devasya khanda parashouh parameshwarasya, paasha ankushouksha vasharaasana pushpa baanaa saa saakshini vijayate tava murtirekaa/* Maha Maaya! You are the unique evidence when Devaadi Deva Parameshwara performs the 'kalpaantara taandava nritya' or the virulent dance at the closure of each 'Kalpa' of the Grand 'Kaala Chakra' as He is equipped with 'paasha-ankusha- dhanush and pushpa baana'!

14. *Lagnam sadaa bhavatu maataridam tavaartham tejah param bahula kunjakunkumapanka shonam, bhaasvat kireetamamrutaamshu kalaavatamsam madhye trikonamuditam paramaamritaardram/* Maha Devi Maya! You as the better and bright half of Paramatma Swarupa as the 'Ardhaangi' is a mass of lustrous and radiant physique further enriched by the flows of deep bright liquid 'kumkuma' and lightning flashes of a golden headgear studded by the nine gems, further adorned by 'Purna Chandra Kala' or the full moon glow along with the 'paramaamritaardra'or the navel of saturated elixir in the form of a 'Trikona Yantra'! You are in raptures of staring at Paramatma!

15. *Hreenkaarameva tava dhaama tadeva rupam twannaama Sundari saroja nivaasa muley,twat tejasaa parinatam viyadaabhibhutam soukhyam tanoti saraseeruha sambhavedeh/* The Lotus resident Hreenkaara Sundari! You are of the similar Swarupa, similar Brightness and similar nomenclature! Being conditioned and adjusted under the High Skies, you are the Adi Kaarana or the Cause of the Universe and indeed the Adi Karta or the Causation of Tri Murtis of Tri Gunas of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhara represented by Satvika-Rajasika- Taamasika Features as the eternal spring of happiness and contentment!

16. *Hreenkaara traya samputena mahataa mantrena sandeepitam stotram yah prati vaasaram tava puro maatarjapnmantra vit/ Tasya kshoni bhujjo bhavanti vashajaa Lakshmischarasthaayani, Vaani nirmala suktibhaarabharitaa jaagarti deergham vayah/* Maha Devi! Whosoever recites the Maha Mantra initiated three- heenkaaras daily with pure body and mind, even Kings and Emporers are under their spell; such devotees are not only residents in their heart- beats of Lakshmi but are blessed as 'deergha aayus' with springs of joy all around them!

### **Shri Lakshmi Narayana Hridaya:**

*Hari Om, Asya sri aadhyadhi sri Maha Lakshmi hridaya stotra maha manthrasya, Bharghava Rishi, anushtubadhi Chanda, Aadhyadhi Sri Maha Lakshmi prasada sidhyarthe jape viniyogah/ Shreem Bheejam, Hreem Shakthi Aim keelakam, aadhyadhi Shri Maha Lakshmi prasada sidhyarthe jape viniyogah/ Hridaye Shreem bheejayai namah guhye, Hreem Shakthyai namah, Paadayo Aim Balaayai namah, Moordhadhi pada paryantham vinyaseth. Om Shreem, Hreem Aim karathala parswayo, Shreem Angushtabhyam namah, Hreem tarjaneebhyam namah Aim Madhyamabhyam namah, Shreem anamikaa- bhyam namah, Hreem Kanishtikabhyam namah, Aim karatalakara prishtabhyam namah, Shreem hrudayaya namah, Hreem Shirase swaha, Aim shikayai voushat, Shreem Kavachaaya namah, Hreem kanishtikabhyam namah, Aim karatala kara prishtabhyam namah/*

Atha Dhyanam:

1. *Hastha dwayena kamala dharayanthim swaleelaya, Hara noopura samyuktham Maha lakshnim vichintheyeta/* May I meditate with concentration about Maha Lakshmi as holding the gorgeous Lotus flowers in both her palms and as decorated with necklaces and anklets. 2. *Kouseya peetha vasanam aravinda nethram, Padma dwayabhya varodhyatha padma hastham, Udhyach sankha sadrusaam paramanga samstham, Dhyayed vidheesanath pada yugaam janithrim/* May I meditate the Devi while I stand upright as indeed she has to be convinced about the intensity of my meditation and then decide the suitability of being deserved of my protection and her blessings. As of then, she was relaxing on a silken seat with her lotus eyes as if her sacred physique was in the shape of a conchshell!

*Shri Lakshmi kamala dhaarinyai Simha vahinyai swaha.* I pray Lakshmi who holds lotus flower and rides on a lion! *Peetha vastram suvarangeem padma hastha dwayaanvithaam, Lakshnim dhyathvethi manthrena sa bhaved prithvi pathi/* Who so ever prays Maha Lakshmi adorned by yellow silk clothing while she sports lotus flowers in both of her hands would indeed become a King! *Mathulunga Gadha kete panou pathrascha vibhrathi, Vaga lingascha maanascha vibhrathi nrupa moordhani/* Maha Lakshmi shines while she holds a citrus fruit, a mace and a shield in Her hands. Further, she carries a Vaag Linga which Kings venerate by carrying on their foreheads!

*Om Sreem Hreem Aim:*

1. *Vande Lakshnim para Shiva mayeem shuddha jambuna dhaabhaam, tejo rupaam kanaka vasanaam sarva bhushojwalangim/ Beejaapuuraam kanaka kalasam hema padmam dhadhaanaam, aadhyam shaktim sakala jananim sarva mangalya yuktham/* Maha Lakshmi! My prostrations to you as the image of divinity with the luster of gold adorned by gold coloured apparel and jewellery sporting a golden vessel with red pomegranate seeds besides a golden -yet fresh- lotus. Devi, you are the Adi Shakti and the golden seed of auspiciousness!

2. *Srimad soubhagya jananim stoumi Lakshnim sanaataneem, sarva kaama phalaavaapti saadhanika sukha vahaam/* Devi Lakshmi! You are the progenitor of fortune, provider of happiness and fulfiller of all wishes ever since times immemorial and omni-present!

3. *Smaraami nityam Deveshi, tvaya prerita manasa, tvadagnam shirasa dhrtwa bhajami paramesvarim/* Devi! As my thoughts are surfeit in my mind always as day in and day out, your instructions are followed scrupulously and your magnificence is sung always in every step of ours! .

4. *Samasta sampat sukhadam mahashriyam, Samastha kalyani kareem Maha Shriyam, Samasta soubhaagya kareem Maha Shriyam, Bhajamyaham Jnanakareem Mahashriyam/* May I always sing and complement your uniqueness and eternity as Maha Lakshmi the giver of all knowledge, the provider of wealth and happiness, the bestower of auspiciousness, and the benefactor of all-round luck!

5. *Vijana sampat sukhadam Mahashriyam, vichithra vag bhutikareem manoramam, ananta soubhaagya sukha pradaayineem, namamyaham bhouthikareem Haripriyam/* My salutations to the beloved of Shri Hari the provider of happiness, the original source of wealth and health, the powerful mind-puller whose commands are always carried out in letter and spirit and the supreme provider of physical pleasures and mental contentment.

6. *Samastha bhuthaantara samsthitha twam, Samastha Bhaktheswari Vishwa Rupe/Tannaasthi yathwad dvayatirikta vasthu, twad pada padmam pranamamyam Shree /Maha Lakshmi!* My heartfelt salutations at your Lotus Feet. Indeed you are the ‘antaryaami’ or One’s own Conscience of all the Beings in the Universe! You are the defined target of all-some desirous of food, some praying for good progeny, some for fame, some for knowledge, some for pleasures of life and some else for salvation! Maha Maya! There is nothing at all beyond your reach and endowment!

7. *Daridrya dukkhoga tamo nihantri, twad pada padmam mayi sannidhadhatsva/ Deenarthi vichhedana hethu bhutai, kripaa kataakshair abhishinchamaam Shree!* Devi Shri Lakshmi! You are indeed the destroyer of the darkness of ‘daaridra-dukhka’ or poverty and sorrow. Do keep your lotus feet on my head and cast your merciful glances as indeed those would uproot the causes of poverty and discontentment of life!

8. *Vishnu sthuthi paraam Lakshmin swarna varna stuti priyam, varadam abhayadhaam Devim vande tvam Kamalekshane/* Devi the Lotus eyed beloved of Vishnu; you are the golden hued shelter and protection to me.

9. *Amba praseedha karunaa pari purna drushtya, maam twat dravina geham imam kurushvaa, Aalokaya pranatha hrud gatha shoka hanthri, twad pada dhyugalam pranamamyaham Shri!* Amba! I beseech you to please me with your benign glances and fill up my home with riches and fortunes; I bend to touch your golden feet and even as I do so demolish my troubles and tribulations!

10. *Shantyai namostu saranagatha rakshanaayai, Kantyai namosthu, kamaneeyagunaashrayai, Kshantyai namosthu duritha kshaya karanayai, dhathryai namosthu dhana dhanya samrudvidhayai/* My salutations to you the Murti of tranquility; I surrender to the Unique Form radiant with features of arresting attraction. My sincere submission to rid of sufferings in a second. As the Dhatri Lakshmi, grant me plentiful food and prosperity.

11. *Shakthiyai namostu Shashi Shekhara samsthithayai, Rathyai namosthu rajani kara sodaraayai, Bhakthiyai namostu bhavsa sagara Taarakaayai, Mathyai namosthu Madhusudana vallaabhai/* My salutations to Devi Shakti who is adorned by Moon especially since you are the sister of Moon the Lord of Nights. Also my salutations to the daughter of the Ocean of Milk to cross the ‘Samsaara saagara’ or the Ocean of Life! Further my sincere greetings to you the seat of knowledge and wisdom as also as the heart throb of Madhusudana the destroyer of Madhu Kaitabha daiytya brothers.

12. *Lakshmyai namosthu shubha lakshana lakshithayai, Sidhyai namosthuysura siddha sumpujithaayai Dhrathyai namosthu mama dur gathi bhanjanayai, Gathyai namosthu vara sad gathi daayakayai/* My salutations to Lakshmi popular for Shubha Lakshanas or the features of auspiciousness, the one worshipped by Sages and Devas alike, besides the one with fortitude and refrainer of sinful paths that I resort to sometimes. Indeed my salutations to you Devi to constantly guide me to the paths of virtue and justice!

13. *Devyai namosthu Divi Deva ganarchithayai, Bhoothyai namosthu bhuvaarthe vinaasakaayai, Shanthyai namosthu dharani dhara vallabhaayai, Pushtyai namosthu Purushottama Vakshalaayai/* My salutations to the Maha Devi who is constantly worshipped by the Celestial Gods; to Her the destroyer of

afflictions of the worlds; to Her again who is the consort of Dharani dhara Vallbha viz. Maha Vishnu and to Her again the symbol of Pushti' or Excellent Health and Longevity as ornamented at Purushottama Vakshasthala or Lord Vishnu's broad chest!

*14.Sutheevra daaridrya thamopahantyai,Namosthuthesarva bhayapahanthrayai,Shri Vishnu vaksha sthala samsthithayai, Namonama sarva vibhuthidhayai/ My earnest salutations to Devi Lakshmi! You are the demolisher of hurdles and fears; the comfortable resident of the broad chest of Maha Vishnu and again to the Bestower of Bhoga-Bhaagyas!*

*15.Jayatu jayatu Lakshmir lakshana alankrutangi, Jayatu jayatu Padmaa Padmasadmabhi vandyaa, Jayatu jayatu Vidyaa Vishnu vaamaanaga samstha,Jayatu jayatu samyak sarva sampathkara Shri!* Victory and Victory to Lakshmi who is adorned with ornaments,Victory and Victory to Goddess of lotus as constantly worshipped by Brahma, Victory and Victory to Vidya the Goddess of Knowledge who sits on the left lap of Vishnu, and Victory and Victory again to the Goddess to all the Beings in showering all sorts of wealth!

*16.Jayatu jayatu devi deva sanghabhi poojya, Jayatu jayatu bhadraa Bhargavi bhagya rupa, Jayatu jayatu nithya nirmala Jnana vedya, Jayatu jayatu sathyaa sarva bhutaantarastha/* Victory again and again to the Goddess worshipped by all the Devas; Victory again and again to Devi Lakshmi who protects and safeguards and who was born as daughter of Maharshi Bhrigu;Victory again and again to Devi the everlasting symbol of transparency, truthfulness and pure wisdom; Victory again and again as the Supreme Inner Consciousness of all the Beings!

*17.Jayathu jayathu ramya Rathna garbhantharastha, Jayathu jayathu Shudha shudha Jamboona dhabha, Jayathu jayathu Kanthaa kanthi mad bhasithangi, Jayathu jayathu santhaa sheegra maargascha Soumye!* Double victory to the Shine and Beauty in built among the precious gems and jewellery! Double victory to the glitter and grace of the unalloyed gold! Double victory to the beloved of Vishnu as her physical attractiveness is unparalleled! Double victory once again with the sincere request to arrive nearby peacefully but very quickly!

*18.Yasya, kalaya kamaledhbhavadhya,Rudrascha Shakra pramukhascha Deva, Jeevati sarvepi sashaktha -yasthe, Prabhutwamaptha paramaayushasthe/* Maha Maya Lakshmi! You are indeed generated with the crescents of a Lotus Flower. It is out of your grace that Lord Shiva , Lord Indra and other Devatas too are well settled and with prominence and 'paramaayush' or longevity!

Now, Maha Beejam in favour of Sacred Chants - the Chants in favour of Maha Lakshmi at this stage viz. Om Hraam Hreem Am aam yam Dhum lam vaam/

*19.Vilekha nitile vidhir mama lipim visrujyantharam, Twaya vilikhithavya methadhithi thth phala prapthye / Thadanthika phala sphutam kamala vasini Sririmaam,Samarpayasamudhrikaam sakala bhaghyasamsuchikaam/.* You have to change the letters of fate written by Brahma! By writing it again in your hand writing, I would then be bestowed by better results. And after that for getting better results further, Oh Sri Mahalakshmi, Please put your mark which denotes luck near it.

Pada beejam: Chants of the Feet/ Om Am Aam ee yem yeem kam lam ram/

20. *Kalaya the yadha a Devi jeevanti sa charaacharaa, tadhaa sampathkari Lakshmi sarvadhhaa sapraseedha me/* Maha Lakshmi, the Goddess of all the Living Beings including the moving and stationary ones be contented always! Devi, be kind to me as well always!

21. *Yadha Vishnur dhruvam nityam svakalaam samnyavesyath, tadaiva svakalaam Lakshmi mayi samyak samarpaya/* Just as Bhagavan Vishnu apportions a segment of time and attention to Lokas, Devi! spare even a second to dedicate your crescent to me for my fulfillment!

22. *Sarva Soukhya prade Devi bhakthaanaam abhaya prade, achalam kuru yatnena kalaam mayi nivesayata/*Devi Lakshmi! you provide refuge to all of your longstanding devotees by granting their wishes. May you not spare a flash of time to let your ‘Kala’ / glow enter into my life too possibly as stable as possible!

23. *Mudaastham mathphaale paramapada Lakshmi sphutakalaa, Sadaa Vaikuntha Shrir nivasathu kala me natanayo/ Vaset satye loke mama vachasi Lakshmir vara kala, Triya shwetha dvepe nivasathu kala me swakarayo/* May the ‘kala’ crescent or glow of Lakshmi as in swarga be happy with me and so may the crescent in Vaikuntha be in my vision! May the crescent in Brahma Loka grant the power of my ‘vaak’ or speech and flow of thought; may your crescent shine in the Sveta Dweepa too enabling strengthening of my hands by way of physical grit!

Netra beejam: The Chants of the eye/ Om Graam greem grem grime, grom groum gram gra/

24. *Thavat nithyam maamangeshu ksheeraabhdou Sri Kala vaseth, Surya chandra masou yavath thavath Lakshmi pathi shriyou/* As long as Lakshmi Kala which is in ocean of milk is in my limbs, may Goddess Lakshmi as well as Lord Vishnu be with me till Sun and moon exist.

25. *Sarva mangala sampurna sarva Aishwarya samanvitha, aadhyadhi Sri Maha Lakshmi tat kala mayi thishtathu/* Devi Lakshmi the image of Goodness and Wealth, may her ‘kala’ or glow be replete with her so that she could easily bestow all kinds of fortunes in my favour.

26. *Ajnana timiram hanthum shuddha Jnana prakaashika, Sarva aishwarya pradaa me asthu thwat kala mayi tishthat/* Maha Lakshmi the flagship of opulence who always exists among the virtuous! You are the uprooter of the darkness of ignorance and the bestower of clear and clean wisdom and knowledge to the well deserved. I beseech you to repose your ‘kala’ or the radiance in me ever so that the darkness of ignorance in me too gets demolished!

27. *Alakshimim harathu shipram thamas Suryas prabha yadha, Vithanothu mamasreyas thwat kala mayi samsthithaa/* May your ‘kala’ the supreme glow, blow off roots of my poverty like the radiance of Bhaskara Deva’s powerful rays removes the utter darkness of nights and enhance my welfare and well being.

28. *Aishwarya mangaloth pathi twath kalayam nidheeyathe, Mayi thasmad krutharthosmi pathramasmi sthithesthava/* Dwevi! As you are granting your ‘kala’ or the brilliance I am now the delighted and most grateful Self now as I am now the blessed recipient of wealth and contentment providing a deserving abode in me!

29. *Bhavaadavesha bhaagyaarho bhagyavanasmi Bharghavi, thwad prasaadaat pavithroham loka Maaathar namosthu the/* Bhrihu Maharshi Putri! As you have entered into my being now thus due entirely your kindness and grace, I am now purified and totally gratified!

30. *Punaasi maam thwat kalayaiva yasmath, atha samagacha mamaagratha sthwam, Param padam Shreer bhava suprasanna, mayyachyuthena pravisadhi Lakshmi/* Maha Lakshmi Devi! Your entry unto me along with your 'kalaa' or radiance has since purified me totally! Devi! Do also bless me to let Achyuta Bhagavan too enter into my Being so that I should be double blessed!

31. *Shri Vaikuntha sthith Lakshmi samagachhammagratha, Narayanena saha maam kripa drushtya avalokya/* Devi Lakshmi! Your entry into my Being from Vaikuntha especially along with Maha Vishnu is indeed a standing proof of my total identification with your graceful self and what is more significant is about your high marked responsiveness!

32. *Sathya loka sthith Lakshmi twam mamaagacha sannidhim, Vasudevena sahitha praseeda varadaa bhava/* Your sacred tour from Satya Loka Vaikuntha to my 'antahkarana' along with Vaasudeva is indeed blissful to me and this eventful happening is nothing less than my 'Atma Saakshaakara'!

33. *Swetha dweepa sthith Lakshmi sheeghraam aagacha suvruthe, Vishnunaa sahitha devi Jagan mata! praseeda me/* Jagan Maata! Your sure and swift arrival from 'Sweta Dweepa' especially along with Maha Vishnu as a ready proof of the victory of Faith and the success of your responsiveness!

34. *Ksheeraambhudhih sthith Lakshmi samaagacha samadhve, twath kripa drushti sudhaaya satatam maam vilokaya/* Devi! Your auspicious arrival near to me all the way from 'Ksheera saagara' the Ocean of Milk- where Maha Vishnu rests in 'yoga nidra' while you serve Him spellbound- is indeed an act of your grace and mercy especially when Vishnu Bhagavan's arrival too is totally unexpected!

35. *Ratna garbha sthith Lakshmi, pari purna hiranmayi, Samagacha Samaacha Sthith vaasu puratho mama/* Maha Lakshmi the repository of jewels as totally ornamented with gold! Do arrive hear swiftly right in front of me to make me believe that indeed you have actually arrived as per my make-believe eyes!

36. *Sthira bhava Maha Lakshmi nischala bhava nirmale, Prasanna kamale devi prasanna hridayaa bhava!.* Maha Lahshmi! You have the unfortunare characteristic epithet of being fickle minded and unstable. Surely that kind of narrow mindedness appears to be misplaced and misjudged. To those confinned devotees, this feeling of instability certainly needs to be corrected at once. Hence your arrival now should be a lesson to the doubting devotees!

37. *Shridhare Mahalakshmi twaddhanthastham maha nidhim, Sheegra muddhruthya puratha pradarsaya samarpaya/* Maha Lakshmi! Being 'Shridhara' or the signage of all the Wealth and thus you have the capability of extracting all the great treasures! You must therefore grant me your 'saakshaat kaaraa' or instant vision and bless me!

38. *Vasundhare Shri Vasudhe vasudhokthri kripa mayi, twath kukshi gata sarvaswam sheeghram may sampradarsaya/.* Bhv Devi! Why do not you unveil what all treasures and riches are hidden in your vast and unending belly and reveal them all to me your 'bhakta' and le them flow them mercifully and bestow!

39. *Vishnupriye Ratnagarbhe Samastha phaladhe Shive, Twath garbha gatha hemaadheen sam pradar - saya darshaya/* Oh the beloved of Vishnu, how many of heaps of precious jewels are hidden in you! Do mercifully exhibit them all and bestow them too!

40. *Raasatala gate Lakshmi sheeghram agacha me pura, na jaane paramam roopam maathar me sampradarshaya/* Oh Lakshmi who is in the under world, quickly come before me, since I do not know your divine form! Mercifully reveal to me! Mother show it to me please!.

41. *Aavirbhava manovegath, sheeghram agaacha me pura, Maa vatsa bairihet yukthwa kamangairiva raksha maam/* Come with the speed of mind besides come before me fast! Please protect me like a cow carressing a calf and telling “Dear son, do never be afraid”! That is how you should and protect me!

42. *Devi sheeghram mamagacha, dharani garbha samsthithe, Mathaa sthava bruthya bruthyoham mrugaye twaam kuthuhalam/* Maha Devi! You are present deep inside the Earth. I beseech you to appear before me at once as I as the servant of servants, I expect you with very high expectations!

43. *Uthishta Jagruhi mayee samuthishta sujagruhi, Akshayyan hema kalasan suvarnena supoorithaan/* Devi Maha Lakshmi! With all my best and clean thoughts and intentions, may I invoke you to rise up or get alert with my best intentions, so that you may fetch for me lots and pots of gold for me!.

44. *Nikshepaan me samakrutya samuddhrutya mamagratha, Samunnatha naanaa bhoothwa samyaktehi dharaa talaat/* May deposits of gold from the bowels of Earth be dug up and brought out for your presentation to gratify me again and again!

45. *Mat sannidhim samagcha mada hitha kripa rasaa, praseeda shreyasam dhoghndri lakshmir me nayanagratha/* Aishvarya Devi!, kindly bless me with your benign presence appearing before me with mercy towards me, and bless me with fame and wealth.

46. *Athropavisya Lakshmi thvaam sthira bhava hiranmayi, Susthira bhava sampreetya prasanna varada bhava/* Devi Lakshmi with splendorous golden hue! May I beseech you to be seated face to face ! Mother! My prostrations to you to be resolved with decisiveness to bless me again and again!

47. *Aneetamsthu twaya devi nidheenvai sampradrasaya, Adhya kshanena sahasaa dhatwa samraksha maam sadaa/* Devi! Show me quick glimpses of the multi-splendoured vistas of your powers like dhana-dhaanya-santaana-vidya-bhoga- bhaagyas and even as you display these visions, grant them too simultaneously instantly too and bless me with protection always!

48. *Mayi tishtha tadhaa nityam yadenraadhisshu tishtathi, abhyam kuru mau devi Mahalakshmi namosthu tey/* .Devi Maha Lakshmi! Never ever desert me in the same manner that you always cling on to Indra and other Devas and assure me to provide shelter and safe haven to me too the ever devout follower of yours!

49. *Samagacha Maha Lakshmi shudha jaambu naadha sthithe, praseeda poorata sthithwa pranatam maam vilokaya/* Maha Lakshmi! you indeed are the native resident of pure gold, do consider my most faithful prostrations to your magnificence ever!

50. *Lakshmeer bhuvangata bhasi yatra yatra Hiranmayi, tathra tathra sthitha twam me tava rupam pradarshaya/* Indeed where ever Goddess Lakshmi is present on this vast Earth, she shines like gold and

provides succour and success! May She present Herself as fixed and bless me always with my constant vision and presence!

51.*Kreedanti bahudha bhoomou pari purna kripa mayi,mama moordhni te hasthamavilambitamarpaya/*  
As you are playful and rejoice in a delightful mood on this earth, Lakshmi Devi! do me the favour of keeping your hand on my head with ‘vatsalya’ or blessing to a dedicated devotee like to a child!

52.*Phala bhagyodaye Lakshmi samastha pura vaasini, Praseeda me Mahalakshmi pari poorna mano radhe/*  
Maha Lakshmi who is the bestower of good luck to one and all among the well deserved, may I too be in the fortune list deserving of consideration and fulfill all my wishes!

53.*Ayodhyadishu sarveshu, nagareshu samasthithe,Vaibhavai vividhai yukthai samagacha mudhanvithe/*  
Devi Lakshmi! you are of the swarupa of Devi Sita in the incarnation of Maha Vishnu as Lord Shri Rama of Ayodhya in Tretaa Yuga. Do very kindly provide similar treatment of Kingship to me too as bestowed to such epic heros and distinctive personalities of illustrious repute and magnificence!

54.*Samagaccha, Samagaccha mamaagre bhava susthira, Karunaa rasa nishyantha nethra dwaya vilasini/*  
Vilasinini Devi Lakshmi! do come forward and further forward till I am face to face to you! As you do so, you look extraordinary graceful and kind full of generocity and mercy!

55.*Sannidhasthwa Maha Lakshmi twat paanim mama mastake, Karuna sudhaaya maam twaam abheeshi -chya sthiram kuru/*  
Mahalakshmi the benign! Come forward and bless me by keeping your hand on my head! Please anoint me with the nectar and make me strong and stable!

56.*Sarva raja grihe Lakshmi samagaccha balaanvite, Sthitwa aasu puratho me adhya prasaadana abhayam kuru/*  
Devi, you are strong supreme who is ever mobile yet well settled too with stability! Bestow refuge to me and thus stay with me for good!

57.*Saadaram mastake hastham mama twam krupaya arpaye, Sarva raja sthithe Lakshmi thwad kalamayi thishtathu/*  
Do kindly keep your hand on my head with affection, Devi Lakshmi! Your crescent is with all the Kings and let it also be with me!

58.*Aadhyaadhi Shri Maha Lakshmi! Vishnu vaamanga sthithe, prathyaksham kuru me rupam rakshamaam sharanagatam/*  
Mahalakshmi! You are also Aadi Lakshmi and other forms of glory! You is seated on the left lap of Maha Vishnu comfortably! Do appear before me and take care of me as I have totally surrendered to you!

59.*Praseeda me Mahalakshmi supraseeda Maha Shive, Achala bhava supreetha susthira bhava mad grihe/*  
May Maha Lakshmi be pleased with me as she is pleasant and placid. She is kind and stable with me ever.Devi! be also a permanent resident of my home for my succour ever!

60.*Yavatishtanthi Vedascha yaavad Chandra Divaakarou,Yavad Vishnush cha yavad twam twad kuru krupaam mayi/*  
As long as Vedas are there, as long as Surya Chandras are in position and Lord Vishnu is pleased, may Maha Lakshmi be pleased to show mercy on me- [in what ever birth I pass through]!

61.*Chandree kala yadhaa shukle vardhathe sa dine dine,tadha daya the mayyeva vardhathamabhi varthathaam/*  
Just as the Chandra ‘Kalaa’ or the Crescent of Moon grows day by day in the waxing phase, may Devi Lakshmi too be merciful to me more and more! .

62. *Yadha Vaikuntha nagare yadhaa vai Ksheera Saagare, tadhaa mad bhaavane tishtha sthiram Shri Vishnuna saha/* Maha Devi! be pleased to reside with me ever at my home just as you reside along with Vishnu would stay at Vaikuntha or the Ksheera Saagara the ocean of milk!

63. *Yoginam hridaye nityam yadhaa thishtathi Vishnunaa, tadhaa mad bhaavane tishta sthiram Shri Vishnuna saha/* Devi! do permanently stay in my home along with Lord Vishnu, like Lord Vishnu stays daily in the mind of Yogis.

64. *Narayanasya hridaye bhavathi yadaste, Narayano aapi tava hridkamala yadasthe, Narayana sthvamapi nityamubhou tadaiva, Thou tishtataam hrudhi mamapi dayanvithou Shri/* Devi Lakshmi! You are in the heart of Lord Narayana, while He is in the lotus heart of yours! May Narayana be always in my heart as you be worshipped and ever merciful to me!

65. *Vijnana vridhim hridaye kuru Sree, Soubhagya vridheem kuru me grihe Shri, Daya su vrishteem kurutam mayi Shri, Suvarna vrishtim kuru me kare Shri!* Devi Lakshmi! may Wisdom be increased in my heart; may fortune and luck be increased in my house, may deposits of mercy be showered on me, and may gold of rain be in my right in my hands!

66. *Na maam tyajetha Srithakalpa valli, Sadbhakthi chinthaamani Kama Dheno, Na maam tyajedha bhava suprasanne, Grihe kalatreshu cha putra varga/* Never ever forsake me Maha Lakshmi the Golden climbing plant of heaven, who is the wishfulfilling giving tree and the wish giving gem to her devotees! Do not leave me out but be ever pleased with me, to my wife and to my children at home.

Kukshi Beejam or Chants on the Seed in the belly: Om Am Aam ee yem iym

67. *Aadhyadhi maye twamajanda beejam, twameva saakaara nirakruthisthwam, twayas druthaschabja bhavanda sanghaa, Chithram charitram tava Devi Vishno/* Maha Lakshmi the primeval illusion, you are the Brahmanda or the Egg of the Universe, the one with form and devoid of form, the one who supports Shiva, Brahma and others! Indeed your charitra or the epilogue is a marvel, the Life's partner of Vishnu!

68. *Brahama Rudraadayo Deva Vedaschapi na saknuyu, Mahimanam tava sthothum mandoham saknuyam kadham/* Devi! even Brahma and Rudra, let alone Vedas fail to describe your magnificence! Who am I the dull head to do so!

69. *Ambaa twath vathsa vaakhyani suktha sukthaani yani cha, taani sveekuru sarvagjne dayalutvena saadaram/* Devi Amba! Please hear and mark my words as from your son-be they worth or worthless! But my dear Mother, treat me with care and kindness!

70. *Bhavateem sharanam gatwa kritharthassyu puratana, ithi sanchithyasmanasaa twaamaham sharanam vruje/* Considering that my forefathers had been indebted to you in the past, I am ever beholden and surrender to you totally on my mind-heart-and Soul, Devi!

71. *Ananta nithya sukhinaa tad bhaktha sthwath paarayana, Iti Veda pramaanaadi Devi twam shranam vrije!* Maha Lakshmi! 'Veda Pramaanaas' or Vedic assertions emphasize that those who surrender to you would reap 'ananta-nitya-sukham' or endless happiness and fulfillment always! Hence I realise that the fruits as assured are ready and fresh!

72. *Tava pratigna mad bhakthaa na nasyantityapi kvachid, Iti sanchitya sanchitya praanaan sandharayamyaham/* Devi! it is only in view of your resolve that you would never let your devotees fail and down, much less destroy-that I am holding on to my Soul!

73. *Tva deenasthvaham Maata! twad kripa mayi vidhyate, yava sampurna kaamasyam tavaddehi daaya nidhe/* Mother, I am indeed yours deserving the treasure of mercy on me and once it is bestowed on me, I should have achieved all my desires and aspirations.

74. *Kshana maatram na saknomi jeevitum twad kripa vinaa, na hi jeevanti jalaja jalam tyaktwa jalaashraya/* Devi! Can I survive even for a second without your grace just as could fishes survive without water for a second!

75-76. *Yadhaa hi putra vaatsalyath Janani prasnutha sthani, Vatsam tvaritham aagatya sampreenayathi vathsala/ Yadi syatava puthroham Maata twam yadi mamaki, daya payodhara sthanya sudhabhi rabhi - shincha maam/* As a beloved mother retains milk on her chest with great affection rushes to a crying child to feed with anxiety. Similarly, dearest mother! have me drowned in the nectar of your mercy always!

77. *Mrigyo na guna lesopi mayi doshaika mandire, pamsoonaam vrishti bindonaam doshaanancha na me mathi/* Devi! I am the abode of sins and grave blemishes ever with almost none of quality deeds of virtue, like the dust particles among the countless rain drops!

78. *Paapinam aham, yekaagro dayaalunaam twamagrani, dhyaneeyo madhanyosthi tava kothra jaga traye/* Parama dayaalu Devi! your outstanding heights of kindness are as low of my ineligibility of sins and that indeed is the yawning gap which exists glaringly! Yet with such utter shame, may I still seek pardon from you and beg you of mercy and lenience that is least deserved!

79. *Vidheenaaham na srishtascheth na syatava dayaalutaa, aamayo vaa na srishtasched oushadhasya vridhodhayaa/* If only I were never born, I would not have committed sins and deeds of vice; in that case there were neither any need for my cries nor pleadings for mercy! This is on the analogy of the need for medicines since there were no diseases in the world!

80. *Kripamadagrajaa kim te aham kim vaa tadagraja, vicharya dehi me vittam tava devi dayaanidhe/* On the consideration as to your kindness is older or of my age, Devi! you are always merciful since times immemorial since the creation of humanity! Being the 'dayaa samudra' you are the ever merciful to grant prosperity!

81. *Mataa pitha twam guru sadgathi Shri, twameva sanjeevana hethu bhuta! Anyam na manye Jagadeka nadhe! twameva sarva mama devi satyam/* Maha Lakshmi! You are my mother, father, teacher and the right path, You are the only cause of my living in this world! Loka maata! Nothing else is visioned to me as I could see any thing else except you!

*Hridaya Beejam-The seed of the heart -Om gram greem grom graim groum gra, hum phat kuru kuru swaha.*

82. *Aadhyadi Lakshmir bhava suprasanna, Vishnudha vijnana sukhaika dhogdhri, ajnana hanthri trigunaadi riktha, Prajnana nethro bhava suprasanna/* Maha Devi! You are primeval and related Shaktis! You are the Source of Pure and Bright Wisdom and the destroyer of darkness and ignorance. You are the

negation of Trigunas of Satvika-Rajasika-Tamas shades. May we not be thrilled with your outstanding ‘Pragjnana Netras’ or the vision of Celestial wisdom

83. *Asha Vag jaadya malaapa hanthri, navam navam sushtu su vakhya daayini, Maamaiva jihvaagra suranga vardhini, Bhava prasanna vadane cha me Shree/* Devi! kindly bless be to eradicate vocal lapses in fluency of speech and open up new vistas of vocabulary especially the usage of creative and newer words enhancing the value of virtue! I seek sharpness and highly poised words of tongue enhancing high vales of expression and pronunciation! May I be thus blessed with ‘Vaak-chaaturya’ or skills of speech!

84. *Samastha sampathsu viraja mana, Samastha tejassu vibhasamana, Vishnu priye thvam bhava deepya mana, Vag devatha me vadane prasanna.* Janani! You are visualised in all types of wealth ranging from dhana-dhaanya-vastu-vaahana- vidya-vigjnaana-vairagyas with overbearing radiance! Vishnu Priya, you certainly are in the power of vaak chaturya or finesse of speech as well!

85. *Sarva pradarsha sakalaart dhe twam, Prabha soolavanya daya pradhogdhri/ Suva nadhe twam sumukhi bhava sri, Hiranmayi me nayana prasanna/* Lakshmi Devata! You generate grace and kindness in every object of brightness as the ‘prabha kanti’ or the rays of your majesty and radiance spread far and wide enriching all the objects of beauty among them as your own golden reflections. May I too be retained in my eyes too as such reflections!

86. *Sarvaarthadha sarva Jagat prasoothi, Sarveswari sarva bhayaapa hanthri/ Sarvonnataa twam sumukhi cha na sree, Hiranmayi me bhava suprasanna./* Sarveswari! Besides being the incarnation of prosperity and the mother of this world, you are the destroyer of fears and threats. Devi Lakshmi! you are gorgeous, ever pleasant and the Supreme! Hiranmayi or the Goddess of Gold, be always pleased with me!

87. *Samasta vighnouka vinaasha kaarini, Samasta bhakthoaddharane vichakshana, anantha sammodha (soubhagya) sukha pradaayini, Hiranmayi me nayana prasanna/* Hiranmayi! You are the outstanding destroyer of obstacles who saves and rehabilitates millions of devotees besides uplifting them and granting them clarity of vision and and endless fortunes; indeed you should be ever present in my looks! .

88. *Devi praseeda dayaneeya tamaya mahyam, Devadhinaadha bhava deva ganadhi vandhye/ Maathasthadhaiva bhava sannihitha drusor may, Pathyaa samam mama mukhe bhava prasanna/* Mahadevi! You are worshiped by Devendaadi Devas! Now I am in a sorrowful and dark condition; may your divine ‘saakshaatkaara’ or appearance ang with Maha Vishnu be in my inner vision!

89. *Maa vatsa bhaira bhayaadana karorpithasthe, Moulou mamothi mayi deena jananukambhe, Matha samarpaya mudhaa karuna kataksham, Mangalya beejamiha na sruja janma mathaa/* Jagajjanani! I have my assurance that you would caress my head and gave me a solace saying: ‘my child, do not be afraid!’ This is due to your grace and kindness and also you ever kind to the downtrodden. Mother, it is due to your genuine kindness alone that germinates from the seed of your grace and kindness to devotees like me who are dedicated to you with complete faith! .

Kanda beejam: The Seed at the neck- Om sraam sreem sroom sraim sreem sram srah.

90. *Kataaksha yiha kaamadhuikh tava manasthu chinthamani, Kara sura taru sadaa bhava nidhi - stvamevendhire/ Bhavetava dayaraso mama rasayanam chanvaham, Mukham tava kala nidhir vividha, vanchithartha pradam/* Devi Lakshmi! your eye-corner glances usher in the wishes of ‘Kamadhenu’ and

your thoughts yield precious gems, your hands bestow the ‘Kalpataru’ or the desire fulfiller Sacred Tree. Indire! You are an endless treasure. Your ‘daya’ or elixir of kindness is indeed the ‘rasaayanam’ or the juice of fulfillment and your visage is ‘kalaanidhi’ or the treasure of crescents!

91. *Yada rasa sparshana thoyasopi suvarnatha, Syath kamala thadda tey, Kataaksha samsparshanatho janaanaam Amangalanamapi mangalatwam/* Kamala Devi! even wrought iron becomes pure gold by your mere touch and indeed by a flash of your glance, while any object or event inauspicious would turn instantly auspicious!

92. *Deheethi nasstheethi sahitha suramyaa, bheetho rame twaam sharanam prapadhye, atha sadasmin abhaya pradhaatwam, sahaiva pathyaa mama sannidehi/* Devi Lakshmi! I surrender to you totally without making temporary submissions and peripheral requests! I am convinced that total surrender is what you demand than piecemeal desires as I am right in face to face with you directly as you know what is the best choice for me!

93. *Kalpa drumena maninaa sahithaa suramyaa, Sristhe kalamayi rasaena rasayanena/ Aasthamatho mama cha druk kara paanipada, Sprushtyaa suvarna vapusha sthira jangama syu/* Soundarya Lakshmi! You are always equipped with a ‘Kalpa Druma’ the wish fulfilling gem by mere touch of that yields the wishes of the eyes, hands and feet too of ‘sthira jangamaas’ or the moving or immobile objects in Creation!

94. *Aadhyadhi vishno sthira dharma patni, twam amba pathyaa mama sannidehi/ Aadhyadhi Lakshmi thwad anugraheena, Pade pade me nidhi darshanam syath/* Vishnu sthira patni! Or the prime and steady consort of Vishnu Bhagavan! You indeed are the Adi Lakshmi the Principal and Primary of the Ashta Lakshmi Forms; may I solicit your presence along with Maha Vishnu and fulfill our wishes in the Dhana-Dhanyaadi facets of you as the Facets step by step!

95. *Aadhyadhi Lakshmi hrudayam padedhya, Sa Rajya Lakshmi machalaam thanothi/ Maha daridhropi bhaveth dhanadya, thadanwaye Shri sthirathaam prayathi/* Whoso ever becomes aware of the Adi Lakshmi Forms would pass the grace of Rajya Lakshmi too and thereby the other facets like dhana-dhaanya-santaana-vidya-keertyaadi swarupas; indeed one may as of then might be poor, but the ‘vyaapti’ or the expansion of the Lakshmi Forms would be multiple to the devotee and their progeny too for good.

96. *Yasya smarana mathrena tushtaa syad Vishnu vallabha, tasya abheeshtam vadathyasu thaam palayathi puthravat/* Vishnu Patni! You are so supreme that the moment I invoke you are pleased to fulfill my requests and desires at once and take care of me as her own son/ daughter!

97. *Idam rahasyam hridayam sarva kamma phala pradam, Japa pancha sahasram tu purascharana muchyathe/* Devi!! the secret wish of my heart gets fulfilled once the mantra aforementioned is chanted five hundred times/

98. *Trikaalam yeka kaalam vaa naro bhakthi samanvitha, ya padet shrunyadwapi sa yati paramam shriyam/* In case the mantra is chanted or heard thrice or at least once a day with faith and devotion then the fruits to gain prosperity and reputation are assured.

99. *Maha Lakshmi samuddhisya nisi bhargavavasare, idam Shri Hridayam japthwaa pancha varam dhani bhaveth/ Chanting of 'Lakshmi Hridayam' addressed to Her especially on Fridays for five weeks, the devotee is sure to get prosperous.*

100. *Aanena hridaya naannam garbhinya aabhimanthritham, dadahathi tatkaale puthro jayathe Sri Pathi swayam/ Successfully performing the chanting of Lakshmi Hridaya and offering 'naivedya' of cooked rice after 'abhimantrana' to a pregnant woman then the outcome is stated as the birth of a boy with the 'amsha' of Lord Himself!*

101. *Narena apyadhavaa naarya, Lakshmi Hridaya mantrite, Jale peethe tad vamshe manda bhaagyo na jayathe/ Once having chanted Shri Lakshmi Hridaya if a man or woman consumes 'tirtha -prasaada' then not only to him or her, but all in the clan in the 'amsha' would avoid bad luck!*

102. *Ya aswa yungmasi cha Shukla paksha, Ramothsave sannihithe cha bhakthiyaa/ Padeth tadhikotara vara vrudhyya, labheth souvarnamayim suvrushteem/ If Lakshmi Narayana Hridaya is read out with 'bhakti and vishvaasa' or devotion and faith during the months of September-october and in the phase of waxing moon, especially on days of Navarathri festival with increasing frequencies on each day then there would be a rain of Gold. [Sharad or Autumn during Ashvijuja-Kartika -Aug 24- Oct 23 is stated as mild]*

103. *Ya eka bhaktyanvaha mek varsham, Vishuddhadhi sapthathi vara japi/Sa manda bhagyopi rama kataakshaad, bhaved sahasraaksha shathadhika Shri/ If Lakshmi Narayana Hridaya is chanted or heard for a year likewise every week -preferably on Fridays, fortunes are stated to be showered by the eye-corner flashes of Maha Lakshmi although gradually till one shapes up like Lord Indra Himself!*

104. *Shri sangria bhakthim hari dasa dasyam, prasanna mantraritha drudaika nishtaa/ Gurossmrutheem nirmala bodha budhim, pradehi matha paramam padam Shri/ Dedicated devotion to Bhagavan Vishnu, 'hari daasa daasyam' or service to Hari bhaktas, and recitation of this Lakshmi Narayana Hridaya chant understanding its meaning and its import, besides Guru's blessings would surely follow results of achieving 'param padam' or ultimate bliss!*

105. *Prithvee patithwam purushottamatwam, vibhoothi vasam vividartha sidhim/ Sampoorana keerthi bahu varsha bhogam, pradehi mata paramam padam Shri/ Maha Lakshmi Devata! Do kindly hand me over the Lordship as a Chakravarti of Earth as presumably I am well qualified and hence bestow opulence, power and fame!*

106. *Vadantha siddhim, bahu loka vasyam, vaya sthiraathwam lalanasu bhogam, pouthradhilabdhim, sakalaartha siddhim, pradehi me Bhargavi janma janmani/ Maharshi Bhargava's famed daughter! Bestow to me birth after birth in select parts of the Universe, the power of speech, ready attractiveness, stable, healthy, long and prosperous life, attractiveness to youthful femininity, long linked and happy progeny!*

107. *Suvarna vridhim kuru me grihe Shri! Sudhanya vridhim kuru me grihe Shri! Kalyaana vridhim kuru me griha Shri/ Vibhuthi vridhim kuru me Griha Shri! Devi Lakshmi! may enormous stock of gold and jewellery, never ending stock of crops and food, around domestic auspiciousness and long prosperity. Griha Lakshmi! may my home and family be showered with fortunes!*

Shiro Beejam (The seed of the head) : Om yam ham kam lam vam Sreem

*108.Dhyaaye Lakshmeen prahasita mukhim koti balaarka bhasam, Vidyut varnaambara dharaam bhushanadyaam sushobhaa/ Beeja puraam sarasija yugam vibhrathim suvarna paathram, Bhaartara yukthaam muhuramabhayadhaam mahyamapya achyuta Shri! May I meditate Maha Lakshmi who is ever smiling with the splendour of crores of Surya Devas, with the dresses flashy lightnings, with the dazzles of ornaments, as though carrying a golden pot of sparkling gems like promogrenate seeds, shining amid red lotus flowers, as always accompanied by her husband who is basically the Husband of the Universe too!*

*Ityadharva rahasye Uthara Bhage, Aadhyadhi Shri Maha Lakshmi hridaya stotram sampoornam/*

Thus ends the Heart of Mahalakshmi in her various forms, vide Atharva Rahasya/

### **Purusha / Vishnu Sukta**

[Shodasa Ruchaas whose Rishi is Narayana, Devataa is Purusha, Chhanda is Anushtup and at the end Trishtubh]

1) *Sahasra Sirsha Purshah Sahasraakshah Sahasra paat, Sa Bhubim Vishvato Vritwaa Atyatishthad - dashaagulam/* (Bhagawan/ Maha Purusha who has countless heads, eyes and feet is omnipresent but looks compressed as a ten-inch measured Entity!) 2) *Purusha ye Vedagum sarvam yadbhutam yaccha bhavyam, Utaamritatwa--syeshaanah yadanne y naa ti rohati/* (He is and was always present submerging the past and the future and is indestrucible and far beyond the ephemeral Universe) 3) *Yetaavaa nasya mahimaa atojyaaya gumscha Puurushah, paadosya Vishwa Bhutaani Tripaadasya amritam Divi/* Whatever is visualised in the Creation is indeed a minute fraction of His magnificence and what ever is comprehensible is but a quarter of the Eternal Unknown) 4) *Tripaadurdhwa udait Purushaha paadosyehaa bhavaatpunah, tato Vishvan gvyakraamat saashanaa nashaney abhi/* (Of three-fourths of the Unknown apart, one fourth emerged as the Universe and the Maha Purusha is manifested across the Totality of the Beings including the animate and inanimate worlds) 5) *Tasmaadwiraadajaayata Viraaajo adhi Puurushah, sa jaato atyarichyata paschaadbhumimatho purah/* (From out of that Adi Purusha, the Brahmanda came into Existence and Brahma spread himself all over and became the Omni Present. Then He created Earth and Life to Praanis.) 6) *Yatpurushena havishaa Deva yagna matanvata, vasanto asyaaseedaajyam greeshma idhmassharaddhavih/* (The Yagna Karyas done by Devatas with Maha Purusha as the aahuti converted Vasanta Kaala as Ghee, Greeshma Kaala as Indhana or the wooden pieces, and Sharat Kaala as Havi or Naivedya); 7) *Saptaasyaasanparidhayah trissapta samidhah kritaah, Devaad yagnam tanvaanaah abadhnan Purusham pashum/* (To this Yagna, Pancha Bhutaas of 'Prithi-vyaapas-tejo- vaayur aakaashaas' and the Day and Night as the 'Parithis' or the boundaries of the Yagna Kunda; twenty one Tatwaas viz. Pancha Karmendriyas, Pancha Jnaanendriyas, Pancha Bhutas, Three Ahamkaaras, Three Tanmatras of Sprasha-Rupa-Rasa; and Mahatawa as Samidhaas; Devatas as Ritwiks and Brahma as Yanga Pashu) 8) *Tam Yagnam barhishi proukshan Purusham jaatamagratah, tena Devaa - ayajanta Saadhyaa Rishayascha ye/* (All the Participants of the Yagna viz. Devas, Sadhyaas, Rishis and such others perform the 'Prokshana' or sprinkled the Sacred Water on the Yagnapurusha and accomplished the Yagna); 9) *Tasmaad yagnaat sarvahutah sambhrutam prushadaajyam, Pashugstaagschakrey vaayavyaan aranyaangraamaschaye/* (In this Universal Yagna emerged 'dadhighrita' or curd-ghee mix, birds, ferocious and normal animals, and such others were created); 10) *Tasmaadyagnaat sarva hutah ruchassaamaani jajnirey, Chaandaagumsi jajnirey tasmaat Yajustasmaa dajaayata/* (In this Prapancha Yagna were created Rig Veda Mantras, Sama Veda Mantras, Gayatri and other Chaandasaaas out of which Yajur Vedas too emerged). 11) *Tasmaadashwaa ajaayanta yekeycho bhayaadatah, Gaavo hajajnirey tasmaat tasmaa jyaataa Ajaavayah/* (From this Yagna were created horses, two lined teeth

Mrigas, Pashus of four legs like cattle, sheep and buffalos). 12) *Yat Purusham vyadadhuh katidha avyakalpayan, mukham kimasya kou baahoo kaavuroo paadaavuchyetye/* ( As Devas made the Sacrifice of Brahma, of what all Forms were manifested; of which type was His Face; of what kind were His hands and of form were His thighs and Feet?) 13) *Brahmanosya mukhamaaseet baahoo Raajanyah krutah, voooro tadasya yadvyshyahi padbhyaagum Shudro Aajaayata/* (From the Lord's face emerged Brahmanas, His hands came Kshatriyas, His thighs the Vaishyas and His feet the lower class); 14) *Chandramaa manaso jaatah chaksho Suryo ajaayatam, mukhaadindraaschaagnischa Praanaadva - ayurajaayata/* (From His Mind was manifested Chandra Deva, His eyes Surya Deva, His face Indra and Agni and from His Prana the Vayu Deva);15) *Naabhya aaseedantariksham Seersho Dhyoh Samavartata, Padbhyaam Bhumir-dishaha Shrotraat tataa Lokaagumakalpayan/* (From the Lord's navel came out the 'Antariksha', His Head the Swarga, His Feet the Earth, Dishas or Directions from His Ears; and likewise the various Lokaas); 16)*Vedaahametam Purusham Mahaantam, Aditya Varnam Tamasastupaarey, Sarvaani Rupaani Vichitya Dheerah Naamaani krutwaabhivadan yadaaste/* ( Thus I have realised that Paramatma manifested Himself in innumerable Forms and nomenclatures and that He is a Kaaryasheela or of Practicalities, Mahimanvita or of Undefined Grandeur, the Ever Lustrous Sun-Like Appearance or of Inner Consciousness far away from Darkness or Agjnaana); 17) *Dhaataa purastaa – dyamuhaa jahaara Shakrah pravidwaanpadishaschatastra, Tamevam Vidwaanamrita iha bhavati Naanyah pandhaa Ayanaaya Vidyate/* ( It is that illustrious and knowledgeable person possessive of the Supreme Awareness realising Paramatma and recognises and visualises Indra and other Dishadhipaas who is qualified to attain Mukti; indeed there is no other route to Moksha!) 18)*Yagnena Yagnamayajanta Devaah Taani Dharmaaani Prathamaanyaasan, tey ha naakam Mahi Maanah sachantey yatra purvey Saadhyaah santi Devaah/* (Devataas came to worship Paramatma by means of this Yagna and assumed the Primary Forms of Manifestations of Dharma; The initial and arduous procedures of Dharma that were assiduously practised by Devatas and Sadhyaas came to be the Guidelines and whosoever followed the Regulations like performing Yagnas are competent to achieve higher Lokas.) 19) *Adbhyah sambhutaha Prithivyairasaascha Vishva karmanah samavartataatdhi tasya, Twashtaa Vidadhadrupameti tatpurushasya Vishvaajanamagre/* ( As the Universe got manifested from water and the Essence of Bhumi, Paramatma created Brahma and the latter created the Universe. That Brahma filled in the Fourteen Lokas and thus the whole Creation is the handiwork of His alone!) 20)*Vedaaha meham Purusham Mahaantam Aditya Varnam tamasah parastaat , Tamevam Vidwanamrita iha bhavati naanyah pandhaa Vidyateya -naaya/* ( If any person could realise that Supreme Soul who is too magnificent to vision like Surya much less to visualise then he is as good as Paramatma Himself; that is the way to attainment and the the path of Glory and Moksha.) 21)*Prajaapatisharati garbhey Antah Ajaaya-maano bahudhaavijaatey tasya, Dheeraah pariyaananti yonim Marecheenaam padamicchanti vedhasah/* Paramatma is reputed as a highly action-oriented Splendorous and Supreme Being who has neither beginning or termination. Mahaatmas and Maharshis like Marichi are indeed aware of His Accurate Form and crave and toil to attain Him) 22) *Yo Devebhya Aatapati yo Devaa -naam Purohitah, Purvoyo Devebhoy Jaatah Namu Ruchaa Braahmaye/* ( May I prostrate before the hallow of that Paramatma who illuminates Devas, whom Devas earnestly consider in the highest esteem as they are but His own reflections and who is the Eternal and Singular Truth). 23) *Rucham Braahmam janayantah Devaa Agrey tadabruvan, Yasthyai -vam Brahmano idvaat tasya Asan vashey.* ( As Devas made great endeavours to understand an inkling of what Paramatma was all about as they could never get even some clues initially, then Devas realised that whosoever among the Devotees similarly made enormous efforts to execute genuine quests about Him should automatically obtain their control mechanism too.) 24) *Hreasha tey Lakshmischa Patnou Aho raatrey paarsvey Nakshatraani Rupam Ashvinou vyaattham/* (Hey Vishnu Bhagavan! Your 'Ardhaanganis' or 'Better Halves' are Hree Devi the Symbol of Modesty and Lakshmi Devi the Emblem of Prosperity are your side manifestations of 'Ahoratraas' or day and night. The Nakshatraas constitute your Celestial Formation. And Ashvini Devatas are the full visage of yours as flower blooms!) 25) *Ishtam Nanishaana Amum Manishaana Sarvam manishaana, Om taccham yoraavrinee Mahey/* (Bhagavaan! We beseech your kindness and grace a to grant us the bestowing of successful and worthwhile fulfillment of our *Iham* and *Param* ; Bhagavan!)

## PART TWO

### SOURCES FROM PURANAS

#### Agni Purana

Shri Lakshmi Stotra and benefits : Mahatma Pushkar informed Parashurama that Lord Indra being desirous of retaining Devi Lakshmi in Indraloka for ever in the Form of Rajya Lakshmi. His eulogy to Devi Lakshmi was as follows: *Namasye Sarvalokaanaam jananeemabdhi sambhavaam, Shriyamunnidra Padmaaksheem Vishnu vakhasthala sthitaam/ Twam Siddhistwam Swaaha Sudhaa twam Lokapaalini, Sandhya raatrih prabhaa bhutirmedhaa shraddhaa Saraswati/Yagna Vidya Maha Vidya Guhaa Vidya cha shobhaney, Atma Vidyaa cha Devi twam vimukti phaladayini/ Aanveekshaki Trayee Vaartaa dandanitis twameva cha, Sowmya sowmyam Jagadrupam tawaitatddevi puritam/ Ka tatwanya twaamrutey Devi Sarva Yagna mayam vapuhu, Adyhaastey Deva Devasya Yogichintyam gadaabhrutah/ Twaya Devi parithayktam Sakalam Bhuvanatrayam, Vinishtapraayamabhavat twayedaaneem samedhitam/ Daaraah purtaasthathagaaram suhruddhaanya dhanaadhikam, Bhavateytanmahaabhaagey nithyam twadveekshanaannrunaam/ Shareerarogya maiswaryamaripaksha khsayah sukham, Devi twadrushti drushtaanaam purushaanaam na durlabham/ Tweamambaa sarvabhutaanaam Devadevo Haih pitaa, Twayatad Vishnuunaachaamba Jagad vyaaptam charaacharam/ Maanam kosham tathaa kosdhtam maa gruham maa paricchhadam, Maa shariram kalatram cha thyajethaah Sarva paavani/ Maa putraan maasahrudvargaan maa pashua maa vibhushanam, Thyajethaa mama Devasya Vishnor vakhasthaalaaley/ Satyana samashauchaabhyaam tatha sheelaadibhiringunaih, Kulaaisvaryescha yujjantey purushaa nirgunaa api/ sashlyaghyah sa guni dhanyah sa kuleenah sa buddhimaan, sa surah sa cha vikraanto yasatvayaa Devi veekshitah/ Sadyo vaigunyamaayaanti sheelaadyaah sakalaa gunahah, Paraanmikhee Jagaddhaatri yasya twam Vishnuvallahbey/ Na tey varnaayutam shattaa gunaan jimhaapi vedhasah, praseeda Devi Padmaakshi maasmaamssatyaaakshih kadaachana/*

(My reverential salutations to you the Mother of Universe! Maha Lakshmi! You were materialised from the Ocean, with magnificent eyes that are resplendent and are like opened up Lotus flowers occupying the chest of Vishnu; You are the hall-mark of Purity and the personification of propitiousness. You are the Siddhi, Swaha, Swadha, Sudha, Sandhya, Ratri, Prabha, Bhuti, Medha, Shraddhaa and Sarasvati. You are the Yagna Vidya, Maha Vidya, Guhya Vidya, and the Provider of Atma Vidya. You are the ‘Anveekshani’ or the Darshana Shastra, Trayi or the Form of Three Vedas viz. Ruk-Yajur and Sama; the ‘Vaarta’ or the three most significant professions of human beings viz. Krishi / Agriculture, Goraksha or the security of Cows, Vanijya or business and Danda Niti or the Art of Defence and Attack. You are the Form of ‘Saumyata’ or of poise and composure; since You are ever-present; You are also the most charming and esteemed. Are you not the singular woman sporting a mace called Kaumudi to defend the virtuous and punish the Evil! You are the Yagnamayi whom Yogis and Maharshis pray to and cogitate about. It is by your grace and magnanimity that the whole World got revived after its erstwhile destruction and is looking full and on-going. With your kindness that all the human beings and their

families are fine and the womanfolk, children, households, and existence in general is contented and smooth enough with 'Dhana-Dhaanyas'. Once your merciful looks are available, persons are healthy, wealthy, contented without enemies and hindrances. You are indeed the mother of all and Vishnu is the father, controlling and preserving the 'charaachara Jagat' comprising the moveable and immovable Benigs. You are our self-esteem, our Treasure-Hold, Anna Bhaandaar or Food-reservoir, the entire household, our well being and families; do keep us safe and satisfied Devi! Those whom you leave away, their truthfulness, stability, virtuosity are all deserted instantly. Your benevolence would turn a miserable being surfeit with riches, a vicious entity into an ideal being worthy of reputation, courage, and perfection. A remote glance of yours would bring about a mind-blowing transformation of a human being. Even Brahma would fail in estimating your qualities and how else marginal beings could possibly do! Mother, my earnest prayer to you is to bless me and never ever leave me even by mistake!).

As Indra Deva made a Prayer as above, his 'Indratva' lasted long with a steady throne and enjoyed great reputation. Mahatma Pushkar affirmed: *Evam stutaadadow Shreescha Varamindraaya chepsitam, Susthiratvam cha Rajasya sagraamavijayadikam/ Swastotra paatha shravana karthruunaam Bhukti Muktidam, Shri Stotram satatam tasmaat patthecha shunuyaanarah/*

(As Indra praised Devi Maha Lakshmi with her 'Amsha' as Rajyalakshmi, his Kingdom was safe and his enemies were routed in the battle between Devas and Danavas. Those who read and hear this Maha Stotra of Devi Lakshmi would secure prosperity and happiness and as such Mahatma Pushkaraa advised Parashu Rama to the entire humanity to make it a ritual of reading Devi Lashmi's Stotra as often as possible and definitely on Fridays each week.

### **Bhavishya Purana**

'Ramaa-Satyanarayana Vrata' and Six 'Kathas' (Episodes) of His Glories:

*Satyavratam Satyaparam Trisatyam Satyasya yonim nihitam cha Satey, Satyasya Satyamrita Satyanetram Satyaatmikam twaam Sharanam prapannah/Antarbhavenanta bhavantamevahyatatyajanto mrigayanti santah, Asantama pya ntyahimantarena Santam gunamtam kimu yanti santah/* (The objective of accomplishing Sacchinaananda Paramaatma is to perform Satya Narayana Vratam- which is the vehicle full of Truth, always absorptive of Truth, True-visioned and Truth-Souled; I seek refuge in Swami Satyanarayana! The fact that all human beings seek 'Satya Tatva' or the Consciousness of Truth is indeed transparent and patent; it is also clear that selfless dedication to Satya Narayana is the ultimate goal!) Vyasa Deva narrated that Sage Shounaka requested Sutha Maha Muni on behalf of a congregation of Munis at Naimisharanya as to which would be the most effective and none-too-complicated method of Realisation of Paramatma! Maha Muni Suta instantly took the name of Satyanarayana and prayed to him as follows:

*Navaambhojanetram Ramakelipaattram Chaturbaahu chaameekaram chaarugaatram/ Jagatraana hetum ripow dhumraketum sadaa Satyanaraayanam stoumi Devam* (I pray to Bhagavan Satyanarayana who has the enchanting eyes of delicate and fully opened Lotus, who is deservingly playful with Bhagavati Lakshmi, who possesses four shapely arms and stunningly shimmering Physique of gold and the Unique Source of Might to shield the Universe against Evil Forces!) *Shri Ramam Saha Lakshmanam Sakarunam Seetaanvitam Satvikam, Vaidehimukhapadma lubdha mathupam Poulasya samhaarakam/ Vandey Vandya padaambujam Suravaram Bhaktaanukampaakaram, Shatrughnena Hanumantaacha Bharatena sevitam*

*Raghavam* ( I salute with reverence Bhagavan Shri Rama who is the epitome of benevolence, whose lotus-like feet are always worshipped, who readily responds to devotees with mercy, who retains Lakshmana with Him and is accompanied by Devi Sita while benignly glancing at her lotus-like graceful face; who is worshipped by Shatrughna, Hanuman and Bharata; who is the destroyer of Poulastya, and the Symbol of Truth and Virtue as the Supreme of Devas).

Sutha Maha Muni then proceeded to narrate the **First Katha (Episode)** of Devarshi **Narada** who having gone around the World in his periodic visits came down to Martya Loka (Bhu Loka) and felt sad that human beings were suffering a lot without any relief from their miseries; he approached Vishnu Deva and prayed for a solution to offer to the human beings who were constant targets of diseases, poverty, natural calamities and discontentment. Lord Vishnu replied instantly that the easiest and effective means of providing reprieve from human sufferings would be the sincere performance of Satyanarayana Vrata; genuine and heartfelt observance of this Vrata would indeed effect in endowing with wealth to the unfortunate, excellent children, Kingdoms to those who lost their positions, good quality vision to the blind, freedom to those who were imprisoned, courage to the frightened and fulfillment of one's wants long cherished. The brief procedure of executing the Vrata is to make a firm resolve to do so without hindrances, keep a Tulasi Manjari in hands and pray to Shrihari as follows: *Narayanam saandraghanaava daantam, Chaturbhujam peetamaarvaasasam/ Prasanna vaktram Navakanja lochanam, Sanandanaadyaika rupa sevitam bhaje/ Karomi the Vratam Deva saayamkaaley twadarchanam, Shrutva Gaadhaam twadeeyam hi prasaadam tey bhajaamyaham/* (Bhagavan Narayana! You possess dark-cloud complexion, grand four arms, tranquil appearance, attractive eyes like fresh lotus, and worshipped by Sanaka Sanandana and other well-known Sages; I am always dedicated in my sincere devotion to You and have determined to perform puja by this evening and then only secure your 'Prasad' (blessings). Thereafter, commence the formal worship with five 'Kalashas' and instal Satyanarayana 'Pratima' in gold or silver or as per one's convenience.

The Puja would be according to 'Purusha Sukta Mantra vidhana' by way of the prescribed '**Shodasopacharas**' viz. 'Avaahayami' (Invocation), 'Suvarna Simha Samarpana (improvising a Golden chair), 'Padyam' (washing the Deity's feet), 'Arghyam' (providing water to clean His hands), 'Aachamaneeyam' (offering water for sipping), 'Suddhodaka Snaana' (bathing the Deity's Pratima with appropriate Mantra), 'Vastra Yugmam' (offering double clothing), 'Yagnopaveetam' (Providing the Sacred Thread), 'Gandham' (offering Sandal Paste), then 'Puja' by reciting the Names of Satyanarayana /Vishnu, either sixteen or hundred sixteen or thousand hundred sixteen, along with flowers or Tulasi leaves only by men and 'Akshatas' or rice grains mixed with turmeric powder, 'Dhupam' (Incense material), 'Deepam' or lighting of oil-soaked cotton vicks, 'Puspham' or a variety of fragrant flowers; 'Naivedyam' or a full meal as Prasada comprising 'Bhakshya' or Sweets and Savouries, 'Bhojya' or cereals and preparations, 'lehya' or items of tongue-licking type, 'Choshya' or items taken in as liquids and 'Paneeya' or drinks; 'Tambula' or betel leaves and betel nuts', 'Neerajanam' or camphor lighting shown to Deity with the accompanying sounds of bells, 'Matra Pupshpam' / Vedic Chanting, 'Pradakshina' or circumambulation, 'Saashtanga Namaskara' or reverential prostration along with 'Aparaadha Mantra' to say that the Puja so performed was incomplete with accepted mistakes and should be forgiven. The worship should climax with 'Chatram' or symbolic holding of umbrella, 'Chamaram' or symbolic fanning to the Deity, 'Nrittyam' or devotional ecstasy displayed in dance form, 'Geetam' or devotional singing in praise of Satyanarayana, 'Andolika' or symbolic swinging of Deity in a decorated swing; 'Ashwaarohana' and 'Gajaarohana' or symbolic rides of the Lord on horses and elephants and all

other possible 'Upacharas' or Devotional Services devoid of capacity, devotion, 'Mantram' or requisite formality and attention!

At the End, the following Mantra be recited while performing 'Homa' or offering to Agnihotra atleast hundred and eight times, viz. *Namo Bhagavatey nityam Satyadevaaya dheemahi, Chatuh Pradaatha daatrey cha Namastubhyam Namoh namah* (My humble salutations to You Satyanarayana to whom we meditate always; You are the Master and Donor of the Four Kinds of 'Purusha Arthaas' viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha'; do grant us the same to us too). By so saying, Devarshi Narada left for Satya loka with the resolve of performing Satya Narayana 'Puja' as soon as possible.

Suta Maha Muni then narrated **Second Katha** (Episode) signifying the 'Mahatmya' of Bhagavan Satyanarayana to the Sages who convened at Naimisharanya: In the city of Kashi, there was a pious, learned and poor Brahmana, called **Shatananda** with his wife and children, eking his livelihood by 'Yayavaara' or begging for rice from door to door. During his rounds of begging, an old Brahmana approached Shatananda and advised that instead of begging to look after his family, he should certainly perform the formal worship of Bhagavan Satyanarayana who was like a boat in the deep waters of 'Samsara'. By so saying the old Brahmana disappeared and there was a stunning and dazzling figure of Narayana Himself standing before Shatananda with Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Saranga! The Brahmana got utterly shocked, instantly prostrated and prayed to Bhagavan as follows:

*Pranaami Jagannatham Jagat kaaranakaaranam, Anaatha naatham Shivadam Sharanyamanagham Shichim/ Avyaktam vyaktaam Yaataam taapatraya vimochanam, Namah Satyanarayanasya katrainamah Shuddha satvaaya vishvasya bhatrai, Karaala Kaalaaya Vishvasya hantrai namastey Jaganmangalaatma murtey/ Dhanyosmadya kruti Dhanyo bhavedya saphalomama, vangamanogocharo yastwam mama pratyaksha-maagatah/ Drishtim kim varnayaamyaho na jaaney kasya vaa phalam, kriyaahenasya mandasya dehoyam phalavan kritah/* (Bhagavan Satyanarayana! You are the Cause and the Cause-Maker of the Universe, the Saviour of the Hapless, the Provider of Propitiousness, the Last Resort of Shelter and Protection, the Epitome of Virtue, the Form of Purity and Auspiciousness, the Invisible yet Visible, the destroyer of the 'Tapatrayas' of Adhi Bhautika, Adhi Daivika and Adhyatmika Nature; the Designer and the Design of the Universe as well as its final Demolisher; the Unique Provider of the Best of the World; today I am the most contented as my life's unknown and impossible desire has been achieved and what is more that I have heard Your Voice; could there be a bigger miracle that very effortlessly this dream has really come true!)

When asked by Shatananda as to the procedure of performing the Vrata, Bhagavan replied that there was no need for ample money to perform it, but it would involve endless devotion and sincerity of purpose. What ever daily earnings that might be secured on account of pleading for food that day would be sufficient, with which to fetch the Puja material required for sugar, milk, gandha, flowers, fruits, dhup / deepa, betel leaves and coconuts and after Puja, the Prashad be shared with Brahmanas, family members, neighbours, relatives and others irrespective of caste, creed and social status. Bhagavan further asked that the Vrata be popularised along with the details of the Procedure and the Mantras to be utilised for it among Kings, Merchants and all the Commoners so that they too would get the advantage. By so saying, the Lord disappeared and on the following day, Shatananda took a resolve to perform the Vrata to the best of his ability and on receiving double the amount than his daily earnings, secured the material as required and managed the Vrata very well. He strained every breath of his to popularise the purpose, procedure

and reward of observing the Vrata and ever since then, Satyanarayana Vrata became popular all over since quick rewards started flowing in; thus there emerged universal acceptance and popularity of the most famous Satyanarayana Vrata. On his part, Shatananda attained recognition and social esteem not only in Kashi but all over wherever Hindu Faith prevailed and after his end his Soul got absorbed into Bhagavan.

The **Third Katha** related to the King of Badari Khanda named **Chandrachuda** at Manipurak Nagara who was highly virtuous, soft spoken and popular among his Subjects. He was a devout 'Vishnu Bhakta'. But, the Mlecchas of Vindhya Desha attacked Chandrachuda who having been defeated in a fierce battle had to flee into forests and strayed into Kashi Nagara and discovered that the entire population was highly contented and enjoyed quality life devoid of diseases, untimely deaths, robberies and natural calamities. He then came to realise that the key to the all round happiness of Kasi was entirely due to the constant observance of Satya Narayana Vrata and that the Originator of this Sacred Vrata was a Brahmana called Sadananda (Shatanand) who had the Vision of Bhagavan Vishnu Himself. Chandrachuda approached Sadananda and secured his 'Upadesha' of the Format, Content, Method and the instant Fruit of the Vrata and immediately performed the Vrata sincerely. Bhagavan Satya Narayana appeared before the King and presented a powerful Sword to use against the Mlecchas who had forcefully occupied his throne and Kingdom. The King thanked Sadananda profusely and having reassembled his army devastated six thousand Mlecchas, retrieved his Kingdom and the lost prestige, thanks to the observance of Satya Narayana Vrata. Back to his throne, King Chandrachuda prevailed on all his Subjects to perform Satya Narayana Vrata as often as possible and before all Auspicious Tasks like Weddings, Birth days and Nama Karana functions were initiated and most definitely on every Purnima day of each month. The King ruled his Kingdom with great veneration for Satya Deva for sixty long years having built a new Capital and ultimately reached Vishnu loka leaving behind a great heritage of peace, prosperity and lasting fame.

The **Fourth Episode** was of Bhills/ Nishadas (Wood cutters) who happened to visit Kashi Nagar to sell their wood, got lost in the City and approached the Hermitage of Vishnu Das (Shatananda) as they felt thirsty. They were impressed with an on-going worship in the Hermitage, even as Vishnu Das not only quenched their thirst but also encouraged witnessing the proceedings of Satya Narayana Vrata. The Nishads took the Prasad at the conclusion of the Vrata with humility and high devotion and tried to take leave of Vishnu Das. The latter enquired whether they would also like to perform the Vrata and the Nishads exclaimed that it was not possible for them to do so; they said that performance of a Puja was not only expensive but they were completely illiterate and could never observe this kind of a complicated Puja in their life time ever! **Satyanarayana Vrata is neither expensive nor complicated**; what is significant is the devotion and commitment rather than riches nor knowledge. This was made amply clear to the Bhills; he said that Lord Krishna while visiting Hastinapura did not accept the Chief Guest Status of Duryodhana but stayed in the humble cottage of Vidura instead! Krishna again took away the 'tandulakanas' (rice-fries) from Sudama (Kuchela) with affection and bestowed such wealth that was not in the reach of Kings even; similarly He was so close to the illiterate and innocent Gopas and Gopis but kept aloof from even Great Sages! Having said this, Vishnu Das prescribed a simple and straight-forward format of observing the Vrata and enabled the Bhills to perform the worship in an effortless and easy way which even unintelligent children could follow provided however their hearts were transparent and Bhakti was paramount. The community of Bhills was thus prompted and encouraged by Vishnu Das, whereby they started earning by the sale of wood and gained profits and confidence in course of time. Eventually, their devotion became intense and their life-style changed so much that took firm steps towards attainment Vishnu Loka!

**The Fifth Episode** centered on a Vaisya called Sadhu and his son-in-law. The famous King Chandrachuda of Manipuraka Nagar referred to in the Third Episode above was once performing Satya Narayana Puja along with a large number of followers, when a wealthy Vanika from Ratnapur landed by his ship filled up with considerable riches. When the highly decorated Puja Mandap, Sadhu enquired as to what was going on at that busy Place, he was told that Satyanarayana Vrat was being performed under the auspices of Chandrachuda Maharaj along with several other devotees. Sadhu was also interested as he had no offspring and thus joined the group and prayed to Satya Narayana to bless him with a child. The Sabhapati was conveyed of the wish of the Vanika and as though Bhagavan Himself approved the wish, the desire was approved but on the condition that soon after securing a child he should perform the Vrata in a manner that would become of the rich Vanika. In course of time, Sadhu's wife conceived and a female child was born. The Name-Giving Function was celebrated with great pomp and show of the wealthy Vanika and the baby was named Kalavati after consultations of her 'Kundalini'. The wife of Vanika reminded of Sadhu's promise that now that they were blessed with a child, the Vanika should recall the promise made by him to perform Satya Narayana Vrata. He kept on delaying the fulfillment the promise somehow. Meanwhile, Kalavati was growing into a fine girl and Vanika commenced searching for a suitable bridegroom; *Ashta varsha bhaved Gauri Nava varsha cha Rohini, Dasa varsha bhavet Kanya tathah proudhaa Rajaswala* (An eight year old girl is known as Gauri and a Nine Year old is Rohini, a ten year old is said to be a Kanya and Proudha having come of age suitable for marriage!). Thus Vanika Sadhu planned for Kalavati's wedding first rather than redeeming the promise made to Satya Narayana Deva. A suitable son-in-law named Sankhapati who was very rich too was selected as Kalavati's husband. After the wedding, Sadhu kept his son-in-law in his own house as his business partner and the joint business flourished well. On the reminder of Sadhu's wife about the promise to perform Satya Narayana Vrata, Sadhu postponed again till his daughter's securing a child. A few days later, Sadhu accompanied by his son-in-law undertook a business tour beyond River Narmada. They stayed out for long and the promise to perform the Vrata was almost forgotten. As though Bhagavan got angry about the callousness of Sadhu in redeeming his promise about the Vrata, the two-some of in-laws faced considerable difficulties in the business and on their return journey back home stayed at a Guest house overnight and at that very night there was a theft in the King's Palace and both Sadhu and son-in-law got entangled as they were strangers there and got imprisoned; moreover, there was expensive pearl-necklace found on the body of the son-in-law of Sadhu. While the two were languishing in the prison awaiting judgment for robbery, there was a theft in Sadhu's house at his native place and both Kalavati and daughter suddenly turned as paupers and were some how eking their existence.

In the **Sixth Katha**, Suta Maha Muni explained that Bhagavan Vishnu could utilise the means of 'Tapatrayas' viz. Adhyatmika, Adhi Daivika and Adhi-Bhoutika forms to punish a human being when a person would go astray from 'Dharma'; in the case of Vanika Sadhu, the promise to execute Satya Narayana Vrata was wantonly ignored. Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi Devi had four sons viz. Dharma, Yagna, King and Thief and Lakshmi was equally fond of all of them. The charity given to Brahmanas and Guests is of the form of Dharma which targets Money; the Deva Yagna and Pitru Yagna are of the forms of Yagnas and in this case too Money is involved; a King who is responsible to safeguard both Dharma and Yagna also aims at Rajya Lakshmi and finally a 'Chor' (Thief) too is after Money in the final analysis. In the case of Vanika Sadhu, he was basically a Thief as he did not redeem his pledge to Satya Narayana Himself and hence there were two thefts were involved-one by way of suspicion by the King and another a theft in Sadhu's own residence. Thus the victims of the unhappiness of Satya Narayana

were all the members of Sadhu's family, thus analysed Suta Muni about the consequences. Be that as it might, Kalavati could not withstand her hunger and approached a Brahmana's house where a Vrata of Satya Narayana was being observed; she returned home late along with the 'Prashad' or the remains of the Offering to the Deity at the Puja. The mother was annoyed that Kavavati returned home late but as was conveyed by Kalavati that the delay was due to a Satya Narayana Vrata; Kalavati was then reminded of the lapse that occurred in not performing the Vrata and approached a past companion's house and begged money for performing the Vrata. Her companion replied that in the heydays of Kalavati, the latter gave a loan which would now be returned. Thus, Kalavati performed the Vrata as prescribed and Swami Satyanarayana was indeed satisfied. As a result, Vishnu Deva came into the dreams of the King who kept Sadhu and son-in-law in his custody; the former ordered the King to free the alleged prisoners, Sadhu and Shankhapati at once. Next morning the King called the Minister about the strange dream of Satya Narayana and his instruction to the King. The Minister called the Prisoners and found out their full antecedents. The King apologised to Sadhu, gave lot of money and freed them. Sadhu and son-in-law got back to their ship but even now there was no hint of remorse for not having performed the Vrata. Bhagavan took the form of a Hermit near the Ship and asked Sadhu and his son-in-law as to what was in the Ship. As a matter of fact there were many valuables forcefully taken by the King's soldiers from the Ship and since restored, besides many gifts from the King to them when released after their imprisonment. But Sadhu and son-in-law mocked at the Hermit and replied that the ship contained only dried leaves and grass and there was nothing worthy of donating to him. The hermit replied: 'Tadhastu' (So be it!). Sadhu and son-in-law really and literally discovered dried leaves and grass, instead of the valuables in the Ship! They were stunned and searched for the hermit and fell on his feet. The hermit reprimanded Sadhu by recalling all the incidents when Sadhu first encountered the 'Pratima' (Idol) of the Satya Narayana at the Palace of King Chandrachuda; he prayed for a child and pledged that he would perform Satya Narayana Vrata befitting his status but on getting a child he did not do so; he said that when the child grew of age and after her wedding, he would perform the Vrata but again he did not; he asked for lot of wealth which was also granted, but still he did not redeem the pledge; when he was imprisoned and sought help then too, did not; when he was let free from the prison and Bhagavan's help was sought even then he never thought that Bagavan gave the help; now too, he lied and said there was nothing for charity in the ship except grass and dried leaves! Sadhu the fell flat on his knees, displayed genuine shame and repentance and prayed as follows:

*Satya Swarupam Satyasandham Satya Narayanam Harim, Yatsatyatvena Jagatastwam Satyam tvaam Namaamyaham/ Twanmayaa mohitat-mano na Pashyayantyatmanah Shubham, Duhkaambhodhou sadaa magna Duhkhecha Sukhamaaninah/ Moodhoham Dhana garvena Madaandheekruta lochanah, na jaane swaatmanah Kshemam kathampashyaami Mudhadhih/ Kshamaswa mamadouraatmyam tapodhaamne Hare Namah, Aajnaapayatmadaasyam me yena tey charanow smarey/ (Satya Swarupa! Satyasandha! Satya Narayana Bhagavan Hari! Human Beings tend to become victims of 'Maya' (Illusion) and get victimised with the thoughts that happiness is in the deep Oceans of 'Samsara' and seek to attain those momentary joys; persons like me become arrogant and ego owing to small amounts of wealth and imagine no end of themselves foolishly; You are well-known as ever-merciful to those who are repentant. Mahatma! Could You not provide me one chance of correcting myself to devote my entire Self at the lotus-like feet of ours!).*

Bhagavan Satya Narayana, the ever-compassionate replied positively and blessed the Vanika. A few days later, the ship of Sadhu sailed off and a message reached Kalavati that her husband was arriving ashore

soon. She was so excited that the concluding part of the Satya Narayana Vrata being performed was ignored and did not even secure the 'Prasada' presented to Bhagavan as the 'Naivedya' and ran off to welcome the husband. But as soon as the ship was cited from a distance, she witnessed the horror of the sinking ship! Kalavati fell unconscious and after recovering her senses prepared herself to immolate in a Fire- Pit. As she was about to jump into the Fire, a Celestial Voice was heard saying that Kalavati who was already performing the Vrata did the unpardonable indiscretion of ignoring the Prasada and hence the calamity of the sinking ship, but if she went back to the house and took the Prasada with veneration, then the situation might change for the better! Kalavati was ashamed of her and did the amends at once; the sinking ship stood up and got anchored safe. There was a happy reunion of the family. Indeed, none could ever ignore the Lord who is other-wise ever-forgiving, considerate and clement! In Kali Yuga, the most fruitful, effective and instantly result-oriented worship is indeed that of **Satya Narayana Vrata**, undoubtedly.

### **Brahma Purana**

Jagannadha Temple at Puri: King Indradyuna of Malwadesha Avantika with Ujjain as his Capital had a long standing ambition to build an unparelled and world famed Temple of Jagannadha with the Idols of Krishna, Balarama and their sister Subhadra where regular and formal worship should be organized with Snaana, Daana, Tapa, Homa and Deva Darshana every day for generations who would seek Moksha to crowds of devotees. With a view to identify a suitable Place for building a Huge Place of Jagannadha as envisaged by the King, the latter undertook a Yatra, with elephants, horses, chariots, and soldiers and the Public towards the southern direction ending the Eastern Sea-coast.

It was at this juncture that the Sages at Naimisharanya interrupted the narration of Maharshi Lomaharshana as to how such most Sacred and appropriate Purushottama Kshetra was selected by the King Indradyumna? In reply to the query, the Maharshi quoted Lord Bramha that Devi Lakshmi asked Janardana on the same issue and the latter asserted as follows since he had the vision of the future: 'Purushottama Tirtha would for sure one of the most celebrated Tirthas, where Devas, Daityas, Danavas and Marichi-like Maharshis were indeed aware already; he further said that on the Southern Sea-coast there would be a mammoth Vata-Vriksha (Banyan Tree) in a large area of ten yojanas and that would be the most ideal Place for developing Purushottama Kshetra. This massive Vata Vriksha was in place already and did not get swept away by water even at the Kalpaantara and Sages and Yogis meditated under the Tree and dissolved severest sins like Brahmahatya of previous births. To the north of that Vata Vriksha was situated a Keshava Temple already and from it, there was a Massive Mahal which was indeed the Dharmamaya Abode of Swayambhu Vishnu by praying whom devotees were making a bee-line to Vaikuntha! By realizing this, Yama Dharma Raja approached me (Vishnu) and I assured Yama Deva that this specific Pratima would be hidden by me.'

King Indradyumna crossed Mahanadi on the either sides of which the lands were fertile, Brahmanas were pious engaged in Yagnas, Homas, worships, fastings and Swadhyaas; Varnaashramas were flourishing and the King came to realize that the destination was reached where the Temple task was to be taken up. He ordered his Samanta Rajas nearby to let the building material arrive, Shilpis were ordered to arrive to quicken the making of various Idols and the Astrologers were summoned to fix up suitable dates of various stages of construction. Efforts were intensified to locate the famed Swayambhu Purushottama Vighraha which was misplaced from the Keshava Temple. As advised by Raja Purohitas and Panditaas, the

King performed Ashwamedha Yagna. Simultaneously the Temple Construction was completed too. But there was no trace of the Purushottama Pratima yet and the King was terribly worried and prayed to the Lord at length: *Vaasudeva Namastestu Namastey Moksha Kaaranaa, Traahi maam Sarva Loksha Janmasamsaara saagaraat/ Nirmalaambara samkaasha Namastey Purushotthaama, Sankarshana Namastestu traahi maam Dharanidhara/ Namastey Hemagarbhaaya Namastey Makaradhwaaja, Ratikaanta Namastestu traahi maam Shambaraantaka/ Namastenjana samkaasha Namastey Bhaktavatsala, Aniruddha Namastestu traahi maam Varado bhava/ Namastey Vibhudaavaasa Namastey Vibhudapriya, Naraayana Namastestu traahi maam sharanaagatam/ Namastey Balinaam Shreshtha NamasteyLaangalaayudha, Chaturmukha Jagaddhaamatraahimaam Prapitaamaha/ Namastey Neela meghaabha Namastey Tridashaarchita, Traahi Vishno Jagannaatha magnam maambhava saagarey/* (Vaasudeva, Moksha Kaarana! Save me from the cycle of birth and death; you are like the clean and clear Sky; my salutations to you Purushottama the best of Beings, Sankarshana who attracts the Universe, Dharanidhara the Holder of Earth's total weight, the Golden-bellied or the Shaaligraama Shila, the Makaradhwaaja or the Flier of the Flag of a Crocodile on your chariot; Ratikanta or the Swarupa of Manmatha who is an embodiment of Charm and beauty; Shambraantaka or the destroyer of Shambraasura; Anjana Sankaasha or of Shyamala / light blue colour; Bhaktavatsala or He who is considerate to devotees; Varadaayaka or the Bestower of Boons; Aniruddha; Vibudhaavaasa and Vibudhapriya or He who rests with and fond of Devas; Natayana or He who lies on a Huge Water sheet in Yoga Nidra; I crave for your indulgence and refuge; You are of the Swarupa of Balarama the Symbol of Strength; You are the Halaayudha; Charurmukha; Jagaddhaama; Prapitaamaha, Neela Meghaaya, Tridashaarchita, Vishnu and Jannaadha; I am fully drowned in the Ocean of Samsara; do lift me up and save me!

King Indradyumna continued his prayer to Jagannadha as follows: You are the annihilator of the invincible Daitya Hiranyakashipu as the incarnation of Nrisimha whose vision was like that of Pralayaagni; save me! You were the Avatar of Maha Varaaha who lifted up Bhudevi from the clutches of Daitya Hiranyaaksha from Rasatalala; lift me up from the deep and distressful Ocean of Samsara; You are the incarnation of Krishna who arrived on Bhumi to terminate innumerable Raakshasaas and Evil Forces and revived Dharma in various Forms of yours like Balarama; You are of the Swarupas like Garuda, Dikpaalakaas and so on and my salutations to one and all; Do bestow on me the boons of Dharma, Artha, Kaama and Moksha; You may be of myriad Forms but the Advaita or the Singular and Unique!

*Ekastwam hi Harey Vyaapi Chitaswabhaavo Niranjana, Paramam, tava Rupam yadrupam Bhaavaabhaavavivarjitam, Nirlepam Nirgunam Shreshtham Kutastamachalam Dhruvam!---*

*Kadaa Manushya Lokegha Kadaa Tiryaggateshucha, Jalayantrey yathaa chakrey ghatee rajju nibandhanaa/ Yaatichyortham tathaa madhey bhraman gacchaami yogatah, Evam Samsaara chakreysminbhairavey Romaharshaney/ Bhramaami suchiram kaalam naantam pashyaami karhichit, Najaaney kim karomyadya Harey Vyaakulitendriyah/ Shoka trishnaabhi bhutoham Kaandisika vichetanah, Idaaneem twaamaham Deva vihvalah Sharanam gatah/ Traahimaam Duhkhatam Krishnamagnam Samsaara Saagarey, Kripaam kuru Jagannaatha Bhaktam maam yadi manyasey!* (Deva! I am not aware of when I shall be in Naraka or Swarga; when would I be on Bhumi and when as an animal or a bird! I have been in the cycle of birth and death just as a string around a pot, once on top and once on bottom as a mechanical appliance lifting water from a well in the 'Kalachakra' and there

does not seem to be an end to the ‘Bhramana’ or unending revolution; I am at a complete loss to realize as to when is the termination of this endless cycle as a I am victimized as a ‘Kandiseeka’ or a migrant/ distressed wanderer from one life to another. Bhagavan Krishna! Kindly liberate me from these unending and repetitive flights in the pursuit of everlasting mirages!)

As the King Indradumna prayed on the above lines, Jagannatha was pleased and granted darshan in the pure-hearted dreams of the King; the Lord who was in His full Form with Shankha-Chakra-Gada and Saranga directed the King to reach the Sea shore in the early morning time all alone with an axe in hands into the Sea which would give way to lead him to reach a place where he would sight a Maha Vriksha and without any hesitation cut the Tree; while cutting it, Jagannadha said that the King would discover a fabulous ‘Vastu’ and should consider that Vastu as the Pratima of Jannaatha for installation in the Temple awaiting the installation. The King was overwhelmed with the vision of Paramatma in the dream, recited Vishnu Mantra and Vishnu Sukta, reached the Sea Shore with extreme devotion and did exactly as directed; he found the Maha Vriksha, cut it into pieces and found Bhagavan Vishnu and Vishwakarma in the Forms of two Brahmanas; the latter interrogated the King as to why the latter was cutting the Tree and the King replied smilingly and with extreme veneration that he was directed by the Adyanta Rahita Bhagavan Jagannaatha Himself! The Brahmanas complimented the efforts of the King and one of them directed the other Brahmana to prepare the Pratimas on the lines prescribed by Him saying:

*Krishnarupam param shaantam padmapatraayatekshanam, Srivatsa Koustubha dharam Shankha Chakra Gadaadharam, Gouraangam Kshira varnaabhaam dviteeyam Swastikaankitam/ Laangalaastradharam Deva manantaakhyam Mahabalam, Deva Daanava GandharvaYaksha Vidyadharoragaih/ Na Viginaa - tohi tasyaantasteynaananta iti smrutatah, Bhagineem Vaasudevasya Rukmavarnaam Sushobhanaam/ Triteeyaam vai Subhadraamcha Sarva Lakshana Lakshitaam!*(Bhagavan Shri Krishna is of extreme peaceful visage; his eyes are large and sparkling like a lotus; his chest is adorned with the Emblem of Srivatsa and with Koustubha jewel; and his hands are decorated with Shankha, Chakra and Gada. The Second Idol of Bhagavan Balarama should be of milk-like Gaura Varna; of Swastika Chihna / Signage; with Hala/ plough as his Ayudha named Ananta or Interminable / Endless, whom none could describe including Deva- Daanava-Gandharva- Yaksa-Vidyadhara-Nagas! The third Pratma would be of Subhadra the sister of Vaasudeva and Balarama whose sacred Physique was golden and auspicious!) As soon as the description of the features of the Three Idols was given, the Junior Brahmana materialized the Pratimas exactly on the lines; first of Balabhadra, then of Vaasudeva and finally of Devi Subhadra. Then the King asked the Brahmanas as to who they were precisely- were they Devataas o Yakshaas, Vidyadharaas, Ahwini kumars are Brahma and Vishnus! Bhagavan replied that he was not a Devata, Yaksha, Indra, Brahma and Rudra, but might be as well construed as Vishnu himself! As the latter’s identity was revealed, the King was non-plussed and broke down into ecstatic bewilderment and implored him as follows:

*Shriyahkaanta Namasteystu Shripatey Peetavaasavey, Shreeda Shreesha Shri Nivaasa Namastey Shreeniketana/ Adhyam Purushameeshaanam Sarvesham Sarvatomukham, Nishkalam Paramam Devam Pranatosmi Sarvatomukham, Nishkalam Paramam Devam Pranatosmi Sanaatanam/ Shabdaateetam Gunaateetam Baavaabhaava Vivarjitam, Nirlepam Nirgunam Sooksham Sarvajnam Sarvabhaavanam/ Praavrunmegha prateekaasham Go Brahmana hitey ratam, Sarveshaameva goptaram vyaapinam Sarva bhaavinam/ Shankhachakradharam Devam Gadaamusaladhaarinam, Namasye Varadam Devam Neelotpaladala chhivam/ Naga paryankashayanam Ksheerodaarnava shaayinam/ Namasyeham*

*Hrisheekesham Sarva papa harim Harim/ Punastwaam Deva Devesham Namastye Varadam Vibhum,  
Sarva Lokeshwaram Vishnum Moksha Kaaranam -avyayam/*

(Lakshmikanta! Peetaambara dhari! Shrinivasa! I greet you the Adipurusha, Ishaana, Sarveswara, Sarvatomukha or He visions in all directions; Nishaka, Sanatana, Parama Deva, Shabda-Gunaateeta or He who is beyond the reach of Sound or Features; devoid of Bhava or Abhava / belief or non-belief; Nirlepa, Nirguna, Sukshma, Sarvajna, and Saviour; Your Form is dark like the clouds of Rainy Season; You are always engaged in the safety of cows and Brahmanas; Sarvajna or the Omniscient and the Supreme Creator; You are the Highest Deity with Shanka-Chakra-Gada-Musala ready to save; the Ever Provider to one and all; Sessa Shaayi; Hrishikesha; Sarva Paapa Haari; Moksha Kaarana, Sarva Vyapi Vishnu; my obeisances to you Sarva Loksha!). The King then asked for the boon of attaining Vishnupada which was impossible even for Devaasuras, Gandharvas, Yaksha, Siddha, Saadhyta, Vidyaadhara, Naaga, Guhya, Kinnara, Parama Yogis and Maharshis. Lord Jagannatha not only granted the boon and also blessed him to continue the Kingship for nineteen thousand years to ensure the observance of worship at the Purushottama Kshetra; he also materialized an Indradyumna Sarovara to immortalize human memory of the most illustrious King as long as Jagannatha's Presence in the Purushottama Kshetra would continue. It is stated that a devotee would accomplish Great Punya /Fruit by worshipping Lord Jannaatha at Purushottama Kshetra by observing strict devotion and fasting on Jyeshtha Shuddha Dwadashi as he or she would acquire by standing upright with devotion for seventy thousand years at Kurukshetra by stringent austerity. Even a passing Darshan of the Shikhara of the Purushottama Temple from a distance would demolish Sarva Paapas of the Past and Present. [See Skanda Purana in the subsequent pp]

### **Brahmanda Purana**

*Why Maha Purusha could not overcome Paraa Shakti (Prakriti) ?* : Agastya Maharshi had been on a Tirtha Yatra in Bharata and reached Kanchi Nagara and worshipped Devi Kamakshi and felt concerned about the low standards of morality among human beings. As he was immersed in the worship, Vishnu appeared in the form of Hayagriva with Shankha- Chakra-Japa maala and a Sacred Book. When the Maharshi expressed his concern as above, Hayagriva said that Shiva too raised the same doubt as the Maharshi did and his reply was that he of Vishnu Amsha was indeed the Pradhana Purusha responsible for Srishti-Sthiti- Samhara far beyond the Tri-Gunas of Satwa-Raajasa-Taamasa nature; but there was another Paraa Shakti who was at play in moulding the psyche or consciousness of every being either in the frame work of Virtue or Vice and those who could worship that Paraa Shakti would decide the fate of the worshipper. Asked about the characteristics of that Para Shakti, Hayagriva explained: Maha Devi had no beginning nor end and all possible Swarupas were her own. But one could only realise her by Dhyana or meditation since her Swarupa was Dhyana itself. Brahma was the foremost to have realised through Dhyana; She was called Prakriti. She was visualised at the time of Samudra Mathana or Churning of the Ocean of Milk by Devas and Daityas as Devi Mohini. Again she appeared in the Form of Parvati whom Mahadeva wedded and gave birth to 'Shaasta' or Skanda. Agastya Muni wondered as to why the Sarvajna Mahadeva who brought Manmatha into a heap of ash was enamoured of Parvati! Indeed why Maha Prurusha was unable to overcome Prakriti!

*Indra's dethronment, Lakshmi's exit from Swarga, Prayaschityas and Atonement:*

Hayagriva narrated that Maha Deva decided to teach a lesson to the arrogant Indra and briefed Durvasa Muni to follow a plan as provided by him; accordingly Durvasa intercepted a Vidyadhari who after long

Tapasya secured a flower garland from Paraambika and demanded that garland for himself. Then he gifted the garland to Indra rather casually and Indra placed it on the head of Iravata elephant which trampled the garland. The furious Duravasa cursed Indra to get unseated from Swarga and Lakshmi Devi left from there to Vishnu's Vakshasthala (Chest).

Indra had to leave his Chair and enquired Deva Guru Brihaspati as to what was the Prayaschitta or atonement of sins; *Killings, Stealing, Violence, Intoxication and Unauthorised Sex* were the prominent sins. The Zone-range of killing was defined: Human beings, four legged animals, Egg-born beings, water-born beings; Tiryak-beings (moving breadth-wise) and bone-less beings ; if the intensity of atonement is of ten thousand units as in the case of human beings, it should be thousand-hundred-ten-five-three or one in the subsequent categories afore-mentioned. In regard to the killings of human beings of different Varnas of Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishya-and others , the top category of 'Himsa' or Violence is the killing of Father, Mother, Guru, Husband / wife, progeny etc. In the case of the rarest of rare offences like the killings of Brahmanas, Gurus and Parents, and those who take refuge, there would not be Prayaschittas possible. But in other cases, there might be atonements of extreme intensity but Jeeva Himsa 'per se' was considered as the worst crime attracting maximum atonement. Referring to Stealing, there would not be any Prayaschittas possible in regard to the belongings of Brahma Jnanis, Daridras, Bahu Putra Samsaris and of those who totally depend and believe in; there might however be possibilities of Prayaschitta to other sins subject however to the range and intensity of the offences. In the cases of 'Asteya' or stealing, where ever one's own inner conscience would prick, the atonement might be Tirtha Snaana, Niraahara except one meal of of Kanda Mulas a day and Ambika Shiva worship besides daily recitation of Shata Rudram for one thousand and eight times. As regards, 'Madya Sevana' or consuming intoxicants, the lesser degree intoxicants made of sugar cane, Tada Phala or Palm fruits or Madhuka flower or jaggery might be least sinful; harder drinks are totally avoidable and sinful; a Brahmana who drinks intoxicants would have to atone by performing 'Kruccha Chandraaya Vrata', reciting ten thousand Gayatri Mantra, Jataveda Mantra, and Ambikaa Hridaya Mantra to get purified. Those Brahmanas who practise the worship of Bhairava, Bhadra Kali and such Ucha Saktis might have to consume intoxicants but their range would be restricted as mentioned above. In any case, they should not consume without worship and other wise they are destined to Rourava Naraka. But drinking either other intoxicants or those which would be of exceptions as mentioned above especially be better damned either by jumping into fire or jump from mountains and there would not be any possible atonements. The next and the worst sin relates to 'Para Sree Sangama'; there is no prayaschitta in the case of mother, sister, aunt, niece and 'Guru Bharya'. As regards Deva Dasi, Brahma Dasi, Swatantra and Low-Class women, unions are certain to experience in Narakas depending on considerations of mutual consent or persuasion of force were all classified in great detail along with the resultant retributions either in one's own on-going life and as carry forward to next births or in Narakas.

Deva Guru also suggested to Indra that besides observing the specified Prayasticchhas there could be relief obtained from reciting various Mantra Rajaas that might blunt the sharpness of sins concerned. To start with the sinner who realise the indiscretions or even wanton sins should at the foremost feel wholly responsible for the shortcomings. A Brahmana who confesses and regrets his misdoings should get into the frame of atonement, perform hundred paranayaamaas, and keep reciting *Idam Vishnurvichakramey; Traimbakam Yajaa mahey, Paavamaanika Mantra; Anna Sukta; Om Bhrugurvai vaarini and Brahmarpana Mantra* and observe fasting overnight and treat Brahmanas to Bhojana, recite again *Idam Vishnur vichakramey and Traimabakam Yajamahey and Pancha Dashaakshari* before taking food. In

fact, if anybody observes the above routine, there would never be any scope for doing wrongs, but overcome the Pancha Paapaas which might not affect even marginally the equanimity of life in Peace and provide shield against distress, desire and disease.

Indra having heard about the generic narration of sins and atonements desired to know from Deva Guru about the instant happening of Indra being unseated from Swarga and Lakshmi disappearing from Swarga! Brihaspati reminded Indra that Kashyapa Muni gave a curse to Indra that soon enough the latter would lose Swarga and Devi Lakshmi since Indra killed Vishwarupa the former Purohita of Amaravati as he suspected that he was protecting the cause of Danavas; Vishwarupa an ardent devotee of Narayana was the grand son of Kashyapa Muni and Diti.

#### Ksheera Samudra Mathana and Mohini Avatara:

Even while Brihaspati was explaining this to Indra, a huge number of Rakshasas attacked Swarga, harassed Devatas and occupied Swarga. Devas and Indra approached Brahma and the latter reached Kshira Samudra to call on Narayana. Vishnu advised that Devatas should prevail upon Asuras and together churn Ksheera Samudra with Mountain Mandhara as the churning stick, Vasuki as the rope to churn and he by assuming the Incarnation of Kurma would balance the Mountain to enable the churning so that Amrita would be produced; Vishnu further planned that he would ensure that Amrita the life lasting drink so produced would be distributed to Devatas and not the Asuras. The Grand Plan worked as several Asuras perished out of their ego to opt for the serpent's mouth that emitted poisonous flames. In the process of churning emerged Surabhi-Kamadhenu- the Sacred Cow, Varuni Devi carrying Sura the intoxicating drink, Parijata Tree which spread fragrance far and with its flowers and Apsara Ganas all rejected by Asuras as they should Amrita and nothing else! The churning continued and Chandra Deva was materialised whom Maha Deva accepted; Kaustubha Ratna was accepted by Vishnu; a huge mass of poisonous creepers were given away to Naaga Devatas; Aoushadhis the herbal medicines were materialised and Maha Bhairava opted for it. Then emerged Dhavantari in his Kamandalu or the Sacred Vessel the much-awaited Amrita but for a while there was a veil of Maya around the vessel as it looked too innocuous.

#### Devi Lakshmi appeared and Muni Ganas and Devas hailed her praising her:

*Lakshmim Ksheera Samudra Raja Tanayaam Shri Ranga Dhaameshwareem, Daasibhuta samasta Deva vanitaam Lokaika deepaankuraam/ Shriman manda kataaksha labdhavibhava Brahmendru Gangaadharaam, Twaam Trailokya kutumbeneem Sarasijaam Vandey Mukunda Priyaam!* They also recited Shri Suktam by saying: *Hiranyavarnaam Harineem Suvarna Rajatasrajaam Chandraam Hiranyayeem Lakshmeem jatavedomamaahava, Taam avaha Jaatavedo Lakshmeemanapagaamineem, Yasyaam Hiranyam vindeyamgaamashwam Purushaanaham/ etc.*

The highly excited Gandharvas jumped into symphonic singing and Apsaras danced with ecstasy; Ganga and other Sacred Rivers fetched cool and fragrant waters while 'Ashta Diggajas' or the Celestial Elephants got her bathed. Vishwakarma gifted invaluable Dresses and Ornaments and Maha Lakshmi reached her rightful Place of Vishnu's heart! With the excitement of Shri Lakshmi's arrival, there was a temporary diversion but soon enough both Devas and Asuras suddenly realised that Dhanvantari's Golden Kamandalu was replete with Amrita!

Then suddenly flared up a scramble of swiftly changing hands and a pandemonium was created; a reverberating female voice halted the mayhem and there was an extraordinarily graceful embodiment of Beauty named Mohini Devi who said: ‘Gentlemen! What for is this fight! I am a neutral person and I shall do justice to all; hand over the Golden Vessel to me and I will surely distribute Amrita in an orderly manner’; by so saying she made formations of Devas and Asuras and served Amrita to Devas first; being under a heavy cloud of Maya, the Asuras continued to await their turn. Rahu however sat in the queue of Devas and as soon as Surya and Chandra recognised him the latter objected even while Rahu consumed drops of Amrita already; Devi Mohini lifted her serving spoon and sliced Rahu’s body into two and his head flew up to the skies discarding the body trunk behind. As the service of Amrita was over, Mohini Devi disappeared and the spell of Maya was lifted. An uproar broke out and Devaasura battle began but since Devas had already consumed Amrita their prowess was multiplied while the Asuras lost their shine and had to retire to Paataala Lokas.

Sage Narada visited Kailasa and conveyed the happenings at Samudra Mathana and the revelation of Devi Mohini as the arbiter to distribute Amrita to Shiva and Parvati; he also narrated as to how Vishnu Maya was at full display and but for the incident of Rahu, Asuras became powerless and fled back to Pataalas. Both Parvati and Shiva were amused and visited Vishnu and Devi Lakshmi and requested Vishnu to display the Unparalleled Beauty of Mohini. As Vishnu assumed that Form of Mohini, Shiva was unable to resist and chased her even while Devi Uma was protesting; he finally embraced her and the outcome was the birth of Maha Shasta who had the capability of destroying crores of Daityas.

### **Brahma Vivarta Purana**

Maharshi Narayana defines Pancha Prakritis, their Kalaas and manifestations: Narayana Maharshi described Shri Krishna as that Supreme Power whom Ganesha, Vishnu, Shiva, Rudra, Sesha Deva, Brahma and other Devas, Manus, Muniganas, Saraswati, Parvati, Ganga Devi, Lakshmi and all other Devis worship his feet always. Maharshi Narayana portrayed Shri Krishna who lifted Govardhana Giri by his little finger and saved Vraja bhumi from the wrath of Indra Deva; who lifted the whole Prithvi as she was sinking into the deep worlds under the huge pull of waters and saved her by his mere tusks; who was the naughty honey- bee seeking to tease the sweetness of the faces of ‘Gopanganas’; who by his mere fall of an eye-lash the Creator of the Universe Brahma would become a casualty; and who as a tortoise that bore the weight of Sesha Nag at the time of ‘Samudra Mathana’ like an elephant to a mosquito. Maharshi Narayana further depicted Devi Radha as the Prakriti, the secondary Prakriti is Lakshmi, the tertiary Prakriti is Saraswati, the fourth is Veda Mata Savitri, and the fifth Prakriti is Durga whose son is the unforgettable Ganesha.

In the Second Chapter of Brahma Vivarta Purana titled Prakriti Khanda, Narayana stated that Pancha Prakriti Devis viz. Ganesha’s mother Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Savitri, and Radha organised the process of ‘Srishti’. Then Narada enquired of Bhagavan Narayana as to what were the origins and the Swarupas of these Prakritis, their characteristics and as why were they called by Five Pritis? Maharshi Narayana replied that the word ‘Pra’ denotes ‘Prakrushta’ or expert and ‘Kriti’ denotes ‘Srishti’, thus the total word is Prakriti. In the ‘Trigunatmaka’ Form, Satva Guna is significant in the context of Srishti (Creation); the word ‘Pra’ stands for ‘Pradhana’ and ‘Kriti’ denotes Srishti; in other words, that Devi who is primarily responsible for Creation is called Prakriti. Maharshi Narayana illustrated Purusha and Prakriti are two Forms, the right and the left respectively and thus Prakriti also is Nitya / Eternal as much as of

Purusha. That is the Mula Prakriti Parameswari. On the instruction of Paramatma, five Rupas were authorised to perform Srishti.

Bhagavati Durga is Shiva Swarupa, also called Narayani, Vishnumaya and Purna Brahma Swarupini, whose natural characteristics are to bestow Yasha (Fame), Mangala (Propitiousness), Dharma (Virtue), Shri (Wealth), Sukha (pleasure), Moksha (Salvation) and Harsha (happiness). Sidheswari, Siddhirupa, Siddhida, Siddhidaata, Eswari, Buddhi, Nidra, Kshudha, Pipaasaa, Chhaya, Tandra, Daya, Smriti, Jaati, Kshaanti, Bhraanti, Shaanti, Kaanti, Chetana, Tushti, Pushti, Lakshmi, Vruti, and Mataa are all the names of Durga.

Lakshmi and other Devi Swarupas: Bhagavati Lakshmi is the Shuddha Satva Swarupa who is Shrihari's Shakti, the Embodiment of Prosperity, Charm, Restraint, and Superior Nature and by nature is the anti-thesis of Lobha, Moha, Kaama, Krodha, Mada and Ahamkara. Noted as 'Maha Lakshmi', she is 'Swarga Lakshmi', 'Rajya Lakshmi', 'Griha Lakshmi', 'Dravya Lakshmi', 'Kirti Lakshmi', 'Vanijya Lakshmi' and 'Ashta Lakshmi'.

Bhagavati Saraswati is the Adhishtaana Devi of 'Buddhi', 'Vaani', 'Vidya', 'Kavitha', 'Medha', Samsarana Shakti, Kalpana Shakti, Bodha Swarupa, Nissandeha, Vichaara kaarini, Grandha kaarini, Sangeeta Sandhi, Taala Kaarini, Vishaya-Gyana-Vaani Rupa, Vyakhya-Upadesha-Vaani- Pustaka-Tapomayi and Siddhi Vidyaa Swarupa.

Bhagavati Savitri / Gayatri is the 'Veda Maata' or the Mother of Four Vedas, the 'Utpanna Shakti' or the Creator of Chhanada/ Vyakarana and other Vedangas, the 'Sandhya Vandana' and also the mother of Tantras. She is also the Dwija Rupa, Jagadrupa, Tapaswini, and Parama Shuddha Rupa. Tirthas look forward to secure her touch for attaining their 'Shuddhi' or purity and 'Pavitrata' or sanctity. Her Swarupa is of Shuddha Sphatika Mani and is the personification of 'Satwa Guna'. Her natural trait is to bestow Moksha.

Bhagavati Radha Devi is the 'Adhishtaana Devata' of 'Prema and 'Praana' or Love and Life. She is the most exalted of all the Devis. She is noted for her 'Sundarata' (Beauty and Charm), 'Sadgunata' (Good characteristics), and 'Sowbhagyata' (auspiciousness). She is called by several names like Paraavara, Saarahuta, Paramaadya, Sanaatani, Paramaananda Rupa, Dhanya, Maanya and Pujya. She is Nityanikunjeswari and the Raasakreedaa's Adhishtaatri, originated from 'Rasamandali'. As the most significant and popular Devi of Goloka, she is well-known as Raaseswari and Surasika, Ahlaada-swarupini, Nirguna (devoid of the Three 'Gunaas'), Nirlipta (devoid of worldly joys and attractions), Niraakaara (She has no physical Existence made of Pancha Bhutas) and Atma Swarupini of Shri Krishnaatma. Only Vidwan Purushas through Veda Vidhana could perceive her undisclosed Existence or Reality. Munindras and Surendra would never be able to realise what Radha is all about! She is stated to wear only Neela Vastras (Blue clothing) emerging from Agni Shuddhi or Purity of Fire. She is the daughter of Vrishabhanu Gopa. Prithvi is stated to have been purified with the touch of Radha's feet! Yet Brahma and other Devas could not vision her!

Prakriti Devi has several 'Amshas' (Alternative Forms), 'Kalaas' (Features), and 'Kalaamshas' (Alternative Features). For instance, Devi Ganga who purifies 'Bhumandala' has a water Form, originating from Bhagavan Shri Hari's feet and is like the blistering Agni which turns the wood-like sins into ash. Mere touch, or better still take a bath or much better of consumption of 'Ganga Jal' would

qualify human and other Beings for securing 'Kaivalya'/ Salvation. Ascending the ladder to 'Golokaa' would be possible by worship to Devi Ganga, which is considered as the most superior of all 'Tirthas' and Rivers. Ganga flows in the 'Jatas' (curled and twisted hair) of Shankara Maha Deva. From there it flows in various lines down to Bharata Varsha enabling 'Tapaswis'/meditators and each and everybody to enoble and purify their hearts and the Holy waters of the River are pure and clean. Bhagavan Narayana is especially fond of Devi Ganga. Shri Tulasi is another principal 'Amsha' of Prakriti Devi with the natural tendency to adorn Vishnu's feet. Any 'Sankalpa' (proposal), 'Puja' (worship) or 'Tapasya' (meditation) of Bhagavan assumes quicker response and is considered as the best, sacred and most propitious embellishment to Shri Hari. The sins of a worshipper are burnt off like wood by fire and the contact of Tulasi gladdens Narayana. In fact, worship of Govinda is stated to be incomplete without 'Tulasi dalas' with double leaves. In Bharata Varsha, Devi Tulasi in Vriksha Form is reputed as Kalpa Vriksha or the one granting and fulfilling the desires of devotees. Also, to the residents of Bharata Varsha, Tulasi is a readily available boon and a 'Traana' or Raksha / protection. Another significant 'Amsha' of Prakriti Devi is Jaratkaaru or the mind-born daughter of Kasyapa Muni named Mansa Devi, who has the privilege of being the disciple of Bhagavan Shankara and is a highly learnt 'Vidushi' of knowledge. Nageshwari is the sister of Nagaraja Sesha and is revered as 'Naga Maata' always worshipped by Nagaloka residents and is a Siddha Yogini whom Sri Hari is fond of and is a Vishnu Swarupini. She is the Adhishthaana Devata of all Mantras related to Saptas. Also, Nageswari is the Pativrata of Jaratkaaru Muni who was of the 'Amsha' of Shri Krishna. One another of the prime 'Amshas' of Prakriti Devi is Devasena, one of the Matrikas, and is also named Bhagavati Shashthi whose principal responsibility is to protect and safeguard 'Shishus' (children); She is also a Tapaswini, Vishnu Bhakta and the wife of Kartikeya. In fact, she is the sixth 'Amsha' of Prakriti Devi and is thus appropriately called Shashthi Devi. All devotees worship for excellent progeny and facile delivery of children; in fact on the sixth day of delivery, the mothers who had just delivered a child perform puja on the day and again on the twenty first day after delivery for the welfare of the newly born, since Devi Shashthi happened to be the twenty first among the Matrikas. Shashthi Devi is a personification of kindness with the duty of protecting children from any difficulty on account of water, earth, sky and household. Mangala Chandi was materialised from the face of Prakriti Devi and is responsible for granting all boons involving propitiousness. She assumes benign nature at the time of Srishti but at the time of 'Samhaara' or destruction, she assumes anger and annoyance and hence her name as Mangala Chandi. She is worshipped on Mangal days or Tuesdays each week. She bestows male progeny, grand children, prosperity, fame, and all-round contentment. Once pleased by devotion, there is nothing that she would not award, yet once annoyed she would destroy the world in a second! Maha Kaali emerged from Devi Prakriti's eyes and at the time when two Raakshasas called Shumbha and Nishumbha were on the rampage damaging Virtue and the Virtuous, Devi Durga created Kaali from the former's forehead, being half of Durga's Shakti and courage. Devi Kaali's radiance is comparable to crores of Suryas. Basically, she is a Yogeshwari and is an apex devotee of Bhagavan Shri Krishna; she has the might and courage of Shri Krishna and also has the complexion of Krishna too. If provoked, she could breathe out the entire 'Brahmanda' or the Universe. But, a kind Kaali Devi is more likely to grant boons of Dharma, Artha, Kaama and Moksha to the virtuous and the Upright. She is the target of 'Upasana' to Brahma downward to all the Devatas as also Munis and Yogis. Bhagavati Vasumdhara is of a prime 'Amsha' of Prakriti Devi on whose benevolence the whole World stands on, with the well deserved descriptions like 'Sarva Sasya Prasutika' (the Creator of all Agricultural Activities), 'Ratnaakara', 'Ratna garbha', 'Sarva Jeevana Pradaayani', 'Sarva Sampatti kaarini', and 'Sarvaadhaara'. Devi Swaha is the wife of Agni Deva without whose generosity no 'havi' could be

dedicated to any Devata; Dakshina Devi is the wife of Yagna Deva without whose kindness all kinds of Karma Kandas become futile. Swadha Devi is the wife of Pitaras and the worship by Munis, Manus or Manavas becomes a waste if her name is not uttered while making any offerings. Devi Swasti is the wife of Vayu Deva and without her consent any exchange of blessings, give-and-takes etc. turn out to be a waste without her name being specially mentioned; in fact the whole World would eagerly await her utterances as many as possible. Devi Pushti is the wife of Bhagavan Ganesha and each and every human being has to invoke her since without her support and mercy, the whole humanity-be it a male or female-would become weak, feeble and pathetic. Devi Tushti is the wife of Ananta Deva without whose blessings, there would be no sense of ‘Samtushti’ or contentment and welfare. Devi Sampatti is the wife of Ishana Deva, and without grace, the whole World would have been a Place of Poverty and Misery. Kapila Maha Muni’s wife Devi Dhriti is welcomed by all the Lokas, since all the Beings in Bhagavan’s Srishti would have been bereft of Courage and intrepidity. Dharma Raja Yama’s wife Devi Kshama is an embodiment of clemency and forgiveness, lest the world would have been a hell to live in without mercy and the ‘milk of human kindness’; indeed, ‘to err is indeed human, but to forgive is divine’! Devi Rati is the ‘Adhishtatri’ or the Presiding Deity of Love and Play and the wife of the illustrious Kama Deva and is welcomed by one and all for the reason that life would have been dry and without much reason to live, human beings would be considered as dry and dead! Devi Mukti is the wife of Satya who is the be-all and end-all of sensible human beings for their goal is Salvation or relief from the unending cycle of deaths and births. Saadhvi Devi Daya is the better half of Moha or extreme obsession, the anti-thesis of leniency and dis-possession. The ‘Sahadharmini’ of Punya is Devi Pratishta without whom one’s very existence in life is a waste and purposeless. Sukarma’s wife is Kirti Devi noted for recognition and if a human being has no place in Society then again an aimless and sub-standard survival is dissipated. Devi Kriya is the wife of Udyog or Industry; indeed, nobody in life could afford to be completely inactive without performing any deeds! Adharma’s wife is Midhya whose physique was almost non-existent in Satya Yuga, somewhat recognisable in Treta Yuga, lean and thin in Dwapara Yuga but well built and solid in Kali Yuga; her trait is ‘Pragalbhata’ or boasting and her brother is ‘Kapata’ or falsity who keeps on moving from house to house; this Devi is an antonym of Devi Dharma. The wives of Susheela are Devis Shanti and Lajja and these two traits of Virtue are the ingredients of disciplined life; a human being devoid or short of these qualities is sub-human, shameless and disruptive in attitude. The famed wives of ‘Jnaana’ (embodiments of knowledge) are Devis Buddhi, Medha and Smriti, without whom existence tends to be a meaningless exercise.

The above ‘Amshaas’ of Prakriti Devi are indeed notable; but there are innumerable manifestations like Dharma’s wife Murti; Kaalagni or Yoga Nidra is Rudra’s wife; Kaal’s wives are ‘Sandhya’, ‘Raatri’ and ‘Din’ (Early morning, Night and Day respectively); ‘Ksuhdha’ and ‘Pipaasa’ are the wives of ‘Lobha’; Prabha and Dahika are the wives of Teja; ara and Mrithu are the wives of Jwara; Vairaaga’s wives are Shraddha and Bhakti; Rohini is Chandra’s wife; Sangjna is the wife of Surya; Shatarupa is the wife of Manu; Shachi is the wife of Indra; Tara is the wife of Brihaspati; simiarly Ahalya and Vasishtha; Ahalya and Gautami; Anasuya and Atri; Devahuti and Kardama; Prasuti and Daksha; Pitaras’s ‘manasi kanya’ or mind born daughter Menaka was the mother of Parvati. Lopamudra, Aahuti, Vindiyavati who was the wife of Bali, the wives of Kubera, Varuna, Yama, Kunti, Damayanti, Yashoda, Draupadi, Shaivya, Devaki, Gandhaari, Satyavan’s wife Savitri, Radha Devi’s mother Kalavati’, Mandodsari, Kausalya, Subhadra, Kaikeyi, Revati, Satyabhama, Kaalindi, Lakshmana, Jambavati, Nagnajiti, Mitravinda, Rukmini, and Sita are all maifestations of Lakshmi Devi. Vyasa’s mother Yojana gandhi, Kaali, Baana putri Usha and her

associate Chitrlekha, Prabhavati, Bhanumati, Sati Mayavati, Renuka-the mother of Parashurama, Balarama's wife Rohini, are all Devi Prakriti's 'Kalaas'. In fact, all the Grama Devatas too are all Kalas of Prakriti.

Mutual curses of Lakshmi, Saraswati and Ganga land them in Bharata Varsha : Originally Lakshmi, Saraswati and Ganga were the wives of Shri Hari in Vaikuntha. Saraswati felt that Shri Hari was getting fonder of Ganga and complained to Lakshmi but Lakshmi was neutral. Saraswati was irritated and cursed Lakshmi to become a tree as she was insensitive. Ganga felt bad that Saraswati was unnecessarily interfering and cursed Saraswati; this led Saraswati to curse Ganga. Reacting to these curses, Shri Hari gave dispensations as follows: Lakshmi would be born as a tree in the house of King Dharmadhwaaja and become the wife of Asura Shankhachuda, a Vishnu devotee and later on turn out to be Shri Hari's dear wife and live for ever as Tulasi and also as a River named Padmavati in BharataVarsha; Devi Ganga due to Saraswati's curse would become a Holy River to demolish the sins of those who take baths on her waters and eventually flow down in Bharata Varsha due to the persistent efforts of Bhagirath and be called as Bhagirathi and be the wife of Samudra who was also of Shri Hari's 'Amsha' and at the same time be at the 'Shiva Sthaan'; and Saraswati as a result of Ganga's curse would become the wife of Brahma; and finally Lakshmi who was of Satwa Tatwa without any anger or jealousy and would be Shri Hari's own wife eventually. As Shri Hari gave the dispensations as follows, all the three Devis viz. Lakshmi, Saraswati and Ganga embraced each other and felt ashamed of their indiscretions which resulted in the repercussions and prayed to Bhagavan Shrihari as to when the arrangements would terminate and the latter pacified the Devis that he would not only ratify the curses that they made to each other but also retain their positions in Vaikuntha with equal attentions and affections to all the three Devis. Saraswati would keep half 'Amsha' in Bharata Varsha and half with Brahma and the total Amsha with himself (Shri Hari); similarly in respect of Ganga, half of Vishnu's Amsha would be Bhagirathi in Bharata Varsha sanctifying the Beings and by slashing their sins there and the rest of Amsha remaining intact with himself as also have the unique privilege of remaining on Shankara's holy head; as regards Lakshmi, one Amsha would be Tulasi as also as River Padmavati for Kali Yuga's five thousand years and all the Devis would return to Vaikuntha thereafter. The occurrence of the curses among the Devis and the arrangements that were made about them by Shri Hari had some hidden meaning: even while there were several Tirthas in Bharat Varsha, there was a great need for some outstanding Rivers and Punya Kshetras where not only devotees of Shri Hari, but even hopeless sinners and 'Nastiks'(atheists) should have possibilities for self-improvement. That was the reason for the emergence of these Sacred and sin-washing Rivers for quick-if not instant- relief to them. Bhagavan Vishnu indicated that there were several persons, who thrived on cheating, making false promises, social parasites, promise breakers, 'Vishwaas ghaatis', givers of wrong and misleading evidences, occupiers of others' properties and belongings; those who discard parents and blood-relatives; swindle or forcibly bamboozle others etc. The purpose of the Sacred Tirthas like Ganga, Padma and Saraswati was thus to exonerate and correct such misled persons to reform them and lessen the burden on Earth.

Mahalakshmi: her exit from Swarga and restoration, and 'Stuti' by Indra included: Parabrahma Paramatma divided himself into two Bhagavans viz. Shri Krishna and Vishnu at the beginning of 'Srishti'. Paramatma also divided into two Devis; from his right side was manifested Devi Radha and from the left Maha Lakshmi. Krishna and Radha resided in 'Goloka' while Vishnu and Lakshmi resided in Vaikuntha. Both Krishna and Vishnu as well as their Consorts were equal in their 'Amshas' traits in terms of Form, Profile, complexion, radiance, fame, dresses, adornments, Gunas, comprehension, voice,

gait, morale and psychology, excepting Krishna was with two hands and Narayana with two hands. ‘Maha Lakshmi’ is called like wise as she is the supreme leader of womanhood representing idealism, virtue, grace, kindness, and all that is propitious and auspicious. She is called ‘Swarga Lakshmi’ as she is the Archetype of Wealth, Prosperity, and Magnificence. She is ‘Rajya Lakshmi’ standing for the Excellence of Royalty and Opulence; ‘Griha Lakshmi’ worshipped in each and every household and the symbol of patience, service, generosity, fertility, devotion and practical wisdom of all ‘Grihinis’. In fact, she is not confined to only Ashta Lakshmis viz. Adi Lakshmi, Dhanya Lakshmi, Dhairya Lakshmi, Gaja Lakshmi, Santana Lakshmi, Vijaya Lakshmi, Vidya Lakshmi and Dhana Lakshmi, but characterizes several good aspects like Arogya Lakshmi, Shri Lakshmi, Shobha Lakshmi, Shubha Lakshmi, Rama, Indira, Chakrika, Kamalika, Kalyani, Vaishnavi, Narayani, Shri Devi, Jalaja, Madhavi, Aishwearya, Padma Priya, Padmakshi, Ulka Vahini and so on. She is present in all materials of significance like Bhushanas, Precious metals and Nava Ratnas, flowers, fruits, water, Kings and Queens, Homes, Palaces, Dhanyas, Vastras, Sacred Places, Deva Pratimas, Mangala Kalashas, Manikyas, Chandana and other fragrances, Dhanya, Vidya-Arogya and Puja related items etc. At the very first, Bhagavan Vishnu performed worship to Maha Lakshmi at Vaikuntha, followed by Brahma, Parama Shiva, Swayambhu Manu, Indra and Devas, Gandharvas, Nagas and Rishis and Munis. Brahma worshipped on Bhadrapada Shuka Ashtami. Vishnu initiated Pujas on Chaitra, Pousha, and Bhadrapada Tuesdays and Fridays.

Durvasa Muni was on way to Kailasha from Vaikuntha en route Swarga; on way he met Indra, blessed him and did the rare honour of gifting a Parijata flower garland which Vishnu presented to the Muni. Out of arrogance, Indra placed the garland around the neck of ‘Iraavata’-the Elephant Carrier of Indra! The infuriated Muni felt that this sacrilegious and irreverent act of Indra was not only indicative of disrespect for himself but also an act of unpardonable profanity to Bhagavan Vishnu himself! He therefore cursed Indra saying that an invaluable gift rewarded to Durvasa by Narayana himself was parted with and was given out of consideration to Indra but out of disregard he ignored its inherent worth. Hence, the root cause of Lakshmi, who was the Form of Prosperity, should abandon Swarga forth with. He further said that as a Bhakta of Narayana, he had the least fear for Brahma or even Shiva; in fact the head of the elephant which wore the Parajata garland would be sliced off and eventually replace Ganesha’s head! With this furious curse of Durvasa, Indra came to senses and realised his unpardonable folly and said: *Aishwaryam vipadaam beejam jnaana pracchanya kaaranam, Muktimargargalam daadhyam Hari bhakti vyavasaayikam/ Janma mrityu jaraa roga shoka bheetaamkuram Param, Sampatthi timiraandham cha Mukti maarga na pashyati/* (Aishwaryam or Great Prosperity is the seed from which difficulties arise, suppressing Gyan or Wisdom and the barrier of Mukti Marga creating obstacles all through the way of Hari- Bhakti. Opulence happens to be the seedling to Janma /Birth, Mrityu/ Death, Jara / Old Age, Shoka / grief and Anurag / Desire. It is due to wealth that obstacles and blindness to ‘Mukti Marga’ are caused). By so saying, Indra fell on Sage Durvasa’s feet with subdued ego and repentance. Muni Durvasa pardoned Indra and advised Deva Guru to be involved to perform worship to Shri Krishna. Brihaspati gave him encouragement and said that virtuous and brave persons should not get disheartened on occasions like this; ‘Sampatti’ or fortune and ‘Vipatti’ or complex trouble would occur due to the Karma phala of previous births. Deva Guru further said: *Maha vipattow samsaarey yah smaren Madhusudanam, Vipattow tasya Sampattir bhavedyvidityaaha Shankarah/* (A person who remembers the name of Madhusudana at the time of hardship would definitely find a way out from Vipatti to Sampatti according to Shankara). Later on Deva Guru and Indra approached Brahma Deva who in turn took Indra and Devas to Vaikuntha. Bhagavan Vishnu stated that just as the whole Universe was under his control, he himself was bound by

what his Bhaktaas dictated to him! Indeed, those who ignored Vishnu, my devotee Lakshmi too would leave that Place at once! After all, Maha Muni Durvasa of Shankara Deva's Amsha was Vishnu's parama Bhakta and his anger was indeed justified! As his shraddhaa in Govinda was unbreakable, the Muni cursed Indra for his unpardonable blunder. Indeed Lakshmi would instantly leave-and so would Vishnu-that house where there was no sound of 'Shankha' (Conchshell), nor where a Tulasi shrub was worshipped; nor where Shankara Puja was executed, and where Brahmanas were not invited to take food. Bhagavan Vishnu further said that Devi Lakshmi would not stay in such residences where Vishnu Bhaktas were criticised, where food was served on Ekadashis and Janmashtamis; where unmarried girls of Devi's names were sold or purchased; where guests were not entertained for food or stay; where persons eat food before Sunrise; where persons sleep during the days or those who sleep naked; those Brahmanas who never performed Vratas, fastings, Sandhya vandanas and Vishnu pujas; and where there was 'Jeeva himsa' or Cruelty of human or other beings of any description. Contrarily, Lakshmi would stay permanently in those houses where there are discussions, Bhagavat Kirtanas, singings of hymns, Shankha dhwanis, pujas of Shalagramas and Tulasi, Pujas of Devas and Devis, Devatarchanas and Naivedyas, renderings of Mantras and veneration of Deva Bhaktas, Godmen, Brahmanas and Sumangalis. Having explained on these lines, Vishnu advised Devi Lakshmi to stay in Ksheera Samudra till Devas and Danavas did 'Amrita Manthana' or churning of the Ocean. Soon thereafter, the Sagara Manthana commenced with Mandara Mountain as 'kaashtha' or the Churning rod; Kurmavata / the incarnation of Bhagavan Vishnu as Tortoise to balance the Mountain, Sesha Naaga as the rope with which to rotate the 'kaashtha', and Devas and Danavas as the Churning Parties. As result of the 'Manthana', first emerged 'Halahala' (the massive poisonous flames) which was devoured by Maha Deva and kept in his throat and then surfaced elephant Iravata, Uchhaishvara horse, Sudarshana Chakra, Koustubha Mani, Chandra and Devi Lakshmi whereafter emerged Dhanvantari and Amrit. Devi Lakshmi adorned Vishnu with Vanamali when Vishnu worshipped her, followed by Maha Deva, Brahma, Indra and Devatas when Durvasa's curse to Indra was cleared and Lakshmi's 'Amsha' reappeared as Swarga Lakshmi.

Lakshmi Puja by Indra with 'shodashopachaaraas' (Sixteen Services): An ever grateful Indra to Devi Lashmi then performed formal worship to the restored Swarga Lakshmi as follows commenced with Dhyana: 'Parama Pujya Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi seated on a thousand petalled Lotus illuminated with the lustre of countless Chandras! We are mesmerised to vision your stunning and gorgeous Rupa like that of molten gold wearing silks of extraordinary grace and charismatic smile as the Embodiment of Affluence and Propitiousness. May we deserve the extraordinary fortune of worshipping you in person?'  
 Asanam: *Amulya Ratna saaram cha nimitam Vishwakarmanaa, Pashyaani prakrush -taani varaani durlabhaani cha, Aasaanamcha vichitram cha Maha Lakshmi pragrahnataam/* (Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi! May I offer in your service an invaluable and distinguished seat made of Choicest Jewels specially designed and crafted by Vishwakarma, the Celestial Designer!) Paadyam: *Shuddham Gangodakamidam Sarva Vanditameepsitam, Paapedhma vahni rupam cha gruhyataam Kamalalay/* (Kamalalaye! This pure and hallowed Ganga water is borne by the heads of one and all as the same is endeared and revered by them; this is considered as Agni Swarupa which burns off all kinds of sins; do kindly accept it to wash your sacred feet); Arghyam: *Pushpa chandana durvaadi samyuktam Jaahnaveejalam, Shankha garbhastitam shuddham gruhnataam Padma vaasini/* (Padmavaasini! This Ganga water in a Shankha along with flowers, Chandana, Durva and such other consecrated material is offered to you as a welcome drink) Sugandhi Pushpa thailam: *Sugandhi pushpa thailam cha Sugandhaamalaki phalam, Deha Soundrya beejam cha gruhnataam Shri Harey Priye!* (Shri Hari Priye!

This fragrant oil extracted from Amala fruit is a pleasing application to enrich physical beauty and skin smoothening; do please allow it to be used as a bathing device); Dhoop : *Vriksha niryaa swarupam cha Gandhadravyaadi samyutam, Shri Krishna kaantey dhupam cha pavitram prati-guhyataam/*(Shri Krishna Kantey! I proffer ‘dhoop’ or the aromatic smoke of incense material mixed with a vegetable gum; do kindly accept this smoke offered with sanctity); Chandan: *Malayaachala sambhutam vriksha saaram manoharam, Sugandha yuktam sukhadam Chandanam Devi gruhnataam/* (Devi! this chandana ‘gandha’ which originated from the chandana tree on Malaya mountain is not only sweet-smelling but also provider of coolness; I request you to apply on your body to give soothing effect); Deepam: *Jagacchasthuh swarupam cha dhwaanta pradhwanasa kaaranam, Pradeepam shuddha rupam cha gruhyataam Parameswari/* (Parameswari! Kindly allow this Sacred Light which is the vision of eyes, remover of darkness and a symbol of Purity to please you and light the surroundings); Naivedya: *Naanopahaara rupam cha nanaa rasa samanvitam, Naanaa swaadukaram chaiva Naivedyam Pratigruhnataam/* (Devi! I am tendering this ‘Naivedya’ or the offering of various eats and juices which have been prepared with taste and flavor; I should be obliged of these snacks are consumed to please me). Anna: *Annam Brahma swarupam cha Pranarakshana kaaranam, Tushtidam Pushtidam chaiva Devyaannam pratigruhyataam/* (Devi! Annam/ food is considered to be of Brahma Swarupa; food is also a life saving material which ensures eating-satisfaction and enhances strength in the natural way; I request you to taste this food); Kheer: *Shaalyakshata supakvam cha sharkaraagavya samyutam suswaadu samanoharam, Swaadu yuktam Maha -Lakshmi Paramaannam Pratigruhyataam/* (Maha Lakshmi! This Kheer or cooked rice with sugar and ghee is specially prepared for your taste; please taste this preparation); *Swaastika Mishtaanna: Shakaraa gavya pakvam cha suswaadu sumanoharam, Mayaa niveditam LakshmiSwaastikam pratigruhnataam/* (Lakshmi! This is ‘Mishta- anna’/Sweet rice called Swastika which is a mix of sugar and ghee in cooked rice which is being offered as a Naivedya to you for your kind acceptance). Phala: *Naanaa vidhani ramyaani pakkvaani cha phalaanicha, Swaaduyuktaani Kamaley gruhyataam phaladaani cha/* (Devi Kamaley! These are various fruits ripe for eating, which are not only sweet luscious but also desire-fulfilling; may I present these juicy fruits for approval). Dughdha: *Surabhistana sambhutam swaadu sumanoharam, Martra -amrutam sugavyam cha gruhnnataamachyuta priye/* (Achyuta Priye! This pure milk which is fresh from Surabhi cow’s udder is meant for Martyaloka residents and is tasty like ambrosia; I beseech you to taste it and gratify me!) Gud / Jaggery: *Suswaada rasa samyuktamikshu vriksha samudbhavam, Agnipakkamati swaadu gudam cha prati- guhyataam/* (Devi! this jaggery has been made of sugarcane juice heated up and solidified; indeed this is very sweet and fresh; please savour this). Mishtaanna: *Yava godhuma sashyaanaam churna renu samudbhavam, Supakvam guda gavyaaktam Mishtaannam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! This is a sweet preparation made of wheat and ‘Yava’ grains-mix, nicely cooked with jaggery and ghee which too is very appetizing for favour of your taste); Pishtak: *Shasyachurnodbhavam pakkvam Swastikaadi samanvitam, Mayaa niveditam DeviPishtakam pratigruhyataam/* (Devi! This pishtak made of rice powder with Swastika and other signs is a fried and crisp savoury for your taste); Eik/ Sugar cane: *Paarthivo vriksha bhedascha vividha dravya kaaranam, Suswaadurasa samyutam Eikshuscha pratigruhyatam/* (Devi! This sugar cane is an extraordinary tree on Earth and is a source of several by products like jaggery, sugar and simple juice from raw cane; this juice is indeed very sweet and succulent; it is my prayer that you may drink up this juice!); Vyanjan: *Sheeta vaayu pradam chaiva daahey cha sukhadam param, Kamaley! Gruhyataam chedam vyajanam shweta chaamaram/* (Kamaley! In this stuffy climate, a white ‘chamara’/ hand fan would certainly bring relief and happiness; may I serve you with ‘Vyanjana’ for your comfort); Taamboola: *Taambulamcha varam ramyam karpuraadi suvaasitam, Jihwaa jaadyacchedakaram*

*Taamboolam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! This ‘Taamboola’ made of tender betel leaves and fragrant materials like ‘karpura’/ camphor and other scented edible digestibles would provide freshness and good feeling to your tongue and mouth; may I tender this to you); *Jala: Suvaasitam sheetalamcha pipaasaa naashakaaranam, Jagajjevaa rupamcha jeevanam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! To quench thirst, there is nothing like very cold, nicely scented and life-reviving water; do please accept this as well); *Maalya: Deha soundarya bijam cha sadaa Shobha vivardhanam, Kaarpaasaja cha krumijam vasanam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! The bouquets and garlands made of a wide variety of fresh and perfumed seasonal flowers provide invaluable joy to the wearers of these as also enhance beauty and grace to them; it is my privilege and unique opportunity to proffer these flowers to you); *Achamaneeya: Punya tirthakam chaiva Vishuddham Suddhidam sadaa, Grhnateem Krishna Kaantey twam ramyamaachaneeyakam/* ( Krishna Kaantey! This ‘Tirtha jala’ which is sanctified on its own as also purify others is highly worthy of ‘Achamaneeya’; do accept the same); *Shayya: Ratnasaaraadi nirmaanam pushpachandana samyutm, Ratnabhusha bhushaadhyam sotalpam Devi gruhnnataam/* (This invaluable and highly comfortable bed with soft cotton and silk clothing, which is bejewelled and treated with fresh and intoxicating flowers and fragrances, is tendered to you Devi! please do accept this for your relaxation); *Apurva Dravya: Yadyad dravyamapurvam cha Prithivyaapi durlabham, Deva bhushaarbhogyam cha taddrayam Devi gruhnataam/* (Devi! Not only these but whatever invaluable and even impossible materials are available on Earth or elsewhere that are worthy of adorning your body would be available at your nod of head!) After performing the ‘Shodashopa -charaas’ thus, Indra pleased Devi Lakshmi with the recital of the Moola Mantras which were taught to him by Brahma Deva: These Mantras include: ‘Shri Beeja’ (Shreem), ‘Maya Beeja’ (Hreem), ‘Kama Beeja’ (Kleem), and ‘Vani Beeja’ (Aim), followed by the word ‘Kamalavaasinyai’ and further adding the word ‘Swaahaa’; the Mantrarajaa would be : SHREEM HREEM KLEEM AIM KAMALAVAASINYAI SWAAHAA/ Kubera recited this Mantra for long time to Devi Lakshmi and attained unprecedented ‘Aishwarya’(Wealth); also Daksha Savarni Manu secured unique Sovereignty of ‘Sapta Dwipas’. As Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi gave ‘darshan’ (vision) to Indra Deva, he was overtaken by extreme emotion and praised her as follows:

Indra ‘Stuti’ to Devi Lakshmi: *Om Namoh Maha Lakshmyai/ Om Namah Kamala vaasinyai Naraayanyai Namoh Namah, Krishnapriyayai Suraaryai Padmaayai cha Namoh Namah/ Padmapakshetranaayai cha Padmaasyaayai Namoh Namah, Padmaasanaayai Padmasanaayai Padminyai Vaishnavyayai cha Namoh Namah/ Sarasampatsarwarupaayai Sarva daatryai Namoh Namah, Sukhadaayai Moksadaayai Siddhidaayai Namoh Namah/ Haribhakti pradaatryai cha Harshadaatryai Namoh Namah, Krishna vakshahsthaalaayai cha Krishneyshaayai Namoh Namah/ Krishna shobha swarupayai ratna padmey cha shobhaney, Samapattadhishthaatru Devyai Maha Devyai Namoh Namah/ Shasyaadhishthaatru Devyai Shasyaayai cha Namoh Namah, Namoh Buddhi swarupayai Buddhidaayai Namoh Namah/ Vaikunthey yaa Mahaalakshmeeryaa Lakshmeeh ksheerasaagarey, Swarga Lakshmeerindra gehey Rajyalakshmeer - nupaalaye/ Grihalakshmischa grihaanaam gehey cha Griha Devataa, Surabhih saa gavaam Maataa Dakshinaa Yajnakaaminee/ Aditirdeva mataa twam Kamalaa Kamalaalaye, Swaahaa twam cha Havirdaaney Kaavya daavey Swadhaa smrutaa/ Twam hi Vishnuswarupaa cha Sarvadharaa Vasundharaa, Shuddha Satwa Swarupaa Twam Naraayanaparaayanaa/ Krodha himsaa varjitaa cha Varadaa cha Shubhaananaa, Paramarthapradaa twam cha Haridaasyapradaa Paraa/ Yayaa vinaa Jagatsarwam Bhasmee bhutamasaarakam, Jeevanmritam cha Vishvam cha Shavastulyam yayaa vinaa/ Sarveshaam cha Paraa twam hi Sarva bandhavarupini, Yayaa vinaa na Sambhaashyo Baandharvair baandhavah sadaa/ Twayaa heeno Bandhu heeno twayaa yuktah sabaandhavah, Dharmarthaa kaama*

*mokshaanaam twam cha Kaarana rupinee/ Yathaa Maataa stanandhaanaam shishuunaam Shaishavey sadaa, Tathaa twam sarvadaa Maataa Sarveshaam Sarvarupatah/ Maatru heenah stanaandhascha sa chejjeevati Daivatah, Twayaa heeno janah kopina Jeevatyeva nischitam/ Suprasanna Swarupaa twam maam prasanna Bhavaambikey, Vairigrastam cha ishyam dehi mahyaam Sanaatani/ Vayam yaavat twayaa heenaa bandhu heenascha Bhikshukaah, Sarava sampad viheenaascha taava Deva Haripriye/ Raajyam dehi Shriyam dehi Balam dehi Sureswari, Keertim dehi Dhanam dehi Yasho Mahyaamcha dehi vai/ Kaamamdehi Matim dehi Bhogaan dehi Haripriye, Jnaanam dehi Dharmam cha Sarva Soubhaagyameepsitam/abhaavamcha Prataapamcha Sarvaadhikaaraevacha, Jayam Paraakramam Yuddhey Paramaishwarya meyvacha/* ( Bhagavati Kamalavaasini, Devi Narayani, my repeated greetings to you. Samsaara saara bhutaa Krishna Priya Bhagavati Padma! My innumerable greetings to you. You possess lotus eyes and lotus face! My repeated salutations to you Maha Lakshmi; you are called Padmaasana, Padmini and Devi Vaishnavi; you are also Sukha daayani, Sarva Sampadswarupini, Moksha daayani, and Siddhi daayani. You lead to the Sacred Path of dedication to Shrihari and the Provider of Happiness to those who excel in devotion to Him. My sincere salutation to you as you exist in full bloom on Krishna's chest and is therefore called as Krishna's Hridayeshwari. You are the major possessor of Krishna's Shobha or Splendor and the 'Adhishthatri' (Sovereign) of 'Sampurna Sampatti' (the Totality of Wealth) as also the Adhishthatri of 'Dhanya' (Harvest) and Dhanya Swarupa. You are the Maha Lakshmi of Vaikuntha, Lakshmi of Ksheera Sagara, Rajya Lakshmi of Kingdoms, Swarga Lakshmi in Indra's Swarga, Griha Lakshmi in households, Griha Devata, Go Lakshmi called Surabhi, Dakshina Lakshmi in Yagnaas, Aditi Maataa Lakshmi to Devas, Swaha Lakshmi at Havyapradaana at Yagnaas, and Swadha Lakshmi at the Kavya Pradaana. You are the Bhu Lakshmi, Sudha Satwa Swarupa, 'Akrodhi Swarupa', 'Ahimsa Swarupa', Varada, Sharada, Shubhaa, Paramaarthadaa and Haridaasapraadaa. Without you, the entire Universe is dissipated and dead. You are the 'Bandhu Swarupa' and the Gateway to Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The World is your milk-providing toddler and you are the ever patient Mother! Hari Priye! Till I could not vision you, I am a 'Bandhu heen', a pauper. Grant me Rajya, Opulence, Power, Fame, Buddhi, Bhoga, Jnaana, Dharma, Sowbhagya, Prabhava, Prataapa, Adhikaara /Authority! [Those who recite the above Stuti thrice a day could retain Lakshmi for ever.]

### **Devi Bhagavata Purana**

Worship to Maha Lakshmi and Her Partial Extensions: The foremost worship to Devi Maha Lakshmi was performed by Maha Vishnu Himself, followed by Brahma and Maha Deva. Also Svayambhu Manu, Indra, various Celestial Bodies, the entire Sagehood, humanity, Sub Terrain regions and indeed the whole Universe without exception are devoted to the Goddess for Prosperity, Happiness and Wellbeing of varying kinds- Dhana, Dhanya, Kirti, Vidya, Svasthya, Ayush, Punya and Moksha. Be that as it may, Sage Durvasa once visited Vaikuntha to pray to Maha Vishnu who out of appreciation gifted a Parijata Flower to the Sage. On return from Vishnu, Durvasa met Indra and gifted the Flower to Indra, as the Sage felt that Indra would be the best of Devas who deserved the gift. But out of vanity and intoxication of power, Indra gave the Sacred Flower to elephant Irvata, not comprehending the consequences. The sordid happening offended Devi Lakshmi and She as the Rajya Lakshmi of Indraloka left for Samudra Deva ( Ocean of Kshira), Her father. She declared that She would leave a place as a general rule, where there was scant respect for Maha Vishnu, where there was no worship of Maha Deva too, where Ekadasa Pujas were not performed, Brahmanas were not respected, girls of marriageable age were left unwedded for long, where purity of body and mind were poor; where no fastings, pujas, Vraths, regular Sandhyavandans were performed and so on. Thus as She left, the chain reaction shook away all concerned

right from Vishnu to Durvasa and Indra. The final impact was on Indra who sought the counsel of Deva Guru Brihaspati, both visited Brahma and finally to Maha Vishnu Himself. Maha Vishnu who apparently planned the episode to teach lessons to the persons concerned, advised the hard solution of Churning the 'Kshira Sagara' and involved Demons and Devas for the mammoth task by utilising Sumeru Mountain as the Churning Rod, Ananta Deva as the powerful string and Himself as the Kurma (Tortoise) Avatara. In the drama, Mahadeva also got a role of devouring the powerful poisonous fire 'Halahala' in His throat, thus giving Him the name of 'Neela greeva'. Various Sacred Objects emerged in the process of churning- the Ucchaisvara Horse, Kalpataru (Tree), Sacred Cow 'Kamadhenu', most significantly Maha Lakshmi Herself and finally 'Dhanvantari' the God of 'Vaidya' or of Medicine emerging with the Pot of 'Amrit', the Celestial Drink of Eternal Life of Youth. Indra was humbled and Maha Vishnu advised Maha Lakshmi to re-inter Indraloka once again. Coming fully to senses, Indra executed sincere 'Puja' formally by offering the traditional 'Shodasopacharas' the sixteen services of comfortable seat on a bejewelled carpet, Ganges water with sandal paste, flower perfumed scents, silky clothes to wear, excellent ornaments of gold and jewels, agarbathi ( Incense)'Dhupa', camphor and ghee soaked vick lighting, variety of luscious fruits, main-course food dishes, sugarcane and other juices, 'payasam' (boiled rice, cow milk, sugar and dry fruits), other Sweets, garlands, 'Achamaniya' ( mouth rinsing with perfumed water), water to drink Ganga water and betel leaves with scented dry nuts as a digestive material.

Thereafter, Indra meditated Maha Lakshmi with the Seed Mantra as Brahma taught him viz. *Om Srim Hrim Kleem Aim Kamala vasinayi Svaha* for hours together with earnest concentration. By the power of this Siddha Mantra, several illustrious personalities fulfilled their desires, like Kubera with unparalleled wealth; Daksha Savarni Prajapati and Mangala became Emperors of Seven Islands; Priyavrata, Uttanapada and Kedararaja became Emperors and Great Siddhas too. As Maha Lakshmi relaxed after the Puja so graciously, then Indra eulogised Her to say that She was Rajyalakshmi to Kings and Griha Lakshmi to house holders, Aditi or the Mother Figure to Devas, Surabhi born of Ocean, Embodiment of 'Suddha Tatva', the 'Svaha Svarupa' or the offer of Sacrifices to Agni; 'Svadha Swarupa', or food offerings to the anxiously awaiting 'Pithris' of dead persons; 'Dakshina Svarupa' (the Fees paid to Sages and Brahmanas to perform Mantra-filled Sacrifices, Vratas, and Pujas), Bestower of the Best Boons to Mankind viz. 'Dharma (Virtue)', 'Artha' (Wealth), 'Kama' ( Fulfilment) and 'Moksha' (Salvation) and so on. Who ever recites the Siddha Mantra, Siddha Stotra and 'Sree Suktam' thrice a day would indeed be blessed with the Four Boons of Life.

While Narayana Maharshi narrated the above to Devarshi Narada, the latter raised three doubts regarding the significance of three 'Svarupas' or Formats of Svaha, Svadha and Dakshina in the Siddha Stotra of Indra afore mentioned. About Svaha Devi, Devas complained that they were not properly receiving the Ghee oblations in the Fire pit of various Sacrifices and Brahma prayed to Devi Prakriti. The solution was that a part of Prakriti would beget a child from the burning power of Fire by name Svaha Devi and that she would deliver three sons viz. Dakshinagni, Garhyapatagni and Avahayagni. Whenever Sages, Brahmanas or Kshatriyas recite Mantras, the terminal component of the Mantra ought to be 'Svaha' or otherwise the entire act of the Fire Sacrifice of pouring Ghee as also the potency of the concerned Mantra would be futile like a serpent without poisonous fangs. Even during 'Dhyana' or meditation the last word has to be Svaha. As regards Svadha Devi, Sage Narayana informed the origin to Narada that Brahma Deva created Seven Pitris viz. '*Kavyahonala Somo Yamaschairyama thatha Agnivastha Barhisadah Somapah Pitri Devatah*' or Kavya, Anala, Soma, Yama, Agnivastha, Barhisada and Somapa. The daily duties of Brahmanas are bathing, Trisandhya, Sraddha upto the stage of Tarpanam with 'Savya Dharana

of Yagnopaveeta' or normal wearing of the Holy Thread as against 'Pracheenaveeti' or the way worn while praying to immediate Pitris of three generations of father, grand father and great grand father. Salutations to Svadha Devi are thus a must while performing daily rites like Tarpanams and most certainly on Shraddha Days. Like in the case of Svaha Devi and Svadha Devi, Dakshina Devi too is of Maha Lakshmi's partial extension. Without rendering prayers to Her to absolve the shortcomings by the Master of any Yajna, Shraddha, Vrath, formal worship or any such other activities in which Sages or Brahmanas are involved, the fruits of the prayers are quite incomplete.

Shashti Devi ( Devasena) is one of the Shodasa (Sixteen) Matrikas\*, the Manasa Putri or mind-born daughter of Brahma, the better half of Skanda, the Sixth Formation of Devi Prakriti, a Siddha Yogini and the boon-giver of sons who have no sons, wives who have no wives and wealth to the needy. Basically, She is the Goddess of children. Once, King Priyavrata, the son of Dharma and Grand son of Svayambhu Manu performed 'Putrakama Yajna' being intensely craving for a son. He was no doubt blessed by a son but with scant life and protruded eye balls. Priyavrata was unable to experience the situation and readying himself to end his life but then appeared Sashti Devi, took the child on Her lap and the miracle of normalcy happened instantly. Being ever grateful, Priyavrata popularised the Devi's worship in all the three worlds since when a new born child's sixth day Her worship commenced and observe various formalities as a child grew including Nama Karana ( Name- Giving) on the twenty first day the 'Annaprasana' ( feeding morsels of rice and milk) after six months and so on as the Laws of the Kingdom. Also Her worship after a child's birth and other ceremonies or after recovery of a child's illness became popular as formal pujas with the Mantra on the lips of the parents *Om Hrim Shashti Devyai Svaha*.

[\*The Sixteen Matrikas are Gauri, Padma, Sachi, Medha, Savitri, Devasena, Vijay, Jaya, Svadha, Svaha, Mataro, Lokamatra, Hrishti, Pushtistatha, Tushti, Atmakuladevata. The Original Sapta Matrikas are Brahmi, Mahesvari, Vaishnavi, Indrani, Kaumari, Varahi, and Chamundi].

Mangala Chandika known for the constant worship by Mangala ( Planet of Mars), the son of Bhu Devi, is also a high devotee of women all over the Universe. She was worshipped foremost by Maha Deva Himself, as She was the Prime Shakti as Chandi, an Extension of Durga, with whose active involvement that the ferocious Tripurasura was annihilated, with Maha Vishnu Himself was the carrier as a huge bull. Soon after victory, Maha Deva worshipped Chandi Devi out of gratitude formally with 'Shodasa upacharas' and meditation of the Mula Mantra: *Om Hrim Srim Kleem Sarvapujaye Devi Mangala Chandike Hum Phat Svaha*. After Maha Deva, Mangala Graha worshipped on Tuesdays ( Mangalvar each week), then King Mangala of Manu's clan, the inhabitants of the Sub Terrain Regions, and all the women elsewhere as also men desirous of Victory in various tasks. She wards off all Evils and Spirits and is an epitome for bravery and success.

Mansa Devi the mind born daughter of Sage Kasyapa is also known as Manasa Krida Shakti or Mind-Play Energy, often playful within Herself. She is worshipped by Krishna and as a Siddha Yogini having a thin body owing to constant Tapasya, thus known therefore as Jata Karu as Sage Jata Karu too was too thin. Popular as Jagad Gouri illustrious for fair colour and charm, Manasa Devi is a unique Deity highly popular in the Sub Terrain world, especially Snakes and other species of the under world and also on earth, Heavens and Brahmaloaka. She is named as 'Shaivi' as an ardent devotee of Shiva, as a 'Vaishnavi' as is a Bhakta of Maha Vishnu ; as Nagesvari as the Saviour of Serpents when Janamejava executed the

Naga Yajna after Parishith's mortal end following a curse by a son of a Sage's son; as Naga Bhagini or Vishahari as a sure curer of poison by snake bites; as Maha Jnanayuta or the Possessor of Great Knowledge; as Mrita Sanjivini as the Revivor from Death and Astika Mata or the mother of Sage Astika. Thus Mansa Devi is acclaimed as Jaratkarupriya, Jarat Karu, Jagad Mata, Siddha Yogini, Shaivi, Vaishnavi, Nagesvari, Visha hari, Mahajanayuta, Mrita Sanjivini, Astika Mata and Mansa Devi.

[ Mansa Devi Temple in Haridwar in Uttarakhand is situated atop Shivalik Hills by a rope way named 'Udan Khatola' and is famous for fulfilling the desires of lakhs of Devotees].

The twelve lettered Seed Mantra after worship by Sixteen Services of Ahvana, Aseena, Sugandha, Padya, Dhupa, Deepa, Pushpa, Abharana, Panchamrita, Vastra, Paniya, Phala, Chamara, Na ivedya, Achamaniya and betel Tamboola, followed by Stotra and Dhyana. The Seed Mantra is: *Om Hrim Srim Klim Aim Manasa Devyai Swaha.*

Devi Surabhi was Bhagavan Krishna's own creation along with Her calf from His left side, as the Lord desired to drink milk during the union with Devi Radha. Krishna Himself milked Surabhi in a jar and sipped with Radha which tasted like elixir. The jar became bigger and bigger to an extent that the milk far overflowed as a stream first and finally as a 'Kshira Sagara' (an Ocean of Milk). From Devi Surabhi's body pores millions of Cows emerged along with calves and since then the Universe has witnessed the presence of plenty not only for milk but its bye products, especially butter and Ghee as the latter are significant for the Yajnas as offerings into Firepits. So much so, every household could keep cows and calves as one of the sources of prosperity and dignity. Sri Krishna the World's most renowned cowherd keeper prayed to Devi Surabhi by the seed mantra: *Om Surabhai namah* and the Go-Puja (worship of Cows) is a part of Hindu Faith, as is in vogue in households and temples. It is customary that the Food offerings on Shraddha days in terms of 'Pindas' to Pitris are fed to cows before taking the food themselves. Also cows in households are symbols of Lakshmi ( Wellness) and Dharma ( Virtue).

Devi Bhagavati Explains about Her Vibhutis ( Manifestations & Powers):

To the pointed queries expressed by Lord Brahma, Maha Devi gave clarifications in no uncertain terms that Maha Purusha and Herself was just the same as a lamp and reflection in a mirror and that She was neither a female nor a male, but a Unique Genderless Nirguna. Any changes witnessed are due to the interplay of 'Antah Karanas' or natural instincts like Mind, Buddhi, ( Mental Power) and 'Ahankara' (Ego) on the one hand and 'Maya' ( Illusion) on the other. At the time of Creation following the Great Dissolution (Pralaya), the dissimilarities occurred as Gender, 'Karma' ( Fate) and 'Anthah Karanas' all created by 'Maya'. It was at that time of Creation, that The Supreme Energy assumed various 'Vibhutis' or Manifestations like Sri (Prosperity), Buddhi(Brainpower), Daya (Compassion), Dhriti (Tolerance), Smriti (Memory), Shraddha (Conviction), Medha ( Acumen), Lajja (Shame), Shanti ( Peace), Nidra (Sleep), Pipasa ( Desire), Vidya ( Comprehension), Spriha ( Awakenness or Alertness) and Shakti( Power). Maha Devi continued to state that She was the Para, Madhyama and Pasyanti ( Mystic expressions of the Supreme Power indicating the Stages of Manifestations of the Eternal Force); She was Para Shakti beyond one's Comprehension, Madhyama Shakti who was both Expressed and Unexpressed ( Vyakta -Avyakta) and Pasyanti Shakti who was Fully Manifested and recognisable with Physical Form or Sakara Shakti; She was also present in thirty five million 'Nadis' through out a human body (the tubular organs of the body like arteries, veins, intestines, blood vessels, pulses etc. She was in Vasa (fat), majja ( marrow), Tvak (skin) and Drishti ( eye sight) clearly present in each and every part of 'Samsara'.

So was the case of non moving objects of Creation either animate or inanimate. Maha Devi further affirmed that She was seen as Brahmi or Sarasvati, Vaishnavi or Lakshmi, Eswari as Gauri, Indrani as Indra, Varuni as Varuna, and so on whose formations were all Hers, making the counterpart Purushas perform their tasks as the Maha Devi's agents or instruments of action. She was the Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas; Ahankaras-Jnana Sakti ( the Power of Knowledge), Kriya Sakti ( The Power of Action) and Artha Sakti ( The Power of Wealth or Maya the Illusion); The various Tatvas and Maha Tatva; and the interplay of Five Tanmatras or Subtle Elements viz. ( Touch, See, Breathe, Hear and Taste) and Five Basic Elements ( Earth, Air, Water, Fire and Sky) known as the Process of 'Panchee- Karana' resulting in Five Causes. This was made into a Jeeva ( Living Entity) and the Cosmic Totality of That would be Brahma, stated Devi Bhagavati!

### **Kamaakshi Vilaasa-Markandeya Purana**

Markandeya Maharshi described the **Significance of Hasti Shaila** to King Suratha : Hasti Shaila was an ornament of Hari Kshetra and was famed among the Punya Koti Kshetras of Bharata where Mahendra became an Elephant as a victim of Devi Saraswati's 'shaapa'(Curse). At one stage, Saraswati assumed self-pride and arrogance that she was the Goddess of Learning in the whole Universe. Similarly, Devi Lakshmi felt egoistic that she was the root-cause of Wealth and Prosperity par excellence. Both Saraswati and Lakshmi entered into arguments claiming mutual seniority of status and importance and reached Mahendra to decide. Indra replied that Lakshmi was indeed superior since not only because he was the consort of Narayana but also because she was the Root Cause of 'Bhoga Bhagyas' or of Wealth and Fulfillment and moreover she was the mother-in-law of Saraswati. On hearing this Saraswati got furious and became highly critical of Mahendra as characterless as 'Ahalyaachaara' or the Spoiler of Ahalya Devi, arrogant, partial-minded and power monger and as such cursed him to turn out to be an elephant. Devi Lakshmi was ever-merciful and understanding ; she assuaged his hurt feelings with the curse and stated that none could cross the lines of Fate or 'karma praarabdha'. She counselled Indra that on descending from Swarga to Bhuloka he should as an Elephant serve and worship at Simhachala Kshetra near Dandakaaranya to worship Nrisimha Deva as also commend Prahlada; seek from Prahlada the 'Naarasimhaanishtubha Maha Mantra' to qualify for entry into Hari Kshetra in Kanchipura and meditate the compassionate Hari. Indra followed the precise advice of Maha Lakshmi; *Samgruhya Mantra - raajaanam Naarasimha mahamanum, Tadeka Dhyaanatasshakra Divya Jnaanamprajaayate/ Tadjnaana kushalatwam hi Harikshetra praveshadam, Avashaaccha bhavetatra Mantramadhaanu muttamam/* (After securing the Maha Mantra, Indra entered Hari Kshetra and performed concentrated Dhyana on a mountain) Then Narakesari witnessed Indra in the Form of an Elephant, pierced his sharp nails through its thick skin , broke into his heart with his Yoga Shakti by assuming a 'Bimbaakaara' when Indra was engrossed in deep Dhyana. While seeing the Bimba, Indra was surprised to see two Brahmana Boys on the mountain. Indra asked as to who they were; they replied that they were the sons of Shringabheri Muni of Shandilya Gotra, that they were named Hema and Shukla, that their Guru was Gautama Maharshi who instructed them to fetch water from Bhadra River, that while bringing the pots of the water they kept the pots down and went up a tree to cut 'Samidhas'(twigs), that a lizard fell in the pot of water and that one Yaksha cursed the boys to become lizards. The lizards fell on the back of the Elephant while they were cutting the twigs and that elephant was none other than Indra! The boys then said that per chance, they as lizards fell on the back of the Elephant who entered Hari Kshetra. Indra who too got relieved of the Saraswati Shaapa touched the lizards who became Brahmana boys again and thanked Indra profusely. Indra in turn commended the Hasti Shaila as the most Sacred Mountain and blessed it: *Mudaa Shailaaya Devendro Dattavaanvaramutthamam, Ekaadashyamahoraatram Vishnossankeertanena cha/ Yatphalam Tatphalam Nrinaam Hasti Shailasya Darshanaat, Iti datwaa Varam Shakro Gatasswabhavanam Mudaa/*

(Those 'Maanavas' who visit the Hasta Giri and worship it day and night on Ekadashaas by fasting and singing 'Harinaama' would indeed reap memorable fruits).

One instance of the Experience of Ganu Brahmana would suffice to amplify the significance of Hasta Giri told Markandeya Maharshi to King Suratha: There was a Brahmana named Ganu of Bhardwajasa Gotra and an Expert in Shukla Yajurveda living on the banks of River Sarayu; he was also an adept in Dhanurveda or a Dhanur Vidya or the Art of Archery! But this Brahmana misused his expertise in Archery and cheated the tourists and travellers by frightening them and earning enormous money. On learning of the dirty ways of Ganu Brahmana as a menace to the travellers, one strong and valiant hero overpowered the Brahmana, tied him up, shaved his head, insulted him and threw him in a gutter. Ganu Brahmana was put to shame and while travelling for some time reached Kanchi Kshetra providentially and went up the Hasta Giri and out of exhaustion collapsed and died. Surprisingly, 'Vishnu Dutaas' were waiting Ganu Brahmana to lift him to by Vimana to Vishnu Loka! Maharshi Markandeya assured that whoever would read out or hear the account of 'Kari Giri Darshana' should be rewarded with Hasta Shaila Darshana Phala!

The Splendour of Varadaraja Swami: Sincerely greeting that Paramatma acclaimed as **Varada Raja Swami**, Maharshi Markandeya revealed the Glories of that Jagatsrashta who appeared in Kanchipura following the successful conclusion of the famed Ashwamedha Yagna executed by the Chaturmukha Brahma. *Atha tatra Nripa Shreshtha Hari Kshetra dharaataley ta Vaarana Shailasya shringey Devaadhiraajakah/ Vartatey Varadastatra Jaganmohana Vighrahah, Shankha Chakra gadaabheetir dadhaanassyaamalaa krtih/ Sarva bhushaa bhushitaango Neela maanikya sundarah, Divya Padma dalodbhaasinayana dwaya shobhitah/ Shri Vatsa Shri Dharashyasshriman Shringaara rasa shevadhih, Sachaamararamaa bhubhyaam Savya dakshinayoryutah/ Padmanaabho Ratna garbhah Kiriti Kundaloojjwalah, Punya kotathyaam nivaasena Punyakoti Padaanvitah/ Abheeshta Varado Vishnuh Puraa Padmaasanaaya cha, Srishti danda pradaataa cha Sarjana hetavey/ Sadaham Sampravakshyaami Puraavritam Charitrakam, Tasya Shravana maatrena Sarva Paapaih pramuchyatey/ ( Shri Varada Raja Swami excelled himself in the Hari Kshetra on the Hasta Shaila Shikhira bestowing desired boons to humanity as Devadhi Deva, 'Trijaganmohanaakaara' or he who mesmerised Trilokaas with his strikingly charismatic Form, as the Holder of Shanhka-Chakra-Gadaabhaya mudra, with his Indra Nila/ Blue Sapphire coloured Body, with lustrous Lotus Eyes, ornamented with a wide ranging variety of jewellery, adorned with Kaustubha Mani on his chest, hand fanned for mild coolness by Ramaa and Bhumi Devis, as the Epitome of Shingara Rasa or Romantic Classical Love, wearing a Nine Gem studded Golden Head-gear of brilliance, earlobes decked with Mani Kundalas, and in all as an exotic and enchanting Figure 'par excellence'! He was the Cause of Creation and Extermination. Indeed hearing about his splendours itself would destroy one's sins and blemishes!).*

Lakshmi and Saraswati asked Brahma to give his honest opinion as to the superiority between them and almost immediately Brahma favoured Lakshmi Devi. Saraswati was highly disappointed and even annoyed with Brahma and took away the 'danda' or an Insignia that Vishnu once gave to her which was the power of Brahma enabling the latter to undertake Srishti or Creation of 'Charaachara Jagat' or of the Moveable and Immovable Beings. Thus the action of Brahma to create was disabled. Brahma did not wish to entreat Saraswati to return the Srishti Danda but left for Himalayas to perform penance to Vishnu to request for an Emblem with Vishnu Amsha to Create instead of a Saraswati-oriented Crest. Vishnu was pleased with Brahma's Tapas and directed Brahma to perform hundred Ashwamedha Yagnas. Brahma then decided that instead of performing hundred such Yagnas it would be sufficient to execute one Yagna at the Hari Kshetra and asked Vishwakarma the Architect cum Builder of Devas to construct a huge Yagna Shaala right opposite the Idol of Narasimha; he discarded Saraswati as his partner at the Yagna but preferred Buddhi Devi as his 'Yagna Patni' to share the duties of a wife as prescribed. Brahma invited Devas, Devarshis like Narada, besides Gandharva-Yaksha- Kinnara-Apsara; Siddha- Saadhya- Muniganaas and decided to perform a Year- long Yagna; he worshipped Ganeshwara first to facilitate the

Yagna without obstacles and then worshipped Yoga Narasimha Swami and initiated the Yagna with formal Mantras by appointing Kumara Swami as Adhavarvu, Maheswara as Udagaata, Varuna as Prastota, Yama Dharma Raja as Hota and Indra who performed hundred such Yagnas in the past as the Yagna Brahma. Since Brahma did not invite Saraswati to participate, she was furious and created powerful flames with her Maya Shakti with a view to destroy the Yagna but the Saviour of the Hari Kshetra viz. Vishnu arrested the Maya Shakti's both the hands and disabled her.

Saraswati took it as a challenge and released Kapalika Shakti but Vishnu in the Form of Nara Simha destroyed the Shakti. Enraged by her discomfiture, Devi Saraswati released 'Daithyaastra' but Daityaari Narayana made the Astra futile. Vagdevi then created 'Karaala Vadana Kalika' and instructed the Maha Shakti to demolish the Yagna but Vishnu assumed an Eight-Hand Swarupa and having suppressed the Shakti sat firm on her shoulders. Finally with all her powers being overcome, Saraswati was humiliated and swooned out of anger and frustration and took the Form of 'Pralaya Swarupi' called Vegavati River with disastrous speed from Brahmaloaka down to Earth heading towards the Hari Shaila. Vishnu sensed the impending danger and decided to resort to her 'maanabhanga' or assault her physically; having become nude he stood before the lightning flash of gushing waters and like a Huge Log lied across against the flow. Saraswati having visioned Narayana's nudity was thus put to shame and without being able to face him entered a 'Bhu bila' or a big fissure of Earth and escaped. Then the Yagna commenced without any hindrance; the Yagna Pashu or the Sacrificial Horse was let loose and returned invincible and at the successful completion of the year long Yagna, the 'Purnaahuti' or the Ultimate Offering to Agni as the climactic Homa of Cow's ghee was accomplished and Brahma visioned a Massive Flood of Illumination on the Eastern Sky and offered wide and palmful of concentrated homage to that Spendour. That was the most awaited Moment of Sweta Varaha Kalpa's Vaivasva Manvantara- Krita Yuga- Nrisimha Bhagavatmika Samvatsara- Vaishakha -Shukla Paksha- Chaturdashi's Hasta Nakshatra Suryodaya when Devadhi Deva the Supreme Lord of the Universe manifested himself from the Yagna Homaagni' as **Varada Raja Swami** and handed over the Insignia of Srishti to Brahma Deva. The latter went into raptures and placed the Insignia on his chest with tears of joy and got non-plussed momentarily. After recovering from the pleasant shock, Brahma Deva installed Bhagavan on the Hasti Shaila on a 'Suvarna Simhasana' or a Golden Throne in the presence of Devas and other Celestial Beings and Maharshis; in order to cool down the charged and excited atmosphere as also to supposedly quench the thirst of Narayana who was just manifested from Agni, Brahma performed 'Abhisheka Snaana' to Varadaraja with potful thousands of Kamadhenu's ghee with chantings of Sacred Veda Mantras and offered 'Shodashopacharaas' or the traditional Sixteen Services such as Aasana- Vastra-Yagnopaveeta- Gandha-Dhupa- Deepa-Pushpa- Phala-Naivedya- Tambula-Mantra Pushpa-Sangeeta-Veda Pathana- Tambula-Chhatra-Chaamaraas. The formal Pujas was followed by bhojanas (Hearty Meals) served to Special Invitees with Bakshya- Bhojya-Lehya- Chokshya-Paneenias to all concerned in the Maha Yagna. Also Anna Santarpana or Free Meals were organised to the entire citizens of Kanchipura. Vishwakarma made a 'Pratibimba Swarupa' or Replica of 'Aalaya'; and 'Nagara' Pradakshinas or Temple wise and Nagari wise several Pradakshinaas or circumambulations were done on Elephant-back; in fact daily worships, Bhojanas and 'Gajotsavas' were also organised eversince. Pleased by all these arrangements, Varada Swami addressed 'Brahmaadidevaas' and Munis : *Yathaaham Virajaa teerey mama Vaikuntha pattaney, Jagadvyaapana sheelaavaad Vishnurityabhidhaayutah/ Prasiddho nivasaamyatra tathaa Kaanchi- purottamey, Harikshetram samaashritya Sarvaabheeshta pradaanatah/ Varadaabhidhayaa khyaato nivasaami nirantaram, Sarvey bhavanto madbhaktaassada maddarshaney rataah/ Sarvadaatraiva tishthantu Vaikunthaadati paavaney, Varshey Varshey Meshamaasi mama Janmadiney Shubhey/ Ghritadhaaraa sahasraabhishechanam mama pujanam, Utsavamcha prakurut Viprabhojana purvakam* (My Bhaktaas! Just as I had settled in Vaikuntha on the banks of River Viraja and got spread all over the Universe as Vishnu, I will now reside in the Hari Kshetra of Kancheepura; hence those desirous of visioning me could do so with my name as Varada or he who would be the Bestower. In fact I will stay here for good thus making Hari Kshetra as significant as Vaikuntha if not even better! You may therefore even reside at this Kshetra. Every year on my birthday during Mesha month you should all

therefore perform ‘Goghrita dhaaraa sahasra -abhishekaa’ or thousand Abhishakaas of Cow Ghee (bathing) of my Murti and celebrate this day as a Festival and of ‘Brahmana Bhojana.’ Then Brahma Deva addressed all the Invitees of the Yagna to follow the instruction of Varadaraja Swami and assured that those who would participate in the Festival on the lines as instructed would secure ‘Maha Phala’.

Maharshi Markandeya narrated to King Suratha one telling instance about a devotee who actually experienced this kind of Maha Phala : In the past, one Vaadaadhyaya Vipra named Bhanuvarna of Gokula on the banks of River Yamuna visited Kanchipura and happened to perform ‘Ghrithaabhisheka’ most coincidentally on the ‘Janma dina’ of Varadaraja Swami at the Hari Kshetra and on return to Gokula after some time passed away; Bhanu varna was being flown to Swarloka by Devaganaas to honour him with the status of Indra but ‘Haridootaas’ intercepted his Soul and took it away to the Everlasting Vishnupada; such indeed was the graceful gesture of Varadaraja Swami! Whoever recites the above account of Varadaraja Swami would certainly secure Varadaraja Darshana, as assured by Maharshi Markandeya.

Eminence of ‘Bhutabandha Janardana’: *Sthaana trayastam Devesham Trividhaakaaramachyutam, Prati Lingaagra Samyuktam Bhuta bandham Samaashraye!* (Markandeya Maharshi extolled the Bhutabandha Janardana existing on the top of the Trayaakaara Linga Swarupas or of Tri Formations of Shiva Lingas) As Kanyakaa Devi assumed the mighty Swarupa of Tripura Sundari to kill Bandhakaasura, dragged his body to Kama Koshthi and installed the Victory Dhruva, She asked Devas to dig up a specific spot and as they did so, Devas spotted a Daitya called ‘Mallaka’ and the highly surprised Devas were taken aback; Vishnu then killed the Daitya. But each drop of the spilt blood of the dead body of the Asura created further Asuras. Maha Deva sought to help Vishnu and pulled out a ‘Jata’ of his knotted hair and hit it on the ground. Two Bhutas were materialised of whom one was male and another was female. These Bhutas drank up the blood of the Asura’s body but as they were used to drink up blood ran after Sri Hari. Vishnu taught a lesson by subduing them and sat heavy on them, but they overpowered Srihari who fell down; this irritated Vishnu and trampled the Bhutas heavily so that the latter apologised and came to senses finally. They requested Vishnu to purify their minds and the merciful Janardana prayed to Maha Deva in the latter’s Pancha Mukha Form and Shankara released Ganga from his Five Faces as ‘Pancha Dhaaraas’ which fell on the Kama Koshtha and these flows fell down as Pancha Tirthas. Srihari asked the Bhutas to bathe in the Pancha Tirtha as Maha Deva blessed the **Pancha Tirthas**. Shiva further stated that whoever took bath in the Agneya side of Pancha Tirtha would be relieved of ‘Swarna Steya Paataka’ or the sin of stealing Gold; Dakshina ‘Dishaa Snaana’ would relieve of Surapaa Paana Pataka; Pashima Dishaa Snaana would nullify ‘Paradaara Sangama’; Uttara Disha Snaana would destroy Praana Harana Pataka; and the Tirtha Madhya Snaana would rectify the sin of cooperating any of the earlier Patakaas. Maha Deva then manifested a Tri-Linga Swarupa and Vishnu addressed Devas and Manavaas that whosoever jumped in the Pancha Tirtha would attain Brahmanatwa even if that person was not so then, that he or she concerned be relieved of Bhuta-Preta-Piscacha-Graha difficulties, that the person be blessed with good progeny and eligibility too secure Vaikuntha. Thus Devas took snaana in Pancha Tirtha and secured the boons and worshipped Bhuta bandhana Janardana as also the Pancha Mukha (Five-Faced) Maha Deva. Maharshi Markandeya narrated an incident related to a Vipra called Girindra of Ramapura on the banks of River Krishna. He married five women but was not fortunate to beget a child. He visited Kama Koshtha and along with his wives and bathed in the Pancha Tirtha; there after he deeply meditated Bandha Mochana Janardana who appeared before him and gave him Divya Madhu (Honey). Having consumed it he returned home and was able to obtain hundred sons and attained Vaikuntha after his death. The Maharshi recommended fully that the devotees visiting Kanchipura ought to bathe in Panch Tirtha and experience miracles by the grace of Janardana and Devi Kamakshi. Recitation of the following ‘Dwadasha Shloki’ while taking early morning Snaanaas should instantly experience fulfillment of desires: *Swaami Pushkarini Tirtha Prva Sindhu Pinaakini, Shilaahradaschatur madhyam Yavat Tundeera Mandalam/ Madhyey Tundira Bhu Vritham, Kampaa Vegavati dwayoh, Tamor madhey Kaama Koshtam amaakshi tatra vartatey/ JagatKaamakalaakaaram Naabhisthanam Bhuvah Param, Pada*

*padmasya Kaamaakshyaah Mahaa Peetha mupasmahey/ Kamakotih smrita tasmaat Kaaranaa Deva chinnabhah, Yatra Kaama kruto Dharmo Jantunaa yena kenavaa/ Sakrudwaapi Sudharmaanaam Phalam Phalati Kotishayah, Yojapey Kama Koshtesmin Mantramishtaatha Daivatam/ Kotivarna phaleynaiva Muktilokam sa gacchati, Yo vasey Kamakoshthesmin Kshanaartham vaatatarhakam/ Muchyatey Sarva Paapebhyassaakshiddevi Naraarith, Gayatri Mamndapaadhaaram Bhu Naabhi Sthaanamutthamam/ Purushaatha pradam Shambhor Bilaabhrantannamaamyaham, Yatkuryaat Kama Koshtasya Bilaabhrasya Pradakshinam/ Pada Sankhyaa kramenaiva Gogarbhajanam Labhet, Vishwa kaarana netraadhyaam Shrimat Tripura Sundareem/ Bandakaasura samhartreem Kamaksheem taamaham bhajey, Paraajanmadiney Kaachyaam Mahaabhyantara margatah/ Yorchayettatra Kamaaksheem Kotipujaa phalambhavet, Tatphalotpanna Kaivalyam Sakritkaamaakshi sevayaa/ Tristhaananilayam Devam Trividhaakaaramachyutam, Bhuta bandham ta maashraey!*

**Shri Chakra Raja Puja:** Those who might not be fortunate to visit Kamaraja Peetha might as well perform Shri Chakra Puja. In the Shri Chakra, one should pray to one's Guru on the Tri Kona Purvaagra or the encircled Triangle's right top. At the same Place prayers were to be offered to Parama Guru, Parameshthi Guru, Paratpara Guru, Narayana, Padma Sambhava, Vasishtha, Shakti, Paraashara, Vyaasa, Shuka, Goudapaada, Kouliki and Manavoughama and ponder about Maha Kamehwari Kuta with Shri Vidya or Pancha Dashi Mantra. Later on, one should the Koulika Dharma Vetta ( the Performer of the Puja) must recite Shri Vidya atleast one thousand times. If the 'Chaapaka' or the Person responsible for the Puja was unable to perform 'Anna Daana' then he or she should seek pardon from Shri Devi. But the most significant aspect of Shri Chakra Puja would be the 'Shri Vidyaa Yajana' or the Japa as prescribed. In the past, the Shri Vidya Chakra Puja was successfully executed by Devi Lakshmi, Hayagriva, Manu, Dasharatha, Tunda, Kantaara Chola, Pannaga Raja and Shiva: **Beneficiaries of Shri Chakra Puja:** At the time of Samudra Mathana, Vishnu who was of a naturally fair complexion turned blue and Lakshmi joked with Vishnu that she would not be fit to be her husband as she was of golden complexion; Vishnu gave a repartee to her that she was old and cursed her to turn of 'Anjana Neela' complexion. Then **Lakshmi** did 'Shri Vidyopaasana' and regained her natural colour. **Hayagriva Muni** was engaged in continuous meditation of Shri Vidya of Devi Kamakshi when once a Rakshasa named Padma sat on the Muni and forced him to travel to Pataala Loka as a horse; Devi Kamakshi appeared in Pataala to save the Muni by killing the Asura. Hahagreeva assumed Vishnu Swarupa and tricked Rakshasa Guru Shukraachaarya and took away the 'Akshaya Kumbha of Mrita Sanjeevani' kept with the Acharya for the revival of dead Asuras and performed Abhisheka of the Sanjeevini to Devi Kamakshi. **Vaivaswata Manu** assumed Manvatwa as bestowed by his father Surya Deva but he had no knowledge what so ever about the fine distinctions of Paapa-Punyas and as advised by Vasishtha Muni and visited Kama Koshta; Durvasa Maharshni provided the 'Upadesha' or instruction of Shri Vidya Mantra and the Manu did Dhyana and Tapas to Devi Kamakshi for hundred years. Then Kamakshi arrived near Manu in the Form of a Brahmana Woman and performed Abhisheka to Manu with the Sacred Waters of Pancha Tirtha as a mark of declaring him as a Chakravarti and imparted the Knowledge of Ideal Administration; till date the 'Dharma Smriti' continues as the Guide of Dharma. **King Dasharatha** was advised by Vasishtha Muni to visit Kama Koshta to perform Shri Chakra Puja and there was a Celestial Voice assuring the birth of Epoch making sons of Shri Rama and others. In the days of yore, **King Aakaasha** joined some followers of Boudha Guru and as directed by the latter stole considerable money of the Kingdom and mis-spent for wrong purposes and due to this sin became childless. He repented and abandoned the Boudha Guru and approached Gorakshanadha Muni who directed him to worship Kamakshi and taught Shri Vidya. He was then blessed with a boy like Vighneshwara as his son. As the King and Queen continued Devi worship daily, one day after the conclusion of the Puja-Homa-Dampati Puja-'Brahmana Samaaradhana', there was a miracle of Suvarna Varsha / Rain of Gold! Although the Brahmanas and Munis at the Bhojanam were unable to explain, the twelve year old son of Akaasha explained the reason: in the meals that were normally served at the daily 'Samaaraadhana', there was a golden pebble in the greengram which was also cooked and served from the Bhojan consumed by an elderly 'Sumangali' woman who was Kamakshi herself and hence the Rain of Gold! The King's son ate a portion of the left over remnant of what the

Suvasini ate, then he became a 'Sarva Tantra Visharada' or an expert of 'Tantra Gyana'; he was considered as Ganeshwara by those present and was named **Tunda** and was named the King of Kanchi Kshetra. In the Agneya direction of Kamakshi Temple there was an Idol of King Tunda that called for a Pradakshina lest the Devi Darshana Phala would reach to King Tunda's account! **King Vikrama Chola** was dethroned by his younger brother Shalya Chola aided by his schemy friend Parjanya. Vikrama Chola and his wife roamed about aimlessly and luckily reached Kama Koshta and organised a flower garden and supplied excellent garlands to Devi Kamakshi daily. Pleased by their service and devotion, Devi blessed them a female child. As the daughter grew of marriageable age, Kamakshi appeared in a dream to the Pandya King Uddhaajit and asked him to defeat a battle with Shalya Chola and marry the daughter of the latter's elder brother who presently was supplying flower garlands to her. The Pandya King followed Devi's instructions and with passage of time King Vikrama Chola retired in favour of his son and devoted his time in the service of Kamakshi. Among various deeds of virtue, he developed gardens by extending them into forests thus securing the epithet of **Kaantara Chola**. While he was working in the forests, he had a serpent bite and he as well as the serpent attained Moksha by the grace of Devi.

### **Kurma Purana**

*Vishnu's Avatara as Kurma, Lakshmi as Maya and Revelation of Tatwa Gyaan (Sage Indradyumna's prayer to Vishnu included):* Dwipayana Veda Vyasa Maharshi called Romaharshana (or he whose body-hairs are imbued with happiness) to narrate the happenings of 'Kurma Avatara' of Vishnu to the Sages at Nimisha Forest. As Deva Danavas decided to initiate the act of the Ksheera Samudra Mathana or churning of the Ocean of Milk - on which Narayana was lying normally in yogic slumber - by erecting the Mandara Mountain, Bhagavan Narayana had already assumed the Kurma Rupa or the Form of a gigantic Tortoise. Even by then, Devi Lakshmi the Goddess of Wealth was in position along with Kurma Deva. As Devas and Maharsis like Narada asked Devi Lakshmi to be identified, Narayana replied that she was of his own 'Amsa' or Swarupa: *Iyamsa Pramashaktirmayi Brahma Rupiney, Maya mama Priyaanantaa yahedam mohitam Jagat/ Anayaiva Jagat Sarvam Sadevasura Maanusham, Mohayaami Dwija Sreshtaa grasaami visrujaami cha/ Utpattim Pralayam chaiva Bhutaanaamagatim gatim, Vijnayaanveekshya chaatmaanam taranti vipulaalimaam/ Asyaastwamshaanadhishtaaya Shaktimanto bhavan Dwijaah, Brahmoshan -adayo Devaah Sarva Shaktiriyam mama/ Saishaa Sarva jagatstutih Prakrithis triguna - atmikaa, Praageva Mattaha Sanjaataa Shrikalpey Padma vaasini/ Chaturbhujah shankha chakra padma hastaa shubhaanvitaa, Koti Surya Pratikaashaa Mohini Sarva dehinaam/ Naalam Devaa Pitara Maanavaa Vasuvopicha , Mayaametaam Samutturtam ye chaanye Bhuvi dehinah/* (This Devi Lakshmi is of Vishnu's Swarupa and Parama Shakti Maha Maya who allures the Universe in totality; Her charms are endless and is spread all over with her attractions conjuring one and all and with her assistance what Vishnu creates, destroys and recreates again. Thus Vishnu confirmed that this Maha Shakti was the prime source of energy based on which, Brahma, Shiva and all the Devas which were the ramifications of Maha Maya came to be created by the mix of Three Gunas or features of Satwa-Rajas and Tamas. She thus got originated with four hands possessing Shankha-Chakra-Kamal and Abhaya or Raksha to assure protection to one and all of the Beings in Creation and indeed there was none including Devas, Pitaras, Manavas etc. who could conquer her except by extreme dedication and deep devotion.) Devi Lakshmi was briefed by Brahma as follows: *Devidamakhilam Vishwam Sadevasura -maanusham, Mohayitwaam - amaadeshaat samsaarey vinipataya/ Jnaanayoga rataan Daantaan Brahmishthaan Brahma vaadinah, Akrodhanaan Satyaparaan dooratah parivarjaya/ Dhyaayino nirmamaan Shaantaan dharmikaan vedapaaragaan, Jaapinastaapasaan Vipraan dooratah parivarjaya/ Sartyaparaan dooratah parivarjaya/ Vedavedaanta vijnana sancchin -naasesha samshayaan, Mahaayajna paraan Vipraan dooratah parivarjaya/ Ye Jayanti japairhomair Deva Devam Maheswaram, Swaadhyayanejjayaa dooraat taan*

*prayatnena varjaya/ Bhakti yoga Samaayuktaaneeswaraarpita maanasaan, Paanaayaamaadishu rataan dooraat pariharaamalaam/ Pranavaasaktamanaso Rudra japy paraayanaan, Atharva shirasasodhyetrun Dharmajnaana parivarjaya/(Brahma advised Lakshmi Devi to certainly spread the net of Maya on Devas, Asuras, Manushyas and indeed the entire world, but not on those who were always engaged in Jnaana Yoga, Jitendriyata or control of Jnaana-Karmendriyas, Brahma Nishtha or Absorption in Brahmatwa, Brahmavaaditwa or seeking to prove Brahma's existence, krodha shunyata or resistance of anger and Satya paraayanata or Constant pursuit of Truth. Those who are Dhyaanis or Meditators, devoid of desires, ever Peaceful, Dharmik or the Virtuous, Veda Jnanis, Japa-paraayanaas, and Tapasvis should also be exempt from the Maya. Veda Vedaanta Jnanis, Yajna paraayanaas or practitioners, Japa-homa-Yajna and Swaadhyaya Murtis too never be exposed to the Lakshmi Maya. Again, those persons who dedicate themselves to Bhagavan and were deeply attached to Praanaayaama viz. Dharana- Dhyana and Samaadhi, 'Pranavopaasana', Rudra Mantra Japa and Athrava sirasaadhyeya and Nitya Ishwaraadhayena are too exempt from the playful exposure of Maya). Having heard about the influence of Devi Lakshmi's Maya, Devas and Munis enquired of Vishnu whether there was any body who might have escaped the impact of Maya in the past, Hrishiksha cited one example of a well-read and illustrious Brahmana called Indradyumna who in his previous birth was a reputed King also named Indradyumna and claimed invincibility over Devas. But meanwhile Vishnu assumed Kurma Avatara and since the Shaktis of Tri Murtis and of Devas got merged into the Avatara, the King sought refuge into the Avatara; then Kurma Deva blessed the King to take to the next birth as a Brahmana and in his current life practised Vratas, Upavaasaas, Homas and worshipped Vishnu. That was the background of Indradyumna as the King and later as Brahmana. Devi Lakshmi encountered the Brahmana and was overcome by his sincerity and dedication and on revealing her identity as Lakshmi touched the Brahmana with affection and assured that one day Bhagavan Vishnu himself would provide Jnaana to him and disappeared. Brahmana Indradyumna meditated to Vishnu for very many years and decades and finally Bhagavan obliged him with his darshan as the latter fell down on his knees and prayed to him.*

*Indradyumna's Prayer to Bhagavan Vishnu: Yajneshaachyuta Govinda Madhavaananta Keshava, Krishna Vishno Hrishiksha tubhyam Vishwatmaney Namah/ Namostutey Puraanaaya Haraye Vishwa Murtaye, Sarga Sthiti Vinaashaanaam Hetaveynanta Shaktaye/ Nirgunaaya Namastubhyam Nishkalaaya amalaatmaney, Purushaaya Namastubhyam Vishwarupaayatay namah/ Namastey Vaasudevaaya Vishnavey Vishwayonaye, Adi Madhyanta Heenaaya Jnaanagamyaya tey namah/ Namastey Nirvikaaraaya Nishprapanchaaya tey namah, Bhedaabheda Viheenaaya Namostwaananda Rupiney/ Namastaaraaya Shaantaaya Namopratihataatmaney, Ananta Murtaye tubhyam amurtaayam Namonamah/ Namastey Paramaarthaya Maayaatitaaya tey namah, Namastey Parameshaaya Brahmaney Paramatmaney/ Namostu tey Susukshmaaya Maha Devayatey namah, Namah Shivaaya Shuddhaaya Namastey Parameshthiney/ Twayaiva Srushtimakhilam twameva Paramaagatih, Twam Pitaa Sarva Bhutaanaam twam Maataa Purushottama/ Twamaksharam Paramdhaama Chinmaatram Vyoma Nishkalam, Sarvasyaadhaara -mavyaktamanantam Tamasah Param/ Prapashyanti Paramaatmaanam Jnaana deepena kevalam, Prapadye Bhavato Rupam tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam/ Evam stuvantam Bhagavan Bhutaatmaa Bhutabhaavanah, Upaabhyaamatha hastaabhyaam paspasrsha prahasanniva/ (My salutations to you Yagna Swami, Achyuta, Govinda, Maadhava, Ananta, Keshava, Krishna, Vishnu, Hrishiksha, Vishwaatma, Puraana Purusha, Vishwa Murti, Hari! You are the cause of Creation, Continuation and Conclusion of the Universe; You possess Unending Energy, You are the Nirguna Swarupa, Nishkala, Vimalatma or of the Pure Soul; Vishwa Rupa Purusha, Vishwa Yoni, vaasudeva,*

Vishnu; You have neither Beginning-nor the Inter Stage-nor even the Termination; You are realisable only by Jnaana or Paramount Knowledge; You are Nitrvikara or Devoid of Features; Prapancha or Pancha Bhutas; You possess neither dissimilarities nor constancies; but are the Embodiment of Ananda or Bliss! You are the only Power that could save us from the Deep Oceans of Samsara or the Miseries of Life; You are always Peaceful, Tranquil, Wholesome, Ever-Clean and Eternal; You are beyond Illusions, Paramartha Swarupa or the Supreme Goal; Paramatma or the Ultimate Soul; The Everlasting; The Minutest; Maha Deva-Parameshti and Parabrahma! You are the Highest Scriptor of Srishti; the Final Destiny; the Purushottama; the Father and Mother of Bhuta-Praanis in Totality; the Avinaashi /Indestructible; Parama dhama or the Last Refuge Point; the Chikitsa Rupa or the Best Physician; Vyoma or the Akaasha; Nishkala or the Transparent; The Adhara or the Fulcrum; Avyakta or the Unknown; Ananta or The Endless; Nitya Prakasha or the Ever-Resplendent; and Realisable by Yogis only by the Light of Jnaana or the Awareness of Infinity! Vishnu, was pleased, and passed on Tatwa Jnaana.).

### **Maha Bhagavata Purana**

‘Virat Purusha’ – the Primeval Force: Described as ‘Purusha’, the Primeval Force of Creation, possesses countless heads, eyes and feet pervading the entire Universe, far beyond the miniscule level of human comprehension. He is Omni-present, omniscient and omni-potent. He is immortal, intangible, and inexpressible. Whatever has been described, visualised or imagined by way of His Glory is far surpassed. It is stated in *Purusha Suktham* (a Vedic compilation of Hymns) that hardly one quarter of the Purusha is comprehended as the totality of His Creation and the rest of Him is unmanifested. From the manifested part sprang the ‘Brahmanda’ or the Cosmos, the countless forms of living or non-living species and the Five Elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Sky) as also the Divine Architect, ‘Visva Karma’, The Master-BUILDER. The Gigantic and Colossal Manifestation of the Material World be likened with the Body of The Absolute Truth, wherein the concepts of Time-The Past, The Present and The Future-converge into One. Sages conceived the ‘Virat Swarupa’ or The Body comprising Various Limbs: The Bottoms of The Feet as ‘Patala’; the Heels and Toes as the Planets named ‘Rasatala’; Ankles as ‘Mahatala’ Planets; the Shanks as ‘Talatala’ Planets; The Knees as the ‘Mahatala’ Planets; the two Thighs as ‘Atala’ and ‘Vitala’ Planets; The Hips as the ‘Mahitala’ Planets and the Navel as the Inter- Space. The Chest of The Giant Body is likened to the Luminary Planetary System, The Neck as the ‘Mahar’ Planets; and The Mouth and Forehead are the ‘Janas’ and ‘Tapas’ Planetary Systems respectively. The Sages described the Topmost Planetary Structure comprising Thousand Heads as ‘Satya Loka’; His Arms as Demi-Gods (‘Devas’) conducted by ‘Indra’ as the Chief; the Ten Directional Sides as His Ears; the Physical Sound as Sense of Hearing; the Two Nostrils as Aswini Kumars; Material Fragrance as The Sense of Smell; His Throat as the Blistering Fire; His Eyepits as the Outer Space; Eye Balls as the Power of Vision (The Sun); Eye Lids as Day and Night; Eye Brows are the Places where Brahma and Super Personalities Reside; His Palate is the Director of Water ‘Varuna’; and His Tongue is the Spring of Juices or the Sense of Taste; Cerebral Passage are the Vedas; His Jaws of Teeth are the Lord ‘Yama’, the Dispenser of Death and Justice; The Set of Teeth is the Art of Affection; His Smile is the most fascinating and deceptive Material Energy; Upper Portion of His Lips is Modesty; His Chin is the Craving and Thirst; His Breast is Religion and His Back Irreligion; His Genitals the Brahma or the Creator; His Two Testicles are Mitra-Varunas; His Waist is the Ocean; His Bones are the Hills and Mountains; The Veins of His Gigantic Body are the Rivers; His Body Hairs are Trees; His Breath is the Omnipotent Air; His Movements are Passing Ages; His Actions are the Reactions or the Three Modes of Material Nature; Hairs on His Head are the Clouds carrying water / rain; His Intelligence is the Supreme Cause of Material Creation; His Mind is the Moon or the

Reservoir of all Changes; His Ego is Rudradeva; His Residence is Humanity; His Musical Rhythm is the Celestial Existence of 'Gandharvas' 'Vidyadharas' and Angels; and so on. The Face of the Gigantic Body is of 'Brahmanas', Arms are 'Khsatriyas', Thighs are 'Vaisyas' and Feet are under the protection of 'Sudras'. The 'Virat Purusha' has no beginning or end; is all powerful and all-prevading. In Introspection by Suka Maha Muni explained the broad concept of 'Virat Purusha', beyond which there could be no other Reality and the rest a mere illusion. It is that 'Reality' which needs to be realised and deeply meditated to. This is the very the first step to Introspection. It is the Supreme Lord Who is in one's own Heart. The marginal pleasures of Life are short-lived and it is unfortunate and foolish to pursue such quickly vanishing joys of corporal nature. It is equally wasteful to work hard and get highly engrossed into such quickly evaporating material rather than pursue the substantive and ever lasting happiness. Indeed, strict regimen of resisting the free play of Five Sensory Features ( 'Pancha Indriya') is an intelligent way of channelising all the physical and mental energies in full force to achieve solid and everlasting bliss rather than chase inefficient and useless actions that would only land into dejections and disappointments at the end of one's own Life's journey. As such, it would be prudent to retain the minimum possible means of living and reject the unwanted and superfluous wants for which the labours to be put in are inversely proportionate to the gains secured. For example, adequate amount of money to eke out a living is good enough rather than seek immense wealth, which has no limit anyway. Sensual life to the desirable extent of procreating children is good enough rather than get entangled with endless conjugal life that has no limit but would lead to complicated health problems. Taking to the habit of drinking wine would certainly lead to the path of misery. Thus each desire should be properly weighed in terms of bare necessity rather than by a false feeling of so-called prestige, or status or Show. By such a frugal and most minimal existence, the unwanted chaff over the grain would make enormous room in terms of effort, time and purity of thought to concentrate on the imprint of The Supreme Self residing right within everybody's own heart admeasuring some six inches with a Miniature Replica of the 'Virat Purusha'. Then would commence the process of aligning the Miniature within and the Colossal Superforce all over, limb by limb, ie. hand by hand, head by head.

New Brihaspati Visvarupa teaches 'Narayana Kavacha' to Indra : Indra's Court is a master-piece of the Universe, with Indra as a cynosure, surrounded by several semi-Gods and seated along with him by Sachi Devi. Guru Brihaspati, the Great Guide and Teacher of all the Subjects of the Court was among the Principal Advisor. In this ideal setting unfortunately, Brihaspati felt humiliated by Indra, as due respect to a Spiritual Master was not paid to him as Indra started cutting short and interrupting the Guru often. In course of time, Brihaspati stopped attending the Court. Indra no doubt apologised to the Guru, but the Guru did not relent. Lord Brahma called Indra and reprimanded him for his follies and had to look for an alternative. At the request of Demi-Gods, Brahma then appointed Visvarupa, the son of Diti's daughter Rachana and Prajapati Tvasta. Lord Brahma suitably briefed Visvarupa and taught the basic principles of an Acharya ( Teacher) who should consider Brahma as father, Indra as brother, Mercy as a sister, the planet of Earth as mother, guest as Agni and all living entities as Lord Vishnu Himself. He underlined the need for balancing the strength of Sukracharya, the Guru of Demons. Visvarupa taught the Narayana Kavacha ( The Shield of Narayana) to Indra and Semi-Gods. Being seated properly, the intial mantra be recited viz. ' Apavitrah Pavitro va , Sarvavasthangatho piva, Yah smaret pundarikasham sa bahyahabhantara suchih, SriVishnu Sri Vishnu Sri Vishnu.' Thus purified, the Mantra be recited as: 'Om Namu Narayanaya' touching eight parts of the body systematically-feet, knees, thighs, abdomen, heart, chest, mouth and head- both in Utpatti Nyasa (Start-up) and Samhara Nyasa ( Close-up) , ie. in reverse

order. The mantra is recited as 'Ya Narayanaya Namoh' in the reverse order. The next mantra is : 'Om Bhagavate Vasudevaya' by touching the four finger tips touching the joints of thumbs, starting from the right hand and then the left hand. The next mantra is recited as 'Om namo vishnave namah', by aligning Om with heart, 'Vi' with top of the head, 'sh' with eyebrows, 'na' with tuft (sikha), 've' with eyes, 'na' with joints of body and 'mah' as a weapon. While reciting the mantras, one should visualise the Supreme Lord seated on Garuda's back and with his eight arms Viz. conchshell, disc, shield, sword, club, arrows, bow and strings.

The Narayana Kavacha protects in different forms of the Supreme Force, such as Matsya ( Great Fish) from water, Vamana ( The Dwarf) from all the three Worlds, Narasimha ( Man-Lion) in forests and battle fronts, Varaha ( The Boar) from the bottom of the Seas, Parasurama with axe from Unkind Kings and Mountains, Rama from tribulations in foreign countries, Narayana from false religious systems, Nara from unwanted pride, Dattathreya from mystic forces, Sanat Kumara from undue desires, Kurma ( Tortoise) from hellish planets, Narada from worship offences, Dhanvantari from physical ailments, Rishabhadeva from extreme heat and cold, Yagna from defamations, Balarama from reptiles, Vyasa from ignorance, Buddha from laziness, Kalki from irreligion and so on. The 'Kavacha' provides protection to the devotees during day and night by Kesava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda, Vishnu, Madhusudana, Hrishikesa, Padmanabha, Janardana, and Vasudeva. Similarly, the eight arms provide protection from all possible evils and ventualities. Narayana Shield is meant for each and every body, from Devas to normal mortals. With the help of Narayana Kavacha, Indra defeated demons and rejuvenated the supremacy of Devas again.

Visvarupa reborn as Vritrasura: In course of time, Indra got suspicious of the intentions of Visvarupa, the newly appointed Guru of Devas; although Visvarupa was the son of Prajapati Tvastha, his mother Rachana was the daughter of Diti whose credentials were of Demons. While performing 'Homams'/ 'Yagnas', he was in the habit of reciting the offerings to Fire God meant for Indra, Varuna and other Devas loudly, but offered 'Ghee'(classified butter) secretly to demons as well. Also, Visvarupa who had three heads, used to consume 'Soma Ras'(Nectar) with one mouth, another with Wine and the third one with food. In a fit of rage, Indra killed Visvarupa, despite the knowledge that killing a Brahmin Priest would attract heavy penalty which was cleared by suitable means eventually.. On learning what Indra did, Tvastha performed high-quality spiritual ceremonies with a view to avenge the death of his son. As a result, a huge, frightful figure emerged from the Fire-pit, who looked like capable of destroying the entire Universe. Tvastha named the giant demon as Vritra, as he was the product of enormous asceticism covering all the planetary systems. The entire army of Devas, headed by Indra, pulled out their collective strength pitted against the one man militia of Vritra to no avail. They had to, in fact, run in different directions in sheer self defence. Finally they made a group prayer to Lord Vishnu for a quick solution as Vritra was growing in power minute by minute. The divine response came that Sage Dadhichi could only help retrieve the ugly situation. The Sage assimilated spiritual knowledge and passed on the same to Asvini Devas who attained the position of Jeevan Muktha ( Liberation in life itself). The Mantras, including Narayana Kavacha was passed on to Prajapati Tvastha who in turn passed it on to his son Visvarupa too. The Narayana Kavacha fortified the body of Sage Dadhichi and only the backbone of the Sage could help to put an end to Vritra. The Devas thus made a collective prayer to Dadhichi to spare his body for the noble cause of ending Vritrasura. Dadhichi consented and his back- bone was converted into a mighty Thunderbolt by the Divine Architect, Viswakarma. A ferocious battle followed then, when Satya Yuga was ending and Threta Yuga was being ushered in, as the entire force of powerful Demons

headed by Vritrasura on one side and the mighty Demi Gods headed by Indra seated on 'Airavatha' - the Heavenly Elephant- fortified in his arms with the thunderbolt made out of Dhadhichi's back bone prepared by Viswakarma. Before using the Thunderbolt, Vritrasura became furious and fought Indra on one to one basis. He tormented and put Indra to shame. He taunted Indra to say that he made the heinous crime of killing a Holy Brahmin, Viswarupa and got away from the sin in a surreptitious manner. He cursed Indra and told that he was a coward and culpable. Without the Thunderbolt he would have been reprehensible. Vritrasura further said 'Almighty in His enormous Wisdom showed the way to kill me to stabilise order in the Universe and that the kind of death which has been awarded to me by Super Force Himself is my reward and not a punishment, as He is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer and His decision is ultimate.' By so saying Vritrasura invited the Thunderbolt to attain Salvation. Thus ended the memorable story of Vritrasura into the pages of the Great Puranas. When Vritrasura attained 'Moksha', all the Celestial Planets, Demi-Gods, Gandharvas and so on praised his valour, but Indra was the single being who was remorseful as he had the Guilt Complex to have killed two Brahmins, Visvarupa and Vritrasura. Indra's sinful reaction was chased by a feeling that a Chandala woman of old age suffering from untouchable diseases, till Indra ran away to Manas Sarovar, the abode of Goddess Lakshmi. When Demi-Gods, and Sages advised Indra to attain freedom from the sin to perform the Yagna of Asvamedha or Sacrifice of Horse in Vedic Method then only Indra got absolved of the sin.

Was Vishnu partial to daityas? King Parikshith enquired of Suka Maha Muni as to why Diti-or for that matter anybody-might have a doubt that Lord Vishnu had always appeared to have been partial in His treatment in favour of Indra and Demi-Gods vis-à-vis Demons, even when many of Demons worshipped the Super Energy; for instance, Vritrasura or Ravana or Hiranyaksha or Hiranya Kasipu and so on. What was more, when these very demon personalities were killed, they were blessed with salvation after death! Suka Maha Muni replied that Lord Vishnu is neither partial nor impartial, but just and kind always. He has no characteristics and is a 'nirguna' (devoid of materialistic qualities). On the other hand, all other beings are governed by the three major 'Gunas', viz. Satvika ( Creative), Rajas (Upholding) and Tamas ( Destroying). Actions of the living beings are controlled by these 'Gunas'. When the Boy- Sages- Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanatkumara- desired to enter Lord Vishnu's Abode- Vaikuntha- the two Gate Keepers Jaya and Vijaya refused entry as the unclad boys looked undeserving of an entry to the hallowed Place, as the latter were governed by the 'Tamo-Guna'. The Boy-Sages cursed the Gate Keepers to become Demons for three consecutive births and what was worse to become the enemies of that very Lord Vishnu, whom they worshipped intensely; they felt that as the Gate-keepers of the Place they suffered from excessive 'Tamo Guna' and had thus be punished. Hence they were born as Demons in the three successive births as Hiranyakasipu and Hiranyaksha, Ravana and Kumbhakarna and Sisupala and Dandavakra. Maha Muni gave the illustration of King Parikshith's recent example of his Grand Uncle Dharmaraja performing 'Rajasuya Yagna' ( Sacrifice of Horse) at the end of which Lord Krishna was named as the Chief Guest and Sisupala brothers vehemently protested the honour to be bestowed on Krishna. Sisupala called Lord Krishna a fake and a cheat, who killed Kings like Kamsa and so on and was a timid person to have disappeared some eighteen times when he was challenged to fight. ( The fact was that Krishna gave a promise to Sisupala's mother that He would tolerate one hundred mistakes against Himself and there after would kill Sisupala brothers.) As the hundredth blunder was committed at the Rajasuya congregation, Sisupala brothers were destroyed by the Lord Krishna's 'Sudarsana Chakra' (Discus). They attained 'Sayudja Mukthi', as originally, the Evil Persons were 'Vishnu Bhaktas',

but due to the temporary aberration and the play of Tamo-Guna, they were cursed and punished but finally reached their original position.

### **Markandeya Purana**

Dhruva an example of devotion, duty and determination : Dhruva, son of a King Uttanapada of yore. The King had two wives Suniti and Suruchi and Dhruva and Uttama were the sons of the respective Queens. The King was highly fond of the younger Queen and once Uttama sought to climb the lap of the King, Dhruva too attempted to do the same, but Suruchi scolded Dhruva and said harshly that he did not deserve to attempt same as Uttama, for which Dhruva would have to perform 'Tapas' (Penance) to Lord Narayana for long. The young heart of Dhruva was badly offended and approached his mother Suniti who felt sorry for her son and confirmed that indeed sincere 'Tapas' was the singular solution and nothing else! Dhruva resolved to do so and desired to proceed to the forests. On way Sage Narada met the angry and anguished Dhruva who narrated the incident about the nasty treatment meted out to him by his step mother and strangely enough of his father's indifference and his mother's helplessness. The Sage cautioned Dhruva that great ascetics, Yogis and Sages found the path of Penance and Sacrifice which was impossible to follow for a mere lad like him and he might follow other means to achieve his objective but Dhruva was decisive and resolute which impressed Narada and directed Dhruva to go to Madhuvana, be of clean physique and heart, control his limbs and senses and meditate Narayana by the Mantra 'Om Namo Narayanaya' till the Lord would appear before him. He strengthened his control of senses day by day, month by month and year after year and as he narrowed the outer awareness and widened the inner revelation he absorbed more and more of Narayana as an Omni Present Vision. He fell into trances which grew further and for longer durations and discovered that clearer Images were visible and audible. The Lord finally stood before him he did not even know how to praise Him, when He fondled the boy's cheeks, his Hymns of Praise and deep meaning of his thoughts got generated as the Divinity manifested its Unending, All Pervasive, and Supreme Energy got spread far and wide his mental Horizon. Lord Vishnu blessed Dhruva saying that he would carve out a Place on the Sky which would be the Central Gravity of various Celestial Bodies viz. Dhruva Loka and that Dhruva would be the Chief of that Loka; meanwhile, the Lord said that he would be a benevolent and valiant King after his father's retirement and rule his Kingdom for sixty three thousand years in good health and thereafter would reach his Loka with considerable fanfare. Thus the Lord did not provide Dhruva the blessing of immediate Salvation, as Dhruva had to prove his worth to his Parents, his step mother Suruchi and his cousin brother and the World. Unfortunately, his cousin was killed in a forest by Yakshas and the heroic Dhruva and their Chief Kubera had to seek pardon from Dhruva as he knew well that Lord Vishnu bestowed boons to Dhruva!

### King Harischandra, an exceptional example of Dharma (Virtue) and Satya (Truth)

The most virtuous and ideal King Harischandra was an outstanding Ruler of the Satya Yuga when Dharma, Truth and Honesty were at the peak; he treated his subjects as his own children who in turn reciprocated his fatherly love totally. During his time, none feared of illness, untimely death and unfulfilled desires of life; even Deities being fully convinced of his high qualities and merit cooperated in ensuring that his Kingdom was peaceful and unparalleled. Once, King Harischandra went to a nearby forest for hunting, when he heard loud shrieks of women saying 'help us, help us'. The King wondered that in his Kingdom, there were such pitiful screams and hence shouted back to say that he was approaching the direction from where the crying squeals emerged. Actually, the shouts were the illusions

created by the Vighnaraja Vinayaka. Harischandra knew that Sage Viswamitra was performing severe penance in that very forest. With a view to test the King, the Lord of Hindrances Gajaanana entered Harischandra's body that was in search of the illusory shrieking women and faced Viswamitra whose penance was disturbed. The Sage grew angry at the King but the illusion created by Vighnaraja in the King's body made the latter argue with the Sage in harsh words. After realising his folly, soon after Vighnaraja exited his body, the King apologised to the Sage profusely and offered all kinds of help for a Yagna that the Sage was to perform soon. The Sage told the King that presuming whatever assistance that the King would provide for the Yagna, he would also have to offer 'dakshina' (Fees) to the Sage. Harischandra thus entered into the Sage's trap; Viswamitra said: *Rajanpratigruheethoyam yastey datthah, Prayaccha Prathamam thavathdakshinaam Rajasuyakeem* (Raja! Let us presume that whatever you would have liked to give me, might have been given away to me, but how about the Dakshina to me for performing the Rajasuya Yagna?). Harischandra replied: *Brahmam-Staamapi dasyami dakshinaam bavathohyamam, vriyatam Dwijashardula yastaveshtah Pratigruham/* (Hey Brahman! I shall nodoubt provide dakshina too as you desire). The reply from Viswamitra was indeed unsavoury as he said: *Sasaagaram dharaametam Sabhubhrudgramapathanaam Rajyamchasakalam Veera rathaaswagajam sakalam Koshtaagaaramcha koshamcha yacchhanyadwidyatey tava/ binaa bharya cha putram chashariramcha tavaanagha/ Dharmam cha Sarva Dharmanjna yoganthamunigacchati, bahunaava kimuktena sarvametatpradeeyataam* (Hey Vira! These entire Seas, Bhumi, Townships, villages, mountains, chariots, horses, elephants etc.; Koshtaagaar (Interior Courts, Treasury and all the rest would belong to me, excepting your wife, son and your-self as they would belong to you as per Dharma Sastras; why all this, you have to give me each and everything else!) Vishwamitra then asked Harischandra to confirm as to who was the King; if so the latter should immediately leave the place devoid of ornaments, Royal Insignia and even the dress that he and his wife Shaibya and son Rohitasya wore and be better dressed by tree barks and leaves! While they were getting ready to leave the Place, Viswamitra stopped them and asked Harischandra about the dakshina that he had to give to the Sage for performing the Rajasuya Yagna; the former King replied that since he had nothing else with him, he would have to wait to pay the dakshina; Viswamitra asked for the time frame to pay the dakshina and insisted that till then, he and his wife and child would be his slaves and even resorted to maltreated him, his wife and son. It was at this miserable moment that the Five Lokapalas (Deities of the Five Directions) were annoyed and expressed their resentment to the Sage, but the latter gave a curse to them that they would be born as human beings; the Lokapalas were frightened and entreated Viswamitra to withdraw his curse. The Sage then softened the curse that they would not get entangled with their worldly affairs, that they would remain as bachelors and avoid 'Samsara' and that they would get killed without much prolongation of life. It was at that curse of Viswamitra that Draupadi's five sons were born and murdered by Aswatthama, the son of Dronacharya; thus explained the Holy Birds to the Sage Jaimini in reply to his query in the context of Maha Bharata.

The sequence of Events that climaxed King Harischandra's further destiny was as follows: As Viswamitra ordered Harischandra to leave his Kingdom, the latter reached Varanasi, the Sacred Place of Parama Siva. Viswamitra reached there too and reminded about the dues of Dakshina since a month passed meanwhile. Harischandra's wife offered that she could be sold off to pay for the Dakshina. The King fainted at her proposal and she fainted too. But since the Sage gave an ultimatum to pay off at least a part payment by that evening, the couple decided that she was sold in an open market place as a slave of any taker. A Brahmana came forward to buy her and some amount was paid to Viswamitra, but the young son

Rohit did not leave his mother and she begged the Brahmana, who already started insulting and even beating her in the presence of her husband and the Public, finally agreed to allow the son to stay along with her in his home. A few days later, Viswamitra appeared in the form of 'Kaal' (Mrityu/ the Deity of Death) and demanded that atleast another instalment of the payment due to him at once; Harischandra had no other option to sell himself to a Chandala, even while reminiscing his past stature and the absence of his virtuous wife and the dear son. The Chandala gave him the duty of holding a stick to burn off dead bodies and be loyal to the Master and carry out his meanest errands The Great Harischandra finally got rid of Viswamitra even if he had to perform the most wretched and heinous duties; he lost his identity and carried on with past memories which also faded away with the passage of time and led a mechanical and handfull existence. One fateful day, a woman arrived at the burial ground with a dead body of her son, stated to have been dead as a result of a snake bite. The crying woman recognised the person with his stick with which he was used to burn off dead bodies for years now, and even as he had a dishvelled and ugly hair and beard, with depressed cheeks and hollow eyes. The former Queen Shaibya, the wife of King Harischandra was herself half clad and hardly identifiable, with her dead son on her lap; she had tired eyes after incessant cries and was looking completely exhausted and hysteric. A man called Harischandra- a non-entity- vaguely felt he saw her somewhere! At last, he recognised her and their dead son and hugged her and the son's body, arranged the dead son on a huge pyre and was about to consign to flames. His wife decided to immolate herself but Harischandra felt that he was not free even to do so without his Master's permission. Finally he decided to join his wife's immolation even if he were to go to hell and the couple performed their last prayers to Almighty. Just at that nick of time several Deities headed by Dharma made their appearance; they included Sadhyaganas, Vishvadeva, Marutganas, Lokapalas, Nagamani, Siddhaganas, Gandharvas, Rudraganas, the two Ashvani Kumaras, Sage Viswamitra and Lord Indra too. The dead Rohit was revived and presented himself in a Prince's attire Harischandra and his wife were blessed and were invited to reach Heaven but the King hesitated as he did not secure his Master's permission; Dharmaraja declared that he himself was the Chandala and approved of the Royal Couple to fly by the Pushpak Vimana to Swarga. Lord Indra stated that all the Deities were extremely happy with the \_Values of Dharma, Sacrifice, Dedication and Truthfulness that were amply demonstrated \_by the King, his wife and their son and as such the three were fully entitled to Swarga. Indra sprinkled 'Apamrutyu vinaashaka Amrit'/ the Ambrosia that negated death on the Pyre where the dead body of Rahul was kept and the various Deities showered fresh fragrant flowers and Indra personally invited the Threesome to Swarga; .but Harischandra hesitated and said that the Citizens of Ayodhya were highly anguished at our misfortune and hence the King and family alone could not depart to Swaraga committing betrayal; the sins of Brahmahatya, Guruhatya, Gohatya, Streehatya are as deplorable as Bhaktahatya; therefore Bhagavan Indra! Kindly return to Swarga, since the pleasure of visiting that Place would not accord as much happiness of our reaching Swarga as our staying in this 'Bhu Naraka' along with our Bhaktas! Thus our resolve is to stay back with our own well-wishers ony. Lord Indra was taken aback by the decision of Harischandra and did concur with his proposal as an. unusual and exceptional occurrence! Sage Sukracharya commended the example of Harischandra and stated as follows: *Harischandrasamo Raja na bhuto na Bhavishyati!* The Daityacharya Sukra also confirmed that those who heard or read Raja Harischandra's Story of sacrifices and dedication, with devotion and sincerity would achieve the fruits of digesting the gist of Vedas, Puranas and Mantras; those who read or hear the same at Pushkar, Prayag, Sindhusagar, Devalayas (Temples), Kasi and Kurukshetra; or performing Japas / Meditation during Eclipse Periods. Further, 'Daan' (charity) of foodgrains, clothes, gold, cows etc. to those who read and

explain the details of the Story would fulfill their desires like begetting ideal progeny, securing idyllic life-partner, prosperity and good health.

### **Matsya Purana**

Narasimha Avatara: It did not take much time that Hiranya Kashipu waited to dethrone Indra and Devas; controlled Lokapalas, Pancha bhutas, Navagrahas, Dikpalakaas, Adityas, Vasus, Marudganas, and Rudras; obtained Yagna bhagaas and changed the texts of Sacred Scriptures; forced human beings to worship him but not Srihari, humiliated and killed Vishnu Bhaktas as they did not fall in line and in short tampered Vedic Traditions to his personal advantage. There was hue and cry and Devas who approached Bhagavan Vishnu who assured Devas that he would soon take an incarnation of a species which would defy the imagination of Hiranyakashipu while he took the boons from Brahma. Parama Bhakta of Narayana, Prahlada the son of Hiranyakashipu realised in his Celestial Vision that Lord Vishnu had arrived in an incarnation as Nrisimha (Half Man and Half Lion) and that it was becoming increasingly clear that the Incarnation would end up the King Hiranyakashipu and Daityas. The vision indicated further that in the Physique of the Man-Lion were images of all Devatas, Oceans, Rivers, Himalaya and other Mountains, Stars on the Sky, Adityas, Vasuganas, Kubera, Varuna, Yama, Indra, Marudganas, Gandharvas, Maharshis, Yakshas, Nagas, Piscachas, Rakshasas, Brahma and Shankara. Even as Prahlada cautioned the Great King in a full House of top officials, the latter commanded the peculiar Man-Lion to be caught where ever it would be, the 'beast' as the King imagined stood then and there right before him; the stunned Danava King lost his senses for a while but quickly recovered his composure and materailised Astras, Kala Chakras, earth-shaking Brahmastras, hell-binding Danava Chakras, Vajraayudhaas, Trishulas, Kankaals, Musalas, Mohanas, Shoshans, Santaapanaas, Vilaapanaas, Vaayavyaas, Mathans, Kaapaals, Shaktis, Brahmashitaastraas, Somaastras, Kaalamudgaras, Gandharvaastras, Vayavyastras, Hayashirastras, Naagastras, Paishachastras and such 'Maaranastras' against Nrisimha Swami who got more and irritated in devastating the 'Astra-Shastras' which were either smashed by his Vajra-like body or redirected them back to Hiranyakashipu which had to be defended or tore parts of his body in the process. Simultaneously, the hastily grouped warriors, Senapatis, Ministers and the armies of Hiranyakashipu attacked Nrisimha and the highly enraged Bhagavan went so angry that fire balls emerged out of his eyes and relentless roars shattered the distant regions. Even by the fire and sound thus released, the battalions of soldiers whose shapes and forms were nauseating and frightening with faces of donkeys and wild pigs got decimated in thousands. Hiranyakashipu kept on hurling Shakti-weapons

which were instantly retaliated by the mere ‘Hunkaar’ of Bhagavan and as though he was tired of fighting further, he tossed the body of the demon up, sat on an elevated place, kept the body of the demon on his thighs and with his pointed finger nails tore apart his stomach and heart when blood surged out in spirals and the greatest menace in Trlokas breathed his last. As the son of Diti succumbed, the whole universe fell into a strange spell of silence mingled with feelings of deliverance and disbelief, even as Prithvi, Kaal, Chandrama, Akash, Grahaganas, Surya, the Ten Dishas, Oceans, Rivers, Mountains and the Forests suppressed their surging incredibility. Lords Brahma, Rudra and Mahendra led the chorus of spontaneous Eulogy of Nrisimha Deva by Devatas, Gandharvas, Apsaras and Maharshis as follows:

*Param cha siddhim cha Paramcha Devam, Paramcha Mantram Paramam Havischah/ Paramcha Dharmam Paramcha Vishvam, Twaamaahuragryam Purusham Puraanam/ Param shareeram Paraamcha Brahma, Paramha Yogam Paramaamcha Vaaneem/ Param rahasyam Paramaam gatimcha, Twaamaahargryam Purusham Puraanam/ Yevam Parasyaapi Param Padam yat, Param parishyaapi Paramcha Devam/ Param parisyapi param cha Bhutam, Twamaahuragryam Purusham Puraanam/ Param parasyaapi param rahasyam, Param parasyaapi Param mahatvam/ Param parasyaapi param Mahadyat, Twamaahuagryam Purusham Puraanam/ Param parasyaapi param nidhaanam, Param parasyaapi param pavitram/ Param parasyaapi param cha daantam, Twamaahuragryam Purusham Puranam/*

(Devadi Deva! You are Brahma, Rudra and Mahendra; the Loka Karta, Samhartta, Upasthitaana/ Creator, Destroyer and Preserver; You are imperishable, the Utmost Siddhi /accomplishment; Paratpara, Parama Deva, Parama Mantra, Parama Havi /Invocation to Agni by Ghee; Parama Dharma, Parama Vishwa, Adi Purusha; You are the Supreme Physique, Param Brahma, Parama Yoga, Parama Vaani , Parama Rahasya, Parama Gati / Direction and Target; and Purana Purusha / the Very First Being; indeed you are the Paratpara Pada /Supreme Step Forward, Paratpara Deva, Partpara Bhuta / Organism, Paratpara Mahatva, Sarva sreshtha / the noblest of all; the One beyond comprehension, the Highest Form of Sacredness and Spotlessness!). As Brahma and Parameswara expressed the gratitude of Devas and in fact of the entire Universe, Bhagavan Nrisimha was extremely happy, Gandharvas sang tuneful songs in praise of the Lord, Maharshis recited Vedas and Shanti Mantras, Apsaras danced to their heart’s content and Devas sounded celestial drums and rained flowers from the skies. Bhagavan Vishnu then boarded Garuda Vahana and flew toward Kshira Sagara. Brahma and Indra assured that the Avatar of Nrisimha Bhagavan would be worshipped for ever since Lord Vishnu would incarnate Himself; he assured that as and when Dharma was in jeopardy, he would reappear again and again in every ‘Yuga’!

Varaha Deva rescues Bhu Devi, His description, Stuti and Worship: As the entire Universe came to stand still when ‘Dishas’ (Directions), ‘Grahas’ (Planets), and Celestial Beings got stuck excepting Thri Murthies, Bhu Devi and Brahma appealed to Bhagavan Vishnu to uplift Her as She was sinking under deep Ocean and to save the Universe. Bhu Devi prayed to Vishnu desperately saying: ‘*Praseeda mama Devesha Lokanadha Jagatpathey, Bhaktayaam Sharanam aashraya praseeda mama Madhava*’: ‘Hey, Jagatpathi Devesha Madhava, Kindly have mercy and save me and Devotees like me; You are Surya, Chandra, Yama, Kubera, Indra, Varuna, Agni and Vayu; You are the ephemeral and Eternal; You are the Dishas or Directions, Vidishas or Direction-less; You are the Ten Incarnations; You are the Constant despite passing Yugas; You are the Earth, Wind, Sky, Water and Fire; You are the Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell; You are the Stars, Yama, ‘Rasi Chakra’ or the ever-moving Cycle of Raasis; You are the concept of Time like months, fortnights, weeks and days; days and nights, Years and Seasons and Six

‘Rasas’; You are the Rivers, Oceans, Mountains and Maha ‘Sarpas’ (Giant Snakes); Meru, Mandhar, Vindhya, Malaya and Dardura Mountain, Himalaya, Nishidha; Sudarshan Chaka, Pinaka Dhanush, Yoga and Sankhya Shastra; You are the Srishti, Sthiti and Laya Karaka; You are the Sukshma and Brihat Swarupa; You are the ‘Maha Yajna’, Embodiment of Vedas; Producer of Amrit with which the Deva Lokas are sustained; You are the Adi (Initial), Madhya (Middle) and Anthasswarupa or Antaryami; You are the Medha, Buddhi and Smriti; You are the Griha Devatha and Griha Mangal Kara; Sarva Swarupa, Sarvesa, Sarva Vyapaka! Do save me from sinking; thus prayed Devi Prithvi!’ The ‘Phala Sruti’ of Vishnu Stuti by Bhudevi would heal the sick, bless with progeny, grant a husband / wife, release from prison or legal entanglements and provide contentment in life. In reply to the ‘Stuti’ by Bhudevi, Maha Vishnu assured that as a result of Her Bhakti (devotion) He would lift Her up along with mountains, forests, Samudra, Rivers, Seven Dwipas and all the rest; He assumed a colossal manifestation of six thousand yojanas of height, three thousand yojanas of width and one thousand yojanas of Varaha Roop; He liberated Prithvi by His left ‘damshttra’ (Jaw) along with the totality of mountains, forests, Sapta Dwipas and their contents including Oceans and Rivers all in tact!’

Bhagavan Varaha’s questionnaire to humanity about the roots of grief and Joy!: The reasons for fear, unhappiness and dissatisfaction among human beings were described by Bhagavan Varaha Himself by posing the following questions: Why should not human beings refrain from feelings of ego and possessive nature instead of turning to the Supreme? Why should persons resort to consuming and selling those prohibited and anti-social items ignoring awareness of the Supreme? Why do human beings turn away poor guests while taking food although they well afford without realising the feelings of the hapless? How could those who are deceitful, desirous of else’s wives, always complaining, jealous, evil minded and anti-social be not afraid of the Supreme? Why do people act against their own inner conscience and allow death and disease chase them closely without even being mindful of the consequences, never even blinking an eye about Almighty’s Omni- presence? How is it that some persons are beautiful but arrogant, smart but sadistic, outwardly virtuous but inwardly villainous not even with a remote sense of God’s existence? Some persons are highly learned and intellectual but some are deaf and dumb; this discrimination is indeed a curse of fate. Is this not a cause of unhappiness? Which worse curse has befallen between two brothers, one with good progeny and one without? Blessed with a human life and not that of an animal or a bird, a person does not even think of Narayana; which worse misfortune does he have, causing unknown mental dissatisfaction? On the contrary, a devotee shares the limited food that he had, but decides to donate half of it to a deserving guest; what more pleasure that he gets! If a bhakta performs Tri Sandhya and worships Vishnu; which better satisfaction that he achieves! Every month comes one ‘Amavasya’ and a pious man makes it a point to perform Tarpana to his ancestors of three generations; what better mental contentment that he would possess! If a person’s urge does not get disturbed even if several charming women fail to tempt him, what more happiness does the couple achieve together! A person with two wives whom he likes equally well and the wives too are accommodative, what more of an ideal situation there could be! If a person treats his aged parents with respect and care and if the person’s wife too is respectful and affectionate to them, could Lord Narayana bless them all in the family any better!

Varaha Deva describes ‘Aparadhas’ (Offences) to be avoided: Having narrated the causes of grief or joy to Bhudevi, Bhagavan Varaha described certain ‘Aparadhas’ to be avoided in one’s mundane life. No doubt, symbolic eating of Bhagavan’s Prasad by humans is not disapproved but offering ‘Bhog’ not suitable to be offered to Devas is unpardonable. In fact, offering of that kind of ‘Bhojan’ or food which is

unfit for consumption to anybody is considered as an ‘Aparadh’. Going near to a person without ‘cleaning teeth, tongue and face especially if the person is performing ‘Dharmik Karma’ is considered as second ‘Aparadha’. To approach near or touch the Idol of Varaha Deva is a third Aparadha. Approaching Varah Deva for His ‘Darshan’ and worship, after seeing a female in the period of menses is a fourth ‘Aparadha’. Similarly, a person should perform ‘Achanam’ after seeing a dead body. Worse still, if a person touches a dead body, one should take head-bath, perform the ‘Samskaras’ and approach Divinity. The Seventh Aparadha is to perform ablutions during worship time and worse still not to purify the body and mind to resume the interrupted Puja with ‘Kshamaapana’ Mantra. Wearing a blue ‘Vastra’ or cloth to perform the Puja is the eighth ‘Aparadha’. Telling lies during Bhagavan Puja is a ninth offence. Touching with impure hands the Puja Items meant for worship is a Tenth Aparadha. The eleventh offence is that an angry person engaged in unreasonable tasks and allowed to do so. The twelfth Aparadha is to use Vishnu’s name in the Society to secure favours. The thirteenth offence is to wear a red cloth while performing Vishnu Puja. The fourteenth offence is that the puja is performed by wearing a black vastra. The fifteenth offence is that somebody touches the body of the devotee. A devotee feeding an ‘Agnani’/ Unethical person by himself is the sixteenth blemish. Performing puja by wearing an uncouth cloth is a seventeenth offence. Worshipping the Deva after consuming fish and meat is considered as a grave mistake. Eating chicken meat before Deva Puja is the nineteenth fault. Touching ‘Dipa’ (light) and without ‘Achaman’ and touching Devas is the twentieth mistake. Having visited ‘Smashanas’ (burial ground) and seeking to touch Deva’s Idol without purifying the self by bath etc. is a known blunder. If Bhagavan Puja is taken up, after consuming ‘Pinyakam’ (Pitthi), it would be the twenty second offence. Worship after consuming pig meat, wine and kusumb flower are the twenty third, twenty fourth and twenty fifth offences. Whoever wears somebody else’s Vastra while performing the Puja of Deva is a blunder numbered twenty sixth. Consuming the ‘Anna Prasada’ (food) meant for offering to Devas and Pitras before the ‘Naivedya’ (‘Mantrapurvak- offering) constitutes an abject blunder as the twenty seventh. Those who wear ‘padarakshas’ (chappals) and perform Deva’s worship would have committed a grave error as the twenty eighth ‘Aparadha’. Worship after massage is considered as an affront to Varaha Deva bearing number twenty ninth in the series of ‘Aparadhas’. Performers of Deva Puja suffering from ‘Ajeerthi’ (Stomach upset) attract the thirtieth offence. Those worshippers of Vishnu Deva offering ‘Dhoop’ or incense would have made a mistake for the thirty first offence since that offer has a negative effect without Gandha-Pushpas.

### **Narada Purana**

Primary Creation by Maha Vishnu: As the Kumara brothers were on way to Brahma, Sanaka and Narada met at the top of Meru Mountain and had a dip in Ganges that emerged from the Sacred Feet of Vishnu. Extolling the magnitude and enormity of Lord Vishnu, Narada asked Sanaka as to how could one realize Lord Vishnu, what was the cause of Creation, what were the features of devotion, knowledge and penance and how did Bhagavan create Brahma and other manifestations! Sanaka explained that Vishnu materialized from the right part of his body the Lord Brahma (sprouted by the stem of Lotus from Bhagavan’s navel), Rudra from his middle part and created Vishnu, a replica of his own from the left side. He also created images/ illusions of Lakshmi, Uma, Chandika and Sarasvati which were his Shaktis (Powers). He is of ‘Vyakta’ (Visionable) and ‘Avyakta’ (Invisible) nature but is all-pervasive and has Sat-Chit-Ananda as his basic features; he is Prakriti, Purusha and Kaala; he is Paramatma creating Five Karmendriyas (Sight, Sound, Scent, Touch and Taste), the corresponding Gyanendriyas (Eyes, Ears, Nose, Skin and Tongue), Three ‘Gunas ( Characteristics) of Satvika-Rajas-Tamasika form; Maha Tatwa

leading to the 'Ahamkaras'(Natural dispositions) creating 'Tanmatras'; and Pancha Bhutas (Earth, Water, Light, Air and Sky). Then Brahma Deva initiated the process of Creation of Beings.

Special implication of Ekadashi Vrata-the legend of King Rukmangada: Maharshi Vasishtha underlined the special connotation of Ekadashi Vrata to King Mandhata of Ikshavaku Clan and the ancestor of Lord Shi Rama. As Ekadashi was stated to be the Special Day of Vishnu, observance of 'Upavasa', 'Puja' and 'Vrata' on this day ought to be a pre-requisite to qualify the abolition of all the sins of a devotee. In fact, the advantage of performing the Vrata in full faith and high dedication as prescribed would secure the fruits of executing several Ashwamedha and Rajasuya Yagas, besides avoiding Yama Darshana! It is neither the Sacred Ganga, Gaya, Kashi, Pushkar, Kurukshetra, Narmada, Devika, Yamuna and Chandrabhaga that are stated to be more momentous than the Vrata. To signify the import of the Vrata, the Story of *King Rukmangada* was mentioned; he was in the habit of publicising through announcements on elephant tops the fact that the specific day was that of Ekadashi Vrata and all the citizens must observe fast, Puja, and penances as prescribed. The announcement was to alert that all the citizens in the age groups between eight and eighty five years ought to observe the fast and puja on that day and whosoever ate food and did not worship Vishnu would be liable for heavy punishment. Thus since a law was enforced, most of the citizens made a bee-line to Vishnu-dham and Lord Yama Dharma Raja became free and Chitrugupta was jobless, as the paths leading to Yamaloka which were otherwise over-crowded had very few sinners in thin streams.

Maharshi Narada made a visit to Yama loka and enquired of Dharma Raja as to why the hells which were highly noisy and bristling with tremendous activity became suddenly quiet and motionless! Dharma Raja informed Narada that King Rukmangada enforced 'Upavas' and Puja on Ekadashi days extended to Dwadashis also.

As prompted by Narada, Dharma Raja accompanied by Chitrugupta reached Lord Brahma and complained that King Rukmangada was creating obstacles in the discharge of their duties and as per the Book of Instructions in Naraka, those who did not discharge their responsibilities even receiving their remunerations and enjoying the benefits of their postings would become worms; those officials who were corrupt and negligent of duties would suffer in Narakas for hundred 'Kalpas' of time; those who perform a deed by cheating the Master would serve as mice in the house of the Master; and those officials who misuse the services of subordinates for their own personal benefit would become cats. In the background of the Rule Book, King Rukmangada was placing hardship in the discharge of the duties of the Officials; so complained Dharma Raja and Chitrugupta. Lord Brahma replied that after all even by saying one word of 'Hari' by the tip of a person's tongue, the Punya accrued would surpass that of Tirtha Yatras to Kurushetra and Kasi; if a person had done the Ekadasha Vrat then 'Yagna Phalas' would be surely accrued and as such the actions taken by King Rukmangada were worthy of emulation, but not of condemnation. Yama Raja too was basically agreeable, as Narayana Himself involved in this case.

To overcome this peculiar situation of encouraging King Rukamanda's efforts to popularise the 'Ekadasha Vrata' and at the same time ensure that Dharma Raja's duties are not stalled, Brahma created a charming woman called 'Mohini' who enticed the King Rukmangada while seated near a famous Shiva Linga on top of Mandarachala in the Kingdom, singing a highly enchanting lyric. The King who excelled in Vishnu's worship and even succeeded that the out flow of his citizens to Vaikuntha far exceeded to that of Yamaloka asked his son Dharmanga to share the responsibilities of Kingship, but tutored him well in

following the principles of Dharma, especially in performing the Ekadasha Vrata. He however conceded that there could be exceptions to observe the Vrata such as expectant mothers, Kumari Kanyas, persons suffering from diseases or with disturbed minds due to reasons beyond their control. Meanwhile, with the arrival of Mohini on the scene, King Rukmanga lost control of his senses and decided to marry her at any cost. She agreed but said that although she might not ask for anything including his entire Kingdom, the only condition however was that what ever she might ask for must be instantly agreed to by him. The King stated that he would never disagree to whatever she desired and as he belonged to the illustrious Ikshvaku Vamsa he would never lie in his life time. Mohini asserted that she was the daughter of Brahma and would not like to be wedded without 'Veda Sakshi'. On way to his Capital along with Mohini, a lizard came under the feet of the horse on which the King and Mohini were seated. The lizard was crushed and was about to die but talked in a female human voice and requested the King to bestow the 'Punya' that he earned from the Vijaya Dwadashi Vrata as earned by him recently so that she could attain Salvation; Mohini did not like the entire incident and asked the King to travel forthwith without wasting time; the merciful King ignored Mohini's wish and donated the Punya of the Dwadashi Vrata to the lizard; the latter narrated the account of her previous birth and used 'Vashikarana Mantra' so that her husband was under thumb always and hence her birth as a lizard yet with the memory of her previous life. On reaching his Palace, the son Dharmanga welcomed the new couple who were married, and openly conveyed his request to the father's earlier wives including his mother that whatever was instructed by Mohini should be considered as the King's personal instructions. But, there were quite a few personal insinuations that Mohini subjected to the King to show him down but he suffered. Both the Prince Dharmanga and his mother cooperated with Mohini whole-heartedly since they did not desire to hurt the King. But the blow came when Mohini insisted that the King should not fast on Ekadashi days! The King begged Mohini not to insist to do so since he observed the Vrata all through his life and in fact enforced a law among his subjects who adopted the habit through the entire Kingdom. There are so many sins like 'sambhog' on Amavasya, hair-cut on Chaturdashi and use of oil on Shashthi which are balanced by fasting on Ekadashi; giving wrong evidences, cheating the management of Establishments being served, obstructing wedding proposals of unmarried Kanyas, ingratitude, breaking promises of charity to Brahmanas, 'Manikut' or selling fake jewellery against market prices, 'Tulakut' or incorrect use of 'Sensitive Balances' while selling material, 'Kanyakut' or arranging a blemished girl, etc. are too excused by Ekadashi fasting. But Mohini was unconvinced and insisted against Ekadashi Vrata and blamed the King to break the promises to her at their wedding time. She even argued with several Brahmanas and Rishis like Gautam that only Sanyasis or widows are justified to undertake fastings on Ekadashi. King Rukmangada's senior wife Sandhyavali too tried to convince Mohini not to insist on husband's observing Eakadasi Vrata / taking food against his wishes and cited the examples of 'Pativratas'. In turn, Mohini asked Sandhyavali that in case the King did not agree to observe the Ekadashi Upavas, then she (Sandhyavali) might as well ask the King to lift his sword to cut the Prince Dharmangada's head and throw into her (Mohini's) lap! The son Dharmangada happily agreed to the proposal of getting killed rather than letting his father down and forcing him to break the Ekadashi Vrata. As the King was rather prepared to cut his own son's head, Mohini became unconscious. Just at that time, Bhagavan Vishnu appeared and bestowed Vaikuntha not only to the King, but to the Prince and the Queen Sandhyavali for their firm convictions and steadfastness to cling to Virtues as great and memorable examples to the world thus vindicating the magnitude and high value of the Ekadashi Vrata to the posterity. The hapless woman Mohini when regained consciousness found the dead bodies of the King, Sandhyavali and Dharmangada and was totally shocked and almost deranged, even as the Purohit of Rukmangada sprinkled water from his vessel and cursed her that she

would be burnt into ashes. Vayu Deva refused to take away her soul which when reached on the path of heavens and even hells, her entry was denied. Her tormented soul was refused entry into the Patala and other lower lokas too.

Finally, the Raja Purohit of Lord Brahma, called Vasudeva, took pity on the devastated, shamefully shaken and highly repentant soul of Mohini, revived her human form and sought to provide a fresh lease of life as a part of reformation process by describing the 'Mahimas' of the soul purifying Ganga 'Snaan' and observance of 'Nakta Vratas', Shiva Pujas, Shivaradhana on successive Purnima and Amavasya fastings, and Tirtha Yatras to Gaya for Pindadaanas for five days, Avamukti Kshetra, Purushottama Kshetra in Utkala Desha for darshan of Bhagavan Krishna, Balarama and Subhadra, darshanas of Bhagavan Nrisimha, Sweta Madhava, Matsya Madhava, Kalpa Vriksha, Prayaga Kshetra, Kuru Kshetra, Ganga Dwara (Hari Dwara), Badarikashrama, Siddhanatha Kamakshi, Prabhasa Kshetra, Pushkara, Panchavati, Pundaripura, Gokarna, Lakshmanachala, Setu Kshetra, Narmada, Avanti, Mathura and Brindavana; ultimately Mohini having performed different kinds of 'Prayaschittas'(atonements), performed 'Mantra Yukta Yamuna Pravesha' or dissolution into the Holy River of Yamuna along with appropriate recitation of Mantras. Such was the story of belittling Ekaadashi Vrata!

### **Padma Purana**

#### Lord Krishna's Ashta Mahishis:

Balarama was wedded to Revati the daughter of King Raivata of Ikshvaku Vamsa. Shri Krishna had a soft corner for Rukmini the pious daughter of the King of Vidarbha Bhishmak who had the 'Amsa' of Devi Maha Lakshmi and she too was inclined on Krishna, but her brother Rukmi was bent on her wedding with Sishupala of Cheda Vamsha; Sishupala and Dantavakra were the two vicious persons destined to take birth in Dwapara Yuga while their predecessors in Treta Yuga were Ravana and Kumbhakarna and Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu in Satya Yuga. As Rukmini's wedding was planned with Sishupala with the active support of Rukmi despite her protest, Rukmini despatched a confidential Purohita of Vidarbha Court to Krishna and Balarama suggesting a plan of her elopement at the 'Muhurta' of the wedding with Sishupala. Jarasandha, Dantavakra and other Kings and associates of Sishupala attended the wedding even along with their armies nearby, lest Krishna and Balarama might create some trouble. Krishna and Balarama too attended by invitation by Daruka and his chariot. Soon after a traditional worship of Bhagavati before the wedding, Rukmini entered the Hall of the Wedding and in a swift pick-up Krishna carried away Rukmini by the chariot of Daruka, while Balarama restrained the armies of Sishupala, Jarasandha and associate Kings. Rukmi took a vow that he would not enter Vidarbha without defeating Krishna and along with Rukmini. In a fight with Krishna, a humiliated Rukmi was tied up to the former's chariot and released on way after shaving him at the request of Rukmini who said that the head-shave was worse than death to a Kshatriya warrior. Indeed, Rukmi never returned to his Kingdom, but the Vidarbha King did 'Kanyadaan' at an auspicious time to Shri Krishna in the presence of elders like Vasudeva, Nanda, Ugrasena, Akrura, and Balabhadra along with Devaki, Yashoda, Revati, Rohini and others, when Devas sounded dundhubhis (drums) and showered flowers.

Lord Krishna's second wife was Devi Satyabhama-of the Amsa of Bhu Devi- the daughter of Satrajit who secured a 'Shamantaka Mani' from Surya Deva which yielded eight maunds (38 kg per maund) of gold daily! Krishna found Prasena the brother of Satrajit wearing the jewel and desired to wear it but was declined. Later on he sported the 'Mani' when he was on a hunting spree and unfortunately got killed by a lion, which took fancy to the Mani and carried it. Jambavan the bear- and an active associate of Shri Rama of the earlier Yuga-killed the lion and took the 'Mani' to his cave. Shatrajit alleged that Krishna must have killed his brother to take away the Mani. Desirous of disproving the allegation, Krishna traced the deadbody of Prasena and following the footsteps of a lion and of a bear entered the cave of Jambavan and fought the latter for many days; finally Jambavan realized that Krishna was Rama himself, apologized to him and not only returned the Shamantika but also requested Krishna to accept his daughter Jambavati in wedding. Shatrajit was profusely apologetic for the baseless allegation that he made against Krishna and offered not only the Shamantaka Mani but also his daughter Satyabhama in wedding. The unnecessary blame that Krishna was subjected to was due to the fact that he did not worship Ganesha on Bhadrapada Shukla Paksha Chaturthi as it was strongly believed by the Public of all Varnas ought to observe the Vinayaka Vrata that day formally and reverentially!

Besides Rukmini, Satyabhama and Jambavati, Lord Krishna was married to Surya Kanya Kalindi; Mitravinda the daughter of Vindanuvindi in a Swayamvara by restraining seven bulls tied to a single chain and accepting Prize money besides the bride; Devi Nagnajiti, Sulakshana and Susheela. Satyabhama accompanied Krishna to kill the most dreaded Narakasura by Garuda as also killed the demon by herself when Krishna fainted in the battle; all the belongings of Devas including the earrings of Deva Mata Aditi, the Uchchhaiswarya horse, the Iravata elephant and Mani Parvata were returned. Also thousand Kanyas imprisoned by Narakasura who were the daughters of the defeated Kings fell madly in love with Bhagavan Krishna and he accepted these brides also as his wives thus making the total of sixteen thousand and eight wives including the eight principal 'Patranis' mentioned above! In all he had a crore sons!

### **Skanda Purana**

*Danavas defeat Devas, churning of Ocean and Emergence of Maha Lakshmi and 'Amrit':* As Deva Guru Brihaspathi's entry to Court of Indra was ignored as the latter was engrossed in music and dance by Celestial damsels, the Guru cursed Indra to soon lose the splendour of Indraloka. Indra got frightened and approached Brahma who went up to Lord Vishnu in turn. Bhagavan Vishnu confirmed that those who got the Guru insulted were as bad as hurting one's own parents. Thus justifying the curse, Bhagavan Vishnu advised Indra and Devas to take refuge from King Bali of Patala Loka. Already having learnt of the curse, Danava Guru Sukracharya asked Bali the King of Danavas of Patala to group his full strength of his army and armoury and attack Indra and Devas. But since Indra and Devas sought refuge to King Bali and as per the Rules of Ideal Administration, Bali did not wage a battle but plundered the wealth of Indraloka. But all the valuables of Swarga brought to Patala got submerged in the Ocean since King Bali did not perform hundred 'Aswamedha' Yagnas as were performed by Indra. A Celestial Voice was heard by Devas and Danavas that the best way of recovering the heavenly wealth as also to materialise several objects including 'Amrit' (Ambrosia) would be by way of churning 'Ksheer Sagar' or the Ocean of Milk with Mandhara Mountain as the churning rod, requesting Maha Nag Vasuki or the Great String (in whose place Maha Garud, the 'Vahan' or the carrier of Maha Vishnu was allowed to bear the brunt of Three Worlds) and approaching Maha Vishnu Himself to take up the Incarnation as 'Kurma' or the stabiliser of

the weight of the Mountain. The Super Churning of the Ocean commenced with the proud Danavas holding the Thousand Heads of Vasuki emitting poisonous flames perishing innumerable Danavas in the process while Devas were saved as they were placed at the tail of the Great Serpent. As the speed of churning caught momentum when both Danavas and Devas were engrossed in the historic mission, the whole world was engulfed by 'Halahal' or skywide poisonous blaze gradually swallowing up the Universe. That was the most critical juncture when Maha Deva swallowed the Halahal and avoided Universal Destruction; He kept the Halahal in His throat and hence assumed the epithet as 'Nila Kantha' or the Blue Throated thus ensuring the survival of the Lokas in His belly. As the churning got revived again, Chandra Deva emerged. Danava King Maha Bala roared and re-commenced the operation and in the process of churning appeared Surabhi-Kama Dhenu- the Celestial Cow followed by thousands of multi coloured cows which were requested for by Rishis. Then surfaced Celestial Trees of Four Kinds viz. 'Kalpa Vriksha', Parijata, Mango and Santana. The Jewel of 'Kaustubh' which was like Suryamandal appeared and with mutual consent of Danavas and Devas it was gifted to Lord Vishnu. From the Ocean came up 'Uchchaisva' or the best of the Horses; 'Iravata', the best of the Elephants; and 'Madira'-like intoxicants such as 'Bhang'. Further churning resulted in the appearance of **Maha Lakshmi**- also known as 'Anvikshaki' (Vedanta Vidya), or Mula Vidya, Vaishnavi, Brahma Vidya, Maya and Yoga Maya- who instantly threw a 'Varamala' or a neck lace around Bhagavan Vishnu and the whole Universe including Devas, Danavas, Rishis, Siddhas, Apsaras, Kinnaras and Charanaganas were all immensely happy. Finally Dhanvanthari, the Demi God of Medicine, came to sight holding two pots of Amrit which were instantly snatched by Danavas and ran to Patalaloka and Devas too ran behind. King Bali asked Devas not to interfere with Amrit as he never interfered with several other valuable objects. Devas approached Lord Vishnu and the latter assured that He would personally intervene in the distribution of Amrit and assumed the incarnation of **Devi Mohini**. King Bali requested Mohini to help distribute and she agreed with a cautionary note she should abide by Her own discretion, should not challenge the methodology or the Principles of distribution and that She would perform the task only next morning since everybody should consume the Ambrosia with physical and mental purity. Bali, Vrishaparva, Namuchi, Shankha, Budbud, Kalanemi, Vatapi, Kumbha, Nikumbha, Sund, Upasund, Nishumbha, Shumbha and other Danavas were lined up. Mohini said that before the distribution, some of the leading Devas like Indra and other Lokpals did deserve some charity and might be considered as their Guests of Honour. Bali was convinced that the principle of 'Athithis' or Guests was agreeable and the entire other lot would be given away to Danavas as per their Status. Then the whole clan of Daityas nodded their heads to the age old Theory viz. '*Aadhau - hyabhyagathah pujiyaa iti vai Vedika Shrutihi*' (*Vedika Shruti says that at the very beginning, Guests be respected*). Thus gradually fooling Danavas by spreading the net of Maya, Mohini gave away Amrit to all Devas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, and Apsaras; but one Danava named Rahu sat in the queue of Devas by mischief and out of a feeling that his turn would never come otherwise. As Chandra complained to Vishnu alias Mohini, the latter cut off the head of Rahu who tried to take revenge on Chandra by swallowing him. But Chandra prayed to Maha Deva who rescued by keeping him in the lock of His hairs. Rahu chased Chandrama and Maha Deva kept Rahu's many heads -which emerged due to the contact of Amrit- around His neck.

Venkatachala 'Mahatmya': In the 'Vaishnava Khanda' of Skanda (Kartika) Purana, Varaha Deva gave 'Upadesha' (instruction) of the Sacred Mantra *Om Namah Shri Varahaya Dharanyu Uddharanaya Swaha* to Bhu Devi and its significance; the Mantra fulfills all desires and leads to liberation. A Manu called Dharma recited the Mantra persistently and attained Moksha; Indra chanted it and regained his throne that

was occupied by demons therebefore and Anantha the Chief of Serpents secured such extraordinary strength as to hold the weight of Prithvi (Earth) on his hoods. Bhu Devi expressed her gratitude to Varaha Deva to have saved from the grip of Demon Hiranyakasipu as also taught the Great Mantra. She admired Varaha Deva for providing the power and perseverance to hold the weight of huge mountains and desired Him to describe to her the names of some of the illustrious Mountains the weight of which was borne by her. These include Sumeru, Himachal, Vindhya, Mandarachal, Gandhamadhan, Chitrakoot, Malyavaan, Pariyatrik, Mahendra, Malay, Sahya, Simhachal, Raivat and Anjana; in the South of Bharat the most significant are Arunachal, Hasthiparvat, Grudhrachal, Ghatikachal and most importantly the Narayana Giri or Venkatachal which possesses the Seven Tirthas in the Mountain Range viz. Chakra Tirth, Daiva Tirth, Akasha Ganga, Kumaradhari Kartikeya, Papanashani, Pandava Tirha, and Swami Pushkarini. Varaha Deva affirmed that in Krita Yuga, the most important Mountain Range was that of Anjanagiri; in Treta Yuga it was Narayana Giri; in Dwapar Yuga was Simhachal and in Kali Yuga again the most sacred mountain range is Venkatachala. In Magha month when Surya Deva is in Kumbha Rasi on Purnima day coinciding with the Makha Star, Skanda worships Venkateswara on the banks of Swami Pushkarini Tirtha at the noon time and devotees performing 'Snaan' and Puja as also 'Annadaan' are blessed by the Lord. Similarly, Snaans, worships and charities at Venkatachal are highly beneficial on the auspicious timings when Surya is in Meena Rasi on Purnima with Uttaraphalguni in Thumbha Tirtha; when Surya is in Mesha Rasi on Purnima with Chitra Star in Akasha Ganga at early mornings; when Surya is in Vrishabha Rasi in Visakha Shukla / Krishna fortnights on Dwadasi Sunday / Tuesday at Pandava Tirtha on evenings; on Sundays of Shukla / Krishna fortnights, coinciding Saptami at Papanashana Tirtha; on Brihaspati / Vyakteeta Yogya, Star Pushya / Sravana Mondays etc;

Varaha Deva described to Bhu Devi that Emperor Akash decided to perform a Grand Yagna on the banks of Arani and while tilling, he found a girl child and as he was issueless, brought her up as their own, named as Padmavati. Once Sage Narad met Padmavati as she was grown up as an eligible bride and predicted that she would be the wife of Lord Srinisasa of Venkatachal. Almost immediately she met a Stranger in the Royal Garden and introduced himself as Anant or Veerapati from Venkatachal Mountain and that he was hunting a wolf. Padmavati's companions rebuffed Ananta Deva that hunting was prohibited in their garden. Anantha returned but desired intensely that Padmavati should become His life partner and sent Vakulamala to the court of Emperor Aakash to negotiate their wedding. The Emperor had no bounds of joy and the holy wedding of Lord Venkateswara and Padmavati took place in style and grandeur when *Devi Lakshmi was present to make Padmavati happy and comfortable, whereafter they all resided in Tirumala bestowing boons to lakhs of Devotees till date.* Varaha Deva narrated the background of Padmavati's earlier birth as Vedavati to Bhu Devi. Vedavati was a companion of Devi Lakshmi and when the latter became Rama's spouse as Sita, she left for forests to perform Tapasya, but demon Ravana misbehaved with her and she ended her life by jumping into fire and cursed Ravana that his entire clan would be wiped out because of a woman. Sita was abducted by Ravana by creating such circumstances that Maricha was converted as a Golden Deer; Sita took fancy for it and prevailed Sri Rama to chase the animal which deceitfully wailed as though Rama was in trouble and Lakshmana had to leave Sita alone even by drawing a Lakshman Rekha that none could cross. The vily Ravana dressed as a Tapsvi revealed his real form as soon as she was prevailed to cross the fiery Lakshman Rekha and forcibly took her to Lanka. After Rama killed Ravana, there was 'Agni-Pariksha' (Proof of Purity / by Fire), Sita came out unscathed. But the real fact was that Agni Deva hid real Sita in Patala and Agni's wife Swaha assumed

the role of Maya Sita; in fact Vedavati's earlier birth was of Swaha Devi! Thus, Vedavati / Swaha turned to Maya Sita was Padmavati.

Devi Prithvi enquired of Bhagavan Varaha as to where and how to secure the 'Darshan' (Vision) of Lord Venkateswara and the former replied that He would mention of those future happenings as recorded in the past. There was a Nishad (Hunter) in Shyamak Jungle named Vasu and his wife Chitravati and Son Vira. Nishad was the Chief of his clan living honestly and peacefully by eating cooked rice and honey. Both his wife and he decided one day to a nearby forest to search for additional stock of honey and entrusted the responsibility of looking after his followers and daily chores to Vira, their son. The daily practice was that the family cooked rice and mixed with honey, offered the same as Naivedya to Venkatachalapati and ate the Prashad. But, Vira in their absence for the day offered some portion of the honeyed rice into Agni, some to tree bushes and the rest was consumed. On return from the other forest, Vasu became furious to learn that no offer of the honeyed rice was made to Venkatachalapati but gave it away as described above. Vasu felt agitated and remorsefully guilty and even tried to kill his son for what was considered as Sacrilege. Lord Venkatachalapati appeared before Nishad in full glory with His four hands, fully ornamented and armed and stopped Vasu from harming his son; he was completely taken aback. The Lord said that the acts of his son Vira were in fact worth emulation and not condemnation for he did a homam (Offering to Agni); homage to Nature and only the remainder was consumed with dedication as 'prashad'. Nishad was so happy that he heard this from Bhagavan Himself!

Varaha Deva also narrated an incident related to King Thondaman and Nishad. As an ideal Prince, he imbibed all the qualities required of a King, viz. of nobility, intellect, valour and devotion to Almighty. Once he took King's permission for hunting in Venkatachal forests, chased an elephant, crossed the River Swarnamukhi and reached the Ashram of Brahmarshi Suka and an Idol of Goddess Renuka nearby. As he proceeded further, he found a 'Pancharangi' (Five Coloured) Parrot screeching the name of 'Srinivasa, Srinivasa' and followed the bird till the mountain top. There he met Nishad who informed that the parrot was very dear to Suka Muni as also to Bhagavan Srihari and hovered around the Pushkarini Tirtha; by so saying the Nishad desired to have a Darshan of the Lord and the Prince too accompanied him. Thondaman was indeed thrilled with the Darshan and witnessed the 'Naivedya' of Cooked rice and honey performed by Vasu Nishad. He was overpowered by the magnificent experience of the Lord and thereafter met Suka Muni and secured his blessings that soon he would become a King after his father's retirement and serve Srinivasa for long time to come. A few days after Thondaman's return to his Capital, he was made the King and started settling in his throne. Suddenly after a few months, Vasu the Nishad approached the Palace in an agitated manner and told the King that he dreamt chasing a 'Varaha' which entered a thick bush, that he started digging up and swooned, that his son was also near him, that the Varaha entered his mind and body and made him say the following: 'Nishada! You must reach King Todarman and ask him to perform 'Abhishek' with lots of milk to a 'Shila' (Stone) underneath this thick bush, pull it out and ask a 'Shilpi' (Sculptor) to prepare an Idol of my features with Bhudevi on my left lap, set up plants of Tamarind and Champa as are loved by Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively and invite learned Sages and Brahmanas to attend a grand function to be hosted by Tondaman and wait for my further instructions. The King followed the instructions as conveyed by Nishad and called Sages and Brahmanas to a Grand Puja of Varaha Deva and Bhudevi through an underground passage and continued the daily practice of taking bath, worshipping the Murthis of Varaha and Bhudevi and arranging 'Prashad' or the left-behinds of Naivedya to Brahmanas and visitors. As this practice got routinised and the interest of Bhaktas snow-balled gradually, a Brahmana stranger approached the King that he was on way to Kasi, Prayaga and a

few prominent Tirthas but his wife was unable to travel as she was in the family way; he requested the King to provide accommodation and food to his wife and generally supervise her welfare. The Brahmana returned very late after several months but unfortunately the wife had a miscarriage and died just a couple of days before the return of the Brahmana after visiting several Pilgrimage Centers and Tirthas. The King got frightened at the tragedy as he gave a surety to the Brahmana's wife and approached Srinisasa, who instructed that the Queens as well as the body of the Brahman's wife should be made to take bath in the Asthi Sarovar Tirtha and as the queens took dips in the holy water and came out, the Brahmana's wife too would emerge. The Brahmana was thrilled at the miracle witnessed by co-devotees! Raja Todarman followed the practice of worshipping Srinivasa with golden lotuses daily. He found one day some Tulasi leaves pulled out from muddy plants and wondered how this indiscretion happened. As the King was wondering about this, there emerged a voice saying: "There is a pot maker (Kumhara) who also did daily Puja to me with the muddy Tulasi leaves from his house and that I have accepted his worship too!" The King reached Kurmapuri in search of the Kumhara, who replied to the King that he never ever did any puja to Srinivasa! But when the King said that there was a voice which said these words, the Kumahara and his wife recalled the voice of Srinivasa in their earlier births that as and when a King would knock their hut, and then a Pushpa Viman would arrive to pick them to Vishnuloka! Indeed that had just happened! The King returned to Venkateswara Temple to perform worship again after this unusual happening and Srinivasa appeared before Tondaman and bestowed him the blessing of a lasting bliss.

Parikshit, son of Abhimanyu of Pandavas, was no doubt a noble and virtuous King, but unfortunately did the unpardonable sin of hanging a dead serpent around the neck of Samika Muni who was in deep Tapasya and his son Shringi cursed Parikshit that he would be dead within a week as a result of a snake bite. Takshak was assigned the task of killing Parikshit but Brahmana Kashyap who could indeed have prevented the tragedy and even demonstrated his ability to do so, was won over by dubious means by Takshak and Kashyap who did the sin was sought to be washed off by a bath in Swami Pushkarini and worship to Lord Srinivasa, as advised by Shakalya Muni. Indeed the sin of Kashyap was eradicated by the Grace of Lord Venkateswara.

Another illustration of the Sanctity of Snaan in Swami Pushkarini was given by Sutha Maha Muni to Rishis at a Congregation at Naimisharanya (The forest of Naimisha). A King of Chandravamsa called Dharma-gupta was a rare example of nobility and virtue. He went hunting and by the evening desired to perform the Puja of Gayatri and was delayed to late hours and had to stay back on a tree. A lion came running after a wolf and ascended the same tree; it asked the King not to worry and would not hurt him in any way. It asked the King to come to an understanding that it would sleep off half night and he might sleep off the other half. The lion tempted the wolf to drop the King down and share a good portion of the King. The wolf rejected the proposal outright as ingratitude was a far heinous sin than the 'Panchapatakas' or the Five known major sins. During the other half of the night when the King was to guard the wolf, the lion gave a similar proposal to him; he accepted and tried to drop the sleeping wolf. But luckily, the wolf was saved and preached the King against ingratitude and gave a curse to the King to become a mad man. It said that he was a Sage, named Dhyanakashtha, who could take any form and told the lion that in his earlier birth he was a Minister in the Court of Kubera and was cursed by Gautama Muni to become a lion as he was standing naked in the Sage's garden with his woman. As regards Dharmagupta's curse for ingratitude, Sage Jaimini suggested a bath in the Sacred 'Swami Pushkarini' on Venkatadri on the banks of River Suvarnamukhi, followed by worship of Lord Venkateswara. Suta Maha Muni described that those who purify themselves in the Pushkarini would surely avoid hells named

Tamisra, Andhamisra, Rourav, Maha Rourav, Kumbhipak, Kaalsutra, Asipatavan and such others. On the other hand, the devotees attain the 'Punya' of performing Aswamedha Yagna and achieve Buddhi (Intellect), Lakshmi (Wealth), Kirti (Fame), Sampatthi (Prosperity), Gyan (wisdom), Dharma (Virtue), Manoshuddhi (Purity of mind) and Vairagya (Other Worldliness). Krishna Tirtha is a Tirtha named after a deeply devoted Brahmana whose Tapasya was so severe and extensive that his body developed mole-hills (Valmikas) and Indra rained forcefully to wash off the mud. Lord Srinivasa was impressed by the relentless and highly dedicated devotion and blessed him with His Darshan, created a Tirtha after his name, declared that those who have the fortune of bathing in it would become as learned and focussed and bestowed Salvation to him. Papanashana Tirtha is such a powerful place that even merely uttering its name, sins of the past and present get vanished. There was a Brahmana named Bhadramati who had enormous knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures but was acutely impoverished having six wives and several children. His each day was a harrowing experience of poverty with several mouths to feed. One of his wives named Kamini told him one day that her father met Sage Narada who described Tirtha called Papanashana lying on the Venkateswar Mountain cluster was a big draw and a bath, preferably after giving away a small token 'bhudaan' to a deserving Brahmana followed by a darshan of the Lord would abolish poverty, and fulfil all human desires. This emboldened Bhadramati to travel along with his family to the Srinivasa Mountain. He was fortunate to obtain on way a token of five feet of land. The entire family took bath in the Papanashana Tirtha and gave away charity of the five feet of land to a deserving Brahmana. Bhagavan Vishnu had instantly appeared before Bhadramati; the latter was extremely thrilled at the darshan and eulogised Him as follows: *'Namō Namasthekhila karanaaya, Namō namasthekhila paalakaya/ Namō Namastheyemara nayakaya Namō Namō Daithya vimardanaya/ Namō Namō Bhakthajanapriyaya, Namō Namah Paapavidaaranaya/ Namō Namō Durjananashakaya, Namasthesthu Tasmai Jagadeeshvaraya/ Namō namah Karunava -mayaya, Naraayanaathivikramaya/ Shri Shankha chakraasi gadaadharaaya, Namasthesthu tasmai Purushottamaya/ Namah payoraasi nivaasakaaya, Namasthesthu Lakshmi pathavyayaya/ Namasthesthu Suryadyamitha-prabhaaya, Namō Namah Punyagathaagathaaya/ Namō Namokyenduivilochanaya, Namasthesthudey Yagna phalapadaaya/ Namasthesthu Yagnaangavilochanaya, Namasthesthu thye Sajjanavallabhaaya/ Namō namah Kaarana Kaaranaaya, Namasthesthu Shabdaadi vivarjitaaya/ Namasthesthutheybhheshta sukhahpradaaya, Namō Namō Bhakta -manoramaaya/ Namō namasthebhuta karanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Manda radhaarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Yagnavarrahanaagney, Namō Hiranyakshavidarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Vaamana rupabhaaje, Namasthesthuthy Kshatrakula -anthakaaya/ Namasthesthuthy Ravana mardanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Nanda sutaagrajaaya, Namasthey kamalaakaantha Namasthey Sukha daayiney, Ashritartha nashiney tubhyam bhuyo bhuyo Namō namah/*'.

As Bhadramati praised Lord Srinivasa, He blessed him to enjoy full-swing prosperity to him and family and attain Moksha to him thereafter. 'Akashaganga Tirtha' was well known for bestowing boons to the highly erudite and dedicated Brahmana called Ramanuja. He did Tapasya of rigorous nature on the banks of Akashganga by standing with 'Panchagni' (Five flames) around him during the hot summer mid-days and under the sky in heavy rains fully exposed chanting the Ashtakshari Mantra 'Om Namō Narayanaya'; he ate dry leaves fallen from trees for years together, for some years by drinking water and many other years by consuming air only. Finally, Bhagavan appeared and Ramanuja who was almost dying with the severity of his Tapasya became fully normal and healthy instantly. He received the boons that the Place of Akasha Ganga where Ramanuja had the fortune of discovering Vishnu in person would be an Eternal

water-spring and those who performed 'Snaan' would change his entire life style and become an ideal Bhakta and at the end they would have no other birth and would get salvation.

In another context, Akash Ganga was immortalised as the Tirtha where Devi Anjana executed penance, since she and her husband Vayu Deva were not blessed with a son. Vishnu Bhakta Sage Matangi directed Anjana Devi to reach River Suvarnamukhi, far south of Vindhya Mountain, reach Vrishabhachal on whose top was situated the famous Swami Pushkarini, worship Varaha Deva and Venkateswara, proceed to north, find Akashaganga and perform Snaan in a formal manner along with Vayu Deva. The Sage confirmed that if the couple did so, a Son of unparalleled prowess and 'Swami Bhakti' (Loyalty to the Master) would be born, to be called Hanuman who was invincible by Devas, Raakshasas, Sages, Brahmanas, Celestial and human beings. As Anjana Devi followed the instructions to the last letter and spirit, Bhagavan Venkateswara appeared before her and blessed that such a Son would be born that his parents would indeed be proud of and play a pivotal role in Treta Yuga as the most powerful personality of 'Siva Amsa'.

Besides the above, Venkatachhal has quite a few other Tirthas like Chakra Tirtha where a Maha Muni Padmanabha prayed to Srinivasa to chase away the dread of Rakshasas and Bhagavan stationed His Sudarshan Chakra known for dispelling the fear of Evil Spirits; Varaha Tirtha, Pandu Tirtha, Tumba Tirtha, Kapila Tirtha, Kumara Tirtha, Jaraharaadi Tirtha Traya, Phalguni Tirtha, Deva Tirtha, Jabaali Tirtha, Sanaka Sanandana Tirtha, Asthi Sarovara Tirtha, Kataha Tirtha and Manvadyashtottara Tirtha.

*Eight-folded approach to Venkateswara:* Sage Suta prescribed an eight-fold Bhakti Route to Lord Venkateswara: 1) To display and ensure 'Sneha Bhava' (feeling of friendship) towards His Bhaktas (devotees); 2) To perform service to 'Bhagavat Bhaktas' and satisfy them; 3) To perform Puja to Bhagawan with sincerity; 4) All the actions of the Self are to be targetted to Bhagavan; 5) To generate Bhakti and love in the eyes and other 'Jnanendriyas' of one self towards Venkateswara; 6) To hear and cogitate about the 'Mahatmya' of the Lord and accord importance to whatever is said, described, sung or taught about the same; 7) To keep the name of Srinivasa on one's lips, thoughts and heart always and 8) To dedicate one self to Lord Venkateswara and take absolute and comprehensive refuge in Him. Those who are fortunate to have even a glimpse of the fantastic Idol of Venkateswara do experience the awe and satisfaction that leaves behind a lasting familiarity and nearness. Those who think of Srinivasa, either out of curiosity, or greediness, love of materialism, or fear or casual occurrence undergo a definite transformation of outlook, approach to life and morality. If such casual approach has a multiplier effect, could one imagine the far reaching impact of the Eight-folded dedication! As Fire is capable of pulling down a huge mansion within minutes, the stock-pile of sins gets ablaze into ash as fast, provided one takes the shelter of Srinivasa. Human life, which is indeed difficult to secure compared to myriad forms of creatures ranging from animals to insects, is stated to be well spent and appropriately lived through, if one takes asylum of that Supreme Power which is 'Avyaktam' (Unknown), 'Shasvatham' (Everlasting), 'Vishnum' (All Pervading), 'Anantham' (Endless), 'Ajam' (Unborn) and 'Avyayam' (Never Spent out), called Venkateswara!

*Purushottama Kshetra (Utkala Khanda) Mahatmya:* As Lord Varaha liberated Bhu Devi from the depths of Rasatala from the clutches of the Demon Hiranyakashipu and Bhu Devi gained normalcy, Lord Brahma resumed the task of Creation again but wondered as to how humanity could be saved from the three major hindrances to life viz. 'Adhibhoutika' or pertaining to the Physical body, 'Adhidaivika' related

to occurrences created by Almighty like earthquakes or famines and ‘Adhyatmika’ (Spiritual issues). He prayed to Lord Narayana for guidance and the latter directed Brahma to visit Purushottama Kshetra on the Sea shore, where Lord Shyama Sundar settled in the form of wooden Idols along with His Brother Balabhadra and Sister Subhadra as also the Sudarshan Chakra and provided solace to humanity from ignorance, lack of direction and discontentment. Brahma reached there as advised by Vishnu and while performing Tapasya got into such a deep and long trance that he was even negligent of the duty of Creation. For a while the Cycle of Life and Death got disturbed as there was no ingress and egress from the Universe. Yamadharm Raja approached Bhagavan Vishnu along whom Devi Lakshmi was seated too. Devi Lakshmi replied that if the reference being given by Yamaraja was to the current issue of the Cycle of Life being disturbed, then it was not possible for Vishnu to leave the Purushottama Kshetra. The Sins of human beings, animals and birds would continue to be burnt off at the Purushottama Kshetra, which was the only hallowed Region unaffected by the Great Deluge (‘Pralaya’); even Sage Markandeya who was blessed by ‘Paramatma’ to achieve immortality for Seven Kalpas had to struggle through the rough waters, till he reached the Purushottama Kshetra where the Divine Tree ‘Akshay Vat’ was the lone survivor on top of which was Vishnu in a miniature form and advised Markandeya to swim somehow to reach that spot! It was ‘Kaal’ (Vishnu) as a child who rescued the Sage and the belly of Kaal was bottomless. Lakshmi Devi who was present too there witnessed all these happenings. Markandeya who had the unique honour of receiving refuge from Vishnu was grateful to the Kshetra and materialised a Water reservoir with the help of Sudarshana Chakra, immortalised as ‘Markandeya Kund’. The Sage established a Markandeswra Linga, which was basically of the form of Narayana as also known as Yameswar where Yamaraja was controlled from Mrityu owing to the Sanctity of the Kshetra. Bathing in the Markandeya Kund and worship of Markandeswara Linga is stated to equal the Aswamedha Yagna.

Devi Lakshmi continued her explanation to Yamadharm Raja that the Purushottama Kshetra was of a conch shape whose North West was dominated by Shankara and the North East by Neelakantha and the Central Portion of a distance of a mile or so was of Narayana. Nearer the Shankara Tirtha is situated the Kapala Vimochana Linga and the third part of the conchshell was of Adya Shakti Vimala Devi. In the Nabhi Sthaan or the Central Region are situated the ‘Vat’ (Tree) and Bhagavan Purushottama. Thus the Three Portions of the Purushottama Kshetra are popular as Tirtha Raj. There is also a Rohini Kund, the waters of which relieve sins and constituted the tail-end of the Pralayakal water! At the southern tip of the Conchshell is situated Narasimha whose darshan itself is an instant sin destroyer. There are ‘Antarvedi’ (underlying) Eight Shaktis which are stated to be providing security at the Purushottama Kshetra viz. Devi Mangala in the roots of the Vata Tree, Devi Vimala in the West, Devi Sarva Mangala in the rear lower portion of the Conchshell, on the northern side Devi Arthashini and Devi Lamba, Devi Kalarathri in the Southern side, Devi Marichika and Devi Chandarupa in the East. Also, Bhagavan Siva assumed Eight Linga Rupas viz. Kapalamochan, Kshetrapal, Yameswar, Markandey -eshwar, Eshana, Bileswar, Neelakantha, and Vateswar. If these Lingas are visioned, touched or worshipped, the devotees have access to Moksha Marga (The Road to Salvation) and if they die, their life-end is tied up with Bhagavan Siva directly without any intervention from Yama Raja.

Sage Jaimini told the Munis at Naimisharanya that King Indradyumna, an ardent devotee of Vishnu was keen in having a ‘darshan’ of the Idol of Neela Madhava at the Temple situated in the Nilachal Mountain’s cave, on the coastal side of East Bharatavarsha, in the Utkal Region. The King asked his Priest to ascertain the route and arrange for the trip. One of the Pilgrims who returned from the famed Temple in the foothills of Nilachal Mountain (who perhaps was Bhagavan Jagannatha Himself) described

the route to the Royal Priest that the Temple was in Purushottama Kshetra near a holy pond known as Rohin adjacent to a place called Odhra and that there was a Temple of Vasudeva besides which there was a hermitage called 'Shabardeep' leading to the path of Jagannath Temple. The Royal Priest's younger brother *Vidyapati* was approved by the King to make an initial trip so that the King would perform the 'Yatra' (expedition) subsequently. *Vidyapati* and party undertook a tedious and tiring journey to the Ekamvaran forests at the foothills of Mountain and at the Shabardeep hermitage met *Vishvasu*. Both *Vidyapati* and *Vishvasu* visited the Place after a steep ascent of the Mountain and finally reached the Rohin Pond and after a bath had Darshan of Neela Madhava. *Vidyapati* was overwhelmed by the thrilling experience of Jagannatha's Darshan and prayed to Him to his heart's content. *Vidyapati* was told by Shabar *Vishvasu* that several Devas frequented the Temple and brought expensive gifts and garlands to the Lord; when *Vidyapati* returned back to King Indradyumna the former showed the flowers which never withered as they were celestial! But *Vishvasu* gave the disheartening news to *Vidyapati* that the latter would not be able to have a darshan of Neela Madhava, although something better might happen! *Vidyapati* was advised not to disclose this fact to the King on his return to the Kingdom as the King might be highly discouraged. Even as *Vidyapati* returned and was describing the rapturous darshan that he had of Neela Madhava, Sage Narada appeared and desired to accompany the King on his way to the Purushottama Kshetra. The King and his large entourage set for the journey and reached the banks of River Mahanadi for an overnight stay before proceeding to the Jagannatha Temple next morning. The King of Utkal informed the senior King Indradyumna that there was a very heavy sand storm and the Idol of Neela Madhava was underneath a huge heap of debris. Luckily Sage Narada was with Indradyumna and consoled the latter and assured him that Lord Jagannatha was extremely merciful and that something memorable would happen! Next morning the King's full entourage crossed River Mahanadi, worshipped Lord Purushottama at 'Eakaamrechhetra' and further proceeded to Kotishwar Mahalaya to perform Puja to 'Tribhuaneswara'. The latter appeared before Sage Narada and instructed that King Indradyumna should perform hundred 'Yagyas'; that Lord Jagannatha would manifest Himself from under the debris; that a Vata Tree with four branches would have to be carved out by Viswakarma the Celestial Artist as Four Idols of Lord Jagannatha, Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra the sister of the former brothers and 'Sudarshan Chakra'; that He (Tribhuaneswara) along with Devi Durga would be present at the top entry of the conchshell shaped Purusha Kshetra; that Lord Brahma would install and consecrate the Holy Idols for the everlasting benefit of generations ahead and the dream and perseverance of King Indradyumna would become fruitful. Sage Narada assured that Lord Tribhuaneswara's instructions would be followed in full letter and spirit. From there the caravan moved to Nilakantha Mahadeva and worshipped Mahadeva and Durga. The King was anxious to reach the Place where Lord Jagannatha was under the sand; he prayed to Him as though he could visualise the Idol and there emerged a voice from the rubble assuring the King that he would soon have His appearance. Since the first task to be performed was to organise the hundred Yagnas as directed by Tribhuaneswara, Narad was anxious to take up the construction of the Temple of Lord Nrisimha as that was the Place to complete the Yagnas. Sughat, the son of Viswakarma completed the construction of the Temple within five days, while Vishwakarma made the Idol of Nrisimha which was installed by Narada. Thereafter the task of carving wood for the four major Idols of Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan Chakra was taken up and a Celestial voice came saying that the Idols would emerge on their own, that the oldest worker be sent inside the Main Gate which should be closed till the job was over, that the sound of drums be kept on continuously till the job was going on inside to cover up the sounds from there, that if somebody heard the sounds from inside he would be irrevocably deaf, and that somebody saw what was happening inside that person would be blind for ever.

On the fifteenth day, a Celestial Voice emerged that all the Idols were manifested. Thereafter the heavenly voices kept on giving instructions about the colour schemes of the Idols ( Deep blue like clouds for Jagannatha, white for Balabhadra, red like rising Sun for Subhadra and deep red for Sudarshan), the ornament details and so on. As the Idols were getting ready with all finishing touches, Indradyumna was in trance and asked Jagannatha for nothing excepting salvation from the mortal life. Narada, the King and the entire entourage entered the Sanctum Sanctorium chanting 'Dwadasaakshara Mantra' (Om Namo Vasudevaya) in praise of the Lord Jagannatha, 'Purusha Suktam' addressed to Balabhadra, 'Sri Suktam' for Subhadra and appropriate Vedic Mantras for Sudarshana Chakra. Narada visualised the various articles required for the Consecration Ceremony and were secured by the King. A Palace was built for Brahma and three Chariots were readied for the three Deities; the required number of horses- sixteen to Jagannatha, fourteen to Balabhadra and twelve to Subhadra-were readied too. The mast on top of the Chariot of Jagannatha was made with Garuda Vahan (The Lord's Carrier), that of Balabhadra had a plough, and of Subhadra's chariot was a Lotus. Indeed the King was so fortunate that the wherewithall for the Function was instantly procured by Sages and Devas! Finally, at the 'Muhurat'time, Lord Brahma performed the Consecration on Suddha Visakha Ashtami on Thursday with Pushyami as the Nakshatra, as witnessed by Devas, Yakshas, Kinnaras and Maharshis! The famous nine day Ratha Yatra commenced on Suddha Ashadha Vidiya and returned from the banks of Bindu Tirtha on the eighth day.

Sage Jaimini explained that Lord Brahma clarified to Raja Indradyumna about a doubt as to *why Jagannath assumed the Wooden Form of Idols*. The 'Daru' (Wooden) Idols represent 'Duhkha vidarana' or destroying of distress and bestowing of endless happiness; as Srihari is 'Darumaya' He therefore manifested in wooden form. At the time of 'Srishti' (Creation) following Pralaya, 'Parabrahma' (The Supreme Being) manifested in the Form of Vedas or the mix of 'Sabda Brahma' and 'Artha Brahma'. Bhagavan Balabhadra is of Rig Ved Swarup, while Subhadra is of Yajur Veda Swarup. Nrisimha is of Sama Veda Swarup and Sudarshan is of Atharva Veda Swarup. If a composite view is taken, the Deities thus represented all the Veda Swarupas and Jagannatha is the sum total and likewise all these forms are Jagannatha Himself. The 'Vata Vriksha' on the Sea Bed at the time of Pralaya was thus the depiction of Bhagavan and the Wooden Idols made out of the Tree are His Symbols!

Badari Kshetra Mahatmya: Kartikeya asked Maha Deva as to how human beings with their limited understanding of Spiritual matters especially in Kali Yuga could ever imagine of securing the Four Featured Desires of Samsara viz. Dharma (Virtue), Artha (Prosperity), Kama (Fulfillment of Desires) and Moksha (Liberation). Bhagavan Siva's ready reply was that there were several holy Tirthas and Kshetras dotted all over Bharata Varsha which could transform the outlook of a human being and imbibe piety and virtue; for example there are Rivers like Ganga, Godavari, Narmada, Tapati, Yamuna, Kshipra, Goutami, Kaushiki, Kaveri, Tamraparni, Chandrabhaga, Mahendraja, Chitrotapala, Vetravati, Sarayu, Charmanvati, Shatadu, Payaswini, Gandaki, Baahuda, Sindhu and Sarasvati. Also there are Punya Kshetras like Ayodhya, Dwaraka, Kashi, Mathura, Avanti, Kurukshetra, Rama Tirtha, Kanchi, Purushottama Kshetra, Pushkara, Dardura Kshetra, Varaha Kshetra and Badari which are all boon providing Places. Bathing, vision of the Idols, performing Puja to them, practising austerities and giving away Charity constitute the best means of washing off sins, fulfilling desires, enabling noble deeds and even securing Salvation. *Badari Kshetra* is one of the most outstanding and ancient Pilgrimage Points on Himalayas where Bhagavan Narayana Himself resides. Mahadeva described to Skanda that the significance of 'darshan' in Kashi, Kailash and Shri Parvat is far more superior than that of Badari where the foot prints of Srihari apart, this Kshetra is also the abode of Agni since the latter as 'Sarvabhakshak' (consumer of any material

worthy of consumption or not) prayed to Vishnu to absolve him of the sins and Bhagavan Vishnu provided refuge at His feet where no sin could reach Agni. Also, Kedar Kshetra is in the same region as Badari where Siva's magnificent Linga is present and even a darshan and if possible an 'Abhishek' and Puja of the Linga would instantly perish the sins of a devotee. Moreover, Mahadeva's fifteen 'Kalas'(features) are present in the Kedar Linga and worship of the Linga by way of 'Japa' (continuous recital) of Siva's name, 'Manana' (Constant thinking about Him), 'Stuti'( Extolling Him) and 'Bhajan'(Singing in praise of Him) would assure that there would be freedom from the vicious cycle of births and deaths! Thus Parameswara advised Skanda that Badari Kshetra has the double advantage of worship to Narayana and Mahadeva as this Unified Point on Himalayas is an ideal Pilgrimage Center. 'Snaan' at Agni Tirtha absolves even the 'Pancha Patakas'or the extreme Five Sins, besides performing 'Pranaayam'and other Yogic Exercises.

Lord Siva explained to Kartikeya that there were *Five Sacred 'Shilas'* or Rocks, viz. Naradi, Narasimhi, Varahi, Garudi and Markandeyi, each one of them being capable of fulfillment and contentment. Sage *Narada* sat once on a rock and did severe Tapasya for visualising Lord Vishnu. When *Narayana along with Devi Lakshmi gave darshan*, Narada asked for the boons of ever lasting devotion to Him, never leaving the rock on which he did Tapasya and creating a Tirtha nearby which should absolve the sins of those who bathe in it and worship Narayana there. *Markandeya* the great devotee met Sage Narada at Mathura and was advised that he should visit Badari Kshetra and pray to Narayana. Markandeya did accordingly and was fortunate to secure the darshan of Sri Hari after continuously reciting the Ashtakshara Mantra viz. Om Namō Narayanaya. He was dumbfounded when Bhagavan Vishnu stood before him in full glory with four hands ornamented with Shankh, Chakra, Gada and Saranga. After extolling Narayana to his heart's content, Markandeya desired for 'Janma rahitya' or freedom from births, that his devotion to Narayana should become stronger and unflinching, that He should be always present at the rock where he was having the darshan of Bhagavan and that He should bless devotees when they visited the Markandeya Shila.

*Garuda* was the son of Sage Kashyap and Devi Vinata whose ambition was to emulate the example of his brother Aruna who was Surya Deva's charioteer and had the intense desire of becoming the Carrier of Bhagava Vishnu.He chose Badari Kshetra on the top of the adjacent 'Gandhamadan Parvat' (Mountain) and was in penance for years together with undaunted grit and devotion. As Lord Narayana finally gave darshan, Garud extolled Him as Trividha Murti integrating the Forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara as also of 'Ashta Shaktis'(Eight Powers) and the Supreme Might of the Universe. Vishnu was pleased and materialised 'Panchamukha Ganga' or the five faced Ganges with the waters of which gave the unique opportunity to Garuda to wash His feet. He also granted the boons of making him His personal 'Vahan' (Carrier), of becoming invincible by any force in the Three Worlds, of making him a never-failing personal devotee of Bhagavan and of fulfilling the desires of those who visit the Garuda Shila and worship Bhagavan Narayana.

*Narasimha Deva* in one of Lord Vishnu's incarnations annihilated the Demon Hiranyakasipu and saved the illustrious devotee Prahlada; He looked like Fire while massacring the Demon with His sharp nails and was in a highly infuriated mood when all the Devas prayed to Him to calm down. After becoming somewhat composed, He declared that He would settle at Vishalपुरी (Badarikashram); all the Sages were extremely delighted that Narasimha would be present at Narasimha Shila for facilitating their constant worship and also to bless Bhaktas visiting the Shila. *Bhagavan Varaha* who pulled up Bhu Devi

from the underworld of Rasatala destroyed Demon Hiranyaksha and saved the Vedas and Holy Scriptures. The Varaha incarnation of Lord Vishnu appeared at Vishalapurī as Varaha Shila and continued to bless the devotees at the Shila.

Devas approached Lord Brahma to complain that in the Satya Yuga virtuous human beings, Sages and they could easily access Bhagavan Vishnu, while in Treta Yuga they could visualise Bhagavan through ‘Yogabhyas’ only but in Dwapar Yuga, His Darshan had become virtually impossible and in the future during the Kali Yuga, human beings might even question or ignore the existence of Vishnu! Accordingly, a Delegation of Devas was led by Brahma to Bhagavan Vishnu at Kshirasagara (Ocean of Milk), as Vishnu replied only to Brahma that Devas had become quite irresponsible and ignorant without even realising the very obvious existence of Himself at Badarikashrama! In fact, Bhagavan kept in view the limitations of human beings in Kali Yuga and as such made His Darshan very easy and possible. As the gist of Vishnu’s admonition to Devas was conveyed, they became ashamed and made instant trips to worship Badari Narayana at Badarikashama. That was why this Kshetra acquired additional significance. It is stated that even if a grain of ‘Prasad’ (Left over of the offering given to Badari Narayana) is consumed, the devotee concerned who visited the Holy Kshetra would get rid of all kinds of Patakas (sins) including Maha Pancha Patakas. There is a strong belief down the ages that visitors to the Holy Region would attain Vishnu Swarupa, whose heart is replete with the Vision of Narayana, whose tongue and ears are full of His glories, whose stomach is with even a morsel of His Prashad and whose kneeled head touches the feet of Narayana’s Idol. The worst Sins like killing the Virtuous, intoxication, robberies and incest with ‘Guru Patni’ equivalent to one’s mother would all evaporate once the above requirements are fulfilled. If Bhojan daan is performed among Sanyasins and good Brahmanas and the Prasad is consumed then the benefits of Badarika Darshan and worship are indeed doubled. Bhagavan Siva described the significance of several Tirthas like *Kapala Tirtha* in the Badarika Region to Kartikeya. This Tirtha is very popular as Pinda Daanas are formally organised to provide relief to Pitraganas from various hells and is thus known as Pitru Tirtha. Considered highly important, this Sacred Spot is greeted with heads down by Devas and Rakshasas alike as the belief had been that this was Brahma’s ‘Pancha Sira Kapala’ or the Fifth skull top which was snipped by Siva Deva for Brahma’s indiscretion of getting attracted to His own Creation of Devi Sarasvati (His daughter). [An alternative Story was that Brahma spoke a lie that he saw the top portion of the huge Siva Linga which indeed was endless]. *Brahma Tirtha* signified Vishnu’s Avatar of Hayagreeva as the two Demon Brothers called Madhu and Kaitabha stole the Vedas and Brahma witnessed the extraordinary Vision of Hahagreeva emerging from a Kund (Pond) to terminate the Demons. Siva informed Kartikeya that after rescuing the Vedas, the ‘Deva Rupi Vedas’ were deposited in the Brahma Kund and ‘Jnaana Rupi Vedas’ were given away to Brahma. Hence the high importance of ‘Snaan’, worship and Daan at the Brahma Kund. To the North of the Kund flows *River Saraswati* along side the Kapala Tirtha where Pitru Karyas (tasks to relieve the past generations) are held. Vishnu established the Vagdevi River most appropriately as Deva Rupi Vedas, Jnaana Rupi Vedas, Pitra Loka and Bhuloka are all concentrated in Badarikashrama which is the confluence of Three Lokas! Bathing in the Holy River Saraswati, its worship, Stuti (Praise) and sincere greetings would indeed enhance a devotee’s vocal and mental power and ensure that the ensuing generation’s abilities would never ever fail. South of Sarasvati coming from the mountains is *Indrapada Tirtha* where Lord Indra conducted Tapasya, fasting and worship and is stated to bestow the devotees who also perform the same austerities as Indra did. Nearby the Indrapada Tirtha are situated the *Manasodbheda Tirtha* and *Vasudhara Tirtha* both being of considerable importance. Not far from Indrapada Tirtha is the *Pancha*

*Tirtha Complex* comprising Five Streams named Prabhas, Pushkar, Gaya, Naimish and Kurukshetra. There is also an important *Soma Tirtha* where Chandra Deva performed Tapasya to Narayana and secured the boons of becoming the Chief of Nakshatras (Stars), Aushadhis (Medicines), Grahas (Planets) and the entire Brahmana Community. Further there are *Dwadasha Aditya Tirtha*, *Chatuhstotra Tirtha*, *Satyapada Tirtha*, *Meru Tirtha*, *Lokapala Tirtha*, *Dandapushkarin* and *Ganga Sangam*.

**Kolhapuri Maha Lakshmi Mahatmya:** Sage Narada incited ‘Vindhyachala’ comparing it with Maha Meru and the latter grew his size to surpass the height of Meru Parvata. As a result, the course of Surya Deva was obstructed and one half of the Universe became dark and the other half became too hot to live in. All the Deities made an appeal to Lord Brahma who suggested that they should all approach Sage Agastya who could only control the situation. When the Devas approached the Sage, he was upset and sad but had no recourse to defy Lord Brahma’s command; along with his wife Lopamudra, an illustrious ‘Pativrata’ dedicated fully to her husband, the Sage had to leave Kashi which was very dear to both of them and knew fully well they would not return in their life time. The Sage took leave of Parama Siva Visweswara, Devi Annapurna, Devi Visalakshi and Kaalabhairava and also of Devi Ganga for his last dip at Kasi. The Couple experienced such grief of parting Kasi as a child would cry parting with the parents. As soon as Sage Agastya arrived, Vindhyachal was frightened that the Sage could as well obliterate his very existence as he was aware of his unpardonable mistake having upset the whole Universe. As such, Vindhyachal had taken the first command of the Sage and became diminutive in size and the course of Surya Deva got restored at once. Agastya asked Vindhyachal to be in that form till he returned back to the same Place. Subsequently, the Couple travelled Southwards of Vindhya on the banks of River Godavari and reached **Kolhapuri** and secured the ‘Darshan’ of Maha Lakshmi. The Sage extolled Devi Lakshmi as follows: *Matarnamaami Kamale Kamalayathakshi, Shri Vishnu hritkamala vaasini Viswa maathah/ Ksheerodaje Kamalakomala garbha Gauri, Lakshmi Praseeda satatam namathaam Sharanye/ Twam Sri Rupendra sadaney Madanaika maatha-Jyothistraasi Chandramasi Chandramanoharaasye/ Surye Prabhasi cha Jagathrithaye Prabhaasi Lakshmi Praseeda Satatham Namathaam Sharanye/ Twam Jaathavedasi Sadaa Dahanaatma Shakti-Vedhastvayaa Jagadinda Vividham Vidhatyat/ Vishambharopi Bibhrudaakhilam Bhavatya, Lakshmi Praseeda Satatam Namathaam Sharanye/ Twaktyakthamyetadamaley Harathey Haropi, Twam Paasi Hamsi Vidadhasi Paravaraasi/ Eedhyo babhuva harirapamaley Twadaptya Lakshmi Praseeda Satataam Namataam Sharanye/ Surah sa eva sa Gunii sa Dhanyo, Maanyah sa eva Kula sheela kalaakalaapih/ Ekam Shuchih sa hi pumaan Sakalopi Loke, Yatrapoktava Shubhey Karunaa kataakshah/ Yasmivaseh Khanamaho Purushey Gajesvey, Strainey Thruney Sarasi Devakuley Gruhenney/ Ratney Patatrini Pashaou Dharaayaam/ Susreekameva Sakaley Thadihasthinanyat/ Twaktspushtameva Sakalam Shuchitaam lameta, Twaktameva Sakalam Twashuchih Lakshmi/ Twannama Yatra cha Sumangaleva tatra, Sri Vishnu Patni Kamaley Kamalalayopi/Lakshmi Shriyam cha Kalaam Kamalaalayam cha, Padma Ramaam Nalina Yugma karaam cha Maam cha/ Ksheerodaja amamrita kumbhakarimiraam cha, Vishnupriyamiti Sadaa Japataam kka duhkkam/ ( My greetings to You Mother! You have the broad Eyes of a Lotus; the Resider of Lord Vishnu’s own Heart and the Supreme Mother of the entire Universe with a delicate belly like the softness of a Lotus leaf; I seek protection from You for Your Kindness always. You are the Mother of Madana and are memorable with the name of Sri in Vaikuntha. You possess the coolness of Chandra, the splendour of Surya and the blistering heat of Agni; You share the responsibility of Brahma for Creation, Vishnu for Preservation and Rudra for destruction of the Universe or in short the Karya-Karana Swarupa of the Whole World; You are the Unique Shuura Veera, Gunavaan, Vidwaan, Dhanya, Maanya, Kuleen, Sheelavaan, and the epitome of*

all 'Kalaas' or features of the World and of Piety and Purity. Even a split second gaze of Yours would bless the Beings, be it a human being, elephant, horse, Eunuch, Water body, Deva Mandir, Home, Anna (Food), Jewellery, Animals and Birds, Earth and any thing in short. When a light touch of Yours is blessed to a being, it becomes Live and Pure and the converse too is true. You are the Emblem of Propitiousness, Prosperity and Success. Every one is ready and too happy when Your any name is pronounced as Lakshmi, Shri, Kamala, Kamalaalaya, Padma, Ramaa, Nalinayugmakara, Maa, Kseerodaja, Amritakumbhikara, Era or Vishnu Priya). Sri Lakshmi was pleased with Sage Agastya at his sincere and heartfelt eulogy and blessed the couple with Her appearance; She stated that since She knew as to what was tormenting the Sage, he would certainly return to Kashi during the next twenty ninth Dwapara Yuga as Veda Vyasa and take up the Sacred Task of annotating Vedas and scripting 'Ashtaadasa Puranaas' and gain immortality through his glorious Works!

How far away the adodes of Maha Lakshmi and Maha Vishnu are! The geographyscical positioning of Vaikuntha is explained in the illustrious Skanda Purana by the vision of an erudite Vidwan. The Purana is quoted as follows:

A Bramhana by name Siva Sarma lived in Mathura who was no doubt well versed in Scriptures but gradually became worldly wise and gave more and more of priority to earning property, Bhumi, jewellery and the like. He had suddenly realised his folly and cursed himself that none of the precepts that he exhorted to others for making money was practised by him. He then commenced Tirtha Yatras and executed Snaans, Worships, charities, daily 'Agni Karyas' or homams, Tarpanas, Shraddhas and such other noble tasks at various Tirthas like Ayodhya, Prayaga, Kashi, and Mayapuri. In the course of the Tirtha Yatras, Siva Sharma experienced death and felt that an aeroplane arrived from Vishnuloka with two passengers named Vishnu prashads to take him away. Along with Siva Sharma, the Ganas travelled various Lokas on way to Vishnu Loka. They first flew over *Piscacha Loka* where they saw the miserable creatures that gave away charities reluctantly, performed Siva Pujas for showing off to others and discouraged others to give charity, Pujas, Snaans, homas, Tarpanas and prayers. They then witnessed *Guhya Loka* where the inhabitants amassed money but had hidden gold, properties and jewelery that could not be traced. Then came *Gandharva Loka* which was full of singers who made several good turns in their mortal lives such as charities, Pujas, Tirtha Yatras, Agni Homas, recitals of Bhakti Geetas, Veda Parayanas and so on; illustrious singers like Tumbura and Narada who had ready access to Devas, Planets, Trimurtis and even lower worlds belonged to this Loka. Siva Sharma and the Vishnu Ganas witnessed *Vidyadhara Loka* where Gurus treated their disciples as their own sons, the well-to-do persons performed charities like Kanya Daans, Bhu Daans, Go Daans, Suvrna Daans and led virtuous lives on Earth engaged in Veda Pathana, Vratas, Worships, and so on. The Vishnugana duo had then shown Siva Sharma a few glimpses of *Naraka Loka*, the scenes of retribution to sins perpetrated by human beings and the treatment given by the Yama dutas as per the Manuals of the various Hells; however the Vishnuganas portrayed Dharma Raja as a benevolent King much unlike what was normally imagined. No doubt Yama Dharma Raja was a strict disciplinarian and stickler of Rules. The Vision of Dharma Raja is as per the eyes of the Viewer who could be guilty, less guilty or non-guilty! However, Dharma Raja instructed his Yamadutas that they should not approach persons who take the names of Govinda, Madhava, Mukunda, Hari, Murari, Shambhu, Siva, Esha, Chandrasekhara, Damodara, Achyuta, Hara, Neelakantha, Vishnu, Nrisimha, Shankara, Narayana and so on. Sivasharma and Vishnuprashads then travelled to *Surya Loka* and found Surya Deva who was Sarvatma Veda Purusha. Those who were taught Gayatri Mantra ought to perform Gayatri Japa thrice a day at the Three Sandhyas and if they did not do so were considered as the

fallen human beings attracting retribution of justice. Those who observed the ‘Sandhya Vandana’ in favour of Surya Deva and Gayatri Mata as prescribed would be blessed with long life, health, affluence, Wealth, Cattle, Friends, Progeny, Good Life Partner, viz. the ‘Ashta Ishwaryas’ or the Eight folded Prosperity. One should realise that Gayatri and Surya Deva has the ‘Vachya-Vaachaka’ relationship or of the Speech and the Target of the Speech (Gayatri Mantra and Sun God). Also, Gayatri is Brahma, Vishnu and Parama Siva and is the Quintessence of Vedas and Scriptures, defining what Supreme Energy or Paramatma is all about!

*Durlabha Sarva Mantreshu Gayatri Pranavaanvita, Na Gayatryadhikam Kinchitrayopu Parigayathey/ Na Gayatri samo mantro na Kasisaddashi Puri, Na Viswasha samam LingamSatya satyam Punah Punah/ Gayatri Veda Jananii, Gayatri Brahmanaprasuh, Gaataaram Shrayatey Yasmaadyatri thena gaayathey/* At the time of Solar Eclipse, what ever virtuous tasks like Snaan, Daan, Japa, Homa etc. are performed would help ‘Surya Saameepya Praapti’ or steps to attaining Surya Loka after one’s mortal life. Recital of the following Surya ‘naamaas’ (names) by prefixing ‘Om’ and suffixing ‘Namah’ during the Eclipse Time would assure removal of poverty, disease, difficulties and discontentment: Hamsa, Bhanu, Sahasranshu, Tapana, Taapana, Ravi, Vikartan, Vivaswaan, Viswakarma, Vibhaavasus, Viswarupa, Vishwakarta, Maarthanda, Mihira, Anshumaan, Aditya, Ushnagu, Surya, Arthama, Bradhna Diwakara, Dwaadashaatma, Saptahaya, Bhaskara, Ahaskara, Khaga, Sura, Prabhakara, Srimaan, Lokachakshu, Graheswara, Triloksha, Loka saakshi, Thamaari, Shaswatha, Shuchi, Gabhastihasta, Teevramshu, Tharani, Sumahorani, Dyumani, Haridaswa, Arka, Bhaanumaan, Bhayanaashana, Chhandoshva, Veda Vedy, Bhaswan, Pusha, Vrishaakapi, Ekachakraratha, Mitra, Mandehaari, Tamishraha, Daityaha, Paapa harta, Dharma, Dharmaprasahaka, Helika, Chitrabhaanu, Kalighna, Thakshyavahana, Dikpati, Padmininatha, Kusheshayakar, Hari, Dharmarashmi, Durnireeksha, Chandamsu and Kashyapaatmaja. The two-some Vishnu Ganas and Siva Sharma approached the glittering *Indra Loka* which was built by Viswakarma by the power of his Tapasya. In Amaravati, the Capital of Indra Loka, nobody produces Clothes or Jewellery, as KalpaVriksha does the tasks exceedingly well. Similarly, Kamadhenu fulfils all desires of food. Indra who had performed hundred Aswamedha Yagnas is known therefore as Shataamanu and has thousand eyes. His deputies are Seven Lokapals like Agni, Vayu, Varuna etc. Siva Sharma and Vishnu Prashad then witnessed *Agni Puri* where besides Agni Deva, there are Agnideva’s ‘Upasakas’ or top devotees of Agni viz. Agnihotrapparaayana Brahmana, Agnisevi Brahmachari, and Panchagni Vrata’s Administrator, who are all as powerful as Agni Deva himself. Also, there are Agni Experts who could treat Mandanaagni with Jatharagni and so on. Agni is the most propitious Deity who is known as ‘Paavak’ or the Purifier and is also the Third Eye of Parameswara. After visiting Agni Loka, Siva Sharma sought the details of *Nirruiti Loka* resided by Rakshasas, but they were of different type as they seldom cheated; in fact they were only Rakshasas by birth but were Virtuous persons by habits as they visited Tirthas, performed worship to Devas and had all the laudable qualities of resorting to Snaan, Daan, Daya (Mercy), ‘Kshama’ (Patience), ‘Shoucha’ (Physical Cleanliness), ‘Astheya’ (Non stealing), and ‘Paropakarish’ (Helpful to others). North to Nirruiti Loka is situated *Varuna Loka* where its residents dig up a number of Wells, Sarovars and Water Bodies with their rightly earned money and along with highly tasteful water offer to travellers food, shelter and rest houses. They also nurture water-oriented marine life including fishes, crocodiles and a large variety of aquatic animals. They live fearlessly under the protection of Varuna Deva and enjoy long and contented life where there is no disease, want and difficulty of any kind. They are all highly virtuous, engrossed in devotion to Paramatma and unnerved by ‘Arishadvargas’. *Vayu Loka* is known as Gandhavati Loka ruled by ‘Praana Prabhanjana’ Vayudeva

always immersed in the worship of Maha deva; a well-known devotee of Siva at Kasi called Pavaaneswar did Tapasya for ten lakh long years and had darshan of Maha Deva who appointed him as one of the Dikpalas, blessed him with the knowledge of all Tatvas and made him the Chief of 'Praana'/'Aayu' or Life Span as also of air or the essence of Life and very existence. Siva also made Vayu the Head of 'Gandhas' or the Ruler of Smells. Next to Gandhapuri is *Alkapuri of Kubera* who was too an intense devotee turned friend of Parama Siva who was pleased to bless Kubera as the In charge of 'Nava Ratnas' or Nine Gems as an Administrator, Provider and Promoter. Adjacent to Kubera Loka where the residents are eternally rich with breath-taking designs of Nava Ratnas is the *Ishanapuri* with high concentration of 'Tapasvis', always deeply engaged with the thoughts and actions of Siva; in the performance of Siva Vratas, Siva 'Abhishekas', Siva Archanas, and Homams oriented to Siva; and totally dedicated to Siva. This Place is also the residence of *Eleven Rudras viz. Aja, Ekpada, Abhirbudhna, Pinaki, Aparajita, Triambak, Nisha, Shambhu, Haran, Ishwara and Kapi*. The next is of *Chandra Loka* which is the epitome of coolness, happiness, health and mental peace. Chandra was the son of Sage Atri who performed Tapasya for three thousand Divya Years to Brahma who not only blessed the Sage to beget Chandra but even brought up the child. Having come of age, Chandra too did Tapasya to Bhagavan Siva at the Avimukta Kshetra Kasi and set up a Siva Linga called Chandrasekhara. Siva was pleased with Chandra's worship and adorned the best 'Kala' (feature) of Chandra on His head; later on Daksha Prajapati cursed Chandra to disappear but the best Kala of Chandra retained on Maha Deva's 'mastak' (head) is revived every Purnima night but gradually wanes day by day till Amavasya and grows gradually again grows there after in the ensuing fortnight. With the blessing of Mahadeva, Lord Vighneswara gave Chandra the responsibility of 'Beejas' (seeds), 'Aushadhis' (Medicines), Water and of Brahmanas. Mondays are the days dear to Chandra and worship to him, especially if coinciding with Amavasya, has far reaching benefits of good health, mental peace, 'Dhanya Vriddhi' or plentiful foodgrains and stay at Chandra Loka after life. *Budha Loka* is near Chandra Loka and Budha (Mercury) is Chandra's son. After securing his father's permission, Budha set up a Budheswara Linga at Kasi and did Tapasya for ten thousand years. Maha Deva gave His darshan to Budha and gave the boon that his Loka would be situated above the residences of Stars and that the Budha Graha would be considered as the most auspicious and the least trouble-making planet to humanity. Siva also gave the boon that whosoever worshipped Budheswar would retain the 'Buddhi' or memory and full consciousness till the last breath. *Shukra Loka* (Venus) is the residing Place of Danava Guru Shukracharya who secured 'Mrita Sanjeevani Maha Vidya' (The Unique Discipline to revive the dead) from Shankara Deva after pleasing Him with rigorous Tapasya for five thousand years. This Vidya was not obtained by Deva Guru Brihaspati but Shukra the son of Sage Bhrigu was able to achieve. Also, Siva was pleased to bestow additional boons such as designating Shukrawar (Friday) in a week in favour of Shukra and whosoever observed fast on that day and worshipped Shukreshwara Linga at Kashi would be blessed to secure courage, comfort and contentment besides good progeny. The next Planet is of *Mangala Deva (Mars)* born to Bhu Devi having stayed in Kashi meditated to Visweswara in the form of a Linga named Angarakeswara and decided that he would not cease his Tapasya till such time that from his body there must be emerging fires or Angarakas. Maha Deva was happy with the Tapasya and granted the Status of a fulfilled Planet to him. Persons worshipping at the 'Angarakeswara' Linga on Mangalawar or Tuesdays would be rid of 'Graha Peeda' and provide relief from the difficulties experienced by human beings. Belief among human beings is rampant till date that especially unmarried girls if born with Mangala Dosha are not preferred for weddings and are better wedded to unmarried boys with similar Dosha! *Devapujya Brihaspati's Loka* is next to that of Mangala Deva. The son of Sage Angira, Brihaspati happened to be the most Learned

Vidwan, who was 'Jitendriya' or the Conquerer of Physical Limbs and Internal 'Gunas'; he was steeped in the comprehension of Vedas, Shastras and all other Scriptures, had the capacity to apply the knowledge to practical situations and was ideally suited to be the Guru of Devas. Immensely delighted by his 'Tapasya', Bhagavan Siva granted the most important boon of appointing him as Deva Guru; Siva stated that 'Brihat' or Great Devas needed a 'Pati' or a Teacher and as such he would be known as Brihaspati to one and all. Siva also told that on Brihaspativars (Thursdays) any new task commenced after worshipping the Linga set up in the name of 'Brihaspatiswara' or to Brihaspati himself would be very successful. Sage Agastya told Devi Lopamudra that the Vishnu Bhaktas Siva Sharma and Vishnupradas were gratified to vision *Shani Loka* soon after passing the Brihaspati Loka. Shani (Saturn) was the Son of Surya and the brother of Yama Dharma Raja and he too executed persistent Meditation and Sacrifices to Shaniswara Linga. Maha Deva was particularly satisfied with Shani's penance and granted him the Status of a very powerful role as one of the 'Nava Grahas' since human beings were punished to experience the 'Karma phala' during the Shani phase of one's life or at times let them experience helpful kick-starts of benevolent tasks performed in their 'Prarabdha' or earlier life. *Saptarshi Loka* is the most hallowed Land where Seven Most Illustrious Rishis appointed by Lord Brahma reside; these Sapta Rishis are Marichi, Atri, Pulaha, Pulastya, Kratu, Angira and Vasishtha, the 'Manasa Putras' the Mind Borne Sons of Lord Brahma. Their Wives respectively are Sambhuti, Anasuya, Kshama, Preeti, Sannati, Smriti and Arundhati, all of them being esteemed as 'Lokamathas' or the Mothers of the Universe. Each of the Sapta Rishis executed extraordinary Tapasya and a happy Sada Siva bestowed the Title of Prajapatis to them. As the *Dhruva Loka* came nearby, Vishnuprasadas narrated the Story to Siva Sharma as to how Dhruva, the grand son of Swayambhu Manu, made the most difficult resolve to seek the 'Darshan' (Vision) of Vishnu as he was hurt since his step mother (Suruchi) prevented him-a mere boy- to sit on his father's (King Uttanapad) lap, while his cousin brother (Uttam) sat; the King did nothing even while the step mother said that Dhruva would have to do Tapasya to Narayana to reach the father's lap. Dhruva's own mother (Suniti) was not favoured although she was the elder Queen and the King had supported the younger wife. Dhruva took his mother's permission, was fired by the ambition to vision Narayana and met the Sapta Rishis who taught the Mantra: Om Bhagavathey Vasudevaya. He recited the Mantra while standing, moving, sleeping, sitting, or being awake and as there was nothing else that interested him in life even at that tender age and after innumerable years of unending perseverance Vishnu made His appearance and said: 'I am fully aware of your ambition which far surpassed the mere lap of your father; you conquered me with your steadfast and unprecedented devotion to me; I am pleased to make you the center of gravity of all celestial bodies including Surya Deva, Planets, Stars and the rest as also as the Chief of Dhruva Mandala till the end of the Kalpa'. After crossing Dhruvaloka, the Vishnu Bhaktas passed *Maha Loka* where Maha Tapasvis reside till the end of the Kalpa targetting Vishnu alone in their minds; *Jana Loka* where Brahma Manasa Putras viz. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanaatana and Sanat Kumaras stay practising 'Akhanda Brahmaharya' or Endless Celibacy; and *Tapo Loka* where Mahatmas like Brahma Himself and of Brahma's life span concentrate on the ways and means of promoting and innovating Virtues and Spiritual Values of the entire Universe. Even while the thoughts of Tapo Loka were in the minds of Vishnu Bhaktas, *Satya Loka* arrived and the three of them fell on the feet of Lord Brahma who complemented Siva Sharma for his knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures; He said that at the end of each day (to Brahma) witnessed a Pralaya and fresh Srishti was taken up and that the various Lokas witnessed by Siva Sharma would soon be forgotten. Brahma also stated that among the four kinds of Creation viz. Swedaja (born of sweat like Lice), Udbhija (created by Earth like trees), Pindaja (born of womb like human beings and animals) and Andaja (born of Egg like birds), only human beings had the

unique prospect to control Indriyas, Gunas, Shatvargas provided they availed the opportunity; there was no Place like Bharat which happened to be the ‘Karmabhumi’ or the Place where Noble Deeds were rewarded and there was no Tirtha like Kasi and no Bhagavan like Viswanath Linga in the Universe.’ Having visited Satya Loka, Siva Sharma asked the Vishnu Prashads as to how far he would have to travel farther and the latter replied that from Prithvi to Surya Loka the distance was away by a lakh Yojanas (one Yojana is 13-16 km approx); from Prithvi to Maha Loka is one Crore Yojanas; from Prithvi to Jana Loka is two crore yojanas, four crore yojanas to Jana Loka and eight crore yojanas to Satya Loka; sixteen crore yojanas to Vishnu Loka and sixteen times higher from Vaikuntha to Kailasa Dham; in other words, the distance from Bhū Loka to Kailas is a staggering figure of two arab and fifty six crore yojanas! From Satya Loka Siva Sharma was blessed to travel further to reside at Vaikuntha. **[Indeed Maha Lakshmi is not that far: She is with oneself--with the Self of him or her-along with, always surrounding, within reach but in never in ample measure and indeed far away like Maya yet closeby!]**

### Vamana Purana

Vishnu Puja on Shukla Ekadashis and Vishnu Panjara Stotra : Perfomance of Vishnu Puja on every Shukla Ekadashi called Akhanda Vrata followed by the Recital of Vishnu Panjara Stotra is stated to be an important component of Dharmik Life. This routine requirement needs to be followed by men and women of any ‘Varna’ with fasting and ‘Baahyaantara Shuchi’ or cleanliness of body and mind and by Puja with ‘Avahana’ (Invocation) –Panchaamrita Snaana with Ghee, Gandhodaka, Fruit Pulp, Honey and Curd; Vastra, Yagnopa -veeta, Pushpa, Phala, Dhupa, Deepa, Naivedyas, Taambula, Vaadya, Mantra Pushpa, Sangeeta, Japa, Homa and Stotra. The Stuti should be by way of Vishnu Panjara Stotra as follows:

*Namostutey Padmanabha Padmaadhava Mahadyutey, Dharmaartha Kaama Mokshaani Twa - akhandaani Bhavantumey/ Vikaasi Padmapatraaksha Yathaakhandosi Sarvatah, Tena Satyena Dharmaadyaa Akhandaah Santu Keshava/ Namostutey Govinda gruhya Sudarshanam, Praachyam rakshasva maam Vishno twaamaham sharanam gatah/ Gadaam Kaumodikeem gruhya Padmanaabhaamita dyutey, Yaamyam rakshaswa maam Vishno twaamaham sharanam gatah/ Halamaadaaya sounandam Namostey Purushottama, Praateekshaam raksha mey Vishno bhavantam sharanam gatah/ Musalam Shaantanam gruhya Pundarikaaksha rakshamaam, Uttarasyaam Jagannaatha bhavantam sharanamgatah/ Shaarangamaadaaya cha Dhanurastram Naraayanam harey, Namostey Raksha Rakshoghnam Ishanyaayaam sharanam gatah/ Panchajanyam Mahaashankhamantarbodhyam cha pankajam, Pragruhya rakshamaam Vishno Aagneyyaam Yagna sukara/ Charma Suryashatam gruhya khadgamchandramasam tathaa, Nairrutyaam maam cha rakshasva Divya Murtey Nrikesatin/ Vaijayanteem pragruhya twam Srivatsam kanthabhushanam, Vaayavyaam raksha maam Deva Ashvaseersha Namostutey/ Vainateyam samaaruhyantaarikshey Janaandana, Maam twam raksaajita sadaa Namas tey twa paraajita/ Vishaalaaksham Samaaruha rakshamaam twam rasaataley, Akuupaara Namastubhyam Mahamoha Namotutey/ Karasheershaangaghni parveshu tathaashta baahu panjaram, Krutwaa rakshaswa maam Deva Namostey Purushottama/ (Salutations Padmmanabha Lakshmiapati! With your blessings, may our Life’s objectives of Dharma-Artha-Klama-Moksha be accomplished; as you are spread out in all the directions, our desires of Dharma-Artha- Kama-Moksha be fulfilled endlessly. Govinda! Do kindly take up your Sudarshana Chakra and protect me from Eastern Side as I am your refugee; Mahadyuti Padmanabha! Do kindly pick up your Koumudi Gada/ mace and save my Southern side as I seek your shelter; Purushottama ! Do take up your Saunanda namak ‘ Hala’/*

Plough and protect me from the western side; Pundarikaaksha! I beg you to save my Musala named Shaantana and safeguard my Northern side; do kindly select your Saaranga Dhanush and Narayanaastra to shield my Ishaana Kona as I am defenceless; Yagna Varaha Vishno! I implore you to take up the renowned Panchajanya Shankhu / conchshell as also your Lotus Flower and disperse my enemies from the Agneya Side; Maha Nrisimha! Please lift up your Chandra naamaka shield and Surya naamak Khadga and guard my Nirruti direction; Hayagriva Deva! Please sport your Garland named Vijayanti and Srivatsa naamaka necklace to defend my Vayavya Kona; Vainateya! Do alight your Garuda vahana and assure my safety from 'Antariksha' / Sky; by assuming the Maha Kurma Rupa, Bhagavan! Kindly protect me from the Rasatala side too so that nothing untoward could happen to me from down-under; Vishaalaaksha! Maha Moha! Save me with Eight of Your endless hands, do create an Ashta-dasha or Eight Direction Safety Cage for me assuring Total Shield to me). This Sacred Vishnu Panjara was stated to have been recited by Mahadeva Shankara to provide a Total Cover of Protection to Devi Katyayani Durga in the context of the destruction of Mahishasura, Raktabeeja and other countless Asuras.

Bali Chakravarti wins and Lakshmi congratulates: As King Bali of Daityas took over the reins of Trilokas from Virochana the son of Prahlada and the great Grand father of Hiranyakashipu, Devas lost power in Swarga and the mighty Mayasura and Shambara flew the Flag of Vijayanti too. Yet, the Daityas were steeply engaged in Dharmik deeds, and they were guarding the Sky providing stability all-around: *Abhaavey Sarva paapaanaam Dharma bhavey sadohitey, Chatush –paadey sthitey dharmey hyadharmey paada vigrahey, Prajaapaalanayukteshu bhraajamaa -neshu Raajasu, Sarva dharma samprayukteshu tadhaashrama nivaasishu/* (There was complete absence of sinners in the Kingdom and Dharma was predominate; Dharma was established on four feet except on one; all the Deputised Kings were performing Administration ideally and all the Four Varnaas of population were observing Dharma perfectly) It was at that opportune time that the Coronation of Bali Chakravarti took place amidst the chanting of Victory by all concerned.

Devi Lakshmi appeared and congratulated at Bali's Elevation to Supremacy along with her 'Amsaas' like the Devis named Hreem, Kirti, Dyuti, Prabha, Dhruti, Kshama, Bhuti, Ruddhi, Divya, Mahamati, Shruti, Smriti, Ida, Shanti, Pushti, Kriya, and also select Apsaraas.

Meanwhile, Devataas were disillusioned at their discomfiture and the climax of Bali's high status especially because of Daitya King's unchallenged success owing to his Dharma Paalana and the lack of any record of Evil deeds by Daityas; they were also denied their shares of Yahna Phalaas. They approached their mother Aditi for solace and advice and in turn she reached her husband Kashyapa Muni. Kashyapa found the situation was delicate and even Brahma might find it difficult as strictly speaking the record of Daityas was above board! Brahma advised that the only way out would be that Tapasya and Aditi would perform strict Tapasya to Vishnu Deva and seek the most difficult boon of Vishnu taking birth as their son! The Couple reached the Banks of Kshira Samudra at a holy spot called Amrita, performed austere Tapasya and 'Kaamada Vrata' for thousand years by controlling their Indriyas, observing silence and Kashyapa chanted Veda Yukta Sukta called Parama Stuti as follows:

*Namastestu tey Devadeva Ekashringa Vrushaaarchey Sindhu Vrushaarchey Sindhuvrusha, Vrishaakapey Suravrishta Anaadisambhava Rudra Kapila Vishvaksena/ Sarva Bhutapatey Dhruva Dharmaadharma Vaikuntha Vrishaavarta, Anaadimadhyanidhana Dhananjaya Shuchishravah Prushnatejah/ Nijajaya Amriteshaaya Sanaatana Tridhaama Tushita Mahaa Tatwa, Lokanaatha Padmanaabha Virinchey Bahurupa Akshaya Akshara/ Havyabhujha Khandaparasho Shakra Munjakesha Hamsa Maha Dakshina,*

*Hrishikesha Sukshma Mahaaniyamadhara Viraja Loka pratishtha/ Arupa Agraja Dharmaja Dharma naabha Gabhastinaama, Shatakratunaabha Chandra ratha Surya Tejah Samudravaasah Ajah/ Sahrashirah Sahasrapaad Adhomukhaha Mahapurusha Purushottama, Sahasrabaaho Sahasramurtey Sahastraasya Sahasrasambhavah, Sahasratvam Twamaahuh/ Pushpahaasa Charama twameva Voushat, Vashatkaram twamaahu ragryam Makheshu Praashitaaram Sahasradharam/ Cha Bhuscha Bhuvasha Suwascha Twameva Vedavedya Brahmashaya, Brahmana priya twameva dhaurasi Maatarishvasasi Dharmosi/ Hota Pota Mantaa Netaa Homahetustwameva Agrya, Vishwathaamnaa twameva dikbhiih Subhaanda Ijyosi/ Sumedhosi Samidhastwameva matirgatirdaataa twamasi, Mokshosi Yogisi Srujaasi Dhaataa Parama Yagnosi/ Somesi Dikshitosi Dakshinaasi Vishwamasi, Sthavira Hiranyanaabha Narayana Trinayana Adityavarna/ Adityatejah Mahapurusha Purushottama Adi Deva Suvikrama, Prabhakara Shambho Swayambho Bhutaadih Mahabhutesi/ Vishva bhuta Vishvam twameva Vishwagoptaasi Pavitramasi, Viswabhuva Urthvakarma Amrita Divaspatey Vaachaspatey Ghrutaarchey, Ananta Karma Vamsha Praagvamsha Vishvapaatastwamewa/ Vaarthinaam Varadositwam, Chaturbhischa dwaabhyaam Panchabhireva cha, Yhuyatey cha punar –dhaabhyaam tubhyam Hotraatmaney Namah/ (Deva Deva, Eka Shringa, Vrishaarchi, Sindhuvrusha, Vrishaakapi, Suravrisha, Anaadi Sambhava, Rudra, Kapila, Vishvaksena, Sarva Bhuapati, Dhruva, Dharmaadharma, Vaikuntha, Vrishaa Karta, Anadi -madhya nidhana, Dhanajaya, Shrutishrava, Prushna Teja, Nijajaya, Amriteshaya, Sanaatana, Tridhaama, Tushita, Mahaa Tatwa, Lokanaatha, Padmanaabha, Virinchi, Bahurupa, Akshaya, Akshara, Havyabhujja, Khandaparashu, Shakra, Munjikesha, Hamsa, Mahaa Dakshina, Hrishikesha, Sukshma, Mahaniyamadhara, Viraja, Lokapratishtha, Arupa, Agraja, Dharmaja, Dharmanaabha, Gabhastunaabha, Shatakratunaabha, Chandra Ratha, Surya Teja, Aja, Sahasra shira, Sahasrapaada, Adhomukha, Maha Purusha, Purushottama, Sahasrabaahu, Sahasra Murti, Sahasrasya, Sahasra Sambhava! I prostrate before you and touch your feet; You are commended as Sahasratva, Pushpahaasa, Charama / Sarvotthama; You are known as Voushta and Vashatkaara; You are Agrya or Sarvotthama, Yagna Praashita or Bhokta, Sahasra dhaara; You are the Bhur-Bhuva-Swah Swarupa; Veda Vedyaa or Recognisable through Vedas; Brahmashaya, Brahmanapriya; Dhyouh or Sarvavyapi like the Sky; Maatarishwa or Speedy like Vayu; Dharmaa, Hota, Potha / Vishnu; Mantaa, Netaa, Homa hetu or the Root Cause of Homa; Vishvateja, Agrya or Sarvasreshtha, Subhanda or like the Huge Patrarupa encompassing all Dishaas; You are worthy of Yajana or Ijya; Sumedha, Samidha, Mati, Gati, and Daataa; You are Moksha, Yoga, Srashta or the Supreme Creator; Dhata / Dhaarana and Poshana Karta; Parama Yagna, Soma, Dikshita, Dakshina and Vishwa; You are Sthavira, Hiranyanaabha, Narayana, Trinayana, Adityavarna, Aditya Teja, Maha Purusha, Purushottama, Adi Deva, Suvikrama, Prabhakara, Shambhu, Swayambhu, Bhugtaadi, Maha Bhuta, Vishwa Bhuta, and Vishwa; You are the Samsaara Raksha, Pavitra, Vishwa bhava or Vishwa Srashta, Urthwa Karma or Uttama Karma, Amrita or Everlasting, Divaspati, Vaachaspati, Ghrutaarchi, Anantakarma, Vamsha, Pragvamsha, Vishwapa or Vishwa Paalaka, Varada or the Bestower of boons; and finally, You are the Hotraatma or who is responsible for producing Agnihotra by way of the seventeen counted Aksharaas or Letters viz. Four ‘Aashraavayas’ plus four ‘Astu Shroushads’ plus two ‘Yajaas’ plus five ‘Yajaamahyes’ and again two ‘Vashats’).*

Devi Aditi also made a commendatory appeal to Janaardana seperately and said: *Namah krutyaarta naashaaya Namah Pushkara maaliney, Namah Parama Kalyaana Kalyaanaadi vedhasey/ Namah Pankajanertaaya Namah Pankaja naabhaey, Namah Pankaja Sambhuti sambhavaayaatma yonaey/ Shriyah Kaantaayaa daantaayaa Daantadrushyaaya Chakriney, Namah Padmaasi hastaaya Namah Kanaka retasey/ Tathaatma Jnaana Yagjnaaya Yogi chintyaaya Yoginey, Nirgunaaya Vishshaaya*

*Haraye Brahmarpiney/Jagaccha tishthatey yatra jagato yo na drushyatey, Namah Sthulaati Sukshmaaya tasmai Devaaya Shaaranginey/ Yam na pashyanti pashyanto Jagadapyakhilam Naaha, Apashyadbhir-jagadyascha drushyatey hridi samshitah/ Bahirjyotiralakshyo yo lakshyatey Jyotisha parah, Yasminneva yataschaiva Hasyaitadakhilam Jagat/ Tasmai Samasta jagataamamaraaya Namoh Namah, Aadyah Prajaapatih sopi Pitrunaam Pamam Patih, Patih Syraanaam yastasmai namah Krishnaaya Vedhasey/ Yah Pravrutthai Nivruttaischa Kamkabhistu virajjyatey, Swargaapavarga phalado Namastasmai Gadaabhrutey/ Yastu sanchintyamaanopi Sarvam paapam vyapohati, Namastasmai Vishuddhaaya Parasmai Harimedhasey/ Ye pashyanthy akhikaadhaara meeshaana majama- vyayam, na punarjanma smaranam praapnuvanti Namaami tam/ Yaa yagnay Yagnaparamairijj- yatey Yagnasamsthitah, Tam Yagna Purusham Vishnum Namaami Prabhumeeswaram/ Geeyatey Sarva Vedeshu Vedavidbhirvidam gatih/ Yastasmai Vedavidyaaya Nityaaya Viushnavey Namah/ Yato Vishwam samruddhutam yasmin Pralayameshyati, Vishvodbhava Pratishthaaya Namastasmai Mahaatmaney/ AaBrahma stambha paryantam Vyaptam yena charaacharam, Mayaajaala samunnaddhamtamupendram namaamyaham/ Yotra Toyaswarupastho bibharti –akhilameeshwarah, Vishwam Vishwapatim Vishnum tam Namaami Prajaapatim/ Murtim tamosuramayam taddhidho vinihanti yah, Raatrijam Surya Rupeecha tamupendram namaamyaham/ Yasyaakshini Chandra Suryo Sarvaloka Shubhaashubham, Pashyatah karma satatam tamupendram namaamyaham/ Yasmin Sarveshwarey sarvam Satyametanmayoditam, Naanrutam tamajam Vishnum Namaami Prabhavaavyayam/ Yadyetat Satyamuktam me Bhuyaschaato Njanardana, Satyena tena sakalaah Puryantaam me Manorathaah/*

(Prabho! I am grieving with unimaginable anguish which could be destroyed only by you. My Salutations to You Bhagavan who sports lotus garlands and Pushakara malaas; You are the Adi Vidhata who is an embodiment of propitiousness! You are Kamala Nayana, Padmanaabha, the Creator of Brahma, Atmajanma, Lakshmi Pati, Indriya damana, worthy of darshan only by Samayama Yogis, Sudarshana and Khadga dhaari! Only those 'Atmagyanayuta' Yagnakartas, Yogadhyaanis and Yoga Saadhakaas could aspire to visualise your Gunarahita Brahma Swarupa! May I pay my obeisances to you Sharanga Dhari Deva! as you occupy the whole world in a Gross Form and yet possess the tiniest Form which is invisible! Those persons who do not make efforts to visualise you do not get your Darshan any way, but those who have no other desire in life excepting you would readily witness you are blessed with your image in their hearts always for the asking! Your unbelievable Jyoti or extraordinary Radiance is all-pervading in the entire Universe in which you are present invisibly and contrarily the Universe is but an integral segment of You Parama Deva! In other words, You are all over the Universe, the Universe was created by you and in fact the Universe is of Yours! My humble greetings to you the original Prajapati! Pitara Sreshtha! Devata Swami! Shri Krishna! Here are my Pranaams again and again! You are the Supreme Objective of Pravritti and Nivritti Deeds (Ritualistic and Directly unswerving approach) and the Unique Decider of bestowing Swarga or Moksha the Eternal Bliss! My namashkaaraas to you Vishuddha Swarupa as even my taking your very name and memory would smash all my sins! You are the Avinaashi or Indestructible; Akhilaadhara or the Mighty Clutch of the Entirety; the Only Reliever of the Trap of Birth-Death Cycle! You are perceptible through Yagnaas, the Yagna Murti, the Yagna Sthita and Yagna Purusha! Vedas commend you, Vedajnaas sing your hymns, You are the 'Vidwadjanaashraya' or the one who is fond of the Company of Vidwadjanaas. My Most Revered Paramaatma! The whole Vishwa is your Creation, Sustenance and also the Termination thus You are the Vishva Kartha, Vishva Bharta and the Vishva Harta! I pray to that Highest Magnificence who materialised Surya Swarupa and destroyed darkness for good. To that Sarveswara, the Ajanma, Avyaya, Srashta and Vishnu who is fully aware of the

Truth about me and the transparency and earnestness of my Prayers that I am prostrating with humility craving him to grant my wish!) As both Kashyapa Muni and Devi Aditi made their Soul-full Prayers, the impossible Darshan of Bhagavan Vishnu appeared and granted the wish that he would indeed assume His Incarnation with a view to reinstate Indra and Devas to Swarga and Trilokas.

Aditi conceives Vamanaavataara: As Aditi got conceived and Bhagavan Vishnu agreed to do so, Prithvi got tremored, Mountains were shaken, and Sapta Samudras were agitated with wobbles of waves and there was strangeness all-around! Bali Chakravarti felt that there were considerable changes in the Nature as mountains were trembling and high Sea tides were on new high and more so Daityas were experiencing paleness and loss of their normal instincts of courage, assertiveness and egoism. Bali approached his grand father Prahlada and asked for the causes of these omens and premonitions. Parama Bhakta Prahlada deeply meditated Bhagavan Srihari and visualised the latter in the Garbha of Devi Aditi and had fleeting scenes of Ashtaadasha Vasus, Ekadasha Rudras, Dwadasha Adityas, two Ashvini Kumaraas, Forty Nine Maruts, Sandhyas, Vishwa Devas, Gandharvas, Nagas, Rakshasaas, his Son Virochana, Bali Chakravarti, Jambha, Kujumbha, Narakasura, Baana, and several other Daityas, Pancha Bhutas, Seas, Mountains, Rivers, Satpa Dwipaas, Brahma, Shiva, Nava Grahas, Daksha and other Prajapatis, Sapta Rishis and so on. Prahlada gave a heavy exhalation and conveyed the details what all he visioned and said that the Greatest Narayana in would soon be descending on Earth in his incarnation as Vamana Deva! Bali could not comprehend the full import of what Prahlada underlined and expressed his surprise whether Vamana Deva could be ever comparable with the Senior most Rakshasaas like Viprachitta, Shibi, Sankha, Ayamshanku, Hayashira, Ashwa Shira, Bhangha kaara, Maha Hanu, Kakkuraaksha and Durjaya. As Bali talked in such thoughtless comparisons with Paramatma and some examples of Danavas however mighty they might be, Prahlada got highly infuriated and shouted at Bali that there could not be bigger immature fool and hollow minded; he said that Bali's evil frame of mind would certainly lead the entire Vamsha of Daityas to doom: *Yashaam twameedrusho Rajaa Durbuddhiravivekamaan, Deva devam Mahabhaagam Vaasudevamajam Vibhum, Twaamrutey Paapa sankalpa konya evam vadishyati/ Ya yeto bhava -ta proktaah samasta Daitya daanavaah, Sa Brahmakaastathaa Devaah Staavaraantaa vibhu -tayah/ Twam chaaham cha Jagacchedam Saadridrumanadivanam, Samudradwipalokoyam yaschedam sacharaacharam/ Yasyaabhivaadya vandyasya vyaapinah Paramaatmanah, Ekaam -shaamshi kalaajanma kastameyvam Pravikshyati/ Rutey Vinaasha abhimukham twaameka mavivekinam, Durbuddimajitaatmaanam Vriddhaanaam Shashanaa -tigam/ Shochaneeyamyasya -mey gehey Jaatastava Pitaadhamah, Yasya twamee -drushah Putro Deva devaavamaanakah/--Nindaam karoshi tasmistwam Krishney Guru Guror Gurow, Yasmaat tasmaadihaiva twamaishwa -ryaad bhramshameyshasi/ Sa Devo Jagataam Naatho Baley Prabhur janaardanaah, Nanvaham pratyavekshyastey Bhaktimaanatra mey Guruh/ Yetaanmaatra mapya -tra ninditaa Jagato Gurum, Naapekshitastavyaa yasmaat tasnaacchaapam dadaamitey/ Yathaa-mey shirasacche -daadim gurutaram Baley, Twayoktamachutaakshepam Rajya bhrashta stathaa pata/ Yathhana Krishnaadaparah Paritraanam Bhavaarnavey, Tathaachirena pashyeyam bhavantam Raajjya -vichutam/* (Bali! I have not come across a King of this kind who is evil-minded and dull-witted that could blame the Devaadhi Deva, Maha Bhaga, Sarva Vyaapi Vaasudeva; the names of the Daityas that you have taken as the so-called Mighty as also of Brahma and Devas were created by that Paramatma; indeed with just one 'Amsha' of myriad of his Amshaas, he created the whole Charaacharaas and Samasta Vibhutip or Manifestations including you, me, Daityas, Parvataas, Vrikshaas, Rivers, Forests, Samudraas, Sapta Dwipas, and so on and He is Sarva-Vandya, Sarva-Vyapi, and Sarva-Vidita; would there be a Vivekaheen-Murkha-

Durbuddhi like you who would pass judgments on Him! What-ever are the reasons due to which you are faulting your Guru/ your father, or his father who is me or the Parama Guru who is Paramatma might be best known to you! Your talking slightly against Narayana is by far the worst since it tantamounts to cutting my head and it is to set right those feelings of pride and egotism that I am giving you a ‘Shaap’ / Curse that soon you would be dislocated from your Kingdom, Aishwarya, and ego. )

Chakravarti Bali was distraught and distressed at this most unfortunate happening of Prahlada’s curse and was ashamed of himself for his rash, thoughtless and sinful belittling of Bhagavan’s uniqueness which had understandably stirred up the anger of a legendary Bhakta of the unparalleled stature of Prahlada. He confessed that there was a total loss of his mental faculties when he conversed at that time due to superciliousness and over-enthusiasm of having defeated Devas which propelled his traits of arrogance; indeed his remarks had correctly hurt his grand father who was fully justified in giving him an irreparable curse but far worse than the curse, his behaviour which hurt elders, like Prahlada, who built a reputation of the family as Narayana Bhaktas, was sullied in the memory of future generations. This was humiliating to the Vamsha that he was squarely responsible! He begged of Prahlada’s forgiveness which he did not deserve and would feel repentant ever day and night. Prahlada appreciated Bali’s remorse and said that he was incensed up at that moment and the anger led him to obsession which lost his mental equilibrium that caused the pronouncement of the curse, for which he felt extremely sad. But a lesson was provided to Bali and fully converted him as a Parama Bhakta of Narayana. Meanwhile, Devi Aditi delivered a lovely male child in short stature when Nature assumed a blossomed freshness that was rare, the Gagan Mandala was clean without any trace of pollution and Vayu was pleasantly soft and nicely odoured quite unfamiliar in the human world. The proud parents invited Brahma to perform Jaatakarma and Namakarana as Vamana Murti.

Brahma Stuti to Vamana Deva : It was at that time when Brahma could not suppress his emotions and broke in his ecstasy into an instant Eulogy as follows: *Jaadheesha Jayaajeya Jaya Vishwa Guro Harey, Janmamrityu jaraateeta Jayaananta Jayaachyuta/ Jayaajita Jayaasesha Jayaavyakta sthitey Jaya, Jagatojagadantesha sthitey Jaya, Paramaarthartha Sarvajna Jnaanajeryartha nihsuta/ Jayaasesha Jagatsaakshir Jagatkartrur Jagat Guro, Jagatojagadantesha sthitou paalayatey Jaya/ Jagaakhila Jayaasesha Jaya Sarvahridistitha, Jagaadi madhyaantamaya Sarvajnaana mayottama/ Mumukshubhinir - deshya Nityahrashtha Jayeswara, Yogibhirmukti kaamaistu Damaadi guna bhushana/ Jayaatisukshma Durjeya Jaya sthula Jaganmaya, Jaya Sukshmaati sukshma twam Jayaanindriya sendriya/ Jaya Swaamaayaa yogastha Seshabhoga Jayaashara, Jayaikadamshttra praaptena samuddhita Vasumdhara/ Nrukesarin Suraataati Vakshahsthalala vidaarana, Saamoprataam Jaya Viswaatman Mayaa Vaamana Keshava/ Nija maayaa paricchhinna Jaddhaatarjanaardana, Jayaachintya Jayaaneka Swapupaika vidha Prabho/ Vruddhiswa Vardhitaaneka Vikaara Prakrutey Harey, Twayyeshaa Jagataameesho samshtitaa Dharma paddhatih/ Na twaamaham na cheshaano Neindraadyaastri dashaa Harey, Jaatumeeshaa na Munyah Sanakaadyaa na Yoginah/ Twam maayaapata samveeto Jagatyatra Jagatpatey, Kastwaam vetsyati Sarvesha twaprasaadam vinaa Narah/ Twamevaaraadhito yasya Prasaada sumukhah Prabho, Sa yeva kevalam Devam vetti twam netaro janah/ Tadeeshwareshwary -shaana Vibho Buddistwa bhaavana, Prabhavaayasya Vishwasya Vishwaatman Pruthulochana!* (Victory to you Adheesha, Ajeya, Vishwa Guru Hari, Ananta who is devoid of Birth and End; Achyuta, Ajiota, Asesha, Avyakta Sthita Bhagavan, Paramaarth Purti Nimita, Sarvajna who distinguishes Jnaana and Jneya, Asesha Jagat Saakshi, Jagat Kartaa, Jagat Guru, Jagat-Ajagat Sthita or Existent in Charaachara; Paa lana-Pralaya Swami, Akhila, Asesha, Sarva Hridaya Sthita; Adi-Madhyama-Anta Swarupa; Samasta Jnaana Murti, Uttama,

Visualisable only by Mumukshaas, Mukti Sadhana by Yoga sevitaas, Nitya Prasanna and Parameshwara who is ornamented by Dama, Kshama and such other qualities; Atyanta Sukshma Swarupa, Durjeya or realisable with great difficulty; Sthula (Gross) and at the sametime AtiSukhsma (Tiniest); Indriya Sahita and Indriya Rahita; Mayaayuta yogastitha; Sesha shaayi Avinaashi; Bahurupa dhaari; Ekadamshtira Prithvyoddhaara Varaha Rupa or Varaha Rupa who lifted Earth with a single tusk; Hiranyakahipa vakshasthala vidirna Nrisimha; Maya Vaamanarupa dhara; Mayaavruta Samsara dharana Parameswara or the Holder of Samsara surrounded by Maya; Dhyaananeka Swarupa dhaarana karaa; Eka Vidhi Vibho! You are the epitome of Buddhi / Intellect; Jagaddharma marga Sthita Prabho! Myself, Shankara, Indra, Sanakaadi Munis and Maha Yogiganaas had failed to understand about you as we are all shrouded by Vishnu Maya; who else could gauge your personality excepting your self! Only those who are dedicated to you and are ever-engaged with your constant 'Araadhana' could have a chance of pleasing you and none else. Ishwreshwara! Ishaana! Vibho! Bhavana! Vishwatma! Pruthulochana! Vishwa Prabhava or Srishti kaarana! Vishnu! May you grow from strength to strength! Victory to you forever! As Bhagavan Hrishikesha was prayed to by Brahma, the former smiled and said that in the past Indra and Devas and Kashyapa Muni as also Devi Aditi paid their homages and recited Stotras to him and he assured that he would assume the incarnation of Vamana Murti; he further assured that he would have Indra and Devatas reinstated as Trilokaadhipatis soon. In course of time Brahma offered Krishna Mrigacharma to Bhagavan and Brihaspati performed Upanayana and Yagnopaveeta dharana; Marichi Maharshi gifted Palaasha danda, Visishtha gave kamandalu, Angira Muni gave a Silk Vastra, Pulaha Muni gave a mat as Aasana, and various other Munis taught the Vatu the purport of Omkaara, Vedas, Shastras, Sankhya Yoga, Darshana Yuktis etc. Having been trained in all these disciplines, Vamana Deva had one fine morning left for the Yagna Shaala of Bali Chakravarti as the latter was executing a Sacred Yagna while carrying his mat, danda /stick, chhatra / umbrella and kamandulu / water vessel. Danava Guru Shukracharya was aware that Vishnu Deva in the form of Vamana Murti was arriving at the Yagna and briefed Bali Chakravarti to be extremely careful as Vishnu was a saave and highly talented person to put words in the mouths of the opponents. The Guru reminded Chakravarti that the latter denied the age-old practice of rights to yagna's shares to Devataas and that Vamana Murti might as well ask for the revival of the practice but those shares were now enjoying by Danava Chiefs. Bali replied to Danava Guru that in case Vishnu in the incarnation of Vamana Murti came and requested for any thing then how could a King say 'no' to it! Bali told the Danava Guru:

*Brahman katha -maham bruyaa manyapi hi yachitah, Naastiti kim Devasya Samsaarasyaaghahaarinah/ Vratopa- vaasairvidhairiyah Prabhurgrunhatey Harih, Sa mey vakshyati deheeti Govindah kimato - dhikam? Naasteeti yanmayanoktamanyeshaamapi yaachataam, Vakshyaami kathamaaya -tey tadadya chaamarechutey/Shlaagha eva hi veeraanam Daanaacchaapt samaagamah, Na badhaakaari yadyaanam tadanga Balavat smrutam/* (Brahmanaachaarya! How could I deny any body requesting me for a favour! And if that Supreme Deva asked me for a charity, then what else would be the alternative! While Parameswara received the fruits of Vrataas, Upavaasaas, and so on from one and all, and if that Parameswara himself asked a boon from me, could there be a greater fortune to me! When even an ordinary person approached me for a favour, then too that could not be denied by a King; then when Narayana himself asked for it, could such an opportunity presented itself, this chance could never indeed be missed. Even if there are difficulties in executing a charity, the value of charity would get multiplied and 'Veera purushaas' would never deter from performing the deed) Having said the above, Bali asked Shukraachaarya: *Yatagjnaatwaa Munisreshtha! Daanavighna karenamey, Naiva Bhavyam Jagannaathey*

*Govidey samupastithey!* ( By understanding the above, Munisreshta! Please do not create ‘Daana Vighnaas’ or hurdles in the execution of the Charity!).

Vamana Deva requests for three feet for Tapasya and occupies trilokas: As Vamana Deva arrived at the Yagna shaala, Bali welcomed him, offered ‘Arghya’, ‘Aasana’, Puja and offered him limitless gold, jewellery, elephants, horses, cows, women, clothes, bunches of villages or townships or whatever would be his wish! Vamana Deva replied smilingly: *Mamagnisharanaarthaaya dehi Rajan Padatrayam, Suvarnagraamaratnaadi tadarthibhyah pradeeyataam/* (Raja! Please provide to me three feet of land to enable me to set up an Agni- Shaala). Bali said that after all three feet would be nothing as he could ask for a lakh of feet which could be given away, but Vamana Deva replied that he was indeed satisfied with that much of Bhumi and if the King were to offer more he might as well provide to the other needy! Bali Chakravarti readily agreed not understanding the implication and as the deed of Daana was being executed and Vamana Deva extended his hand to the King and expanded his Vamana Rupa gradually immediately:

*Sarva Devamayam rupam darshayaamaasa tatkshanaat/ Chandra Suryoutu nayaney dyouh shirascharanou Kshitih, Paadaangulyah Pishaachaastu Hastaangulya –scha Gruhakaah/ Vishvedevaascha jaanusthaa janghey Saadhyaah Surottamaah, Yakshaa nakheshu sambhuta rekhaapsaraastathaa/ Drushtirruksaanya seshaani keshaah Suryamshvah Prabhoh, Taarakaa romakupaani romeshu cha Maharshayah/ Baahavo vidishatasya Dishaah Shrotrey Mahatmanah, Ashvinou Shravaney tasya naasaa Vayurmahaatmanah/ Prasadey Chandramaa Devo Mano Dharmah samaashritah, Satyasyaabhavad Vaani Jihvaa Devi Saraswati/ Greevaarditirdeva mataa Vidyaastadvalayastathaa, Swargadwaaramabhunmaitrah twashtaa Pushaa cha vai bhruvou/ Mukhe Vaishvaanarschaascha vrushanou tu Prajaapatih, Hridayamcha Param Brahma Pumstwam vai Kashapo Munih/ Prushthesya Vasavo Devaa Marutah Sarva saandhishu, Vakshasthaley tathaa Rudro Dharryachaasya Mahaarnavah/ Udarey chaasya Gandharvaa Marutascha Mahaabalaah, Lakshmirmedhaa Dhrutih Kaantih Sarv Vidyaascha vai Katih/ Sarvajyoteesham Yaaneeha Tapascha Paramam mahat, Tasya Devaadhi Devasya tejah prodbhutammuttamam/ Tanou Kukshishu Vedaascha jaanuni cha Mahaamakhaah, Ishtayah pashavaschaasya Dwujaanaam cheshtitaanicha/ Tasya Devamayam rupam drushtaa Vishnormahaatmanah, Upasarpanti tey Daityaah patangaa iva paavaakam/ Chakshurastu Mahaa Daityaah Paadaangushtham gruheetavaan, Dantaabhyaam tasya vai greevaa mangushtheynaahana dharih/ Prathamya Sarvaansuraan Paadahastathalairvibhuh, Krutwaa Rupam Mahaakaayam Samjahaaraashu Modineem/ Tasya Vikramato Bhumim Chandraadityaou stanaantarey, Nabho Vikramamaanasya sakhidesho stitathaarvibhou/Param Vikramaanasya jaanumuley Prabhaakarou, Vishnoraastaam sthitasyaitow Devapaalana jkarmani/ Jitwaa Lokatrayam taamscha hatwaachaasura pungavaan, Purandaraaya Trailokyam dadou Vishnururukramah/*

(Instantly, Vamana Murti displayed his Virat Swarupa: Chandra and Surya were his two Eyes, Shy was his head, Prithvi his feet, Pishachaas were his foot-fingers, Gruhyakaas were his hand fingers, Vishwa Deva Ganaas were in his jaanus /knees, Sadhyas were his janghaas, Yakshaas were his nails, Apsarsaas were his palm lines, Nakshatras were his Eye sight, Surya kiranans were his hairs, Stars were his body hairs, Maharshiganaas were in the hair roots, Vidishas were his hands, Dishaas were his ears, Ashwini Kumars were his faculty of hearing, Vayu was his nose, Chandra Deva was his joking faculty, Dharma Deva was his thinking capacity, Satya was his voice and Saraswati was his tongue, Deva Mata Aditi was his neck, Vidya was his valiyaas or long poles; Pushas were his eye brows, Swarga dwar was his anus,

Vaishvanara his face, Prajapati his vrushanaas, Param Brahma was his heart, Kashyapa Muni was his Purnstwa, Vasu Devata was his back, Marutganaas were his Sandhis, Rudra was his Vakshasthala, Mahaarnavaa was his Dhairya, Gangharvas were in his stomach; Lakshmi, Medha, Dhruti, Kaanti and all Vidyaas were in his 'Kati Pradesha'; the luster and radiance in the total Universe as also the Tapo teja or the power of meditation was the reflection of the magnificence of Natayana; Vedas and Scriptures and the huge Yagnaas and the Sacred Deeds of the Virtuous like Maharshis and Brahmanas were all inside in his 'kukshi' or belly. On viewing the Paramatma's 'Virat Swarupa', the so called 'Mahaasuraas' referred to earlier in ignorance by Chakravarti Bali before Prahlada's curse to him got burnt off like flies before a gigantic outbreak of Fire! Having thus occupied the Universe in totality including the sub-terrain Sapta Paatalaas, Vamana Deva stated that since Bali took the water in his hand and donated the THREE FEET of Land, and blessed him to be the King of the Sapta Paatalaas and granted him long life till the end of Manvantara of the on-going Vaisawata Manu. He also blessed Bali that all the 'Homa Phalas' at the time of Shraddhas to be performed even by Brahmanas, besides incomplete and defective Vratas, Agni Kaaryaas without ghee, and Kusha grass roots as also the daanas without detachment would belong to Bali and his followers.

*Ityetat kathitam asya Vishnor mahatmyamutthamam, Shrunuyaadyo Vamanasya Sarva Paapaih pramuchyatey/ Bali Prahlaada samvaadam mantritam Bali Shakrayo, Baleyrvishnoscha charitam ye smarishyanti Maanavaah/ Naadhayo Vyadhayestshaam na cha Mohaakulam Manah, Chuturaajye nijam Raajyamishta- praptim Viyogawaan/ Samaapnoti Mahabhaagaa Narah shrutwa kathaamimaam/ Brahmano Vedamaapnoti Kshatriyo Jayatey Mahim, Vaishyo Dhana Samruddim cha Shudrah Sukhamaampunuyaat, Vaamanasya Matmyam shrunvan Paapaih pramuchyatey/*

(Whosoever hears of this narration of Vamana Charitra and Mahatmya would have no 'Adhi-Vyadhis' or external and internal problems and be freed from sins; Brahmanas would attain Veda Prapti, Kshatriyas of Victories, Vaishyas of Dhana Samruddhi and Shudras enjoy happiness; As they read or hear of Prahlada-Bali Samvada or of Bali and Vishnu Charitra, one would avoid situations of Official hindrances and achieve the desired goals of life.)

Gajendra Moksha: Maharshi Pulastya narrated further to Brahmarshi Narada further that Bhakta Prahlada extensive tours of Tirthas like Naimisharanya, Brihadhwaja, Maha Nadi, Soma Tirtha, Mangunika, Ashwa Tirtha, Varanasi, Avimukteshwara, and so on and reached Trikuta Mount which was the residence of Rishis and Yogis. He worshipped Sarvya Vyapi Pundarikaaksha and sighted the famed Gajendra Moksha Sarovara which was the legendary and Sacred Tirtha encircled by the Mountain Range. Nearby the Sarovara was a thick jungle inhabited by cruel animals, birds, and vegetation inhabited by large groups of wild elephants too. The chief of a herd of elephants Gajendra entered the Sarovara for a bath of cool water along with its group and a huge crocodile caught hold of one of the feet of Gajendra dragged into deep waters as the Elephant struggled but could not escape the sharp and powerful grip of the crocodile, even as Gajendra and its companions made desperate efforts for thousand years while Devas were witnessing the prolonged suffering of the Elephant King. The Elephant was stated to be the King of Pandya an extreme and dedicated Narayana Bhakta and the crocodile was a Gandharva called Huhu who was cursed by a Sage ; when implored by the Gandharva, the Muni forecast that Narayana Himself would slice the crocodile head and qualify him for Salvation. As Gajendra was desperate and distressed, he remembered the Script of a Vishnu Stotra in his erstwhile birth and frantically chanted the Prayer by

offering a ‘Pushpamaala’ with his lifted trunk and imagining the Swarupa of Artaa- Janardana with tears in his eyes as follows:

*Om Namō Mulapratrutaey Ajinaatha Mahatmaney, Anaashritaaya Devaaya Nispruhaya  
Namostutey/Nama Aadyaaya Beejaaya Arshayaaya Pravartiney, Anantaraaya Choukaaya Avyataaya  
Namō Namah/ Namah Shivaaya Shantaaya NischitaayaYashaswiney, Sanaatanaaya Purvaaya  
Puraanaaya Namō Namah/ Namō Devaadhi Devaaya Swabhaavaaya Namō Namah, Namō Jagat  
Pratishthaaya Govindaaya Namō Namah/ Namostu Padmanaabhaaya Namō Yogoddbhavaayach,  
Vishveswaraaya Devaaya Shivaaya Harayey Namah/ Namotu Tasmai Devaaya Nirgunaaya Guptaataney,  
Narayanaaya Vishvaaya Devaanaam Paramaatmaney/ Namō namah Karanavamanaya  
Naraayanaayamita vikramaaya/ Shrishaankha charaasi Gadaadhaaraaya Namostu tasmai  
Purushottamaaya/Guhyaya Vedanalayaaya Mahodaraaya Simhaaya Daityanidhanaaya  
Chaturbhujaya, Brahmendra Rudra Muni chaarana Samtutaaya Devottamaaya Varadaaya  
Namochyutaaya/ Nagendra deha Shayanaasana supriyaaya Goksheera Hema Shukhaneela  
ghanopamaaya, Peetaambaraaya Madhu Kaitabha naashanaaya Viswhaaya Charumukutaaya  
Namōjaraaya/ Naabhiprajaata Kamalastha Chaturmukhaaya Kshirodarakaanavaniketa Yashodharaaya,  
Naanaa Vichitra Mukutaangada Bhushanaaya Sarveshwaraaya Varadaaya Namō Varaaya/  
Bhaktipriyaaya Varadepta Sudarshanaaya Phullaravinda Vipulaayata lochanaaya, Devendra  
vighnashamanodyata pourushaaya Yogeshwaraaya Virajaaya Namō Varaaya/ Brahmaayanaaya  
Tridashaananaaya Lokaadhi naathinaathaaya Bhavaapanaaya, Mahaa Varaahaaya Namaskaromi/  
Kutasthamavyata -machintya rupam Naarayanam Kaaranamaadidevam, Yugaanta sesham Purusham  
Puraanam tam Devadevam Sharanam prapadye/ Yogeshwaram Charuvichitra mouli magneyamagrayam  
Prakruteyh parasthatam, Kshetrajnamaatma prabhavam Varenyam tam Vaasudevam sharanam  
prapadye/Adrushya mavyata machintya mavyayam Mahashiyo Brahmamayam Sanaatanam, Vadanti yam  
vai Purusham Sanaatanam tam Deva guhyam sharanam prapadye/ Yadaksharam Brahma vadanti  
Sarvagam nishamyā yam Mrutyu mukhaat pramuchyatey, Tameehwaram truptamanuttamaigunaaih  
paraayanam Vishnumupaimi shaswatam/ Kaarya Kriyaa Kaarana maprameyam Hiranyabaahum  
Varapadmanaabham, Mahaabalam Vedanidhim Suresham Vrajaami VishnumSharanam Janaardanam/  
Kireeta Keyura Mahaarha nishkairmanyuktamaa -lankrita sarva gaatram, Peetaambaram Kanchana  
Bhakti Chitram Maalaadharam Keshava mabhypaimi/ Bhavodbhavam Veda vidaam Varishtham  
Yogaatmanaam Saamkhyavidaam Varishtham, Aditya Rudraashvasuprabhaavam Prabhum  
prapadyechuta maavatmavantam/ Shrivatsaankam Mahadevam Devaguhyamanoupamam, Prapadye  
sukshmamachalam Varenyamabhayapradam/ Prabhavam Sarva bhutaanaam Nirgunam  
Parameshwaram, Prapadye muktamamkaanaam yateenaam Paramaam gatim/ Bhagavantam  
Gunaadhyakshamaksharam Pushkarekshanaame Sharanyam Sharanam Bhaktya Prapadye  
Bhaktavatsalam/ Trivikramam Trilokesham Sarvesham Prapitaamaham, Yogaatmaanam Mahaatmaanam  
pradyeham Janaardanam/ Adidevamajam Shambhum Vyaktaavyaktam Sanaatanam, Naraayana –  
maneyamsam prapadye Brahmana priyam/ Namō Varaaya Devaaya Namō Sarvasahaayacha, Prapadye  
Deva Deveshamaneeyaamsa manauh sadaa/ Ekaaya Lokatatwaaya Paratah Paramaatmaney, Namah  
Samahsahasra shirashey Anantaaya Mahaatmaney/ Twaameva Paramam Devamrishayo  
Vedapaaragaah, Keertayanti cha yam Sarvey Brahmaadeenaam Paraayanam/ Namstey  
Pundareekaaksha Bhaktaanaamabhayaprada, Subrahmanya Namastostu traahimaam Sharanaagatam/*

(My salutations to you Mula Prakriti Swarupa, Invincible Mahatma Vishnu who is Nirashraya or free to act in your own voiltion; You are the Adyabija Swarupa or the Primeaval Germinator, Aradhya Deva or

the Principal Target sought to be achieved by Rishis and Yogis and the Unique and Unknown powerhouse of the Kalachakra or the Supreme Time Machine; You are indeed the Sarva Vaapi or All-Pervasive; the Undisclosed Guna Swarupa and at the same time the Nirguna or Featureless; You are beyond the barriers of reasoning and logic, impossible to achieve by rationality or prudence, the Immeasurable; the Foremost Form of auspiciousness, Ever Peaceful, Decisive, the Embodiment of Eminence and Fame and the Origin of Knowledge and the Ageless and Timeless! Devadi Deva, Swabharupa, Jagat Pratishtha Kaaraka, Govinda, Padmanabha, Yogodbhava, Vishveswara, Deva, Shiva, Hari, Nirguna and Gunatma alike; Viushwatma, Narayana, Deva's Paramatma, Karanavasha Vamana -rupa or of the Form of Vamana owing to Exigencies; Atula Vikrama; You are the Holder of Shankha, Chakra, Sword, and Mace and Purushottama; You are the Mysterious and the Unidentified; the Emitome of Vedas; Mahodara readily assuming Leonine Form to eradicate the race of Daityas, the Chaturbhuj or the Four Handed Swarupa; You are the Dheya or the Worshippable by Brahma, Indra, Rudra, Maharshis, and one and all. You lie comfortably on the Sesha Naga's Unique Body as your Bed; wearing vastras of different colours; the annihilator of Madhu-Kaitabha Daityas; the wearer of a charming Kirita or head gear; who has always youthful and never has old age; has Brahma seated on a lotus top that sprouted from his navel; has residence on Ksheera Sagara or the Ocean of Milk; he is multi ornamented on his various body parts; the provider of boons and the Emblem of Boons; Bhakta Premi or the Beloved of devotees; the Eternal Embodiment of Radiance; with eyes resembling fully bloomed Lotus flower; the trouble shooter of Devendra; and the provider of boons to him; The 'Aadhaara Swarupa' or of the Murti worshipped by Brahma and all the Devas; Triloka Naatha; Bhava Hatha; Maha Varaaha Swarupa; I seek refuge in Kutastha, Avyakta, Achintya Swarupa; Kaaranaswarupa; Adi Deva Narayana; the Great Survivor Maha Swarupa at the End of Yugas; Ajeya; Sarva Sreshtha; The One who exists far beyond Prakriti; the Kshetrajna; Atmaprabhava; Varenya, Vaasudeva; Adrushya, Ayakta, Achityaneeya, Ayaya, Brahma maya and Sanatana Purusha and Deva guhya my Pranaams / greetings; I was at the Mrityu Mukha or at the Devouring Point of Death; I seek protection and safety from you Bhagavan; You are Atmatrupta or Self-Satisfied; Shaswata Ashraya Swarupa; Karya-Kriya-Karana Swarupa; Agamyaa; Hiranuabaahu; Mahabala shaali; Veda nithi; Sureshwara-Janardana-Vishnu; I seek asylum from that Jishnu who was ornamented by Kireeta-Kayura-Atimulya Mani malaas; Peetaambara Dhaari; Swarnima Patra Racaha naalin -krita; Mala Dharana Keshava; Samsaarotpannakara; Vedavidsreshtha; Yogatma; Sankhya Shastra Jnaata Sreshtha; Aditya-Rudra-Ashvini Kumara-Vasu Prabhavaachyuta; Atma Swarupa Prabho! Shri Vatsa Dharanakara; Maha Deva; Devataaguhya; You are the Unparalleled one defying description, with the Epithet of Nirguna, Nissanga, Niyama Paalaka; My I seek refuge in you Gunaadhyaksha, Akshara, Kamala Nayana, Ashraya Karana Yogya Swarupa, Sharana Pradata and Bhakta Prema kara. I prostrate before you Bhagavan as the measurer of Three Feet covering the the Trilokas, Prapitamaha, Yoga Murti, Mahatma Janaddana, Adi Deva, Ajanma, Shambhu, Vyaktaavyakta Swarupa, Sanatana, Parama Shukshma, Brahmana Priya Narayana! I bend my knees before you Sreshtha Deva, Sarva Shaktimaan, Sukshmaati Sukshma Devadevesha, Lokatata Swarupa, the Unique Paratpara Paramkatma, Sahasraseersha Paranatma, Ananta, Dedaparagami Rishi sannuta! You are the final shelter to Brahmadi Devaas; Pundarikaaksha, Bhuaktaabhaya Pradata, Subrahmanya, Sharanu, Sharanu (Save me, Save me)!

As Vishnu Deva was playing chess with **Maha Lakshmi** and heard with the heartfelt and desperate supplication of Gajendra, he did not even care to inform her and even dragged her some distance and instantly appeared in his full glory with four arms adorned with Shankha, Chakra, Gadaa and Saranga

descended from Garuda and sliced off with his Sudarshana Chakra the neck of the crocodile and relieved from the curse of Devala Muni to the Gandharva Huhu and simultaneously rescued King of Pandya.

Phala Shruti : Brahma Deva affirmed- *Ya idam shrinuyaa nityam Praatarutthhaaya Manavah, Prapyuyaat Paramaam siddhim duhkha prastasya nishyati/ Gajendra mokshanam Punyam sarva Paapa pranaashanam, Kathitena smrutey naatha Shrutena cha Tapodhana, Gajendra mokshaneneha sadyah paapaat pramuchyatey/ Yasmin kiloktey bahu paapa bandhanaat labhyet Moksho Dwiradena yaddhat, Ajam Varenyam Varapadmanaabham Narayanam Brahmanidhim Suresham/ Tam Devaguhyam Purusham Puraanam Vandaamyaham Lokapatim Varenyam/*

Whosoever reads, hears or cogitates about the Gajendra Moksha Stuti with purity of body and mind in the mornings would be relieved of difficulties of the day and the cumulative sins of the past; Its Pathana-Shravana-Manana would dissolve the sins and provide liberation as in the case of Gajendra. May I salute Vishnu Bhagavan who is Ajam or birthless, Varenya or the Supreme, Sreshtha or the Topmost, Padmanabha or Lotus-navelled, Narayana or Existent on Water, Devaguhyia or absorbed among Devas , Purana Purusha or the Most Ancient, and Loka Swami or the Super Lord of Lokas!)

[Sonepur hardly 25 km from Patna approachable by a long bridge across the River Ganges is famed to oraganise Asia's largest Cattle Fair held from Kartika Purnima in November for some two months at the confluence point of Ganga and River Gandaki; the Fair is for the exhibition and sale of elephants, horses, donkeys, dogs, cows, bulls, buffalos, birds and so on, besides being a huge mela drawing huge turn of masses besides Yatris paying respects to Hariharnath Temple ron the banks of Gandaki believed to have been built up Lord Shri Rama when he accompanied Vishwamitra to the Court of King Janaka of Mithila to break the 'Shiva Dhanush' to win he hand of Devi Sita.

Another significant legend is related to the Sacred River Gandaki mentioning about Gajendra Moksha; the elephant King Gajendra with his spouses and a massive collection of elephant army went into Gandaki banks and a fierce and huge and powerful crocodile caught nasty hold of Gajendra's foot in a biting grip and they fought for years together for Gajendra to get rid of the awful grip. In their earlier births Gajendra was King Indradyumna the King of Pandyas who in similar situation of the King enjoying a river bath with his queens angered Sage Agastya in deep meditation by the noises and Agastya cursed that a crocodile would catch the King becoming an Elephant and torture for years together. Likewise, a Gandharva Chief Huhu was cursed by Devala Muni that in similar circumstances the Gandharva would become a crocodile and torture an elephant king to be finally restored of his original form with the grace of Vasudeva and his Sudarshana Chakra!]

Vishnu Vibhutis: While all the above are of Vishnu Swarupas only, Janardana also assumes the Chatur Vibhaagas of Srishti-Sthiti and Laya: the first Amsha is of Brahma, the second one of Prajapatis like Marichi; the third is of Kaala and the final one is of Pranis; indeed creation and cremation of Manavaas occurs almost every minute! Maharshi Parashara thus addressed Sage Maitreya: *Yetey sarvey pravartasya shitow Vishnormahaatmanah, Vibhuti Bhutaa Raajaaney ye chanye Munisattama/ Ye bhavishyanti ye Bhutaah Bhuteswaraa Dwijaa, Teysarvey Sarva Bhutasya Vishno ramshaa Dwijotthamaa* (Hey Munisattama! These and various Administrators and Kings engaged in the Upkeep of their respective Territories are all Vishnu Vibhutis. Those Kings in the past and those who in future would be too of Vishnu Rupas! All the Devatas, Daityas, Danavas; all the Pashus, Pakshis, Manavaas, Sarpaas, Nagas; and all the Vrikshas, Parvataas, Grahaas and so on are Narayana Vibhutis are Vishnu Rupas. The Past-

Present-Future are Vishnu Rupas. Thus *Yeva meshaa Jagatsrushtaa Jagatpaadaa tathaa Jagat, Jagat bhakshayitaa Devaha Samastasya Janaardanaah/ Srishtistityanta kaaleshu Tridhaivam sampravartatey, Gunapravruthya paramam padam Samastasya Janaardanaah/Taccha Jnaanamayam vyaapi swasamvedya manoupamam, Chathus prakaaram tadapi Swarupam Paramatmanah./* ( As such, Janardana creates, maintains and finally destroys, he himself the Unique Jagat Swarupa; Bhagavan Vishnu is indeed responsible for Jagadutpatti, Sthiti, and Antaby assuming Tri-Gunas of Satwa-Rajo-Taamasa but basically is Nirguna or Featureless! Paramatmaa's Swarupa is of four kinds viz. Jnaanamaya (Embodiment of Knowledge), Vyapaka (All- Pervading), Swasamvedya or Swayam Prakaasha (Self-Illuminated) and Anupama (Unparalleled).

Then Sage Maitreya desired to know from Maharshi Parashara about an in-depth analysis of the 'Chathus-prakaara' characteristics of Bhagavan; the reply was: Just as Bhagavan is the raison d'tre or the cause of the material world, so is he the Sadhana or the 'means' too; the 'Siddhi' is the accomplishment; and 'Sadhya' is called a possibility! In other words, the Yogis aiming at Mukti could follow the 'Sadhanaas' like the Ashtaanga Yoga or the Eight-Limbed Yoga viz. 1) Yama (Yogik Principles), 2) Niyama (Personal discipline), 3) Asana (Yoga Posture), 4) Pranayama (Control of Breathing) 5) Pratyahaara (withdrawal of senses) 6) Dharana (Concentration of an object) 7) Dhyana (Meditation) and 8) Samadhi (Mukti). Indeed, thus Parabrahma is Sadhya! This kind of Sadhana by means of Yoga is called *Swaadhana -alambana Jnaana*. There is another type of Jnaana viz. *Aalambana Vijnaana* which discards Samsara and seeks Paramatma by complete withdrawal and renunciation. Yet another type is *Advaita Jnaana* in which the Self seeks merger into the Totality, that is *Aham Brahmaasmi* or I am Brahma meaning thereby that the Inner Consience or Jeevatma is the same as Paramatma. The aim of the three types of Jnaana target the Supreme Experience of Atma Swarupa Parabrahma that is : *Nirvyaapaara manaakhyeyam Vyaaptimaatra manupa -mam, Atmasambodha vishayam sattaamaatramalakshanam/Prashaantamabhayam Shuddham Durvibhaavyamasamshrayam, V ishnorjnaana mayassyoktamk tadjnaanam Brahma samjnitam/* The Jnaana Swarupa Bhagavan Vishnu is Nir-vyaapaaram or devoid of activities of Samsara; Anirvachaneeyam or Undefined; Vyaptamaatram (Omnipresent), Anupama or Unparalleled), Atmabodha Swarupa (Self-Realising), Alakshana (Featureless), Shanta (Ever Tranquil), Abhaya (Fearless and Protective), Shuddha (High Mark of Purity and Translucent), Bhaavaateetam or beyond comprehension; Ashraya heenam or the Holdless since he is the Supreme Holder Himself; and indeed that is Brahma Jnaana]!

*Evam prakaaramalam Nityam Vyapakamakshayam, Samasta heryarahitam Visdhnavaakhayam Paramam padam/ Tad Brahma Paramam Yogi yato naavaratey punah Shriyatya punyoparamey kheenakleshoti nirmalah/ Dwey Rupey Brahmaanastasya Murtam chaa murtamevacha, Kshara akshara swarupo tey Sarvabhuteshthavasthitey/ Aksharam Tapp;aram Brahma Ksharam Sarvamidam Jagat,*

*Ekadeshasthitasyaagneyerjyotsnaa visteerani tathaa, Parasyabrahmaanah Shaktistatheymadakhilam Jagat/* (In this way Vishnu Paramapada is percivable which is Nirjala-Nitya- Vyapaka-Akshaya-and Heya Guna varjita; this Unique Form devoid of Paapa- Punya and Samsara Kleshaas is such that would have no return as the Person concerned gets absorbed into Para Brahma! That Brahma has two manifestations of *Murta and Amurta!* And Akshara is the Everlasting Para Brahma and Kshara is the Transcient Universe. Brahma Shakti is akin to the all powerful Agni which spreads fast its heat and radiance and its impact is also according to the distance or closeness that the Practitioner Yogi concerned.

Vishnu Maha Stuti: Muni Maitreya requested Maharshi Parashara to portray Bhagavan Vishnu in his Complete Form and the Maharshi quoted Vasistha Maha Muni as follows: *Namaskrutya aprameyaaya Vishnavey Prabha Vishnavey, Kathayaami yathaakhyatam Visishthena Mamaa bhavat/Aatmaanamasya Jagato Nirlepam agunamalam, Bibharti Kaustubhamani Swarupam, Bhagavaan Harih/ Shri Vatsasamshaana dharamanantena samaashritam, Pradhaanam Buddhirapyaastey Gada Rupena Madhavey/ Bhutaadimindri-yaadimcha Dwidhaahankaara meeshwarah, Bibharti shankha rupena shaaranga rupena cha sthitam/ Chalatswa rupamayantam javeynaantaritaanilam, Chakraswarupam cha Mano dhaatvey Vishnukarey sthitam/ Pancharupaatu yaa Maalaa Vyajayanti Gadaabhurutah, Saa bhuta hetu sanjaata Bhutamaalaa cha vai Dwijah/ Yaanindrayanya seshani Buddhi karmaatmakaani vai, Shararupaanyasheshani taani Dhattey Janaardana/ Bibharti Yacchaasiratnamachyutotyanta nirmalam, Vidyaamayam tu tadjnaanavidyaakosha samsthitam/Ithyam Pumaampradhaanam cha buddhyahankaarameva cha, Bhutaani cha Hrisheerkesho Manah sarvendriyaanicha, Vidyaavidye cha Maitreya Sarvametat samaashritam/ Astrbhushanaa samsthaana Swarupam Rupa varjitah, Bibharti Maayaaruposou Shriyasey Praaninaam Harih/ Savikaaram Pradhaanam cha Pumaamsamakhilam Jagat, Bibharti Pundareekaaksha Devam Parameshwarah/Yaa Vidya yaa tathaavidyaa yatsadyat chaasadavyayam, Tatsarvam Sarva bhutesho Maitreya Madhusudaney/Kalaa kaashtaa nimeshaadi dinartwayana haayanaih, Kaala Swarupo Bhagavanpaapo Harivyayaha/ Bhurlokotha Bhuvanloka Swarloko Munisattama, Maharjana -stapah Satyam SaptaLokaa imey Vibhuh/Lokaatma Murtih sarveshaam Purveshaamapi Purvajah, Aadhaarah Sarva Vidyaanaam Swayameva Harihsthitah/ Deva Maanusha pashwaadi Swarupairbahubhih sthitah, Tatah Sarveswaronanto Bhutamurtiramurtimaan/ Ruchi yajuumshi Saamaani tathaavaatharvnaani vai, Itihaasopavedaaschavedanteshu tathoktayah/ Vedaangaani Samastaani Manvaadigaditaani cha, Shaastraanyaseshaakhyaa- naanyanuvaakaascha ye kwachit/Kaavyaalaapaascha ye kechidgeetakaanyakhilaani cha, Shabdamurtidharasyaitadwipurvishnor mahaatmanah/ Yaani Murthaanyamurtaani Yaanyantraayantra vaa kwachit, Santi vai Vastujaataani taani Sarvaani tadupuh/ Aham Harih Sarvamidam Janaardano naanyattatahb kaarana karya jaatam, Idrungmano yasyana tasya bhuyo Bhavodbhavaa Dwandwagadaa bhavanti/*

(Hey Mune! I salute Jagat palaka, and Aprameya Vishnu and narrate the same which Maha Muni Vasistha described earlier: Srihari Bhagavan who is Nirlepa- Nirguna-Nirmala and Shuddha Kshetrajna Swarupa wears Kaustubhamani; Shri Ananta sought the company of Vishnu as Srivatsa Rupa and Buddha adorned Madhava in the form of Gadaa; Vishnu is also ornamented by Shankha which is of Tamasa Swarupa and Shaaranga Dhanush of Raajasa Ahamkaara; the Chakra which out smarts the speed of Vayu is basically of Satvika Swarupa and adorns the lotus like smooth hands of Vishnu. Bhagavan also wears a Pancha Rupa Vijayanti Maalaa made of Mukta-Manikya-Marakata-Indraneela and Heeraas, representing Pancha Tanmatraas and Pancha Bhutaas. Bhagavan also keeps 'baanaas' or arrows which are the embodiments of Jnaana and Karma! Further Vishnu wears a sharp Khadga or sword which pierces through Avidya and brightens Vidyaamaya Jnaana. Muni Maitreya! In this manner, all kinds of features like Purusha, Pradhana, Buddhi, Ahamkara, Pancha Bhuta, Manas, Indriyas, Vidya and Avidya are all surrounded by Vishnu. Srihari who has basically no Form but in a Maya Swarupa keeps Astras and Ornaments to help and encourage various Praanis. This is how Parameshwara seeks to facilitate the deeds and thoughts of various Beings with the help of Vidya-Avidya, Sat-Asat, and such characteristics. Vishnu is also present as Kaala Swarupa in the form of Kala-Kaashtaa- Nimesha- Dina- Ritu- Ayana-and Varsha! Bhagavan is spread all over the Bhurloka- Bhuvanloka- Swarloka-and Maha-Jana- Tapa-and Satyalokas! He is the Origin of Origin-Purvaja to Purvajas; Sarva Vidya Swarupa; Swayam Lokamaa Swarupa;

Niraakaaa- Sarveswara- Ananta- Sarva Bhuta Swarupa inclusive of Deva-Maanava-Pashu- Pakshi and so on; He is Ruk-Yajur- Sama-Atharva Veda Swarupa; Itihasa-Upavedaas like Ayurveda; Vedanta Vaakya; Vedaanga; Manvaadi krita Dharma Shastra; Purana-Aakhyaana- Anuvaaka (Kalpa Sutra)-Kavya Charha- Sarva Shabda Murti Dhaari-and so on. Whichever Murta-Amurta Padaardhaas exist are of Vishnu's Mighty Physique! He assures: I am the totality of the Universe and there is neither a Karana- Karya- Kaarana beyond me! A person who believes in this simple Truth would have conquered Dwandwa Rupaas and attains me!)

Having rendered the Vishnu Maha Stuti as above, Maharshi Parashara assured Maitreya Muni that who so ever reads or listens to it would be freed from sins. That person would be eligible for the Punya that daily Snaanaas and worship in Pushkata Kshetra could fetch by merely hearing the Stotra. This unique piece of homage to Maha Purusha Janardana describing the Creation of Deva-Rishi-Gandharva-Pitru-Yaksha and others is adequate to bestow the blessings of Narayana.

### **Varaha Purana**

Exemplary devotion of Priyavrata-Ashvashira-Vasu- and Raibhya ( Pundarikaaksha an Gadaadhara Stotras included) In the context of balancing the forces of Dharma and Adharma, instances of exemplary devotion displayed by Illustrious Kings and Sages through the ages were cited by Bhagavan Varaha to Prithvi. **King Priyavrata**, son of Swayambhu Manu, relinquished his Kingdom to his sons and Sage Narada visited his hermitage once. The Sage narrated his own interesting experiences. In one case, he passed by a lake in Swethadvipa and found a highly attractive and lonely damsel when he felt infatuated and lusty. Soon he discovered that she was Devi Savitri Herself- the embodiment of Virtue- and felt an unpardonable sense of shame for his sin. From Her body emerged three male figures, viz. the three Vedas of Rik, Yajur and Sama. However, Devi Savitri pardoned Narada's momentary indiscretion and embarrassment and blessed him with his knowledge of past lives. In one of his earlier lives, Narada was a rich and virtuous youth in a Brahmin family, became a Scholar, donated lot of his wealth for several noble causes, performed pilgrimages, Sacrifices, penances etc; constantly recited 'Om Namo Narayana' and finally secured Lord Vishnu's 'Darshan'(Direct Appearance). But the Lord declined 'Mukti' (Eternal Bliss) to Narada as he was to play important roles through many births ahead till he became a Brahma Manasa Putra (Lord Brahma's mind-born son). Exhorted by Narada, King Priyavrata decided to emulate the example of Narada through out his remaining life.

**King Ashvasira** was another example of a highly righteous and worthy devotee of Lord Vishnu who performed several donations, Sacrifices and an Aswamedha Yajna. Sage Kapila, accompanied by Sage Jaigishvya visited Ashvasira's Court and the King received the Sages with great veneration and devotion. The King desired to know from the Sages as to how best he could attain 'Sayujyam' or oneness with Lord Vishnu. They replied that they were the Lord Vishnu themselves! The King replied politely that the Sages were indeed most revered and memorable no doubt but how could they claim to be Vishnu himself; for one thing the Supreme Lord is unique and singular! The Sages created a make believe situation by the help of illusion that they were Vishnu and His Carrier Garuda. They taught a lesson to the King that Lord Vishnu resided in each and every being and the Pure Soul in each object is as good as Lord Vishnu among all. The Sages had thus helped the King's 'Jnananethra' or the Eye of Wisdom open up to witness that Lord Vishnu was all pervasive and Omni Present and that he should be able to witness Lord Vishnu all over! The King was apparently convinced, yet had raised a doubt that the Sages should please clear up:

‘who is able to realise Almighty?-a Knowledgeable person or a person who does his rightful deed or duty?’ In reply, the Sages Kapila and Jaigishvya narrated a story to the King that Sage Raibhya and King Vasu too sought a reply on a similar query from Deva Guru Brihaspati. The Guru explained that who ever would perform his duty with a sense of complete detachment would also have access to Salvation. To illustrate this, Deva Guru described an incident: There was a Brahmana, named Sanyaman, who was a descendent of Sage Atri. While he was taking bath in a river, he met a person named Nishthoor who was a fowler, killing birds and animals for his living. The Brahmana scolded the fowler for his evil deeds, but the latter did not show any signs of remorse; instead he justified the acts. He said that whoever sought salvation ought to keep in mind that the doer was God, the act was His own and the reason for doing the act too was God Himself-‘Karanam, Kaaranam and Kartha!’ The moment ego came to play while performing the act, the doer would be called cruel, but when he did it with perfect detachment and as a duty, then the situation would be different. Thus spoke Brihaspati that anybody could certainly aspire for salvation, be he a householder or a hermit or a seeker of knowledge. King Ashvasira was thus convinced about his doubts from the Sages Kapila and Jaigishvya, moved on to Naimisharanya for the rest of his life and in the course of several Yagnas that he conducted he found a sheet of effulgence approaching him and got engulfed into Lord Vishnu finally.

**King Vasu** and Sage Raibhya were totally convinced by the preachings of Deva guru as mentioned above. The King renounced his kingship in favour of his son and left for Pushkar Teertha always reciting ‘Pundarikaksha Mantra.’

*Pundarikaksha Mantra : ‘Namastey Pundarikaksha Namastey Madhusudana, Namasthey Sarva lokesha Namasthey Thigmachakriney, Vishvamurthi Mahabahum Varadam Sarvatejasam, Namami Pundarikaksham Vidyaavidyatmakam Vibhum, Adidevam Mahadevam Veda Vedangapaaragam, Gambhiram Sarva Devaanam Namami Madhusudanam, Vishva Murthi Maha Murthi Vidya Murthi Trimurthikam, Kavacham Sarva Devaanam Namasye Vaarijekshanam, Sahasrasirshinam Devam Sahasraaksham Mahabhujam, Jagat- samvyaapya Thishthanthim Namasye Parameswaram, Sharanya Sharanam Devam Vishnum Jishnum Sanatanam, Neelamegha pratikamsham Namasye Chakrapaaninam, Suddham Sarvagathim Nityam Vyomarupam Sanaatanam, Bhavaabhava Vinurmuktam Namasya Sarvagum Harim, Naanyat kinchit prapashyami Vyatiriktam thvada-Achuta, Tvanmayamcha prapashyami Sarvametatcharacharam’.*

The Mantra means: ‘I greet Pundarikaksha, I greet Madhusudan, I greet ‘Sarva Lokesha’ or the Lord of all the Worlds, I greet ‘Tigmachakrinam’ or He who carries a fearful and glowing wheel; You are Visva Murthi, Maha bahu (mighty armed), Varadam (Giver of boons), Sarva Tejo Swarupa or All Radiant Figure, I greet Pundarikaksha, ‘Vidyaavidyatmikam’ (The Embodiment of Learning and Ignorance alike), ‘Vibhum’ or the Super Lord, ‘Adi Devam’ or the Original God; Maha Devam (The Greatest Deity), ‘Veda Vedanga Paaranam’ (The Supreme Sourcer of Vedas and other Scriptures), ‘Gambhiram’ (The Complex), ‘Sarva Devaanam’ (All in one of Devas), I greet Madhusudanam (Destroyer of The Demon Madhu), Visva Murthim, Maha Murthim, Vidya Murthim, Tri Murthikam or The Union of Three Gods of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara; Kavacham Sarva Devanam or the Safeguard of all Devas, I greet ‘Varijekshanam’ or He who is Lotus Eyed, ‘Sahasrasirsham Devam’ or He who has Thousand (countless) Heads, ‘Sahasraaksham’ or countless Eyes; ‘Maha Bhujam’ (Great Shoulders), ‘Jagasamvyaapya’ (All Pervasive); I greet ‘Parameswaram’, (Supreme God); ‘Sharanyam Sharanam’ (Protect me, hey Vishnu, Jishnu, Sanatanam or Omni Present, Omni Scient and Ageless), ‘Nilameghapratikasham’ or He who is

likened to blue clouds, ‘Chakrapaninam’ or He who carries the famous and all powerful Sacred Wheel; ‘Suddham’ or Pure, Sarvagatam or All Present, ‘Nityam’ (Permanent), ‘Vyomarupam’ or Resembling of Sky; Bhavabhava nirmuktam (He who is devoid of materialistic feelings or otherwise); ‘Namaste Sarvagum Harim’ or I greet Hari who is replete all over; ‘Naanyat kinchit Prapasyaami Vyatiriktam Twadaachyuta’ or I cannot visualise any thing else other than You Achyuta! You are all over the Universe comprising all movable and immobile objects!)

While the King was chanting the Mantra, a blue human form emerged from the King’s body and conveyed that in an earlier birth he (Vasu) was a King too who killed a Brahmin in disguise as a deer and as a penance performed Eakadasi Vratas, donated cows and many other austerities. But at the time of death uttered his wife’s name Narayani instead of the name of Narayan. In his next birth too, King Vasu was a King of Kashmir but then again he no doubt did Yagnas and many other virtuous deeds but not heeded to chant the name of Lord Vishnu; out of vengence the soul of the Brahmin in the form of the dead deer continued to haunt the King of Kashmir. Since in the current birth as King Vasu continued the chanting of the Pundarikaksha Mantra at Pushkar Teertha, not only the tormented soul of the Brahmin dead as a deer got relieved but the King Vasu got rid of the sin of killing a Brahmana and eventually reached Vishnu Loka.

**Sage Raibhya** decided to emulate the example of King Vasu in the quest of Salvation. He left for Gaya to perform the ‘Shraddh’ (Annual Ceremony) of his ancestors. One of Brahma Manasa Putras-Sanat Kumara was pleased with the ‘Shraddha’ or complete dedication with which the Sage Raibhya performed by the Ceremony. Sanat Kumara complimented the Sage and confirmed that visiting the Sacred Place of Gaya and performing ‘Pindapradan’ to the ancestors in a systematic manner ought to be considered as highly significant; what is more, Gaya is the abode of Gadadhar Sri Hari Himself and the Ceremonies performed with sincerity and devotion to Gadadhar would yield immense results to the ‘Karta’ or the Performer and the ancestors of three generations as well. In this connection, Sanat Kumara gave the example of King Vishal who was greatly perturbed as he had no son and thus called for a Conference of Brahmanas to suggest a solution. The advice received was that the King was cursed by his ancestors and their souls were being tormented in the absence of the Annual Ceremonies which were never performed in the past. Hence he should perform a Shraddha Ceremony at Gaya. During the course of the Ceremony, the King found three elderly Brahmanas and introduced themselves as the deceased of three generations viz. the Father, Grand Father and the Great Grand Father. Thus as a result of the success of the function performed at Gaya by the King, the souls of the deceased three generations were liberated. Sage Raibhya continued to stay at Gaya till the end of his life and prayed to Lord Gadadhar till he joined the league of Vaikuntha. The *Gadadhara Mantra* with the power of which Sage Raibhya was blessed to attain Vaikuntha is as follows:

(1) *‘Gadadharam Vibhudhajanaira- bheeshtitham dhrutakshamam kshuditha janaartha nashanam, Shivam Visalaasurasainya mardanam, Namaamyaham hatasakalaasubham smruthou’* (I pray to Lord Gadadhara who is praised by all the Devas for the fulfillment of their desires; who is ever-kind to respond to the wails of human beings and demolish their needs; who is a lasting source of propitiousness as also a merciless destroyer of Demons and Evil Forces); (2) *‘Puranapurvam Purusham Purushottamam Puratanam Vimalaalam Nrinam Gatim, Trivikramam Dhрутadharanim Bleham Gadadharam Rahasi*

*Namami Kesavam* (I bow to Gadadhar Kesav who is Originless, Existent far before the Universe, Most Ancient, Pure, Spotless, Capable, Trend setter to Humanity, Trivikram, the Holder of Earth, and Appointer of Bali); (3) *'Susuddha bhavam Vibhavirupavritam Shriyavrutam Vigataamalam Vichakshanam, Kshithiswarair- apagata kilbishaih Stutam Gadadharam Pranamati yah sukham vaset/* I implore Gadadharam who is charming, pure hearted, highly prosperous and flourishing, immaculate, featureless, scholarly, bright, sinless, Ever eulogized and blissful); (4) *'Surasurairarchita pada pankajam Kaiyura haaraangada mouli dharinam, Abdhou Shananam cha rathanga paaninam'* ( I revere Him whose lotus-like feet are worshipped, wears hand-jewellery, necklace, body part adornments and headgear, relaxes comfortably on milk-ocean, and holds Sudarshan wheel and mace); (5) *'Sitam kruthey Tretayugerunam Vibhum tatha Tritiye peetha varnamachyutam, Kalou Ghanaalipratimam Maheshwaram Gadadharam pranamati yah sukham vaseth'* ( I beseech the blessings of Maheswara Gadadhara who is happily coloured white in Kritha Yuga, crimson in Treta Yuga, yellow during Dwapara Yuga and cloud-like in Kali Yuga); (6) *'Bijoddhvo yah Sujathey Chaturmukhastayaiva Narayana Rupathojagat, Prapaalayet Rudra vapurastathantakrut Gadadharo Jayatu Shadartrimurthiman'* (Victory to Gadadhara who assumed three forms of Lord Brahma born out of the former's seed being responsible for the task of Creation, Lord Narayana being responsible for Administration and Lord Rudra for Universal destruction); (7) *'Satva Rajaschiva Tamo Gunaastraya sthaveseshu naanyasya samudbhavah kila, sa chaika eva thrividho Gadadharo dadhatu dhairya mama Dharma mokshiyoh'*; (There are Satva, Rajas and Tamo Gunas and beyond these three Gunas there are none else; Hey Gadadharo, kindly bestow me strength and courage to secure Dharma/ Virtuousness and Moksha / Salvation to obtain a proper mix of these Gunas);(8) *'Samsara thoyarna vadum khatanhubhi viyogana kramakramanih subheeshanaih, Majjanthamujjaih sutaraam Mahaplavey Gadadharo mamu dadhaatu pothavat'*; (May Gadadhar pull me up from the frightful Ocean of 'Samsara' and from the strong ropes of attachments like the body, family and constant fear of death); (9) *'Swayam Trimurthih Svamivatmanaatmani Svashaktitah anda midam sasarjaha, thasmijjalothaasanam arya thejasam sasarja yasthah pranatosmi Bhudharam'* ( I salute Gadadhar as He holds Earth and the Trimurthis by His own might, created the Universe and the highly radiant Kamalaasan Brahma);(10) *'Matsyadi namani jagatsu kevalam Suraadi samrakshanato Vrushakapih, Mukhya swarupena smanthato Vibhu Gadadharo me Vidudhaatu sadgatim'*(May Incarnations of Gadadhar like Matsya meant only to protect Devas and the Virtuous be kind to lead me to Salvation!)

#### Manifestation of 'Tri Shaktis'-Brahmi, Vaishnavi and Rudrani:

Lord Brahma led a delegation of Devas and reached Kailash when Rudra Deva and Devi were sharing a lighter moment. The reason of the visit was that a Demon named Andhaka defeated Devas badly and ousted them from Swargaloka. Brahma requested Narayan too to join at Kailasa to face the emergency. As the Trinity pondered over the crisis rather seriously and their vision crossed each others' eyes, there appeared a *Tri Shakti* whom the Trinity named as *Tri Kala* who would administer the entire Universe. Since She was the embodiment of Tri Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas, She would be known by that name as *Tri Guna*; since Her physique and appearance alternate with the three colours of white, red and black, She would be called *Tri Varna* also. Among the Tri Shaktis so manifested, one Swarupa was extremely beautiful and benevolent as a personification of propitiousness to be engaged in the task of 'Brahma Srishti' as Brahmi Devi. Another characterization of Tri Shakti was endowed with the quality of an administrator in the most dignified and poised demeanor, signifying valour and Vishnu Maya was named Vaishno Devi. With a fearful visage and physique, ready to pounce on the wicked and the Evil, the

third Image with a Trident seated on a tiger was called Rudrani Devi as 'Vishva Samharini' or the Destroyer of the Universe. Brahmi Devi who was Svetha Varna or fair complexioned, lustrous and lotus eyed became a 'Yogini' with the permission of Brahma on 'Sveth Parvat' or the White Mountain. Eventually this Devi of Satva Guna became popular as Saraksharamayi, Ekakshara, Vageesha, Sarasvati, Vidyeshvari, Vedavati, Amritakshara, Jnanavidhi, Vibhavari Devi, Vishalini, and Soumya. Vaishno Devi who manifested from Vishnu too left with His consent for Mandarachal for Tapasya. Rudrani left for Neel Parvat or BlueMountain to perform Tapasya after Rudra Deva's approval. The Tri Shatkis were thus ready for facing exigencies whenever they were recalled from the respective Lords such as when Sarasvati was asked to help in the task of Creation etc. More than the normal duties as were assigned to them, the Tri-Shakties were ever ready to supplement the efforts of their respective Lords as collective endeavors were called for, such as the destruction of mighty Demons as Andhaka.

Significance of 'Vaishno Devi' (Devi 'Stuti' included):

Symptomatic with Rajoguna and Vishnu Maya, Vaishno Devi entered a cave named Vishala Teertha atop MandaraMountain for executing Tapasya. After considerable time gap of years, She felt highly disturbed and out of that feeling of stress emerged several 'Kumaris' (Young Virgins) who were bluish in complexion, with curled hair, attractive lips, broad eyes, slim waists and ornamented. Simultaneously a massive number of grown up women too materialized. Innumerable palaces and houses with all possible facilities with luxurious living appeared to accommodate the Kumaris and women. Renowned among the Kumaris were Vidyutprabha, Chandrakanthi, Suryakanthi, Para, Gambhira, Charukeshi, Sujata, Ghritachi, Urvashi, Shashini, Sheilamanditha, Charu Kanya, Visalakshi, Dhanya, Peenapayodhara, Chandraprabha, Girisutha, Suryaprabha, Amrita, Swayamprabha, Charumukhi, Shivadooti, Vibhavari, Jaya, Vijaya, Jayanti, Aparajita and many others housed in Sreshthapuri. All the Maids of Devi wearing 'Ankush' and 'Paasha' surrounding Her as seated on a Golden Throne were fanning Her with white 'Chamaras'. Vaishno Devi was fully ornamented and garlanded with various fragrant flowers and was seated comfortably when Sage Narada called on Her for 'Darshan' and left. His purpose was to convey to Demon Mahishasur about the unparalleled beauty of Vaishno Devi. The puffed up arrogant Demon tormented the whole world, especially Devas, Sages and all the virtuous since he attained boons of invincibility from Brahma except from women. He called his Maha Mantri 'Alamsharma' and select other Mantris like Praghas, Vighas, Shankukarna, Vibhavas, Vidyunmali, Sumali, Parjanya and Kruur and instructed them to request Her to marry him politely and if necessary utilise the other means of 'Daana' or tempt with gifts; 'Bheda' or divide and try; and finally as a last resort to 'Danda' or punish or even kidnap or if need be to destroy Her! As the road map plan of approaching Her was finalised, a highly accomplished person named Vighas was commissioned to negotiate. As all means of cajoling and threatening were not fruitful, the Demon had to declare war. Senapati Virupaksh led the Demon's side and quite a few of the Danavas were capable of defeating the Mighty Indra who carried the Vajrayudha! Among these 'Daithyas' were stalwarts like Lomavarshak, Anjan, Nilakukshi, Udraksh, Meghavarna, Balahak, Lalataksh, and Subhim. While Rahu challenged 'Ashtavasus' or Eight Vasus, mighty Demons like Bhayankar, Dhvanksh, Dhvasta Karna, Shanka Kukarna, Vajra Kaya, Ati Veerya, Vidyunmali, Rakthaksha, Bhimadamshtra, Vidyutjihva, Atikaya, Mahakaya, Dirghabahu, Krithantak etc. attacked the Eleven Adithyas by turns. Kaal, Kritanth, Raktaksha, Haran, Mitrah, Aanitya, Yajaha, Goghna, Stridhan and Parakrami fought Eleven Rudras. Thousands of Asuras were destroyed and in the process Devas too got defeated and fled without a scar but for the fact that they consumed Amrit. Sage Narada alerted Kumaris of Vishno Devi that the so-called invincible Mahisahasur had moved towards Devi Bhagavati to

wage a battle. As a final effort of demanding Devi to wed Mahishasura was personally conveyed by the Special envoy, called Vidhyutprabha; indeed Vaishno Devi was fully aware of Mahisha's background but gave a patient hearing: there was a demoness named Mahishmati who took the form of a Mahisha (She-buffalo) and tried to forcibly occupy the Ashram of Sage Ambar who by his Divine Vision found the real form of the demoness and cursed her that she would take the birth of a Mahisha (buffalo). As she fell on the feet of the Sage, he had kindly agreed that if she begot a son then she would be back to normalcy. After a time lag, another Sage named Sindhudveep who was performing Tapasya on the banks of Narmada river witnessed the attractive physique of a Devakanya without clothes and the Sage dropped his semen in the water, when the Mahisha saw the scene. She drank up the semen water and thus begot Mahishasura who was unconquerable. "Therefore oh Devi, this would be a last chance to marry the Mighty Mahisha and be happy for ever", said the Emissary Vidhyutprabha. As this was stated, Vaishno Devi laughed like a roar of a Lioness so much so, the Trilokas in her belly were shaken and from that vibration came out Devi Jaya, the Dwarpalika of the Goddess and said: 'You stupid, your head is as thick as your Lord Mahishasura's! Do you not realise that Vaishno Devi is a Kumari and is the Supreme Goddess of Kumaris and the Boon Giver to those who perform this Great Vrata; do run back soon as the rules of 'Dharma Yuddha' (Battle of Dharmic Rules) prohibit killing an emissary. As this conversation was going on, Sage Narada appeared and was so mirthful that the final moment of Mahisha's annihilation had arrived. A multitude of Mahisha's army was butchered by Kumaris and there was tremendous 'hahakars' of death all around. Vaishno Devi assumed a mammoth form with twenty hands each carrying a weapon of mass destruction like arrows and bow, sword, Shakti, mace, axe, damaru, huge bell, Shatagni, Mudgara, Bhushundi, Jhala, Musal, Chakra, Bhindipal, Danda, Pasha, Dhawaja and Padma. As the entire army of the Asura was floored totally, the Lion on which was seated by Devi made such a howl that the Universe was frightened as though that was the signal to jump. The Asura Maya which sought to be spread by the Demon jumping from mountain to mountain was targetted with Vishnu Maya with such precision that the Trisul went right through the wretched body of Mahisha, the Greatest menace of the World, fell with a terrific thud which pierced through the ears of the entire humanity. Headed by Lord Brahma, Indra and all the Devas extolled Vaishnavi Devi for saving them as also the World from the peril of the Asura as follows:

*Devi Vaishnavi Stuti : Namō Devi Mahabhagey Gambheerey Bhima Darshiney, Jayasthey Stithi Siddhantey Trinetrey Vishvatomukhi /Vidyavidye Jaye yajey Mahishasuramardini, Sarvagey Sarvadeveshi Vishwarupini Vaishnavi / Veethashokey Dhruvey Devi Padma Paptra Shubheykshaney, Suddhasatva vrathasthey cha Chanda Rupey Vibhavari / Ruddhi Siddhipradey Devi Vidyey Vidyomrutey Shivaey, Shankari Vaishnavi Brahma Sarva Deva Namaskrutey / Ghanthaaahastey Trishulaastrey Maha mahisha mardini, Ugra Rupey Virupakshi Mahamayemritusravey / Sarvasatva hithey Dhruvey, Vidyaapurana shilpanaam Janani Bhutadharini / Sarva Deva Rahasyanaam Sarva Sattvavathaam Shubhey, Tvameva Sharanam Prapadyanthey e Devi Parameswari / Na theshaam Jaayathey kinchithasumbha rana sankatey, Yashva Vyaghra bhayey ghorey chorarajabhaey tatha / Stvamennam sada Devi Pathishyati Yataatmavaan, Nigadasthopyo Devi twam Smarishyati Manava Sopi Bandhairvimuktasthu Sumukham vasatey sukhi/ ( Hey Mahabhagyashalini, Gambheera, Bhayankara Darshini, Vijayashalini, Sthitha Swarupa, Three Eyed Devi, Universe Faced One, Our sincere Greetings to you; Hey Vidya and Avidya Rupi, Jaya, Fit for performing Yajnas, Mahishasura Mardini, Omni Present, Swamini for all Devas, Vishwarupini, Devi Vaishnavi: our Greetings; You are devoid of sorrows, Everlasting, Beautiful and Lotus Eyed, You are embodiment of Pure Satva Gunas and at the same time ferocious, brutal and night*

like darkness; You are the benevolent Devi bent on enhancing Virtuous mind-sets; You are Vidya, Avidya and Amrit in the same wavelength; You are Shankar, Vishnu, Brahma and Shakti in one go; You carry a Ghanta ( Bell), Trishul and many other Items signifying several aspects simultaneously; You are the force to destroy Maha Mahishi, Ugraswarupa, Virupakshi and Maha Maya; Sarva Satvamaya, Dhruvasva Rupini, Mother of Puranas, Vidyas and various Skills; Ambika, Virupakshi, Shantai Swarupa, Dosharahita or Sinless, Akshaya, Avyaya,; I am in Your 'Sharan' or safe custody; Those who read this Stuti with a clean thought and mind shall never be troubled by ferocious animals, thieves, or those in authority and nothing untoward would ever occur to them! Even shackled by iron chains, those who read this Vaishavi Stuti would instantly be free and fearless! )

### **Vishnu Purana**

Mutual Affinity of Vishnu and Lakshmi : The couple of Bhrigu Muni and Khyati gave birth to Devi Lakshmi who was wedded to Vishnu. In this context, Maitreya Muni interjected and sought an explanation from Paraashara Maharshi as to how Lakshmi Devi who surfaced at the time of Samudra Mathana by Deva-Danavaas for Amrita was supposed to have been born to Bhrigu-Khyati couple! Maharshi Parashara replied as follows in extolling Lakshmi:

*Nithaivaishaa Jaganmataa Vishnoh Shriranapaayani, Yathaa Sarvagato Vishnusthathaiveyam  
Dwijottama/ Artho Vishnuriyam Vaani neetireshaa nayo Hari, Bodho Vishnuriym Buddhirdharmosou  
Satkriyaa twiyam/ Srashtaa Vishnuriyam Srushtih Shrir Bhumirbhudharo Harih, Santosho Bhagavaam  
Lakshmistushti Maitreya Shaswati/ Icchaa Shrir Bhagavan kaamo Yagnesou Dakshinaa twiyam,  
Aarjaarhutirasou Devi Purudaasho Janaaradanah/ Patneeshaalaa Muney Lakshmih Praagvamsho  
Madhusudanah, Chitir Lakshmir Hariryupa Idhmaa Shrirbhagavaankushah/ Saama Swarupi  
Bhagananudgeetih Kamalaalaya, Swahaarlakshmir Jagannatho Vaasudevo Hutaashanah/ Shankaro  
BhagavaanccchorirGauree Lakshmirdwijottama, Maitreya Keshavah Suryastatprabhaa Kamalaalaya/  
Vishnuh Pitruganah Padmaa Swadhaa Shaswata Pushtidaa, Dyouth Shreeh Sarvaatmako Vishur -  
avakaashoti vistara/ Shashaankah Shridharah Kaantih Shristathaivaana paayani, Dhurutir Lakshmeer -  
jagaccheshtaa Vaayuh Sarvatrago Harih/ Jaladhidwija Govindastadwelaa Shirmaha Muney, Lakshmi  
Swarupamindraani Devendro Madhusudanah/ Yamaschakradharah Saakshaat Dhumrerna  
Kamalaalaya, Ruddhih Shtih Shridharo Devah Swayameva Dhaneshwarah/ Gauri Lakshmeermahaa  
bhaagaa Keshavo Varunah Swayam, Shrirdevasena Viprendraha Devasenaapatir Harih/ Avashtambho  
Gadaa paanish Shaktir Lakshmirdwijottama, Kaashtaa Lakshmir nimeshaasou kalaa twiyam/ Jyotsnaa  
Lakshmih pradiposow sarvah Sarveswaro Harih, Lataabhutaa Jagan maataa Shri Vishnurdruma  
sanjnitah/ Vibhavari Shrirdivaso Devaschakra gadaa dharah, Varaprado Varo Vishnurvadhuh  
Padmavanaalkayaa/ Nadaswarupi Bhagavaan-chhirnadi rupa samstita, Dwajascha Pundareekaakshah  
Pataakaa Kamalaalaya/ Trishnaa Lakshmir Jagannaadho lobho Narayanah parah, Rati Raagascha  
Maitreya Lakshmi Govinda yevacha/ Kim chaati bahurnoktena Sankshepyaaadou muchyatay/ Deva tiryaa  
Manushyaadou Putraanaa Bhagavaan Harih, Streemaani Shricha vigneya nanayorvidyatay param)*

'Hey Dwijottama! Devi Lakshmi who never leaves Vishnu is as permanent as Vishnu and is Sarva Vyapi as Vishnu. Lakshmi is the meaning and definition of Vishnu, his voice, his discipline, his morality, his

teachings, his mental status, his dharma or virtuosity, and his deeds. Vishnu is the Srashta or the Creator and Lakshmi is the Creation par excellence. Srihari is the 'Bhudhara' and Lakshmi is Bhumi. Bhagavan is Santosha or the Essence of Happiness and Lakshmi is the incarnation of Tushti or Contentment. Bhagavan is 'Kaama' or desire and Lakshmi is the goal of desire. He is Yagna and she is Dakshina. He is the Purodasha and she is Ajyaahuti or the offering of Ghee. Madhava is Yajamana Griha or the House of the Master and Lakshmi is the Patni shaala or the Private Residence of the wife. He is 'Yupa' or the Sacrificial Post and she is 'chita' or the Sacrifice herself; He is the Kusha or the grass used for all Sacred Deeds and she is the 'Idhma' (piece of Sacrificial wood); He is Saama Veda Swarupa and she is the Udgati or the Cantor/ Mantra; and Bhagavan is Hutaashana or the receiver of Homa while Lakshmi is Swaha or the offering. Bhagavan Vishnu is Shankara while Lakshmi is Gauri. Keshava is Surya while Lakshmi is Prabha; Vishnu is Pitrugana and Lakshmi is Swadha; and He is Aakasha and She is Swargaloka! Hari and Lakshmi respectively are Chandrama and Kaanti; Vaya and Gati /Speed and Dhruti or Adhara /the hold; Samudra and Taranga or the wave; Indra and Indrani; Yama Dharma and Dhumorna; Kubera and Ruddhi; Kartikeya and Devasena; Gadadhara and Shakti; Nimesha-Kashtha; Muhurta-Kala; Deepaka and Jyoti; Vriksha and Lata; Dina-Ratri; Vara- Vadhu; Nada and Nadi; Dhawaja and Pataka; Lobha and Trishna; Rati and Raaga; in brief: he is the symbol of masculinity and she is the emblem of femininity!).

Samudra Mathana, Emergence of Lakshmi and Amrita ( Vishnu and Lakshmi Stutis) :

As Durvasa Muni gifted a fragrant garland to Indra who disrespected and gave it away to Iravata elephant which trampled it, the Muni went wild and cursed him that Rajya Lakshmi would desert Tribhuvanas and Indra's magnificence would disappear. Since Indra's grandeur was lost Daitya-Danavas occupied his throne and Devas became fugitives and approached Brahma Deva. Brahma in turn reached Ksheera Saagara along with Indra and Devas and extolled Bhagavan Narayana as follows:

*Namaami Sarvam Sarveshamanantamajamavyayam, Lokadhaama Dharaadhaaramaprakaasha mabhedinaam/ Naraayanamaniyamshamasesshaa-naamamaniyaasam, Samastanaam Garishtham cha Bhuraadeenaam Gareeyasaam/ Yatra Sarvam yatah Sarvamutpannam Matpurah saram, Sarva Bhutascha yo Devah paraanaamapi yah Parah/ Parah Paramaatmaat Purushaat Paramaatma Swarupa dhruk, Yogibhischintaye yo sowMuktihetor Mumukshibhih/ Satvaadayo na Santeesho yatra cha Prtaakrutaa ganaah, Sa Shuddhaha Sarva Shudhyebhyaha Pumaanaadyah praseedatu/ Prochatey Parameshohi yah shuddhopyapuchaaratah, Praseedatu sa no Vishnuraatmaa yah Sarva dehinaam/ Yah Kaaranamcha Kaaryam cha Karanasyaapi kaaranam, Karyasyaapi cha yah Kaaryam praseedatu sa no Harih/ Karya Kaaryasya yatkaaryam tat Kaaryasyaapi yah Swayam, Tat Kaarya Kaarya Bhuto Yastatascha pranataah sma tam/ Karanam Kaaranasyaapi tasya Kaaranakaaranam, Tat Kaaranamnaam hetum tam pranataah sma Pareshwaram/ Bhoktaaram Bhogyah bhutam cha Srashtaaram Srujyamevacha, Kaarya kartu Swarupam tam pranataah sma param padam/ Vishuddha bodhavannityam ajam akshayamavyayam, Avyaktamavikaaram yattadvishnoh paramam padam/ Na sthulamcha sukshmam yatra Viseshanagocharam, Tatpadam Paramam Vishnoh pranamaam sadaamalam/ Yasyayutaam yutaam shaamsho Vishwashaktiriyam sthithaa, Parabrahma Swarupam yat pranamaamstamavyayam/ Yadyoginaha Sadodyhuktaah Punya Papaapa kshayekshayam, Pashyanti Pranavo chintyam Tad- Vishnoh paramam padam/ Yatra Devaa na Munayo na chaaham na cha Shankarah, Jaananti Parameshasya tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam/ Shaktayo yasya Devasya Brahma Vishnu Shivbaatmikaah, Bhavantiya Bhuta Purvasyaha tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam/ Sarvesha sarva Bhutaatman Sarva Sarvaashrayaachyuta, Praseeda Vishno Bhaktaanaam Vraja no drishtigocharam/*

(My Salutations to you Narayana! You are an atom among the minutest of atoms and the heaviest by far the heavier than Earth; You are the Nikhilaloka Vishraama, Prithwi's Adhaara Swarupa, Aprakaashya, Amogha, Sarva Rupa, Sarveshwara, Ananta, Ajaya, and Avyaya. Inclusive of me Brahma the totality of Universal Existence is far beyond of our comprehension, even as you exist in it, created by you, preserved by you, and is Sarva Deva maya, Sarva Bhutamaya, Sarva Mokshagami Munijanamaya, Paratma Swarupa, Adi Purusha! Do kindly be merciful! Be kind to us Shuddha Swarupa Shakti and Kala Swarupa ranging from Kalaa-Kaashtha-Muhurtaas to Maha Yugaas! Be pleased Shudda Swarupa Parameshwara or Parama/Maha Lakshmi Pati; be compassionated to us as you are the Kaarana, Karyarupa, Karanaa's Kaarana, and Karya's Karya. I bend my knees to you for benevolence as you are the Karya or Maha Tatwa, Karya as Ahamkara, Karya as Tanmatra panchaka, Karya as Brahmanda, Karya as Brahma-Dakshaadi Karyabhuta! You are the Jagat Karana (Brahmaadis), Brahmanda Karana, Bhuta Panchaka Karana, PanchaTanmatra Karana, Mula Prakruti Hetu, Bhokta and Bhogya, Srashtaa and Srujya, Karta and Karya Rupa, and Parama and Paramapada, Vishuddha Bodha Swarupa, Nitya, Ajanma, Akshaya, Avyaya, Avyakta and Avikari, my prostrations to you. My reverential greetings to you who is neither Sthula (Gross) nor Sukshma (Minute), Nirmala-Nitya, and Paramapada! Indeed Your Ayutaamsha or of Ten thousandth Amsha is capable of Vishwa Rachana! Indeed the NityaYukta Yogi ganaas seek to realise even hazy glimpses of the vision of your 'Paada Padmaas' through their extended lives due to their Tapasyas! Indeed, Devaganaas, Maharshiganaas, Shankara and myself could never gauge the magnitude and magnificence of Your Reality! Sarveshwara, Sarva Bhutatma, Sarva Rupa, Sarvaadhaara, Achyuta, Maha Vishno do kindly respond to our supplications!) To supplement the prayers of Brahma Deva, others like Brihaspati, Indra and Devaganaas further prayed to Bhagavan Vishnu along with Shankara and Rudras, Dwadasha Adityas, Ashvani Kumaras, Ashta Vasus, Marud Ganas, Sadhya Ganaas and so on as a final refuge point; and Bhagavaan was satisfied with the sincerity of their Stutis. He replied that they should have to undergo some hard work and sacrifice which only could help accomplish their ends. He required Devas to convince Daityas and Danavas to jointly perform Kshirasagara Mathana or churning of the Ocean of Milk to materialise Amrita (Nectar) besides Auoshadhis or herbs and medicines and so on with Mandharaachala as the huge stick, Vaasuki Naga as the string and any other assistance required could be provided by himself; Daitya-Danavas would readily agree to the proposition, he assured. Vishnu further assured Devatas that the Amrita to be finally emerged would be meant for them alone. The Daitya-Danavas having been convinced keeping in view to the 'Catch' of Amrita, the operation commenced in Sharat Ritu when the Sky was clear and at an Auspicious Muhurta. Danava-Daityas out of self-pride opted for the huge Vaasuki whose mouth gave out poisonous fumes and many of them perished but Devas opted for the tail of the Vasuki. Vishnu assumed Kurmaavataara to provide stability to the process of churning by withstanding the heaviness of Mandhara Mountain and the churning speed. The first round of churning yielded Kamadhenu which opted for Siddhas; then emerged Kalpa Vriksha which was claimed by Devatas; Daanava-Daityas let it go to Devatas as they aimed at Amrita and nothing else!

Then followed Apsaraas who were on their own but to serve Swarga loka; Chandrama was claimed by Mahadeva to adorn his head; Maha Lakshmi emerged as Muni Ganaas welcomed her by reciting 'Shri Suktam' of *Hiranya varnaam Harinim Suvarna Rajata -srajaam*, *Chandraam Hiranmayim Lakshminim Jaatavedo mavaavaha* and she readily ornamented Vishnu Deva's chest; [Incidentally, there was no mention in Vishnu Purana of the Creation of 'Haalaahala' or the huge sheet of poisonous flames across the sky which was retained in the throat of Maha Deva and hence got the epithet of Nilagreeva] Then finally emerged Dhanvantari along with his 'Kamandalu' the Akshaya Patra full of Amrita and Daitya-Danavas

forcibly dragged the kamandalu from Dhanvantari. Vishnu Bhagavan assumed the dazzling Mohini Swarupa and spread over a thick screen of Maya over the Danava- Daityas and distributed Nectar among Devas, who were fully contented with the Amrita and Daanavas fled back to Pataala while Indra and the Devas got reinstated to their lost glory.

### Lakshmi Stuti by Indra:

A highly satisfied Indra most humbly welcomed Devi Lakshmi as Rajya Lakshmi by commending her as follows:*Namasye Sarva lokaanaam Jananimabjasambhavaam, vibhushanam Shriyamunnidra padmaakshim Vishnu Vakshasthala -sthitaam/ Padmaalayaam Padmakaraam Padma patranibhekshanaam, Vandey Padma -mukheem Devim Padmanaabha priyaamaham/ Twam siddhitwam Swadhaa Swaaha twam Lokapaavani, Sandhyaa raatrih Prabhaa Bhutirmedhaa shraddha Sarasvati/ Yajna Vidyaa Mahaa Vidya Guhya Vidyaa cha Shobhaney, Atma Vidyaa cha Devi twam Vimukti phala daayini/ Aanveekshiki Trayivaartaa Danda neetistwameva cha, Sowmyaasowmyair-jagadrupaistavaithaddevi puritam/ Kaa twanyaa twaamrutey Devi Sarva Yajnamayam vapuh, Adhyaastey Deva Devasya Yogichintyam Gadaabhrutah/ Twayaa Devi Parityaktam Sakalam Bhuvana trayam, Vinashtha praayamabhavantwaye daaneem Samedhitam/ Daaraah Putraastathaagaara suhruddhaanya dhanaadikam, Bhavatyetan mahaabhaago nityam twadeekshanaatranaam/ Shareearogya maishwarya maripakshakshayah sukham, Devi twadrushti drushtaanaam Purushaanaam nadurlabham/ Twam Maataa sarvalokaanaam Deva Devo Harih Pitaa, Twayyaid vishnunaa chaamba Jagadvyaaptam Charaacharam/ Maa na kosham tathaa gosham naa gruham maa paricchadam, Maa shariram kalatram cha thyajethaa Sarva paavani/ Mamaa putraanmaa suhrudvarga maa pashunmaa vibhushanam, Twajethaa mama Devasya Vishnurvakshah sthalaalaey/ Statvena Satya shouchaabhyaam tathaa sheelaadi -bhiringunaih, Tyajantey tey Naraah Sadyah Santyakttaa ye twayamaley/ Twayaavilokitaah Sadyah Sheelaadvair -akhilairgunaih kulaishwaryaischayujjyantey Purushaa Nirgumaa api/ Sa Slaaghyah sa gunee dhanyah sa kuleenah sa Buddhimaan, Sa Shurah sa cha Vikranto yastwayaa Devi veekshitah/ Sadyo vaigunyamaayanti Sheelaaghah Sakalaa gunaah, Paraangmukhi Jagaddhaatri yasya twam Vishnu vallabhey/ Na tey varnaantu shaktaa Gunaajihvaapi Vedhaah, Praseeda Devi Padmaakshi Maasmaamstyaa-kshim kadaachana/ (My salutations to you Jagajjanani! You possess a magnetic face with charming eyes like of a lotus adorning the magnificent chest of Vishnu; you reside on a lotus, lotus alone is ornamented in your soft hands, lotus leaves are likened to your eyes, and lotus stem on your husband's navel thus fond of lotus again! You are Siddhi, Swadha, Swaaha, Sudha, Sandhya, Ratri / night, Prabha, Vibhuti, Medha, and Sarasvati. You are the Yajna Vidya of the Science of Karma- Kaanda, Maha Vidya or Upasana, Guhya Vidya or Mahendra jaala or mesmerism, Atma Vidya or route to Mukti, Tarka Vidya or the Scientific Art of Logic, Vedatrayi or the Expert in Three Vedas, Varta of Business and Danda niti or the exponent of Politics! You are all over the Universe to many with tensions due to lack of opportunities and to a select few with all facilities. Is there a person who among all the Tri Lokas could afford to ignore you and make good in their lives! It is only due to your kind vision that a person is blessed with all fulfillments including women, progeny, home, money, good food and happiness. It is only due to your revelation that any body is provided with physical health, prosperity, destruction of enemies, and contentment. You are the Loka Maata or the Mother and Bhagavan Vishnu is Loka Pita or the Father over whom the world is spread all over and dependent. May this Samsara be profuse with our properties, Pashu shaalaas, homes, articles of enjoyment, and over all well being. Please always never ever leave us from our families, well wishers, ornaments, joys and good health. All the human beings bereft of you lose our mental strength, body energy, truthfulness, cleanliness and all other*

laudable qualities of life. Those who secure your kindness instantly become Buddhimaan, Shaktimaan, Sura veeraas and Dhanavaans; the moment your absence is felt, life gets unworthy, eventless and purposeless. My Mother, never leave me and be ever with me!) Thus Devi Lakshmi who was the daughter of Bhrihu and Khyati disappeared from Swarga and surfaced again after Samudra Mathana. As and when Vishnu Bhaagavan took to human forms, so did Devi Lakshmi as Prithvi along with Parashu Rama, Devi Sita along with Shri Rama, Devi Rukmini along with Shri Krishna!

*Yaschhetchhrunuyaajjanma Lakshmyaa yaschja pathennarah, Shriyo na vicchutistasya Gruhey yaavatkulatramam/ Pathyateyeshu chaiveyam Shristutirmuney, Alakshmiih Kalahaadhaara nateyshthaastey kadaachana/(Hey Muney! Those homes in which Lakshmi Stotras are not recited daily become the victims of arguments, quarrels, and poverty; contrarily, Lakshmi Stotraas are heard, read out and recited silently become the abodes of opulence, delight and propitiousness.)*

**Vishnu Vibhuti:** While all the above are of Vishnu Swarupas only, Janardana also assumes the Chatur Vibhaagas of Srishti-Sthiti and Laya: the first Amsha is of Brahma, the second one of Prajapatis like Marichi; the third is of Kaala and the final one is of Pranis; indeed creation and cremation of Manavaas occurs almost every minute! Maharshi Parashara thus addressed Sage Maitreya: *Yetey sarvey pravartasya shitow Vishnormahaatmanah, Vibhuti Bhutaa Raajaaney ye chanye Munisattama/ Ye bhavishyanti ye Bhutaah Bhuteswaraa Dwijaa, Teysarvey Sarva Bhutasya Vishno ramshaa Dwijotthamaa* (Hey Munisattama! These and various Administrators and Kings engaged in the Upkeep of their respective Territories are all Vishnu Vibhuti. Those Kings in the past and those who in future would be too of Vishnu Rupas! All the Devatas, Daityas, Danavas; all the Pashus, Pakshis, Manavaas, Sarpaas, Nagas; and all the Vrikshas, Parvataas, Grahaas and so on are Narayana Vibhuti are Vishnu Rupas. The Past-Present-Future are Vishnu Rupas. Thus *Yeva meshaa Jagatsrushtaa Jagatpaadaa tathaa Jagat, Jagat bhakshayitaa Devaha Samastasya Janaardanaah/ Srishtistityanta kaaleshu Tridhaivam sampravartatey, Gunapravruthya paramam padam Samastasya Janaardanaah/ Taccha Jnaanamayam vyaapi swasamvedya manoupamam, Chathus prakaaram tadapi Swarupam Paramatmanah./* (As such, Janardana creates, maintains and finally destroys, he himself the Unique Jagat Swarupa; Bhagavan Vishnu is indeed responsible for Jagadutpatti, Sthiti, and Antaby assuming Tri-Gunas of Satwa-Rajo-Taamasa but basically is Nirguna or Featureless! Paramatma's Swarupa is of four kinds viz. Jnaanamaya (Embodiment of Knowledge), Vyapaka (All- Pervading), Swasamvedya or Swayam Prakaasha (Self-Illuminated) and Anupama (Unparalleled).

Then Sage Maitreya desired to know from Maharshi Parashara about an in-depth analysis of the 'Chatush-prakaara' characteristics of Bhagavan; the reply was: Just as Bhagavan is the raison d'tre or the cause of the material world, so is he the Sadhana or the 'means' too; the 'Siddhi' is the accomplishment; and 'Sadhya' is called a possibility! In other words, the Yogis aiming at Mukti could follow the 'Sadhanaas' like the Ashtaanga Yoga or the Eight-Limbed Yoga viz. 1) Yama (Yogik Principles), 2) Niyama (Personal discipline), 3) Asana (Yoga Posture), 4) Pranayama (Control of Breathing) 5) Pratyahaara (withdrawal of senses) 6) Dharana (Concentration of an object) 7) Dhyana (Meditation) and 8) Samadhi (Mukti). Indeed, thus Parabrahma is Sadhya! This kind of Sadhana by means of Yoga is called *Swaadhana -alambana Jnaana*. There is another type of Jnaana viz. *Aalambana Vijnaana* which discards Samsara and seeks Paramatma by complete withdrawal and renunciation. Yet another type is *Advaita Jnaana* in which the Self seeks merger into the Totality, that is *Aham Brahmaasmi* or I am Brahma meaning thereby that the Inner Consience or Jeevatma is the same as Paramatma. The aim of the three types of Jnaana target the

Supreme Experience of Atma Swarupa Parabrahma that is : *Nirvyaapaara manaakhyeyam Vyaaptimaatra manupa –mam, Atmasambodha vishayam sattaamaatramalakshanam/Prashaantamabhayam Shuddham Durvibhaavyamasamshrayam, V ishnorjnaana mayassyoktamk tadjnaanam Brahma samjnitam/* The Jnaana Swarupa Bhagavan Vishnu is Nir-vyaapaaram or devoid of activities of Samsara; Anirvacha - neeyam or Undefined; Vyaptamaatram (Omnipresent), Anupama or Unparalleled), Atmabodha Swarupa (Self-Realising), Alakshana (Featureless), Shanta(Ever Tranquil), Abhaya (Fearless and Protective), Shuddha (High Mark of Purity and Translucent), Bhaavaateetam or beyond comprehension; Ashraya heenam or the Holdless since he is the Supreme Holder Himself; and indeed that is Brahma Jnaana]!

*Evam prakaaramalam Nityam Vyapakamakshayam, Samasta heryarahitam Visdhnavaakhayam Paramam padam/ Tad Brahma Paramam Yogi yato naavaratey punah Shriyatya punyoparamey kheenakleshoti nirmalah/ Dwey Rupey Brahmaanastasya Murtam chaa murtamevacha, Kshara akshara swarupo tey Sarvabhuteshthavasthitey/ Aksharam Tapp;aram Brahma Ksharam Sarvamidam Jagat,*

*Ekadeshasthitasyaagneyerjyotsnaa visteerani tathaa,Parasyabrahmaanah Shaktistatheyamadakhilam Jagat/(In this way Vishnu Paramapada is percievable which is Nirmala-Nitya- Vyapaka-Akshaya-and Heya Guna varjita; this Unique Form devoid of Paapa- Punya and Samsara Kleshaas is such that would have no return as the Person concerned gets absorbed into Para Brahma! That Brahma has two manifestations of Murta and Amurta! And Akshara is the Everlasing Para Brahma and Kshara is the Transcient Universe. Brahma Shakti is akin to the all powerful Agni which spreads fast its heat and radiance and its impact is also according to the distance or closeness that the Practitioner Yogi concerned.*

Vishnu Maha Stuti: Muni Maitreya requested Maharshi Parashara to portrayBhagavan Vishnu in his Complete Form and the Maharshi quoted Vasiththa Maha Muni as follows: *Namaskrutyaaprameyaaya Vishnavey Prabha Vishnavey, Kathayaami yathaakhyatam Visishthena Mamaa bhavat/Aatmaanamasya Jagato Nirlepamagunaalam, Bibharti Kaustubhamani Swarupam, Bhagavaan Harih/ Shri Vatsasamshaana dharamanantena samaashritam, Pradhaanam Buddhirapyaastey Gada Rupena Madhavey/ Bhutaadimindri-yaadimcha Dwidhaahankaara meeshwarah,Bibharti shankha rupena shaaranga rupena cha sthitam/ Chalatswa rupamayantam javeynaantaritaanilam,Chakraswarupam cha Mano dhaathey Vishnukarey sthitam/ Pancharupaatu yaa Maalaa Vyajayanti Gadaabhrutah, Saa bhuta hetu sanjaata Bhutamaalaa cha vai Dwijah/ Yaanindrayanya seshaani Buddhi karmaatmakaani vai, Shararupaanyashshaani taani Dhattey Janaardana/ Bibharti Yacchaasiratnamachyutotyanta nirmalam,Vidyaamayam tu tadjnaanamavidyaakosha samsthitam/Ithyam Pumaampradhaanam cha buddhyahankaarameva cha, Bhutaani cha Hrisheerkesho Manah sarvendriyaanicha,Vidyaavidye cha Maitreya Sarvametata samaashritam/ Astrbhushanaa samsthaana Swarupam Rupa varjitah,Bibharti Maayaaruposou Shriyasey Praaninaam Harih/ Savikaaram Pradhaanam cha Pumaamsamakhilam Jagat, Bibhrarti Pundareekaaksha Devam Parameshwarah/Yaa Vidya yaa tathaavidyaa yatsadyat chaasadavyayam,Tatsarvam Sarva bhutesho Maitreya Madhusudaney/Kalaa kaashtaa nimeshaadi dinartwayana haayanaih,Kaala Swarupo Bhagavanpaapo Harivyayaha/ Bhurlokotha Bhuvanloka Swarloko Munisattama, Maharjana -stapah Satyam SaptaLokaa imey Vibhuh/Lokaatma Murtih sarveshaam Purveshaamapi Purvajah, Aadhaarah Sarva Vidyaanaam Swayameva Harihsthitah/ Deva Maanusha pashwaadi Swarupairbahubhih sthitah, Tatah Sarveswaronanto Bhutamurtiramurtimaan/ Ruchi yajuumshi Saamaani tathaavaatharvnaani vai,Itihaasopavedaaschavedanteshu tathoktayah/ Vedaangaani Samastaani Manvaadigaditaani cha,Shaastraanyaseshaakhyaa- naanyanuvaakaascha ye kwachit/Kaavyaalaapaascha ye kechidgeetakaanyakhilaani cha,Shabdamurtidharasyaitadwipurvishnor*

*mahaatmanah/ Yaani Murthaanyamurtaani Yaanyantraayantra vaa kwachit,Santi vai Vastujaataani taani Sarvaani tadupuh/ Aham Harih Sarvamidam Janaardano naanyattatahb kaarana karya jaatam, Idrungmano yasyana tasya bhuyo Bhavodbhavaa Dwandwagadaa bhavanti/*

(Hey Muney! I salute Jagat palaka, and Aprameya Vishnu and narrate the same which Maha Muni Vasishtha described earlier: Srihari Bhagavan who is Nirlepa- Nirguna-Nirmala and Shuddha Kshetrajna Swarupa wears Kaustubhamani; Shri Ananta sought the company of Vishnu as Srivatsa Rupa and Buddhi adorned Madhava in the form of Gadaa; Vishnu is also ornamented by Shankha which is of Tamasa Swarupa and Shaaranga Dhanush of Raajasa Ahamkaara; the Chakra which out smarts the speed of Vayu is basically of Satvika Swarupa and adorns the lotus like smooth hands of Vishnu. Bhagavan also wears a Pancha Rupa Vijayanti Maalaa made of Mukta-Manikya-Marakata-Indraneela and Heeraas, representing Pancha Tanmatraas and Pancha Bhutaas. Bhagavan also keeps 'baanaas' or arrows which are the embodiments of Jnaana and Karma! Further Vishnu wears a sharp Khadga or sword which pierces through Avidya and brightens Vidyaamaya Jnaana. Muni Maitreya! In this manner, all kinds of features like Purusha, Pradhana, Buddhi, Ahamkara, Pancha Bhuta, Manas, Indriyas, Vidya and Avidya are all surrounded by Vishnu. Srihari who has basically no Form but in a Maya Swarupa keeps Astras and Ornaments to help and encourage various Praanis. This is how Parameshwara seeks to facilitate the deeds and thoughts of various Beings with the help of Vidya-Avidya, Sat-Asat, and such characteristics. Vishnu is also present as Kaala Swarupa in the form of Kala-Kaashtha- Nimesha- Dina- Ritu- Ayana-and Varsha! Bhagavan is spread all over the Bhurloka- Bhuvarka- Swarloka-and Maha-Jana- Tapa-and Satyalokas! He is the Origin of Origin-Purvaja to Purvajas; Sarva Vidya Swarupa; Swayam Lokamaa Swarupa; Niraakaaa- Sarveswara- Ananta- Sarva Buta Swarupa inclusive of Deva-Maanava-Pashu- Pakshi and so on; He is Ruk-Yajur- Sama-Atharva Veda Swarupa; Itihasa-Upavedaas like Ayurveda; Vedanta Vaakya; Vedaanga; Manvaadi krita Dharma Shastra; Purana-Aakhyaana- Anuvaaka (Kalpa Sutra)-Kavya Charha- Sarva Shabda Murti Dhaari-and so on. Whichever Murta-Amurta Padaardhaas exist are of Vishnu's Mighty Physique! He assures: I am the totality of the Universe and there is neither a Karana- Karya- Kaarana beyond me! A person who believes in this simple Truth would have conquered Dwandwa Rupaas and attains me!)

Having rendered the Vishnu Maha Stuti as above, Maharshi Parashara assured Maitreya Muni that who so ever reads or listens to it would be freed from sins. That person would be eligible for the Punya that daily Snaanaas and worship in Pushkata Kshetra could fetch by merely hearing the Stotra. This unique piece of homage to Maha Purusha Janardana describing the Creation of Deva-Rishi-Gandharva-Pitru-Yaksha and others is adequate to bestow the blessings of Narayana.

### Prahlada Charitra- Nrisimhaavataara

Empowered by Brahma Deva's boon of invincibility by all species normal in the Creation of Paramatma, Daitya Hiranyakashipu conquered Three Lokas, threw out Devas and all Celestial Beings from their respective Positions and controlled the totality of the Universe, harassing Maharshis and all the virtuous and religious devotees especially the Vishnu Bhaktas. His son, the famed Prahlada was admitted in a Guru Kula and the Guru tried to teach everything according to the principles that the King wished including that the King was God! But the boy learnt nothing that the Guru sought to teach but strongly believed in relentless devotion to Narayana. Once Hiranyakashipu desired to test Prahlada that

the Guru would have taught on the lines of the King's own philosophy, but his amazement the boy stated otherwise and said:

*Anaadi madhyantamajama vriddhikshayamachutam, Pranatosmya–manantasantaanam Sarva kaarana kaaranam/* ( My salutations to that Achyuta who has no beginning, midway and termination, has no birth- enhancement-and finality; He is also the Cause-Causation and the Conclusion.) The King became furious at Pahlada's statement and even desired to punish the Guru as his teachings were totally unacceptable and unpalatable. But Pahlada prevented his father that his Guru tried and made tremendous efforts to teach as per his father's instructions but not only he but the rest of the students also made him join Vishnu Bhajana. Hiranyam Kashipu cajoled, daunted, frightened and terrorised Pahlada but the deep dedication to Narayana was so intense that the boy was never brought under control; Pahlada argued with his father: *Shastaa Vishnurashesya Jagato yo Hrudisthitah, Tamrutey Paramatmaanam Taatha kaka kena shasyatey!* (As the father asked Pahlada as to who taught this since the Guru swore that he did not, Pahlada said: As Bhagvan Vishnu is right in my heart, who else needed to teach me!) *Na Shabda gocharam yasya Yogidhyeyam Param padam, yato yasha Swayam Vishnum sa Vishnuh Partameshwara/* ( As Hiranyakashipu shouted as to who that Bhagavan was? You Stupid! Then Pahlada replied: Vishnu is Parameshwara who is worthy of meditation; he is not visible nor heard and certainly not assessed but could most definitely be visualised, heard or assessed through meditation and faith!) *Na kevalam taatha! Mama Prajaanaam sa Brahmabhuto Bhavatascha Vishnuh, Dhaataa Vidhaataa Parmeshwa -rascha Pradeeda kopam kurushe kimartham/* ( As father asked Pahlada as to he was the Supreme besides himself, Pahlada replied: Dear father, Maha Bhuta Vishnu was not only meant for me but to the whole World, its Praja, the Karta of Hiranyakashipu, his Administrator, and finally is his destroyer too.) Since, the King could not contain this nonsense any further, he ordered that this odd creature called Pahlada be tortured, cut into pieces and destroyed finally; as the Daitya resolved on these lines, Bhagavan despatched his Sudarshana Chakra to save the boy from the various deeds of unending violences: he had Pahlada trampled by elephants, bitten by snakes, sliced into body parts, thrown from mountain tops, blown by fierce winds, burnt by Agni, but each act of cruelty that was executed to the child furthered his confidence and devotion.

The Daitya King called his Ministers and the Chiefs of his Army and confessed: *Naagnirdagati Naivaayam Shastrairchinno nachoragaih, Kshayam neeto na vaatena vishena na krutyaya/ Namaayaabhira Chaivoyaatpatito na cha Diggajaih, Baalotidr ushti -chittayam Naaneynaarthomsti jeevitaa/ Tadesha toyamadhey tu samaakraanto Maheedharaih, Tishthabdasataantram Praanaanan–hyayasti Durmatih!* (Lo, this hopeless son of mine was burnt by Fire, sliced by weapons, bitten by poisonous snakes, subdued by harsh winds, deceased by powerful poisons, destroyed by delusions, dead by throwing from mountain tops, and trampled by elephants; this monument of Evil has no use for me excepting hastening my restlessness and anxiety; hence, I want you to crush him between mountains and dip deep into fathomless Seas for thousand years and be perished into oblivion!) As Pahlada heard the above instructions of his Army of several 'Akshouhinis', Bhakta Pahlada strengthened himself and prayed to Paramaatma thus: *Namastey Pundarikaaksha Namastey Purushottama, Namastey Sarva Lokaatmannamastey tigmachakriney/ Namo Brahmanya devaaya Go Brahmana Hitaayacha, Jagaddhitaaya Krishnaaya Govindaaya namo Namah/ Bruhatvey Srujatey Vishwam Sthiyatou paalayatey punah, Rudrarupaaya Kalpaantey Namastubhyam Trimurtaye/ Devaa Yakshaa Suraah Siddhaa Naagaa Gandharva Kinnaraah, Pischaachaa Rakshasaaschaiva Manushyaah Pashavastathaa/ Pakshinah Sthaavaaraschaiva pippileeka sareesrupaah, Bhumyaapognir Nabho Vaayuh Shabdah Sparshastathaa*

*Rasah/ Rupam Gandho Mano Buddhiraatmaa Kaalstathaa Gunaah, Yeteshaam Paramaarthascha Sarvamettwamachyuta/ Vidyaavidye Bhavaansatyamasatyam twamvishaamrutey, Pravruttamcha Nivruttamcha Karmvedotim bhavaan/ Samasta karma bhoktaa cha karmopakaranaanicha, Twameva Vishno Sarvaani Sarvakarma phalam cha yat/ Mayyanyatra Tathaan yeshu Bhuteshu Bhuvaneshucha, Tavaiva Vyaptiraishvaryaaguna samsuchiki Prabho/ Twaam Yoginaschinthayanti twaam yajanti chaYaajakaah, Havya Kavya Bhugekastvam Pitru Devaswarupadhruk/ Rupam Mahatthe Sthita matra Vishwam tatascha Sukshmam Jagadetadisha, Rupaani Sarvaani cha bhutabhedaa steshvantaraatmaarayamateeva Sukshmam/ Tasmaachha Sukshmaadi Viseshanaanaamagocharey Yatparamaatma rupam, Kimapyachintyam tawa rupamasti Tasmai Namastey Purushothamaaya/ Sarva Bhuteshu Sarvaatmanyaa Shaktiraparaa tawa, Gunaashrayaa Namastasyai Shaswataayai Sureshwara/ Yaateeta gocharaa Vaachaam Manasaa chaavisheshana/ Jnaanijnaana pari- cchedya taam Vandey Sweshvareem paraam/ Om Namo Vaasudevaaya tasmai Bhagavatey sadaa, Vyaktiriktam na yasyaasti Vyaktiriktokhilasya yah/ Namastasmai Namastasmai Namastasmai Mahaatmaney, Naama Rupam na yasyaiko yostistvey -nopalabhyatey/ Yasyaava- taara rupaani samarchinta Divyokasah, Apashyantah param Rupam Namastasmai Mahatmaney/ Yon tishthannasesashya pashyateeshah Shubhaashubham, Tam Sarva Saakshinam Vishwam Namasye Pareshwaram/ Namstestu Vishnavey tasmai yasyaabhinna midam jagat, Dhyeyah sa Jagataamaadyah sa praseedantu mey Harih/ Om Nano Vishnavey tasmai Namastasmai punah punah, Yatra Sarvam yatah Sarvam yah Sarvam Sarva Samshrayah/ Sarvagatwaad anantasya sa yevaahamavisthitah, Mattah Sarvamaham Sarvam mayi Sarvam Sanaataney/ Ahamevaakshayo nityah Paramaatmaatma samshrayah,Brahmasanjnohamevaagney tathyaantey cha parah pumaan/ (Pundarikaksha, Purushottama, Sarva Lokaatman, Tikshana Chakradhaari, Go-Brahmana-Hitakaari Krishna, Vaasudeva, Jagaddita Govinda! My sincere prostrations you again and again. As Brahma Swarupa, you do the scripting of Srishti; as Vishnu administer and preserve it, and as Rudra you perform the samhara; thus you are the Trimurti-dhaari Parameswara! In reality you assume the myriad Swarupas of Devas, Yakshas, Asuras, Siddhaas, Nagas, Gandharvaas, Kinnaraas, Piscachaas, Rakshasaas, Manushyas, Pashus, Pakshis, Sthaavaraas, Pipeelikaas or ants, Sariswarupaas, Prithivi, Jala, Akasha, Vayu, Shabda, Sparsha, Rupa, Rasa, Gandha, Manas, Buddhi, Atma, Kaala, Guna, and all other forms and indeed you are not only present in them but in fact you are all these yourself! You are the Vidya and Avidya, Satya and Asatya, Visha and Amrita, Vedokta Pravritti and Nivritti Karmaas; You are the Bhokta and Bhojya, and again the Karmaphala of Plus and minus variations; you are spread over among me and all others, among Bhutas and Bhuvanas, Gunas and Traits, Suchanaas or indications; all the Yogiganaas meditate you only, Yagnika ganas perform Yagnas only in your name, you are the Pitruganas and Devaganas receiving and forwarding Kavyaas and Havyas! Ishwara! The totality of Brahmada is your Gross Form, of which a minute part is in the Form of Bhumi, and in that Sukshma Form of Earth are a staggering sub-forms of Beings and the ‘Antaraatma’ is the Sub- Consciousness; indeed far beyond is the ‘Sukshmaatma Sukshma’ ‘Avishaya’ or nothingness to whom my salutations! You are the Saguna-Nirguna Parashakti and Nitya Swarupini Shakti and it is that Para-Paraa Shakti which is even far interior or far beyond that Shakti is Vaasudeva. That ‘Vastu’ which is not material but is a huge question-mark that I pray with humility and extreme dedication! While the whole Universe is visible yet indivisible, may that Supreme Power who makes, maintains and mars it-as the Adi Kaarana, Akshara, Adhara Bhuta, Avyaya, and Adi Shakti save me and let me live so as to serve you again and again and ultimately get absorbed unto You! the Brahma Sanjnak Parama Purusha!)*

As Prahlada's Naga Paasha was released, there was a commotion of Seas, the Nava Grahas were tottering from their alignments, and a series of Earth quakes occurred while the mountains which sought to crush Prahlada collapsed in smithereens and the powerful force of the depths of Seas into which Prahlada was submerged threw him out in the Sea-bed. No sooner that this happened than Hiranyakashipu was overcome with suppressed emotion for his son realising that Prahlada was indeed invincible and not himself as the Super Lord of Trilokas; almost immediately there was the grand appearance of Lord Narasimha who was neither man nor a lion as per Brahma's boon to Hiranyakashipu and the time too was dusky and propitious as it was neither day nor night. Even as Prahlada greeted his father, mother and Guru with veneration, the Unique Narasimha the immortal incarnation of Vishnu placed the greatest menace to the Universe in the form of Hiranyakashipu, pulled and rolled over across his mighty thighs and pierced his nails deep into the Daityas body to death. Bhakta Prahlada was unable to overcome his emotions and broke out into a memorable Stuti to the Avatara of Nrisimha as follows:

*Om Namah Paramarthartha sthoola sukshma Kshara –akshara, Vyaktaavyakta Kalaateeta Sakelesha Niranjana/ Gunaanjana Gunaadhaara Nirgunaatman Gunasthita, Mahtaamurta Mahaa Murthi Sukshma Murtha Sphutaasphuta/ Karaala sowmyarupatman Vidyaavidyaa Mahaachyuta, Sadasadrupa Sadbhaava Sadasd –bhava Bhavana/ Nityaanitya Prapanchaatmatannishprapanchaamalashritaa, Ekaaneka Namastubhyam Vaasudevaadi kaarana/ Yah Sthula sukshmah prakiata prakaasho yah Sarva bhuto na cha Sarva bhutah, Vishwam yataschaitada Vishva hetor Namostu tasmai Purushottamaaya/*

(Paramaatha! Artha or Drushya Rupa! Sthula Sukshma! Ksharaakshara! Vyaktaavyakta! Kaalaatita! Sakaleswara! Niranjana Deva! My obeisances to you! Gunaanu-rangita! Gunaadhaara! Nirgunaatma! Gunasthita! Murtaamurta! Maha Murta! Sukshma Murta! Prakaashaaprakaasha Swarupa! Vikaraala Rupa yet Sundara Rupa! Vidyaavidyaa! Achyua! Sadasat /Karyakaarana Rupa! Jagatudbhava Sthaana or the Origin of the Universe; Sadasat Jagat Paalaka or the Supreme Administrator of the the world that be or the world that is not! Jnaanaashraya Swarupa! Ekanta Rupa! Adikaarana! Prakashamaya! Sarva Bhuta- Adhistana Deva! Vishva Kaarana! Samasta Jagotpanna!)

As Jagannatha was pleased with Prahlada again and again with his extemporaneous and spontaneous commendations, Bhagavan asked him for a boon and Prahlada replied: *Dharmaartha Kaamaih kim tasya muktistasya karey shita, Samasta Jagatam muley yasya bhaktih karey sthita, Samasta Jagataam muley yasya Bhakatih sthita twayi!* (Of what avail are Dharma-Artha-Kaama –Moksha to me Janardana, since my unwavering Bhakti that you provided to me is in my tight grip for the Janaardana Swarupa!) Then on his own, Bhagavan granted Mukti much after his Dharma Prachara was assured from Prahlada! Any person fortunate in reading or hearing Prahlada Charitra would be instantly be purged of his sins of past or present. Mere reading or reciting the Chapters of Prahlada in Vishnu Purana, especially on Purnima or Amavashya or Ashtami or Dwadashi would enjoy the fruits of Go-Daana and would most definitely overcome all kinds severe and close-trap tribulations as insurmountable as in the case of Maha Bhakta Prahlada!

#### Yama Gita- A Perfect Endorsement of Vishnu Bhakti

Muni Maitreya asked Maharshi Parashara whether there could be any escape route by which a human being could possibly avoid facing Yama Dharma Raja after the termination of one's life! Maharshi replied that Nakula of Pandava Brothers of Maha Bharata fame also enquired of a similar question from Bhishma the Grand Father of Pandava-Kaurava brothers. Bhishma's reply was in the form of an

illustration about a Brahmana in Kaling Desha who met Bhishma once. The Brahmana cited the example of a Jatismara Muni who retained the knowledge of his previous birth. The Brahmana was convinced that the Jatismara Muni was genuine as he asked the Muni of searching questions and received correct answers. The Brahmana then quoted the Jatismara Muni about an incident when one Yama duta as taking away a just dead soul, Yama Raja secretly conveyed to his Yama Duta that if there were a Vishnu Bhakta he should not be taken into Yamaloka and that was the instruction received from his Authorities! Yama was reported to have stated that Brahma appointed him (Yama) as the authority to decide on the Paap-Punya account of all kinds of Beings except the devotees of Bhagavan Janardana. Yama was reported to have told the Yamaduta as follows:

*Ahamamara varaarchinena Dhaatraa Yama iti Lokahitahitey niyuktah, Hariguruvashagosmi na swatantrah, prabhavati samyamena mamaapi Vishnuh/*

( I was appointed by Vidhata as Yama to assess the accounts of Paapa-Punyas of various Beings, but am in the over-all control of Bhagavan Vishnu and certainly not independent to take actions on my own.) The Yamaduta argued with Yama as to why he should be responsible for Vishnu! Yama Raja then replied:

*Na chalati nija varna dharmato yah samamatiraatma suhrud vipaksha pakshey, na harati na cha hanti kinchiducchhahit sitamanasam tamavehi Vishnu bhaktam/ Kalikalushamalena yasya naatmaa vimala matermalinikrutastamenam, Manasi krita Janaardanam Manushyam satatamavehi Harerateeva bhaktam/ Kanakamapi rahasyavekshya buddhyaa trunamiva yassamavaiti vai paraswam, Bhavati cha Bhagatanya -nanya chetaah Purushavaram tamavehi Vishnu bhaktam/ Sphatika giri shilaamalah kka Vishnurmanasi Nrunaam ka cha matsaraadi doshah, Na hi tuhini mayukha rashmi punjey bhavati Hutaashana deeptijah prataapah/ Vimalamatira matsarah prashaantashashuchi charitokhila satvamisra bhutah, Priyahita vachanostamaanamaayo vasati sadaa hridi tasya Vaasudevah/ Vasati hridi sanaatanecha tasmin bhavati pumanjagatesya sowmya rupah, Kshitirasamati ramyamaatmanonantah kathayati chaaruta yaiva shaalapotah/ Yamaniyamavidhuta kalmashaanaamanudina machyutasatthamaana maanasaanaam, Apagatamadamaana matsaraanaamtvajabhatadooratarena Maanavaanaam/ Hridiyadi Bhagavaan - anaadiraastey Harirasi shankha gadaadharovyayaatmaa, Tadaghamagha Vidhaata katru bhinnamBhavatikathamsatichaandhakaaramarkai/ Haratiparadhanam-nihanijantun-vadati-tathaanruta nishthuraani yascha, Ashubha janita durmadasya pumsah kalushamateyrmudasya tasya naasthanantah/ Na sahati paraspadam vinindaam kalushamatih kurutey sataama saadhuh/ Na yajati na dadaati yascha santam Manasi na tasya Janaardanoghamasya/Parama suhrudi baandhaveykalatrey sutatanayaa Pitru Maatru bhrutyavargye, Shathamatirupayaati yortha trishnaam-tamamaghachestamavehinaasya- Bhaktam/ Ashubhamatirasat-pravrutti saktta satatamanaarya kusheela sangamattah, Anudina kruta paapabandha yuktah Purusha-pashoorna hi Vaasudeva bhaktah/ Sakalamidamaham cha Vaasudevah ParamaPumaanparameswarassa Ekaha, Iti Matirachalaa bhavanyanantey hridaya gatey vraja taanvihaaya duraarat/ Kamalanayana Vaasudeva Vishno dharani dharaatyuchyuta shankha chakrapaaney, Bhava sharanamitiryanti ye vai, twaja bhata dooratarena taanapaapaan/ Vasanti Manasi yasya sovyayaatmaa Purusha Varasya na tasasya drishtipaatey, Tava Gati Ratha vaa Maamaasti chakra pratihata Veerya Balasya sonyalokyah/*

( That person who does not leave his Varna Dharma, who treats one's own friend or foe on the same footing, who would never steal money or other's possessions, who would never harm nor hurt others, does not harbour extra favour or hatred on any person and retains equanimity in respect of one and all is

defined as Vishnu-Bhakta. A person who keeps his conscience clear and is not ruffled by Kali-kalmasha or tainted thinking but keeps Janardana in his heart always steadily is called a Vishnu-Bhatka. After all where is a crystal-clear mind and where is a prejudiced mind full of likings and dislikes! Could the coolness of Chandra and the unbearable heat generated by Fire be ever comparable! It is in that person who has a clean conscience, devoid of jealousy and wrath, always peaceful, pure hearted, friendly and considerate to one and all, helpful with spontaneity, straight forward without being hurtful of others and being compassionate that Vaasudeva likes to reside always. It is in that person's heart that an objective feeling predominates just as a well structured and attractive Shaala Vriksha minimises its own beauty and impressiveness but sincerely appreciates the features and presentability of other trees around. Yama Doota! Please keep off from that person who practises Yama and Niyama or Physical Control and Regulation seeking to minimise, if not uproot, the sins already committed ; do keep aloof from whom who is not affected by superior feelings, social consciousness, and pride and prejudices. If a person who has always embedded the Grand Form of Vishnu with four hands, Gada-Sharanga-Chakra and Shankhu in his heart and soul should in fact be run away from. Could one ever think of a situation when Surya Bhagavan is existent in his glory and darkness could ever prevail! But never ever spare those Beings who steal, hurt others, converse ill of others, and practise evil deeds, cannot tolerate improvement of others, are critical of fellow beings, offend the virtuous, the poor, and helpless; insult Sadhus, women, children and the 'Anga Viheena' and mentally unsound. Also never ever spare the sinners who seldom perform charity to the needy. Run after those Durbuddhis who have no consideration to friends, relatives, women and children, servants, and even parents and family members out of concern for monetary consideration, social status, false dignity and selfishness! Those human beings who are seemingly righteous and upright but basically immoral and dishonest are worse than openly cruel and declared offenders and they are cunning and schemy and such pretentious fakes are more dangerous than straight criminals and Yamadutaas ought to be able to identify them with insight and discretion! Also there are 'Nara rupa Pashus' or Humans with animal instincts and they too should be segregated by Yamadutaas. At the same time, those who realise that the whole world is a reflection of Vaasudeva himself and worship Him with one's own inner consciousness must be kept far away from the Yamadutas as they are recognised by the shields of Vishnu Bhakti and such devotees hail Paramatma by their salutations saying: "Hey Kamala Nayana! Vaasudeva! Vishno! Dharanidhara! Achuta! Shankha Chakra paaney! Do save us!" Remember such sacred persons are distinct and distinguished and indiscretions on the part of Yamadutaas or Yamadharma Raja would not be condoned easily as such Bhaktaas must be very carefully directed to Vaikuntha!)

Such was the explanation given by the Jaatasmira Kalinga Brahmana about his own experience of Dharma Raja conversing with Yama Dutaas and Bhishma quoted the Brahmana's serious and secret talk to Nakula of Pandavas; Maharshi Parashara thus replied to Muni Maitreya and assured that a genuine Vishnu Bhakta need not be unnecessarily rattled as to how he would avoid Naraka Darshana! *Kinkaraah paasha dandaascha na Yamo cha Yaataanaah, Samarthaastasya yasaatamaa Keshavaalambanassadaa!* (A devotee of Vishnu whose heart is saturated by Bhagavat Paaraayana would indeed be free from the fears of Yama, Yamadutaas, Yama paasha, Yama danda or Yama yatana!)

## PART THREE

### SOURCES FROM UPANISHADS

#### Introduction:

The Essence of Bhoga-Bhagya-Yogyia Lakshmi denotes Ashta Lakshmi Swarupas ranging from food-health-fame-longevity-progeny-material prosperity-knowledge-ability to help others-satkarma or righteous way- and overall fulfillment of Life - all on the framework of Dharma and Nyaya or virtue and justice. In other words, bhoga-bhaagyas ushered by Maha Lakshmi are indeed aspirational but materialism for negative and evil purposes ought to be resisted and never ever enslaved! Indeed perfect existence to the possible percentage of existence bestows 'yogyata' or be worthy of and deserving balance. Indeed that is what Upanishads avow unequivocally.

[Note: The seriatum of the Upanishads is as follows: Yajur Veda: Brihadarankya, Katha, Taittiriya, Isha, Svetashvatara-Saama Veda: Chhandogya and Kena- Rig Veda: Atreya and Kauksheetaki-Atharva Veda: Mundaka, Maandukya, and Prashna. There after the Maha Narayana Upanidshad is highlighted]

#### Brihadaranyaka:

***[Relevance of Devi Lakshmi: Creation of Beings and their materialistic needs lead to means of achieving them to some extent; Eventually realising that endless efforts being mere mirages, the attractions of 'Maya' the make-belief are gradually toned and realised as unreal ; Principles of Virtue need to be learnt and austerities, detachment, self control etc. are practised in the quest of Reality]***

Prajapati pair creates fathers, food, rituals, mind, speech, praana

( I.V.1) *Yat saptaannaani medhayaa tapasaajanayatpitaa, Ekamasya saadhaaranam dve Devaan abhaajayat/ Trinyatmane kurut pashaubhya ekampraayacchhat, Tasminsarva pratishthitam yaccha praanamiti yaccha na/ Kasmaattaani na ksheemantedya maanaani sarvadaa, yo vaitaamajkshinti veda sonnamatti prateeken/ Sa Devaanapigacchati, sa urjamupajeevati/* ( Not only Prajapati but every father produces seven kinds of food through meditation and rituals of which one is common to all consumers, two of the food are meant for Devas, three for himself and family, and one to domestic animals. Existence of the food is indeed rests on the food consumed thus and for sure one realises that food would always be available in the creation of the Supreme Lord somehow by the grace of Devas) (I.V.3) *'Triney atmaane kuruta' idi-mano vaacham praanam, taanyatmaney kuruta, 'anyatra manaa abhuvam naadarsham', 'anyatra manaa abhuvam naashrousham' iti; manasaa hi eva pashyati manasaa shrunoti, kaamaah samkalpo vichikitsaa shraddhaashraddhaa, dhritiadhritir dhreeradhreeryeti sarvam mana eva/ Tasmaadapi pratishtha aprapratish pushthat upaspushtho manasaa vijaanaati; yah kascha shabdo vaak eav saa, eshaahi antnamaayatta, eshaahi na, 'praanopano vyaanaa udaanah samanona' iti etat sarvaa praana eva/ Etaanmayo vaa ayam atmaya vangmayo pranamayah/* (Prajapati designed three items viz. the mind, the organ of speech and Praana or Vital Force; normally it is stated by many that they are absent minded, or they have not noticed, or they have not properly heard; thus it is through one's mind that he or she hears, notices or sees. Mind is the deposit of desire, resolve, doubt, faith or want of these faculties, steadiness or wavering, sense of shame or shamelessness, intelligence or dullness, fear or courage and so

on. Mind reacts if one is touched, or sees, or hears. Speech is indeed possible only due to tongue and mind; hearing is possible through ears and mind again; likewise mind is that which activates any of the sensory organs. Now, the Vital Force comprises of the five types viz. Praana-Apaana-Vyana-Udaana-Samana- and Ana. Each of these units of the Vital Force have their own functions: Praana connected to the heart capable of moving mouth and nostrils, Apaana functioning the area of heart till the navel facilitating excretion;Vyaana regulates prana and Apana requiring force and strength;Udaana causes digestion and internal movement of ‘jeerna rasaas’ or the juices for digestion and mobilising the body region from feet to head; Samana is that which helps absorption of food and drinks; and finally ‘ana’ is the general stabiliser of the totality of body functions. Thus the body is identified with the three principal the organs of speech, the mind and indeed the Vital Force.)

Naama- Rupa-Karma or name-form-work of Individual Self.vi.1) *Trayam vaa idam-naama rupam karma; tashaam naamnaam vaagity etad eshaamuktam, ato hi sarvaani naamaani uttishthanti, etadi eshaam saama; etaddhi sarvair naamabhih samam; etad esham Brahma, etaddhi sarvaani naamaani bibhrati/* (This Universe comprises of three facets of existence viz. ‘naama’ or name, ‘rupa’ or form and ‘Karma’ action or work. The root of a name is ‘Vaak’ or speech or say sound in general; all the names originate from it and that is their general source. That indeed is the Self another name of which is Brahma himself!) I.vi.2) *Atha rupaanaam chakshuriti etad eshaam uktam, ato hi sarvaani rupaani uttishthanti, etad eshaam saama, etaddhi sarvai rupaih samam, etad esham Brahma, etaddhi sarvaani rupaani bibhrati/* ( Now as regards the form of a person, the look of a specific swarupa or form of a person depends on the beholder’s eyes as that form or shape of a personality might impress the view of a Self or otherwise and indeed that specific Self is Brahman himself as that Form might or might not make a feeling or perception) I.vi.3) *Atha karmanaan atmeti etad eshaam uktham, atohi sarvaani karmaani uttishthanti, etadeshaam saama, etadhi sarvaih karmabhih samam, etadesham Brahma, etaddhi sarvaani karmaani bibhrati/ Tadetatrayham sadekamayam atmaa, atmaaekah sannetat trayam, tadetatamritam satyena channnam, praano vaa amritam, naama-rupe satyam taabhaa mayam praanahschannah/* ( Similarly, for all actions emanate from one’s own body parts as their wont just as the eyes look, ears hear and heart beats; the Self or the ‘antaratma’ is Brahma or ‘Paramatma’ since Praana or the Vital Force since all the three entities viz. the body with Praana is the Self who is Brahma! The three sided Self is at once the name, rupa and karma as also the body covered and sustained by Prana is the Self and the Super Self too! This Brahmana thus firmly establishes the perfect identity of the three concepts!)

### Mortal and Immortal Swarupas of Individual Self and Supreme Self

II.iii.1) *Dwe vaava Brahmano ruupe, murtam chaivaamritam cha, Martyam chaivaa Martyum cha sthitam cha yacha, saccha twaccha/* (Brahman is of two distinct Swarupas are Forms viz. the Subtle and Gross, the Mortal and the Immortal, the ‘Sthira’(Stable) and ‘Asthira’ (Unsteady), the Actual or Existent and the Everlasting Truth! In other words, the Self which is transitory and the Supreme is eternal, what is percieveable and the other Unimaginable, besides one is limited Truth and the other all pervasive yet Undefined.) II.iii.2) *Tadetan Murtham yadanyad vaayoschaantarikshaaccha; etanamrityam, eatasthitam, etat Sat, tasyaitasya murtasya, etasya murtasya etasthitasya, etasy sata esha raso ya esha tapati, sato hyesha rasaah/* ( This gross form is different from ‘Vayu-raksha’ or the supportive Air and Ether and as such is mortal, limited, and distiguishable. It is atleast visible and defined if not unlimited like Surya or Chandras ) II. iii. 3) *Athaamurtam-Vaayuraantarikshamcha yetadamritam, etadyat, etathyat; tasmaitasyaamutrasya, etasya yatah, etasya tyasyaisha raso ya esha etaminmandalo Purushah, taya*

*hosha rasah: iti adhidaivatam/* ( When one describes of ‘Amurta Swarupa’ or the Formless Subtle Entity viz. the Vayu and Akasha, that indeed is immortal, all pervasive and indistinguishable. Further regarding Surya Deva who is distinguished yet all pervasive and immortal too, [as in the case of Chandra Deva and Agni Deva too yet undefined] , the description is about Devas in essence.] II.iii.4) *Athaadhyaatmam-idameva murtam yadanyat praanaaccha yaschaam antaratman aakaasha, etanmartyam, etat stitam, etat sat, tasyaitasya murtasya, etamritasya martasya, etasya stitasya, etasya sata esha raso yacchakshuh, sato hesha rasah/* (Having referred to Devas, the description is now about the Adhyaamika Murti or the corporal body and the organs; breathing or Prana is a part of it which indeed is mortal. Actually it is concentrated in the normal eyes. This inherent Prana is neither lasting nor mobile outside the body.) II.iii.5) *Athaamurtam praanascha yas chaayam antaratman akaashaha; etad amritam, etad yat tyam, tasyaitasyaamurtasya, etasaamritasya, etasya yatah, etasya tyasyaisha raso yoyam dakshinekshan Purushah, tyasya hyesha rasah/* ( Now the description of Amurta or the Formless viz. breath or Praana in general as a product of Space which is immortal and that is freely moving any where. And that is concentrated in the ‘original’ right eye which is the essence of Truth!) II.iii.6) *Tasya haitasya Purushasya rupam yathaa maharaajanam vaasah yathaa paandvaavikam, yatendra gopah, yathaagnyarich, yathaa pundarikam, yathaav sakrudvidyuttam; sakrud vidyutteva ha vaa asya shrir bhavati, ya evam Vedaa, athaataav aadesha na itia iti, na hyetasmaaditi, na iti anyat param asti; atha naama dhyeyam satyasya satyam iti, praanaa vai satyam, esha satyam/* (That Purusha Swarupa is such as he dons a saffron robe; he is like an Indragopa insect, looks like the flames of Fire, as a pure and white lotus flower and like the sudden flash of lightning. As per the directive of Brahman, the Prajapati Purusha is of the saying : ‘neti, neti’ or ‘not this and not that’! Yet indeed He is the Truth or Reality and the Truth alone or the Reality itself! Indeed He is the Quintessence of Truth! Various explanations have been expressed about Him: some designate him as ‘Murtaamurta Rashi’ or The One with or without Form; some call Him as –‘Karta or Vijgnaanamaya, Vidya maya Bhokta’- and Karma inclusive of ‘Purvakarya karana Samudaya’ or the Totality of Past and Present Deeds and their fruits). Some call Him as Lord Buddha opined as ‘sudden flash of lightning’ or Enlignment , that is *aprimeyam asamkhyeyam achintyam anidarshanama, Swayam eva atmana -atmaanam twam eva jnaatumarhasi/* or That only the Self could realise about Him who is beyond measure, beyond number, beyond thought, beyond comparison)

II.v.13) *Idam maanusham sarveshaam bhutaanaam madhvasya maanushasya sarvaani bhutaani madhu yaschaayamasmin maanushe tejomayomritamayah Purusho yaschaayamadhyaatmam maanushastejomayah amritamayah Purushoyameva sa yoyamaamedamamritamidam Brahmodah sarvam/* ( These **Humans and other species** are sweet like honey to each other; the sum total of their bodies and organs or the cosmic body is always in favour of Truthfulness and Reliability both internally and externally. The **Four factors** governing the Self are righteousness, knowledge, brightness within and of everlasting nature; the Self is tightly intertwined and totally unified with Brahman; indeed the knowledge of what Brahman is what the means of attaining that very status)

IV.iv.1) *Sa yatraayam Yagjnyavalkyam nyetya sammohamiva nyeti, athainamete praanaa abhisamayanti; sa etaastejomatraah samabhyaadadaano hridayamevaanva vakraamati; sa yatraisha chaakshushah purushah paraan paryaavartatethaa rupagjno bhavati/* (At the time of death, the Self gets feeble and frail and virtually senseless when the body organs like speech and hearing fail gradually. The element of light within gets withdrawn and the ether in the lotus of the heart manifested in the intelligence gets shaken and dwindling. His eyes get drooping unable to recognise forms and colours!) IV.iv.2) *Ekibhavati, na pashya teetyaahuh; ekibhavati, na jighnateetyaahuh; ekibhavati, na rasayat etyaahuh; ekibhavati na vadateet –*

yaahuh; eki bhavati, na shrunoteetyaahuh; eki bhavati na manuta ityaahuh; eki bhavatina sprushateet yaahuh; ekibhavati na vigjnaanaateetyaahuh; tasya haitasya hridayasyaagram pradyotate; tena pradyote-naisha Atmaa nishkraamati—chakshushto vaa, murdhno vaa, anyebhyo vaa sharira deshebhyah; tam utkraamantam praanonutkraamanti; praanam anuutkraamantam sarvepraana anuutkraamanti; sa vigjnanam evaanvakraamati; tam vidyaa karmaani samanvaarabhete purva pragjnaa cha/ (While facing the end of life, the vision gets unified with the Inner Self and is stated to be blurred in vision and that is why the persons near him say that his eyes are wide open but yet would not see; similarly his nose could not smell, the tongue could not taste, the voice is not functional, the ear is unable to hear, the mind could not think, the skin loses touch, and the intellect too gets vanished. That is the precise time when the vital force would quit, and all the organs follow suit; a semblance of consciousness finally departs!) IV.iv.3) *Tad yathaa trunajalaayukaa, trunasyaantam gatwaa, anyam aakramam aakramya, aatmaanam upasamharati, evam evaayam aatmaa, idam shariram nihatyaa, avidaam gamayitwaa, anyam aakramam aakramya, aatmaanam upasamharati/* (Whenever a caterpillar reaches the edge of a blade of grass, it tends to hold another support and contracts its body before holding another grass blade. In the same manner an Individual Self too contracts another dream body gradually manifesting the functions of the new organs and senses; the new organs are such as to display actions of erstwhile works called Karma of the previous births plus the instant actions) IV.iv.4) *Tad yathaa peshaskaari peshaso maatram upaadaaya, anyan navaratam kalyaanataram rupam tanute, evam evaayam aatmaa, idam shareeram nihatyaa, avidyaam gamayitwaa, anyan navaratam kaltaana taram rupam kurute, pitrayam vaa Gandharvam vaa, Daivam vaa, Prajaapatyaam vaa, Brahmam vaa anyeshaam vaa bhutaanaam/* (Ignorance or Knowledge are the two ends of a scale; it is quite possible that an Individual makes some positive achievements in one life and thanks to better knowledge seeks to improve far more virtuous accomplishments in a subsequent life. The accessories too in terms of better vision, improved hearing capacity, stronger mental strength and so on could improve from one life to another, depending on the bettering the yield of fruits. This is just like a goldsmith with a minimum quantity of gold could make a good ornament and having amassed more gold by the price of the earlier ornament could further make a more fashionable ornament eventually. Thus the cycle of ever improving knowledge might enable higher and higher advantage from one life to another deserving berths from the world of Manes, or Gandharvas, or Devas, or Viraja or Hiranyagarbha. Thus knowledge and past work as enabled by better body forms equipped with ever improving body adjuncts as facilitated the five elements that rule the body parts could usher in higher and higher achievements!)

#### Damayita-Daana-Daya or Control-Charity-Compassion constitute the three seeds of Virtue

V.ii.1) *Trayaah Prajaapatyaah Prajapatau Pitari Brahmacharyam ushuh:- Devaa manushyaa asuraah; ushitvaa Brahmacharyam Devaa ueechuh, braveetu no bhavaan iti; tebhyo haitad aksharam uvaacha; da iti; vyaajaasishtaa iti, vyajnaasisshma iti hochuh, vyajnaasishmeti hochuh, daamyateti na aatteti Om iti hovaacha vyajnaasishteti/* ( Now there is a three kinds of disciplines of Self control possible and necessary prescriptions were given by Prajapati / Viraja to three classes of his progeny viz. Devas, Manushyas and Asuras. After completing their ‘Brahmacharya’ or Student Life, one after another class. First the Devas requested Prajapati for instructions as which discipline be pursued by them! Prajapati replied in a single letter word viz. **Da!** and asked the Deva Vidyarthi or Student- Probationers whether they have understood! They nodded their heads and repeated the ‘Upadesha’ or the Sermon as **Damayata / Control** or Self Control) V.ii. 2) *Atha hainam Manushyaa uucha: braveetu no bhavaan iti; tebhyo haitad evaaksharam uvaacha; da iti; vyaajnaa sisthataa iti, vaajnaasishma iti hochuh, dattaa iti na aattheti; Om itihovaacha vyajnaasishteti/* (The Brahmacharis / Vidyarthi of Manushyas or human

beings then approached Prajapati who again gave the single word instruction of **Da** and queried them whether they had correctly understood the instruction; they too nodded their heads and replied that the Teaching commanded by Prajapati as **Daana / Charity!**) V.ii.3) *Atha hainam Asuraa uuchuh, braveetu no bhavaan iti; tebhyo haitad evaaksharam uvaacha; da iti, vyajnaa shishta iti; tebhyo haitad evaaksharam uvaacha; da iti, vyajnaa shishta iti, vyajnaasishmaa iti hocuh, dayaadhvam iti na aattheti, Om iti hovaacha vyaajnaashishteti; tadetad evaisha Daivi vaag anuvaadati stanayitnuh; da, da, da, iti/ damyata, dutta, dayaadhvam iti/ Tad etat trayamshikshet DAMAM DAANAM DAMAYAM iti/* Finally, the Asura probationers requested Prajapati to instruct them before they would assume the profession of Asuratwa and once again Prajapati gave the same single expression **Da**, but he was not sure whether the Asuras being fat minded they had readily understood the import of the word, and there were thunderous reverberations saying Control, Charity and **Daya/ Compassion!**

Austerities like fasting and detachment embolden to face death seeking better status and comfort later!

V.xi.1) *Etad vai paramam tapo yad vyaahitah tapyate; paramam haiva lokam jayati, ya evam veda; etad vai paramam tapo yam pretam aranyam haranti; paramam haiva lokam jayati, ya evam veda etadvai paramam tapo yam pretam agnaavabhyaadadhati; paramam haiva lokam jayati, ya evam veda/* (When a person is sick suffering from fever or diseases, then he is on forced and strict fasting which might indeed be a state of austerity. For a Sage who undergoes such a situation would not like to condemn the disease nor get dejected since he is ailing; instead he would consider it as austerity and seek to meditate. Similarly a dying person should consider that after death, the Self would be travelling from his place of residence, say a village or township to the forest for practising excellent austerity, or alternatively to a burial place into Fire as an excellent austerity and get uplifted to an excellent world! Indeed a person of extreme faith and knowledge who practises austerity-even while being in healthy state of body- could resort to a psyche of detachment and consant austerity would face death fearlessly and resolutely as a transfer to a far better and lasting comfort to the Self!)

Seekers of Brahman do realise the role of food and praana as factors for seeking higher status next!

V.xii.1) *Annam Brahma iti eka aahuh, tam na tathaa, puuyati vaa annam amrite praanaat; praano Brahma ityeka aahuh, tan na tathaa, shushyati vai praana rutennaat, ete ha tyeva Devate ekadhaabhuyam bhutwaa paramataam gacchatah; taddha smaah praatrudah pitaram, kim smidevaivam vidushe saadhu kuryaam, kimevasmaa asaadhu kuryaamiti; sa ha smaah paaninaa, maa praatruda, kastvenayor ekadhaa bhuyam bhutwaa paramataam gacchateeti; tasmaa u haitaduvaacha veeti; annam vai vi, anne heemaani sarvaani bhutaani vishtaani; rameeti; praano vai ram, praane heemaani sarvaani bhutaani ramante; sarvaani ha vaa asmin bhutaani vishanti, sarvaani bhutaanii ramante, ya evam veda/ Iti dwadasham Brahmanam/* ( Having described as above that rigorous austerity is the path of realisation of Brahman, the next significant proposition is that vital force whose base is food, would delight Brahman. Very loosely it is stated that *Annam Para Brahma* or Food is Brahman. But one needs to realise that food only when eaten and transforms into Praana or the Vital force be noted as Para Brahma. Others say that food when rotten and thus discarded ceases to be Para Brahma, while still others consider that when Vital force gets dried up without food cannot be Brahman; therefore there is a mutual complimentarity of food and Praana and as such there is a unity of purpose and as such the two entities of Food and Vital Force together would make the status of high Brahmanhood! This being so, a person named Praatruda queried his father as to what kind of worship should be done to realise the Supreme and the father replied rather gesticulatingly that no aspirant would secure perfection in this context however the guidelines would be to worship food and vital force. Asked further by the son, the father stated that food be denoted by the expression of ‘Vi’ since all the creatures rested on food and Vital Force denoted by the expression ‘Ram’ since all the creatures enjoy pleasure once Vital Force or Praana was intact. As long as a Being possessed body and strength, then he or she would be on the top of the world and mighty contented, since the sayings of Scriptures avow: ‘Let there be a youth, a good youth, well read, prompt

in action, steady in mind and strong in body; let this whole Earth be full of wealth for him; that indeed is the human bliss' (Taittiriya Upanishad II.viii.1); this simply means: It should be a youth, and a virtuous youth at that, and more so studious! Thus on such a person of knowledge about the good worth and value of food coupled with excellent of Vital Force are indeed the sure seekers of Brahman!)

### Meditation to Praana by Ukta Geeta unifies the body to the Soul!

V.xiii.1) *Uktam; Praano vaa uktam, Prano heedam sarvam utthaapauyati;uddhaasmaad uktavid virah tishthati; uktasya saayujyam salokataam jayati, ya evam veda/* (Besides austerities and food-praana combine, now the process of meditation is being qualified further as targeted to Vital Force by Ukta or Hymns of Praise to the Supreme! Ukta of Praana the Vital Force enlivens and enhances the Universe; hymns of praises to Vital Force lifts up the 'Samsara' which the Universe is all about! Ukta Geeta clearly sings the hymn of Praana being the prime component of body organs; indeed no lifeless person ever rises in the Universe. Now the purport of meditation is thus very succinctly analysed: the visible and apparent meaning of a truism should no doubt precede or make a headway such as to state that a person should indeed realise the significant knowledge of Vital Force for existence; but Ukta provides the hidden message or the invisible result viz. that very person could achieve union with the abode of the Self and the Super Self! Hence the supremacy of Ukta over a factual statement!) V.xiii.2) *Yajuh; praano vaiYajuh; Praano heemaani sarvaani bhutaani yujjatyante; yujjanyante haasmai sarvaani bhutaani shraishthaaya, Yajushah saayujyam salokataam jayati ya evam Veda!* ( Any mature and learned Brahmana must meditate upon Vital Force as Yajur Veda -or for that matter as Sama Veda is in the following stanza.Vital Force binds all human beings together and nothing like prayers to Yajur Veda joins the Beings with Vital Force; thus Vital Force is called the Yajus. All the Beings are indeed united to meditate to their Chief in the World viz. the Vital Force in the medium of Yajus) V.xiii.3) *Saamaha; praanovai Saama, Praano heemaani sarvaani bhutaani samyancha; samyancha haasmai sarvaani bhutaani shreshthaaya kalpante, Saamnah saayujyam salokataam hayati, ya evam Veda /* ( One should also meditate upon the Vital Force as Saama Veda. Saama Veda being the very 'Prana' of all the Beings in the Universe unifies them all together. As Parmatma, being aware that all the Beings are unified with the Vital Force, should facilitate such of those Brahmanas with faith in Praana and Saama, to surely absorb unto Him!) V.xiii.4) *Kshatra - mah/ Praano vai kshatram traayate hainam praanah kshanitoh; pra kshatramatramaapnoti, kshatrasya Saayujyam, Salokataam jayati, ya evam Veda/* (One should deliberate and ponder upon the Vital Force as Kshatra; because the Vital Force protects the body from injuries as inflicted by weapons or as normal wounds and eventually heal them with fresh flesh. That is why those who are victims of 'Kshata' or a wound or an injury are those whom Praana saves and recuperates. It is for this reason Vital Force is always a redeemer to all 'Kshatas' and is recognised and praised as the liberator; thus in Brahman's creation, Kshata and Praana too occupies as much a signified status as that of Yajur Veda and Saama Deva in the context of worship to Brahman!)

### **Katha Upanishad**

***[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi:Each and every human being in the quest of Materialistic desires is driven by one's own intellect and mind; but the Inner Conscience is only a silent witness merely]***

I.iii.3) *Atmaanam rathinam vidhui, shareeram rathameva tu, Buddhim tu saarathim viddhi, manah pragrahamevacha/*

(This Individual Self is denoted as the Master of the Chariot, body is the chariot, charioteer is the 'buddhi' or the Intellect, mind is the bridle!)

I.iii.4) *Indriyaani hahaanaahu vishayaamsteshu gocharaan, Atmendriya mano yuktam bhokte -tyaahur maneeshinaam/*

( The Pancha Indriyas are the horses viz. the Pancha Karmendriyas ie.the eyes-ears- mouth-nose-reproductive cum excretory organs and Pancha Jnenendriyas of seeing-hearing-eating- breathing and the concerned of the last afore said. Besides, material objects are the roads as countless. Those who understand these details are called the Self and the latter has the body adjuncts and the mind detailed above)

I.iii.5-8) *Yastva avigjnaavaan bhavati ayutena manasaa sadaa, Tasyendriyaani vashyaani sadashvaa iva saarathah//Yastu vigjnaanaavaan bhavati yuktena manasaa sadaa, tasyendri –yaani vashyaani sadashvaa iva saarathah// Yastva avigjnaavaan bhavati amanaakshah sadaashuchi, na satat padam aapnoti samsaaram chadhigacchati// Yastu vigjnaanaavaan bhavati samanaskah sadaa shuchih, satu tat padam aapnoti yasmaat bhuyo na jaayate//*

(The Panchendriyas attached to the Charioteer called the Intellect lacks discrimination as that of the Intellect too, then the vicious horses too get carried away with wrong deeds. But once Intellect in tune with the bridle of mind is endowed with care and discretion then the organs too like the good horses tend to run on the roads of safety and well being. Contrarily, the master of the chariot looks bewildered as mute spectator to the unapproved deeds of the Charioteer, the bridle and the horses thus for sure getting deeply engaged in the cycle of births and deaths with all the risks of existence again and again either as humans or animals or worms depending on the deeds of the body concerned! However if the charioteer as associated with the bridle and quality horses would certainly take to smooth roads without pitfalls and seek to escape the dreaded cycle of births and deaths! )

I.iii.9-11) *Vigjnaana saarathiryastu manah pragrahavaannarah, sodhvanah paarapaamneti tadvishnoh paramam padam//Indriyebhyah paraahyaarthaah, arthebhyascha param manah, manascha paraabuddhir buddher aatmaa mahaan parah// Mahatah param avyaktam, avyaktaat purushah parah, Puruhaan na param kinchit: saa kaashthaa, saa paraa gatih/*

(A person who is fortunate to possess a ‘saarathi’ or a charioteer of distinguishing ability with controlled psyche accomplishes the destination never to be born again and that indeed is the ‘Paramam Padam’ or the abode of the Supreme! Thus the ‘ arthaa’ or the sense objects are ‘paraah’ or higher than the senses; in other words material objects are created to cater to ‘Indriyas’ but intelligence overcomes the temptations of the mind; the Antaratma or Inner Consciousness is on a far higher scale. Put in a different way, Maya or Illusion that tends to make the intelligence and action overpowers but the Consciousness is on a higher pedestal and has the ability to overcome the enticement. The pull of Maya is strong enough but ‘Mahat’ or the Great Soul is ‘Param, Avyaktam, and Purusham, Purushaat na param kim chit’ or the Culmination, Subtle, and Purusha the Supreme or nothing there beyond!)

I.iii.12-13) *Esha sarveshu buthteshu gudhotmaa naprakaashate, Drushyate tvagraayaa buddhyaah sukshmayaa sukshma darshibhih/ Yacchedvaan manasi pragjnyaastad yacchecchanta aatmaani, Jnaanam aatmaani mahati niyaachet, tad yacchecchaanta aatmaani/*

(This Purusha is hidden in all beings from Brahma to bunch of grass but is covered by maya or cosmic illusion born of the mix of Satva-Rajas and Tamo Gunas. Only Maharshis and Great Seekers might perceive him as a subtle entity; the Paramatma is stated to reveal to none due to Yoga Maya or the Great Illusion as covered by Ignorance. Only through purified intellect as is available to Seekers, a hazy profile of Hiranyagarbha is perhaps seen by their mind’s eye! The discerning person needs to merge into the ‘Indriyas’ or the organs into the intelligent Self and then infuse the latter into the ‘Paramatma’. While so doing, the name-form-action of that particular Self is totally negated and there had to be a ‘tadaatmya’ or fusion of the two entities!)

I.iii.14-17) *Uttishthat jaagrat prapya varaan nibodhita, Kshurasya dhaaraa nishitaa duratyayaa, Durga payastakavayo vadanti//Ashabdham asparsham arupam avyayam tathaa arasam nityam*

*agandhavacchayat, Anaadyanantam mahatah param dhruvam nichaayya tanmriyumu mukhaat  
pramuchyate// naachiketamupaakhyaanam mriyuproktam sanaatanam, uktvaa shrutvaa cha medaavi  
Brahma kote mahiyate//Ya imam Paramam guhyaam shraavayed Brahmasamsadi, Prayatah shraaddjha  
kaale vaa tadaantyaaya kalpate, Tadaanangyaaya kalpat iti/ Iti Shri Kathakopanishad  
pradhamaadhyaye triteeha valli//*

( This is a clarion call to all the creatures sleeping in ignorance: you must soon arise, awake and get alert from the seeds of evil! Indeed, the wise and knowledgeable must soon tread the sharp and slippery path of the dangerous razor's edge which could be hurting mortally, yet would be so worthwhile attempting the hardest as the termination point is bliss itself! The end of this arduous journey would free from the jaws repeated deaths and births. While attempting this the operational maneuvering has to be performed with extraordinary dexterity: the mission to Reality is truly subtle; it is subtle as one has to manage Pancha Bhutas or Five Elements and their extensions; earth is possessed of smell, taste, vision, touch and sound while water of the four of the preceding; Agni the last three or colour, touch and sound; Air of smell and sound and Akasha the sound as its quality. The Mission is subtle due also to gradual elimination of the sway of Panchendriyas. The grossness of wrong signals of Indriyas be therefore softened as one proceeds on the razor's edge! The essence of Upanishads thus exhorts to distance from the jaws of death and seek proximity to what is titled as 'Ashabdham-asparsham-arupam-avyayam' or the soundless, touchless, formless- and endless Truth which also is 'Arasam-Nityam-Agandham-Anaadyantam-Mahatam-Param-Dhruvam or respectively the Tasteless, Constant, Odourless, devoid of Origin and Termination, Truly Distinctive and Superior and Changeless. The exhortation of Upanishads to the Creatures of Knowledge and Intellect is to detach from the tight and merciless grasp of the jaws of death comprising ignorance, desire and misleading actions away from the Reality and Truth! Lord Yama related to Nachikea the eternal Truism that a 'Medhavi' or a person of quintessential intellect is always acclaimed and glorified only for his endeavors to draw himself to the regions of Brahman the Truth! Truly enough, should a Vidwan after his own purification recite this Eternal Truth at an assembly of Brahmanas observing a death ceremony about this Highest Secret of Existence and its Aftermath!)

### **Taittiriya Brahmana :**

**[ *Relevance to Lakshmi Devi: Major desires of Life are food, water, material wealth; once attained somewhat, the next step forward is morality and spirituality- From Food to Praana to Material Wealth to Knowledge to Mind to Truth to Spiritual Awakening to Bliss!*]**

The paramouncy of Food as this is the be all and end all of Creation via Praana/Life I.ii.1) Annaadvai prajaah prajaayantte, yaah kaascha prithvim shrutaah , atho annenaiva jeevanti, athainadapi yantyantatah, annam hi bhutaanaam jyeshthamn, tasmaat saroushadhamuchyate, sarvam vai tennamaatpanuvanti, yennam brahmopaasate, Annaad bhutaani jayante, jaataannyannena vardhante, adyatetti cha bhutaani, tasmaad annam tad uchyata iti/ Tasmaadvaa yetasmaadanna rasamayaat, anyontara aatmaa praanamayah, tenaisha purnah, sa vaa esha purushavidha eva, tasya purusha vidhataam, anvayam purushavidhah, tasya praana eva shirah, vyaano dakshina pakshah, apaana uttarah pakshah, aakaasha aatmaa, prithivi puccham pratishthaa, tadapyesha shloko bhavati/ ( Food is the base that all the Beings on earth are born from, sustained by and at the end merged into. Since food is preceded by, born before, worshipped always, and eaten by all the Beings, it is precisely called Praana or the Life Force for all. As the Inner Self is made of this Life Energy which is the essence of food, the latter is an off shoot of Vayu the Air of the Pancha Bhutas or the Five Elements of 'Prithivi-aapas-tejas-vaayu - akaashas'. Of this Vayu, the head of a Being is Praana, its right side is Vyana, left side is Apaana; Akasha or the Space is the Self of a Being, Earth is the tail that stabilizes. Thus 'Annaat' or food transforms into 'Prajaah' resting on earth; since 'annam hi bhutaanaam jyeshthaanaam' or as food is the first born, all the

living beings originate from ‘annam’, sustain from it and finally merge into it; hence *Annam Brahma!*

Be it a cosmic view or a microcosmic one, the very foundation is Food the origin-sustenance and merger!

III.vii.1) *Annam na nindyaat tad vratam praano vaa aanam shariirimannaadam, Praane shariram pratishthitam shareere praana pratishthitah/ Tadetamannamanne pratishthitam, sa ya yetadannamanne pratishthitam veda pratishthitah/ Annavaanannaado bhavati mahaanbhavati prajayaa pashubhir brahma varchasena mahaan keertyaa/* (Basically indeed *Annam na nindyaat/* or since Food occupies the premium position, it is to be kept aloft on the most appropriate pedestal in the scheme of priorities. Be that as it may, Praana or the Vital Force is food essential to the body and as such both ‘anana’ and ‘praana’ are the essential ingredients of Life, both lodged into each another; hence *praanah vai annam*, the vital force is food indeed. Thus *shariram annadam*, and *praane shariram pratishthitam*; thus human body or for that matter any body is the eater of food and a body is fixed on vital force. In other words, the body and praana are the foods of both and thus inter-linked. Every human being thus is an aspirant of begetting good children, cattle, prosperity, knowledge and far reaching name and fame. Thus the world is the perfect venue for good food and praana. So also it is the Place for clean enjoyment and fulfillment; in other words, the three concepts of enjoyment, the enjoyer and the Source of enjoyment are their merger point.; thus the most ideal spot of fusion of the three entities unifying into one another. That precisely what Bliss is all about!)

Food and water and Fire the origin for water pave the Path for Bliss or Brahman III.viii.1) *Annam na nindyat tad vratam, Praano vaa Annam shariramannaadam, praane sharira pratishthitam, sharire praanah pratishthitah, tadetadannamanne pratishthitam, sa ya etadanna- manne pratishthitam veda pratishthitah, annavaananaado bhavati, Mahaanbhavati prajayaanpashubhir Brahmavarchasena, mahaan keertayaa/* Food should not be disrespected any way but certainly water is the constituent of food and Fire is well established in water as is the common knowledge. *Aapo vaaannam, jyotirannadam, apsu jyotih pratishthitam/* Thus human body is the natural recipient of food as well as water and as such is the final recipient of Fire. Therefore food is interlinked to water and fire too. Such ideal linkages of food, water and fire exist in the universe and facilitate abundance of good progeny, cattle, physical radiance and glory. Indeed, the most ideal place is thus provided on Earth as the most happening place where enjoyment, the enjoyer and the Source of enjoyment are in appropriate fusion to lead to what is abundant in the form of Bliss which Brahman is all about!)

Food, Earth and the latter’s emerging point viz.Sky enable fusion possible to lead to the path of Bliss III.ix.1) *Annam bahu kurvita tad vratam prithivi vaa annam, akaashonnaadah, prithivyaam aakaashah pratishthitah, Akaasho prithivi pratishthitah, tadevadanne pratishthitam, sa ya etadannaanne pratishthitam veda pratishthitah, annavaamannado bhavati, mahaan bhavati prajayaa pashubhir brahmavarchasena, mahaan keertayaa/* (May food be plentiful on Earth: *Prithivi vaa annam* or Earth is food. *Aakaashonnaadah* or Sky too is plentiful of Food. *Aakaashoprithivi pratishthitah* or Sky is supported by Earth. Thus one food is based on another. He who is aware of these realities of food, earth and sky are blessed indeed and has an overview of the Universe: ‘ Annamannaado bhavati, mahaan bhavati, prajayaa pashubhir brahmavarchasenamahaa keertayaa! May the Universe be plentiful of food with blessings of excellent progeny, cattle, radiance of purity and glory. As the prayer goes ‘Sarve janaa sukhino bhvantu’ or may Almighty bestow happiness and fulfillment to one and all! Thus one becomes the enjoyer, the enjoyment in essence and Brahman the very source of bliss himself!)

Meditation for human and divine achievements to help Society as also for Self fulfillment :III.x.1-2) Na kanchana vasatou pratyachaksheeta tadvratam tasmaadyaya kayaa cha vidhaayaa bahavannam praapnuyaat araadhyasmaa annamityaa chakshate, etadvai mukhatonnam raaddhaam madhyatosmaa annam raaddhyate// Ya evam Veda, kshema itivaachi,yogakshema iti praanaapaanayoh karmeti hastayoh gatiriti paadayoh vimuktiriti paayouh iti maausheeh athadevih triptiritivrishtau balamit vidyuti/ (As the person in constant meditation seeking unity with Brahman possesses distinct characteristics; his vow would not to deny shelter and food. Accordingly, he collects plenty of food by whatever means he might possess. As per the axiom that as a person sows so he reaps, he inculcates the habit of offering charities of shelter and cooked food even in his young age with simplicity and respect to guests then accordingly he would indeed be rewarded profusely early in that very age; such offerings are reciprocated as he would be of middle age then again the rewards and courtesies would be similar; but scant respect gets secured reciprocally when he his offerings are made in his late age of life!So much in reference to the charities; now, in the context of meditation, what ever has already been consolidated is no doubt be improved upon; further acquisition of yoga needs to be intensified as long as breathing control by way of inhaling and exhaling is sustained as an on going exercise; Brahman is meditated as long as hands and feet, body movement and excretions are allowed and cognitions and perceptions are sustained. This is in the context of physical control. In the plane of divinity, meditations pertaining to Devas need to be intensified to various aspects of Brahman, be they to Varuna the Rain God to facilitate good crops and impact on foodgrains, to expand energy sources by lightnings, Solar Zones and so on by other Devas. Similarly the meditations are also addressed to Prithvi and Antariksha for intensely sourcing food, besides physical well being, material plentitude and mental balance.)

Worship to Brahman for material and spiritual fulfillment, attainment of Bliss by the Self III.x.3-4) Yasha iti Pashu, Jyotiriti nakshatreshu, Prajapatih amritamaananda ityupasthe, sarvamityaa-kaashe, tatpratishthety upaaseeta pratishthavaan bhavati tammaha ityupaaseet mahaanbhavati tanmana ityupaaseeta maanavaan bhavati//Tannama iti upaaseeta nanmayam tesmai kaamaah tad brahmeti upaaseeta brahmavaan bhaati tadbrahmanah parimara ityupaaseeta paryenam mriyante dvishaantah sapatnaah pari yepriyaa bhraatravyah sa yaschaayam purushe yascha saavaaditye sa ekah/ (Contemplation to Brahman is performed for cattle wealth since a man secures reputation as such; similarly worship to Brahman be done for the sparkle of Stars; for the joy of the organ of procreation, for everything in space; for immortality to become Brahman himself and so on. Constant meditation provides support from Brahman; the more intense is the introspection of what Brahman is yields further realisation and confidence; the depth of worship yields fulfilment of bend-down and control of desires. As Mundaka Upanishad (III.3) explains: ‘As one worships Him so he becomes’ ; Naayamaatmaa pravachena lahyo na medhaaana bahunaa shrutena, Yamevaishavrinite tena labhastasyaisha aatmaa vivrunute tanum syaama/ All kinds of desires could be fulfilled, not only through knowledge, study or intellect but the Self is attainable by seeking and bydestroying ignorance that envelops the Reality. The Self as coupled with the highest abstinence strengthened by the spiritual disciplines of fortitude, and selflessness, becomes revealed. On the other hand, the great Six Enemies within viz. desire, anger, narrow mindedness, attachments, arrogance and jealousy- need to be suppressed. Indeed it is that person who is seen in Sun too. That indeed is the Truth: ‘Tat twam asi’ or That is the Self! That is the Truth; Thou art thou!)

From Food to Praana to Material Wealth to Knowledge to Mind to Truth to Spiritual Awakening to Bliss! III.x.5-6) Sa ya evam vit asmallokaat pretya, etamannamayam aatmaanam upasamkramya, etam praanamayam aatmaanaam upasamkramya, etam vijnaana mayam aatmaanam upasamkrammya, etam

*manomayam atmaanam upasamkrmya, etam vijnaanamayamaatmaanam upasamkrmya, etam ananda mayam atmaanam upa samkrmya, imam lokaan kaamaanni kaamarupi anusancharan, etat saama gaayannaaste/ haa vu haa vu haa vu// Ahamannamahamannam, ahamannaadohamannaadoha mannaadah/ Aham shlokakrit; aham asmi prathamajaa ritasya, purvam devebhyo amritasya naabhaayi, yo maa dadaati, sa ideva maa, vaah, ahamannam annam adantam aadaami, aham vishvam bhuvana abhya bhavaam, suvarna jyoti, ya evam iti upanishat// Iti Bhriguvalli samaaptaa/( The person of mental maturity and enlightenment after refraining from the mundane activities of the world realises that Life is essentially made of ‘Anna’ or the food. Consumption of Food helps generate Praana the Life Force, invigorates mind and sharpens intelligence. This helps to create joy and eventually leads to bliss, the climax of spiritual fulfillment, and Self Awareness. As a True Yogi, he enjoys ‘Siddhis’ like freedom of movement at will and roaming about over the worlds instantaneously besides total command of food which in turn is linked with vital force. This state of bliss involuntarily prompts him to break him to Saama Singing viz. ‘haa vu haa vu haa vu’! He extols Anna the Food as : *Ahamannamaha mannamahamannadohamannaadohamannaadah/* or ecstatic song and further shouts aloud that he is the eater of that Anna, the unifier of food and eating, the unifier, the unifier of the unifiers; the first born Hiranyagarbha, the Virat of Devas, the navel of Immortality; the Hiranyagarbha, the Virat Swarupa and the Upanishad and the Brahman Himself! Thus initiating the analysis of food the Self evolves to generate the Praana, the play of Jnaanendriyas and Karmendriyas, the ever floating responses of mind, the impact of thoughts on the limbs and so on. These apart are the influences of Praanamaya, Atmamaya, Vijnaana - maya, and Anandamaya view points leading to the Finality of Bliss and Brahman!)*

## **Ishopanishad**

**[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi: Desire for materialism is often blinded by Evil ends and hides Reality!]**

Detachment and Deliberation are the rudiments of Realising the Supreme: I) Om Ishaavasyamidam sarvam yatkimcha Jagatyaam Jagat,Tena tyaktena bhunjeethaa maa gridhah kasyasvid dhanam/ ( Om! The Totality of what exists and moves about all over this Earth is under the care of the Over Lord Paramatma. This Self that dwells inside each and every Being is indeed the Supreme Itself and therefore should be guarded against by evil forces and material allurements arising therefrom. Utmost vigilance is therefore called for by extreme detachment and renunciation by stoic endurance and steadfast adherence to scrupulously hold fast to the norms of Virtue and Justice and never yield to the pulls and pressures of the transient and meaningless possessions of wealth and physical joys!Indeed there are the two clearcut paths on which Vedas and auxiliary Scriptures are based and these are non- involvement and proactive deliberation arising from conviction, quite apart of course from abstinence and self denial. Be that as it may, another interpretation considering the changed situations of time and circumstances, the instruction by the Lord appears not to be too greedy and over-enthusiastic, by head over heels, but within the framework of virtue and justice one should be contented with minimal wants for survival and not to get too attached!)

Righteous Action irrespective of fruits begets further longevity deserving scope for further Enlightenment II) Kurvunnevah karmaani jijeevishet shatam samaah, Evam tvayi naanyathetosti na karma lipyate nare/(Having stressed that total detachment be practised, yet human beings as they are, the Supreme relaxes for a while that one should perform works truly with conscience and without desires of returns; (Gita-Dwitiyodhaaya, Sankhya Yoga-Stanza 47) states: ‘Karmanyevaadhikaaraste maa phaleshu

kadaachana, Maa karma phala heturbhuh maa te sangostv karmani' or human beings possess the limited freedom of performing their duties but have little relevance of the fruits and returns, since whatever is destined as per the 'Prakriti dharma' or natural norms of predetermined returns would be reaped any way. Hence a person performing his 'Karma' or the dutiful works should only pray for hundred years of longevity, reemphasising the fact that the longevity be subject to continued performance of the Karma or the duties. In other words one should ask for long life only to enable to perform the duty. After all the prayer for extension of life is not for materil fulfillment but for spiritual enhancement; the purport to seek longer life by enhanced contemplation is to further activise life for exrta opportunity to serve the Almighty and certanily not to respond to pleasures of material ends. It is emphasised that there are two paths on which Vedas are established viz. one characterised by attachment and another to underscore detachment!)

Involvement of Evil Forces blinds the brightness of Truth and the pace of recovery is slow to nil

III) *Asuryaa naama te lokaa andhena tamasaa vritaah, Tamaste pretyaabhi gacchanti ye ke chaatmahano janaah/*(How do the worlds of Devils get involved by blinding human beings in deep darkness! Indeed this is due to the ignorance caused by the severe play of body adjuncts of Pancha Karmendriyas of eyes, ears, skin, nose, and reproductive organs and the Pancha Jnaanendriyas viz. vision, hearing, touch, breathing and generation acts- all guided by the 'Manas' or Mind! These demonic and wicked influences tend to the hide the Reality of the Self and till such time the Panchendriyas are present in the body or till its termination! The nature of the Self is such that its consciousness is literally imprisoned from the sway of the Maya or hallucination or false sense of perception of the True Reality. Death and the pursuant trans-migration of the Self provide another opportunity for the enlightenment but alas, the influence of the Panchendriyas might in all probability would continue in the subsequent birth too! This being so, one would like to define what all this Self about any way! The experience of this 'Antaratma' or the Self and its self declared superiority asserts that it is free from decay, disease and death!)

### **Shvetaashvatara Upanishad**

***[Relevance of Devi Lakshmi: Quest for Bhoga-Bhaagyas tends invariably Maya the mirage of Materialism- It is the fall out of Ups and Downs that is the wake-up call!]***

One's Self-generated Energy is driven by Maya and Her twenty four units of five Elements, Five each of Jnaanendra-Karmandriyas, Manas, Praana and Kaalamaan!I.iii) *Te dhyaana-yogaanugati apaayan devatma-shaktim sva-gunair niguudham yah kaaranaani nikhilaani taani kaalaatma yukaani adhitishthati ekah/* (Those who are intensely engaged in constant meditation and deep introspection gradually realise that that the specific 'devaatma shaktim swa gunair niguudham' or the divine power is latently replete right within and indeed that rules and causes all the actions and conditions its psyche; Bhagavat Gita in Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga vide IX.10, Bhagavan Shri Krishna declares: '*Mayaadhyakshena prakrutih suuyate sacharaacharm, hetunaanena kounteya jagadviparivartate/* or Kounteya! I preside over the affairs of the Universe while Maya Shakti is my seretariat help to look manage the Creation-Preservation and periodical dissolution activities and that is how the activities are carrying on with no hitches.' Indeed, the Self driven power enforces the interaction of Satva-Rajasika-Tamasika Gunas or Instincts or features of Beings and balance these to prompt the actions of the Beings. In this very Upanishad, vide IV.10 states: *Maayaam tu Prakritim viddh, Maayaayinaam tu Mahehwaram, tasyaavayaya bhutaih tu vyaaptam sarvam idam jagat/* or 'this be well realised that Prakriti is Maya and the origin and essential force behind

Maya the Illusion is Rudra Himself; the Universe in totality is permeated and suffused with that Root Energy of His!’ Brahma Purana illustrates: *Esha chaturvamshati bheda bhinna Maayaa paraa prakritistat samutthaa/* or ‘ The Universe is surfiert with twenty four major variations of Maya of Five Elements, Five Jnanendriyas, Five Karmendriyas, Manas, Praana, Trigunas and Kaalamaana. Thus the Self-generated Energy is camouflaged within, by the three main qualities of all the Beings in Srishti in the three forms of Satvika-Raajasika-Tamo gunas. These very qualities are also responsible for the Existence and the driving forces within, besides being the causes of Srishti- Sthiti- Samhara or Creation-Preservation- Dissolution of the Universe! This very Original Energy of Parama Rudra is also the manife station of three forms of Prakriti-Purusha-and Ishvara !He is the Cause-Causation- and Casuality of Life!)

I.iv) *Tam eka nemim trivartam shodashaantam shataadhaaram vimshati pratyaraabhih ashtakaih shadbhih vishva rupaika paasham tri maarga bhedam dvini mittaaika moham/* (The Supreme Lord is realised as a Single hub of a wheel, with three tires or three folds of three Gunas of Satva-Rajas-Tamas; ‘shodashatantam’ sixteen terminals or of five elements, five organs of Perception viz. Jnanendriyas and five organs of Action or Karmendriyas and the mind as the Leader; ‘Shataardhaaram’ or fifty spokes representing viz.’ viparyaas’ viz. misleading conclusions, ‘tamas’ or ignorance, ‘moha’ or self-love, ‘maha moha’ or extreme infatuation, ‘taamishra’ or abhorrence and and ‘andhataamishra’ or terror; ‘Vimshati pratyaraabhih’ or twenty four counter spokes or the Five Basic Elements of Nature with five each of organs and senses and mind; ‘ Ashtaika shabdih’ or six sets of eights viz. ‘Prakriti’ or Nature, with eight causes of five elements with, ‘Manas’ or Mind, ‘Buddhi’ or Intelligence and ‘Ahamkaara’ or Ego As Bhagavati Gita videVII.4 illustrates vividly: *Bhumiraaponalo Vayuh kham Mano buddhirevacha, Ahamkaara iteeya me bhinnaa Prakrittrastadaa/*; ‘Vishva rupaika paasham’ or the strong rope tied to each and every being named ‘Karma’ or the plus and minus account; ‘tri maarga bhedam’ or the dominant difference of three ingredients of Life viz. ‘Dharmaadharm vichakshanaa jnaanam’ or the innate capability of Righteousness and its Contrariness; and ‘dvini mittaaika moham’ or the double edged obsession of good and evil orientation both being the definite causes of rebirth! This is how the delineation of the Single focal point or the hub of the wheel of Life !)

The Eternal Paradox of Existence -an analogy of two birds –Role of Maya/Prakriti: IV. v-vii)

*Ajamekamlohita shukla krishnam bahveeh prajaah shrijamaanaam sarupaah, ajo hieko jushmaano nushete jahaati enaam bhukta bhogam ajonyah// Dvaa suparnaa sayujaa sakhaayaa samaanaam vrksham parishasvajaate,tayor anyah pippalam svaadv atti anashnann anyobhichaaksheeti// Saaane vrikshe purusho nimagno neeshaaya shochati muhyamaanaah, justaam yadaa pashyati anyam sham asya mahamaanam iti vita shokah//*(The manifestation of the Universal Self mobilises the creation endless Individual Selves; that ‘ajam ekam’ or the eternal and singular Universal Self sets into motion of the three coloured Beings apparently of lohita-shukla- krishna or of three gunas of Rajasa- Satva-Tamas or of persons and their generations leading to pleasures and pains, as some being delighted and some others being the sources of enjoyment. Now on to the explanation of the Sixth and Seventh stanzas two birds Suparna and Sayuja both being companions cling to the same tree one eating sweet fruits and another refraining from eating at all. These two stanzas are precisely the repeats of Mundaka Upanishad vide III.i-1& 2 and so is the explanation: while one regales by enjoying the sweet tastes of different kinds of material happiness, the other appears like calculating the consequences. The analogy refers to two individuals: one enjoys and is immersed with the joys and comes a slave of even evil influences quite in disregard to immoralities, the other exercises restraint and resist undue temptations. Evern as the two specimen human beings are in the same ‘samsaara’, there the obvious references of temporary

materialism versus lasting happiness of spiritual fulfillment, the latter being an excruciating and prolonged hard way indeed!)

The ‘Karmaanubhava’ or the fall out experience of actions by the Embodied Self: V.vii-xii) Gunaanvayo yah phala-karma-kartaa kritasya tasyai va sachopabhoktaa sa vishva rupastrigunah tri vartmaa praanaadhipah samcharati sva karmabhih // Angushtha maatro Ravi tulya rupah samkalpaahankaara samanvito yah, buddher gunenatma gunena chaiva aaraagra maatro hi aparopi drashtah// Vaalagra shata bhagasya shatadhaa kalpitasya cha bhaago jeevah vijneyah sa chaanantyaayakalpate// Nava stri na pumaan esha na chaivaaya na pumumsakah yad yacchareeram aadatte tena tena a rakshyate// Sthlaani suuksmaani bahuuni chaiva rupaani dehee sva gunair vranoti kriyaa gunair aatma gunaischa teshaam samyoga hetur aparopi drishtah//(Having described about THAT, the majesty and grandeur of unrealisable Brahman, now about TVAM, or of the ‘Trigunas’ of Satva-Rajasa-Tamo gunas and ‘Trivartmaas’ or of ‘Dharmaadharna vichakshana’ or the deep sense of Virtue versus Vice ! Depending on the Great Mix of Positive and Negative Results of what all the Embodied Self has performed the resultant balance of the plus and minus accounts would qualify the Individual to the three distinct paths after the termination of one’s life in the inevitable cycle of existence of births and deaths and rebirths again viz. ‘Devayana’ leading to Brahma Loka as the highest life of with Brahma so vividly described on Kaushitaki Braahmana Upanishad I.iii-v; the ‘Pitruyaana’ for enjoyment in Swarga and other higher lokas as long as the balance of positive fruits lasts or the third of ‘manushya yaana’ or of rebirth after the negative balance is exhausted then back to life as some species of human or worse of entities of existence! The eighth stanza above describes the Individual Soul as of the size of a thumb or the heart of a live body; it is of the ‘Ravi tulya rupa’ or of the dazzle form of Sun bestowing meaningful thoughts and of perception as though that these endowments seek to seriously mobilise positive actions of virtue. The Individual Self is of hair splitting atomic formulation to the extent of division into innumerable units counting till potential infinity. This Self is sexless as It is neither male nor female and is capable of quickly prone to transformation instantly; *tad tad dharmaan atmani adhyasyaabhimanyate/* or the characteristics of the Individual Self are adapted almost instantly. Also the Embodied Self is capable of adapting and conditioning itself to varied situations, thoughts, feelings, features, tastes, emotions, passions, food varieties and so on. Even practices of faith, ways of life and living styles are transformed too so easily that the Self itself wonders its own innate capability to transform with no trace of the previous situations. Indeed the Embodied Self assumes qualities, selects shapes, colours, features that are at once gross or subtle, that the possibilities of transformation are truly amazing!)

## **Chhandogya Upanishad**

**[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi: Dharma demands karyaacharana and control of materialistic impulses]**

The three branches of Dharma or Virtue viz. ‘Yagjno-Adhyaaya-Daana’ or Sacrifice-Study-Charity as also the meditation of the unique syllable of OM): II.xxiii.1) Trayo dharmas skandhaah- Yagnodhyaayanam daanamiti; prathamastapa eva, dwiteeyo brahmachaarya aacharya kula vaasi, tritiotyantam aatmaanam acharya kulevasaadayana: sarva ete punya lokaa bhavanti, Brahma samsthomritatwam eti/ ( The three divisions of Virtue are stated to be Sacrifices to Agnihotra, Study of Scriptures and Charity as per one’s capacity. The prime most duty is the practice of Austerity comprising physical penances, ahimsa or non-killing, asteya or non stealing, frugality or non-ostentation, nigarva or modesty, and ‘satyaacharana’ or practice of truthfulness. The second is the acquisition of knowledge or

quest for sacred wisdom and Brahma Vidya or the Learning of Reality and Materialism, by staying in the house of the Teacher and the third is brahmacharya or celibacy by body and mental control and renunciation of the world . All these accomplish the way of Virtue) II.xxiii.2) *Prajapatir lokaan abhyatapat; tebhyo abhitaptebhyah trayi vidyaa sampraasravat, taam abhyaatapat, tasyaa abhitaptaayaa etaani aksharaani sampraashravanta bhur bhuvah swar iti/* ( As Prajapati made intensive introspection on the existence of the worlds, then he arrived at a three folded awareness of Vedas and of the three syllables viz. bhuh viz. Earth, bhuvah or Atmosphere, and swah or the Sky!) II.xxiii.3)*Taan abhyaapat, tebhyobhitaptebhya Omkaarah sampraasravat, tad yathaa sankunaa sarvaani parnaani samtrannaayani evam omkaarena sarvaa vaak samrunnaomkaara evedam sarvam, Omkaakaara evedam sarvam/*(Prajapati then performed further introspection and then visualised the most potent and unique syllable **OM**. The word Om is basically constituted by three letters viz. a-u-m; since the vowel ‘a’ represents Vaak or speech, the word therefore is sarvam or everything. Om is thus indeed ‘ all these’ or every thing and any thing, or All Pervasive!And a repetition of the Sacred Syllable underlines emphasis and magnificence!)

Pranava and the hidden meanings of Scriptures like Upanishads anaysing Brahman the Reality bestow nectar leading to material fulfillment and spiritual enlightenment : III.v.1) *Atha yeshyordhvaa rashmayas taa evasyordhvaa madhunaadyo guhyaa evaadeshaa madhukruto, brahanaiva pushpa, taa amrita aapah/* (Brahman signifying the Unique syllable OM constitutes the upward rays of Surya representing the upper honey cells. In this context, the secret injunctions of Upanishads and Scriptures are indeed the bees and the flower is of OM while the waters or juices are the nectars) III.v.2) *Te vaa ete guhyaa aadeshaa etad Brahmaabhyatapat tasyaabhitaptasya Yashas, teja, indriyam, veeryam, annadyam, rasojayata/* (The mystical instructions issued by Upanishads are motivated by the flower of Pranava and thus originate juices in the form of fame, luster, vitality and strength provided by food) III.v.3) *Tad vyaksharat, tad aadityam abhitoshrayat, tad vaa etad yad etad adityasya madhye kshobata iva/* ( The juices flowed in abundance and settled on the side of Surya Bimba which is what activates all across the Great Entity) III.v.4) *Te vaa ete rasaanaam rasah, Veda hi rasaah, tashaam ete rasaah, taani vaa etaani amritaanaam amritaani, Veda hi amritaah, tashaam etaani amritaani/*(Thus these flows of juices are indeed the essence of essences, as Vedas or Scriptures are all the true nectars! What all are the Sacrifices, Rites, Meditations, Dharmaacharanas, Guhya Mantras, splendours of Pranava and so on are the quintessence of what Brahman and Reality is all about!)

From a controlled mindset to conditioning as a confirmed embodiment of Virtue and ‘Vipratwa’ the transformation becomes gradual yet as an ever sustained conviction! III.xvii.1) *Sa yad ashishshati yatpipaasati yanna ramate, taa asya dikshaa/* III.xvii.2) *Atha yad ashnati, yat pibati, yad ramate, tad upsadairiti/* (As a person seeks to perform ritualistic Sacrifices, especially in the stages of intitation, apparently he becomes hungry, thirsty and some what restless and feels constrained somewhat) III.xvii.3) *Atha yaad hasati yajjakshati, yan maithunam charati, stuta shastrair evatadeti/* (Then, once, he eats, drinks and is relieved of the pangs of hunger and thirst, then he gets normalised as would then be mentally prepared to come up to the Ishti Sacrifice called Upanishad which is an oblation in the form of ghee poured into the Vedi Fire! In other words, he no longer feels constrained) III.xvii.4) *Atha yat tapo daanam aarjavam ahimsaa satya vachanam iti, taa asya dakshinaah/* ( In that mood of normalcy, he is happy, laughing, eating and even enjoying with his wife, thus assuming the usual practice of virtue, ‘veda pathana’ and meditation! It is at that normal frame of mind and routine discipline, he practices austerity, charity, sincerity, ahimsa, Satya bhashana, ahimsa, asteya and so on) III.xvii.5) *Tasmaad aahuh*

*soshyatiasoshteti punar utpaananam evaasya, tan maranam evaavabhithah/* ( Therefore, the person is called as reborn and is no longer afraid of death as though he has finished his bath after a Sacrifice! In other words, he would literally belong to Brahmanatwa and dedicate himself to that mode of life literally!) III.xvii.6) *Tas haitad ghora aangirasah krishnaaya Devaki putraayoktvo vaacha, a-pipaasa eva sa babhuvasontavelaayaam etat trayam pratipaddyet: akshitam asi, Achyutam asi, praana- samsthitam aseeti: tatraite dvairuchau bhavatah/* ( An incident is recalled that at the time of Shri Krishna Nirvana or while laying down the mortal incarnation of Krishna, Ghora Angirasa Maharshi advised that the latter that should become free from desire and take shelter at the final time from three Mantras: akshitam asi, achyutam asi, praana samsthitam asi! That is: You are Indestructible, You are Undecaying, You are Praana or the Quintessence of Life! Indeed as Lord Shri Krishna became free from thirst, two Rig Veda Mantras got manifested as follows! ) III. xvii.7-8) *AAad it pratnasya retasah, jyotih pashyanti vaasaram, Paro yadidhya te Divih// Ud vayam tamasah pari jyotih pashyanta uttaram svah pashyanta uttaram, Devam devatraa Suryam aganman jyotir uttamam iti /*(The Knowers of Brahman who indeed realise the most Outstanding and the Ageless Source Dazzle that far surpasses the intense luminosity of innumerable Suryas; they have their mind's eyes turned aside, with their purged by the rigours of asectic discipline visualise nothing else but effulgence all around!)

In the mortal world, justice may be delayed or even denied in place of injustice, but retributions or compensations are but True and Real; That is That as the Self and indeed Thou art Thou for ever! VI. xvi. 1-3) *Purusham, Saumya, uta hasta grahitam aanayanti, apaahaarsheet, steyam akaarshit, parashum asmai tapata iti, sa yadi taya kartaa bhavati, tata evaanritam atmaanam kurute, sonritaabhi sandhonritenaatmaanam antardhaaya parashum taptam pratigrihanti, sa dahyatetha hanyate// Atha yadi tasyaakartaa bhavati, tata eva satyam aatmaanam kurute, sa satyaabhisandhah satyenaatmaanam antardhaaya parashum taptam pratigrihanti, sa na dahyate, atha muchyate// Sa yathaa tatra naa daahyeta aitaad aatmyam idam sarvam, tat satyam, sa aatmaa, tat tvam asi, Svetaketu, iti; tadd haasya vijajnaaviti vijajnaaviti//* ( That truth triumphs in the long run is the normal dictum in the Universe and it is on this principle that Devatva and Asuratva are stated to prevail. The illustration given by Uddalaka to Svetaketu was that when a person who committed theft and got retribution on being killed by a burnt axe then the act was stated as justified. But in case this was not true and if the crime of theft was rubbed on him by vested interests and got punished and killed, then however there was remorse for the offence not done, but would certainly be compensations in his ensuing life. The person who actually escaped the punishment and survived wrongly, there would be retributions in the instant and further lives with added punishments! Indeed 'That is the Truth' and 'That is the Self'. Uddalaka then explained further to Svetaketu : 'That art Thou' since justice might be delayed in the eyes of the World but most certainly is never ever denied!)

Narada's attainment of knowledge was but a tool to realise Reality and hence approaches Sanatkumara VII.i.1-5) This is a key Chapter of the Chhaandogya Upanishad being the conversation of Brahmarshi Narada and the illustrious Sanat Kumara of the Brahma Maanasa Putras of Sanaka-Sanandana-Sanatana Sanat Kumaras. As Narada approached Sanatkumara to teach him about the Unity of the Self with Existence, the latter asked Narada to first describe as to what all was learnt heretofore so that he could then deduce as to how other things of inferiority to Existence were known and what kind of vision was required in the context. The Kumara further desired to ascertain as to what level of understanding Narada had to define the Supreme Reality called Infinity, for instance like showing the Moon on the branch of a tree to a child through the leaves of a near by tree! Indeed knowledge of the Self would be in the realms

of the possibility only when seeking to locate the best goal of life! Then Narada narrated that he read Rik-Yajur-Saama-Atharvana Vedas, Itihasa Puranas as the Fifth Veda, Vyakarana, Rites for the Pitru ganas, Ganita, Astrology and Astronomy, Natural Sciences, Menerology, Logic, Sciences of Archery, Military Tactics, Science of Poison Cure, Fine Arts of Music, Poetry, Dance and of Sounds! But Narada confessed that he had only textual knowledge except a few of practical applications. Even what all he learnt was by way of subjects and names and that his objective was specific viz. know of Self beyond sorrow and that his request too was specific viz. To take him beyond sorrow to Eternal Bliss! Sanat Kumara replied that indeed what all he acquired was by way of titles of texts and of learning, but the real learning was far more specific namely meditation on an Image, indeed that of Vishnu who was Unknown, being 'Avyaktam Shasvatam Vishnum Anantam Ajam Avyayam'! Any one who meditates on the name of that Reality called, say, Brahman, would acquire freedom of barriers of space, time, distance and knowledge! Now, a systematic analysis of natural features and their magnificence vis a vis the supreme self is attempted step by step like the power of Speech, the might of Mind, the strength of will and thought and the effectiveness of prayers and concentration to discover Brahman!

The power of **Speech** in seeking the Brahma Tatwa: VII.ii.1-2) Indeed, Speech is most certainly far more significant than being a mere name of a particular regulation of thought, be it Vedas, Itihasa Puranas, or several other media of expression and the deep and endless mine of disciplines that Narada mentioned about ranging from truths and untruth, good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant. If there is no speech, there would be no knowledge, thought, fact, reality or otherwise or truth and falsehood, thus making the line of distinction too thin and vague as distinct among humans from an animal, bird or an insect! Hence Knowledge and Virtue are the very fundamentals of Existence and so is the expression of that fund of awareness as in the medium of Speech that occupies primacy to realise what Brahman is all about! Those who meditate Speech as Brahman thus acquire freedom of expression about him and vindicate our realisation of Him for sure!

Double vigour of Speech and **Mental Caliber** to realise Brahman : VII.iii.1-2) Sanatkumara stated that while knowledge and speech were important no doubt, but mind and its clarity signifying maturity of judgment would be in fact be of greater consequence. Mind being an internal organ would be a tested companion and like two juicy fruits of speech and mind would further add to double power of meditation. For example knowledge and speech coupled with thinking and discretion would have double advantage to chant mantras, to perform rites, to take up tasks and accomplish fruits of success! This is how meditation of Brahman by utilising mind becomes doubly constructive and fruitful!

Strong **Samkalpa** or **Determination** is the most essential input in the quest of Brahman! : VII.iv.1-3) Even if one's knowledge base is strong and his Vaak or speech be of impeccable quality, his mind is to be attuned enough to seek Brahman and his 'Sankalpa' or determined 'Will' would need to be fine-tuned in an effort to seek Brahman! A firm will power is indeed very significant while inclination, capability to recite the Mantras and perform Rites as backed up by comprehension of the empirical data are essential too. Indeed application of appropriate Mantras to the Rites as aimed at is no mean task any way, but as is said the horse have to be taken to the tub of water and more importantly would have to be made to drink! Thus the where-with-all being in perfect placement, meditation being a highly subjective motivation, has to emerge by buttressed Samkalpa! No doubt, he who meditates on Brahman would attain the world of Truth and Lasting Joy but the samkalpa has to be reinforced!

Sturdy Self Belief, Will Power, Application of Mind to situations demanding dynamism of thought and action should make realisation possible :VII.v.1-3) Having made the Sankalpa or a firm decision, then the perseverance and staying power of what has been resolved would be the sustenance that needs to be followed up; the chitta or the intelligence to hold despite obstacles is thus superior to the will. As one deserves and desires, he wills, decides and ascertains as how to give a practical shape to the realisation of the goal; in the process he resorts to think, propel the organ of speech to utter mantras and perform the rites. It is possible that there might be shortcomings and the application of intelligence would need to be supplemented from other sources; in other words, one needs to meditate on the thought process and wherever felt necessary make amendments as rigidities should be softened. Indeed, all possible omissions and commissions in the approach be incorporated and the modus operandi be revised as felt needed on a dynamic graph. The proverb states that most of the sections of the Society never even launch a project as they are basically diffident and know of their limitations; some handful of these do launch the project but as several hindrances crop up somewhere on way give up as tension overtakes their strong-enough will; but those very very few in millions face all the obstacles and finally reach the goal dropping many on the sideways! All these actions of perseverance emerge from thought and practical application of intelligence! Thus he who may be literally solitary to seek Brahman ought to contemplate and reflect deeply on intelligence in the form of Will Power to attain the absolute and unqualified world of Brahman as far as Will Power prevails!

Meditation and Contemplation are superior to Will Power: VII.vi.1-2) ‘Dhyaanam’ or meditation is more effective than the consideration of Will Power since after all the Self Determination has to pave way for Meditation. The process of meditation to Brahman is not a simple task! Primarily, one has to conquer the material world centering the Earth. Then the contemplation needs to surmount ‘Dyauh’ or the Intermediate Space. It is not an easy task to overcome the pulls and pressures of the Swarga by ‘dhyana’. Then meditation of the glory of water and the high mountains needs to be prevailed upon. Then comes yet another intensity of humanity and divinity which has such a strong pull that is simply unimaginable and that complexity of that tough intensity is a near impossibility! Those among human beings who had already scaled the dizzy elevations and summits of glory in the pursuit of Brahman are not only few and far between but even of the stature of Naradas and Maharshis slip down the valleys of failures out of jealousies and pettinesses. Such situations abound when meditation becomes warranted against pinnacles of meditation! It is stated that he who meditates on Meditation, he who is identified with what Meditation is all about, he attains freedom of movement of thought, action and deed; and he who is identified with meditation is indeed the Reality of Meditation itself!

Vijnanam or Enlightenment as facilitated by the fund of knowledge takes a further step forward to realise Brahman: VII.vii.1-2) Reverting back to basics, Sanat Kumara did appreciate the fund of extraordinary Vijnana of Brahmarshi Narada, which indeed was the breaking point of the quest of Brahman! Indeed, dhyanam or contemplation is possible on the strength of knowledge and **enlightenment!** Knowledge is amassing huge funds of empirical information and facts, while Vijnanam is the capacity for assimilation and understanding which is the bottom of **Critical Analysis!** Now, he who meditates on such deep and close assessment of Brahman, might be able to understand the range and depth of Brahman! But alas, none is sure to gauge the range and depth of Brahman as the proverbial origin and depth of Shiva Linga remains enigmatic! He who meditates Brahman might have a hope on the understanding of what kind of Truth that he is!

With all the faculties of mind and related factors enabling the exploration of Brahman, where is the physical strength, without which the energy level of body is absent and missing!: VII.viii.1-2) Mentally and psychologically ready with outstanding back up of knowledge, excellent capability of Vaak Shakti or command of speech, determination and will power, capacity of meditation and enlightenment, Sanat Kumara emphasised to Narada, that a person of full equipment to realise Brahman should be physically strong too and possess optimal ‘bala’ or **strength** which most certainly could not be dispensed with! Strength is far superior to Vigjñana or Enlightenment and a strong person by his very physical appearance would stand out among hundreds of others and any person of similar capabilities should indeed be an ideal observer, hearer, visioner, thinker, performer and a man of exceptional Understanding and Enlightenment! It is stated that one’s Vijnana or Enlightened Understanding overcomes Antariksha and Swarga on the celestial side then he on the earthly plane overakes the fabulous heights of parvatas, Gods and human beings, animals of cruelty and ferocity, birds and reptiles, water based species, trees, insects, flies and ants. He who meditates on his strength based on muscle and might must by all means be esteemed as the right candidate with all the erstwhile qualifications to seek Brahman as he rises above all as the best observer, careful listener, rational thinker, a visioner, performer and the unmistakable deliverer of Brahma Tatwa!)

Bala or Strength is the derivative of Food and indeed Annam is stated as Paramatma! VII.ix. 1-2) Now how is strength derived as quite obviously, Annam or **Food** is not only the source but is certainly far superior to strength! In case a person abstains from food for ten nights and still survives, it would be a wonder that he is able to see, hear, think, understand and perform. Once the food barrier is crossed, he could see, hear, think, understand, and perform! That is precisely why food is to be worshipped and deeply meditated to! Indeed Brahman sustains life from humans downward lest very existence is at stake otherwise. He who meditates on food as Brahman himself attains the worlds which is full of food and also its associate and even superior to it viz. water!)

**Water** has comparative significance over food since it is truly the life line of Beings in the Universe! VII.x.i-2) On a comparative analysis, water is superior for two reasons: a person can survive with water for a more days than without food; also when there is lack of plentiful rainfall, then persons state in anguish that food would be scarce now. When there is good rain fall, public would feel happy that food would be plentiful. In extreme cases then there is too much of rain and floods spoil standing crops, public would get alarmed too, due to bad prospects of food. Indeed water is far more crucial than food. Water as truly meditation worthy as it takes all forms on earth, intermediate space, in heaven, on mountains, where gods or humans, animals and birds, grass, trees, fish, worms, and even ants exist and survive on! Indeed, existence of all Beings depends squarely on water, since there is water there is joy, contentment and all round fulfillment for one and all in the Creation of Brahman!

Heat energy is the essence of water and the much needed rains originate from the Element of Fire which is but the radiance of Brahman VII.xi.1-2) **Tejas** or heat caused by Fire is far more noteworthy than water in the universe also heating up the Antariksha or the intermediate space supported by Vayu /Air. When it is said that the atmosphere is heating up then the indication is that it is going to rain and that is how heat and radiation would lead to water. Fire taking to the form of thunders travels with flashes of lightnings and together they lead to rains. Thus one needs to basically meditate to Tejas or Fire when it is said that the worlds too get brilliant and bright destroying darkness and dullness and that is what the basic Reality is and Brahman is!)

Supremacy of Akaasha is such that Brahman himself might describe it while Beings in the worlds are too insignificant and ill equipped to do so; VII.xii.1-2) Indeed among the Pancha Bhutas or Five Elements, viz. Prithivi, Aapas, Tejas, Vaayu and Aakaashas or Earth-Water-Agni-Air and the **Sky**, the last but not the least is the Sky undoubtedly as it holds the Surya, Chandra, Nakshatraas, Vidyut or Lightnings, and Agni in position. All the activities in the Universe including the Sapta Lokas of Bhū-Bhuvah-Swar-Mahar-Janar-Tapas and Brahma Lokas are performed, seen, heard, enjoyed by the medium of Akasha; Dasa Dishas or Ten directions witness the activities by Akasha; Astha Loka Palakas of Indra-Agni-Yama-Nirrti-Varuna- Vaayu-Kebera and Ishana are active only by the courtesy of Aakashas; births and deaths of Souls are facilitated by Aakashas; growth and decadence are effected and visioned by Akasha; indeed Aakashas is the unique witness of activities of shrotra, chakshu, vaak, twak, and reproduction! Indeed there is no existence possible without the Sky! One needs therefore to meditate Akasha as Brahman himself!)

Memory power is a sure means of accomplishing Brahman enabling one to hear, see, think and meditate VII.xiii.1-2) Having stated that among the Pancha Bhutas, Akaasha has a unique role in the quest of Brahman, Sanat Kumara made a distinction of Space among the Pancha Bhutas in the macro context, and though strictly not comparable, referred to another significant aspect of the Smara or **Memory Power** in the personal context. His memory power would occupy a high priority in the attainment of the Absolute Truth called Brahman, since all the faculties of a human being like seeing, hearing, thinking, would all be on one side and the singular capacity of Memory is on the other. Once the memory is strong, one's own capability to hear, think, observe, analyse and so on is facilitated! That is why the need for meditation on memory as Brahman!)

Hope is trust and optimism by which a human being exists and expects to achieve! VII.xiv.1-2) *Aashaa* / Hope is the spring of human life and even those who have been successively disillusioned in life have a ray of hope that one day he or she would witness improvements! In fact hope seeks to forget memories or ignore dark patches and rouse hope again! Moreover, good memories if sustained, provide inspiration and help memorise Mantras, prayers, rites, and so on while bad memories act as precautions and motivate fresh bouts of hope to perform better! Hope wishes for prosperity, good progeny and all round success and fame! Thus indeed meditate on hope. Whoever meditates on hope as Brahman would secure freedom of movement as far as and as much as hope prevails and sustains!)

Praana is the Vital Energy signifying one's very existence that tantamounts to Self Consciousness as being none too distant from Truth and Brahman! VII.xv.1-4) Praana the Life Energy supercedes Hope and Optimism. It is **the Conscious Self** called 'Pragjnaatma' or the Individual Self which is as significant to one's own near and dear, say like the parents, brothers and sisters, teachers or a learned Brahmanas. If one ceases to esteem one of these loved ones, then it is stated that he had no Praana or scruples and compunction and that he was unworthy of his existence! As and when such a person is dead, then none has pity for him and out of spite and latent hatred, one would not even mind to shove his body and bones into fire with disgust murmuring that the departed one deserved no mercy and consideration. That indeed is the power of Praana or the Life Breath when persons of virtue are gone, there would be spontaneous feelings of sorrow, admiration of the departed one and of genuine disinterest and despondency lingering at each and every memory of his, his qualities of speech or other abilities, genuine goodness and justifiable name and fame. By narrating this, Narada was presumably able to attempt to excel be it in his art of speech, conviction, identification with external elements and their unification with his Pragjnaatma

or the Individual self; he appeared perhaps sensitised Sanatkumara by way of step by step elevation of the Self towards an ordeal to realise Brahman the Truth from gaining knowledge to Sankalpa to meditation to befriending 'Pancha Bhutas' to cleansing Praana and wondered as to what other inputs might still be required to seek the Truth! Would not Praana or the Vital Force be the final step indeed! Sanat Kumara smiled and expressed that Narada was yet to measure further distances as Truth appeared elusive further!)

Narada defines that his greatest endeavour was to discover Absolute Truth as distinguished from speech, vital force and so on being far transcendent of Universe and Existence! :VII.xvi.1) - VII.xvii.1)

Apparently, Narada referred to excellence of Praana in absolute sense and not in a common place manner while mentioning earlier of the Truth and thus Sanatkumara's remark of Truth being elusive! He affirmed therefore that his greatest endeavour was to realise Truth the Infinite! Narada once again underlined that he mentioned of realising the Truth as it indeed was the Most Absolute Truth beyond all the frontiers of speech, praana, elements and so forth! He further stated that he was not one of those who said that he understood Truth; also some stated that they did not understand what in fact understanding actually meant. It was in this dilemma that one needed to understand understanding. Indeed his major desire was to understand what indeed was worth understanding!

**Thought**, deep perception and **Faith** towards Truth:VII.xviii.1) *manute*/VII.xix.1) *shraddhaa* : If a person really thinks and deliberates deeply enough, then he understands effectively; contrarily when he thinks superficially his understanding would be likewise! Therefore one must have the real yearning for understanding; Brahmarshi Narada confessed that he desired understanding intensely! Now, when his thinking was profound, it would beget faith and only when he had faith then he would think deeper. One ought to therefore desire to reflect with faith. The Maharshi then expressed his resolve that by all means he would seek and sincerely pursue faith with conviction to realise Truth!

**Nishtha** or **Commitment** and **Karyaacharana** or **Involved Activity of Service** leading to fulfillment! VII.xx.1 and VII.xxi.1) When there is commitment and dedication, that precedes faith; in the absence of faith there cannot be commitment. One attains faith by service with devotion. It is indeed devotion only that one needs to acquire. Now, when 'Yadaa vai karoti' or when one acts or takes action, that presupposes control of senses and practice of mental control or concentration. Once that kind of focussed deliberation is secured, devoted service and 'nishkaama karana' or service without expectation becomes possible. That indeed the seed of happiness in the real spiritual way!

Pursuant to such Fullfillment, Narada entreated Sanatkumara to bless him for that **Unique Joy of Infinity and Eternity!** VII.xxii.1 and VII.xxiii.1) As one acts and performs dynamic service firmly embedded in total dedication, then that bestows 'sukham' or enjoyment; indeed there cannot be such happiness without dedicated service backed up by 'nishtha' and 'shraddha'. This happiness is certainly not in reference to maerial context, which is tantamount to endless craving and flimsily fleeting! The joy that is under reference is most hard-earned as a result of a long chain of variables strating from speech enabled by strong knowledge of appropriate nature, clean mind, strong will, thought, meditation, understanding, physical energy based up by good food and water of suitable heat and relief space, good memory, aspiration, vital energy, truthfulness, thinking capacity and mental sharpness, faith, determination, nishkama karma! Indeed it was that kind of Happiness that Narada aspired for! He specifically referred to

: Yo vai bhumaa tat sukham aalpe sukhamatsi bhumaiva sukham bhumaa tyeva vijjnaasitavya iti! Narada specifically aimed at That joy which is truly endless and Infinite!

Infinity is beyond comprehension and indeed within One Self! VII.xxiv.1-2) Now, the definition of Infinity would mean such that where one would not be able to see, hear, feel and understand any thing. In the situation of the Self and the Infinity get united or as both are the reflections of each other, whom should one see, hear, feel or understand! Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is quoted in this context vide Br.II.iv.14: As Maitreyi got enlightened, she got confused and told Yagjnyavalkya so and the latter explained to her: *'Yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati taditara itaram jighnati,taditara itaram pashyati, taditara itaram shrunoti, taditara itaramabhivadati, taditara itaram manute, taditara itaram vijaaneeti; yatra vaa aya sarvamaatmaivaa bhutatkena kam jighnet, tatkena kam pashyet, tatkena kam shrunuyaat, tatkena kamabhivadet, tatkena kam manveet, tatkena kam vijaaneeyat? Yenedam sarvam vijaanati tam kena vijaaneeyat? Vijnaataaramare kena vijneeyaaditi?'* In other words, when there is duality, then one smells,sees, hears,speaks thinks and knows differently. But now when Brahman and Self are just the same, then what should one smell, hear, speak, think, know, see,through what! This is because both are just the same: 'Through what should one know That owing to which all this is known-through what, o Maitreyi, shouldone know the Knower?' Thus Sanat Kumara explained to Narada that which indeed was the Infinite was Immortal while that which was finite was mortal! He further explained that in the mortal world, one's glory comprised cows, horses, elephants, gold, servants, women, fields and houses. Then how indeed would one guess that Infinity and its glory could be measured! The reply was that Infinity was immeasurable and has no parallels!

That Brahman or Truth is nowhere else but the Self of all!VII.xxv.1-2) Brahman is omnipresent as he is below, above, behind, in front; in South, in North and is indeed all this. Hence His instruction that is not only Infinite but is also in everything from Brahma the Creator of the Universe to a piece of grass. Hence He is indeed the Individual Soul the Antaratma. Hence the further instruction that the Self is below, above, behind, in front, in all the Directions. Anyone who looks within has seen Him as he is one's mirror image! He is free of movement, speech, thought, vision, hearing and touch. The concept of duality is totally misplaced. This is so but for the interaction of the Jnanendriyas and karmendriyas or the body parts and the sensory organs.Mortality is for the body and never ever for the Soul and indeed that is the Eternal Truth .

Sanatkumara sums up to Narada and provides the final Upadesha or his Spiritual InstructionVII.xxvi.1-2) *Tasya havaa etasyaivam pashyatah, evam manvaanasya, evam vijaanata atmaah praanah, atmaa aashaa, atmaah smaraha, atmataakaashah, atmaastejah, atmaapah, atmaa aavirbhaava- tirobhavau atmatonnam, aatamato balam, aamtmo vijnaanam, atmato dhyaanam, atmaschittam, atmatah sankalpah,aatmato manah, aatmo vaak atmo naama, aatmato mantrah, atmaani karmaani aatata evedam sarvam iti// Tad esha shloka:na pasho mryum pashyati, na rogam notaduhkhataam,Sarvam ha pashyah pashyati, Sarvam aapnoti sarvashah iti// Sa ekadhaa bhavati, tridhaa bhavati, panaachadhaa saptadhaa navadhaa chiva punaschaikaadasha smritah, shatam cha dashachaikascha sahasraani cha vimshatih aahaara-shuddausattva-shuddhih, sattva-shuddhau dhruva smritih, smritilambhe sarva grabndhinaam vipramokshah; tasmaimridita kahaayaaya taasah param darshayati bhagavaan sanakkumaaraah: tam skanda ii aachakshate, tam skanda iti aachakshate/* (Once any person believes and gets convinced that he - or any Individual Self for that matter -happens to be the spring boat of the Praana, hope, memory, space, water, form and look, strength , food, reasoning and intelligence, mental power, speech, knowledge, rites

and all such abilities, then indeed that Self himself or each and every Self like himself, is certainly, nay undoubtedly, the Supreme Self himself with all the accomplishments listed and such as those which are even dormant in him but capable of! In this connection a Stanza with considerable hidden meaning has been described; it states: ‘The definition of one who accomplished Realisation of Truth is free from grief, illness and death; he can foresee each and everything and attain what he desires. He originally becomes one, then three fold-say Tri Gunas and five fold-say pancha bhutas, seven fold say Sapta Dvipas or Samudras, and nine fold, say Nava Grahas; he is called eleven say Ekaadasha Rudras, or one hundred and ten and one thousand and twenty and so on! He is a symbol of Purity, purity of food, nature, memory, heart, thought, and action. Then Sanatkumara pointed to Narada about spiritual freedom to escape from darkness, impurities of ignorance, attachment to desire and to speed up the bandwagon of knowledge, mind, thought, resolve, meditation and introspection to discover Truth finally as Himself! Once that stage is reached, then he becomes ‘Bhagavan’ or God like and He knows the source and cause of Existence, its termination, the entries and exits, as also the knowledge and ignorance of Reality. Brahmarshi Narada had that conviction of Sanatkumara being a Bhagavan and hence approached him for guidance and thus the latter titled himself as Skanda, like Lord Kartika Himself!

Despite the non-dual Reality of the Self and the Supreme as exists in the Lotus Heart of ‘Daharaakaasha’ or the Small Space, one’s own body parts are responsible for deeds and the Self is but a mute spectator !  
 VIII.i.1) Hari Om! There is a need to enable normal understanding to identify the Individual Self with the Absolute and Superlative Self; this is especially to conceive the Object with qualites like organs and senses in the mortal world viz. the Self, as juxtaposed with the Ultimate Reality in terms of Space, Time and other derivative features of the Pancha Bhutas or Five Elements. This is why normal knowledge of mortal conditons vis-à-vis the macro view of higher and applied situation becomes needed. Therefore then, a lotus like small space viz. ‘daharaakaasa’ within the dwelling place of Brahman is viewed for the understanding. The inference is that Brahman has manifested himself in the form of an Individual Soul called Existence and even as the latter is totally detached, there are officials of that abode who are responsible for the maintenance of that abode which is purely temporary ; once that Individual Soul- which is but a reflection of Brahman himself- is transferred then a new abode gets ready and the Manifested Brahman called Individual Self- is migrated too again on temporary duty. Thus the mirror images of the Original Brahman keep moving to varying abodes on purely temporary basis! But the original is always intact and the duplicate reflections are in circulation from birth to birth of the mortal bodies!) VIII.i.2-3) As one enquires that since at the abode of Brahman there was a lotus space then what would be that small space that would have to be realised! The reply has to be as follows: That specific space within the heart is as huge and cosmic as space outside within which are enveloped the heaven and earth, Fire and Air, Surya and Chandra, lightnings and Stardom, and so on! Whatever one perceives in the Universe is but a part of the unknown!) VIII.i.4-5) The next query would be that if all aspirations and desires of the Beings are fulfilled in the abode of Brahman, then how about old age, diseases and such problems occurred, and what would be the answer to such natural mis-happenings! Then the answer would be that Brahman would not be victim of age, disease, death. Indeed this is always so in the true abode of Brahman where only positive blessings are derived. This is Brahman or the Self that has no decay, disease and death; it would be free from sins, and the resultant negative impact of sorrow, hunger, thirst, unfulfiled desires and unfailing will. But if the mind which is the head of body limbs misdirects vision, speech and the concerned senses, understandably the serving agents would obey their master and sins or virtues as the case might be are recorded on the balance sheet of Fate, while the Self or the Inner

Conscience which for sure is not responsible for the acts of omission and commission would remain as a mute spectator! Eventually the Being with its body adjuncts would have to suffer or enjoy the consequences; the blame or blessing is thus not, repeat not, due to the Self or Brahman since both being the same of Purity, but perhaps to what is called Fate or the balance sheet account on the basis of the body actions!) VIII.i.6) Just as the deeds of evil are exhausted the results get diminished, the impact of virtuous deeds too gets lessened. Therefore, those who depart from this world without realising the Self as instructed by teachers or on their own efforts continue to be in the endless chain of births and deaths . But the select handful who succeed enjoy freedom of movement and enjoy Bliss!

### **Kenopanishad**

[ *Relevance of Devi Lakshmi : Paraa Vidya denotes Krama Mukti by Mind- Materialism-Moksha; Aparaa Vidya involves Self Purification*]

Keneshitam' or by whom is this directed to and the inevitable answer is that the directive is to 'Manas' or the Mind by the Outstanding Instructor Parameshvara Himself. What is the purport and message of the Instruction: the contents of the Teaching are two folded viz. the Paraa Vidya and Aparaa Vidya. The former Knowledge is intended to 'Sadyo Mukti' or of the short term Liberation and Aparaa Vidya aims at Superior Learning to accomplish 'Krama Mukti'. The Paraa Vidya seeks to overcome desires by of *withdrawal* of Mind from the pulls and pressures of material desires by way of abstinence and Sacrifices, Charities and such other 'Karma Kaanda' or KarmaYoga, while Aparaa Vidya necessarily involves elevated levels of 'Atma Samskaara' or *purification* of mind and focus on Inner Consciousness by the demolition of of the thick blanket of Ignorance and by way of 'Samyak Drishti' or Inward Vision as reflected into unification with the Supreme, leading up to the ladder of Krama Mukti. Paraa Vidya is essentially enabled by Saama Veda of the 'Gayatra Saamas' highlighting Sacrifices, Rites and Meditations controlled by Mind and Praana the Vital Force as further controlling actions and their far-reaching effects. Brihadaranyaka vide IV.iv.22 states that while the Individual Self is unaffected by the deeds of virtue or vice, Brahmanas seek to upgrade themselves by the study of Vedas, by yajnas, daanas, sacrifices, penances, fastings and such other works. Karmakaanda attains offspring, wealth, fulfillment of material ends, and finally turns persons as ascetics and terminates their lives; yet the Self is unattached and whatever the body and mind do has no bearing on the karma phala, be it good or bad. Hence in the ultimate analysis , the return of the Self, be it from Swarga Loka or Pitru loka, albeit by intermission of time is only to postpone the process of rebirth after the exhaustion of the temporary liberation, but why not one indeed seek 'Aparaa Vidya' or Superior Learning to earn 'Krama Mukti' and secure 'taadaatmya' or Unification of Jeevatma into Paramatma by way of Self Realisation! The Self is indeed such that he is not available for hearing and even if he hears is unable to understand him; blessed be he who undertands this from an efficient Instructor. The Self has to be such that one could appropriately assimilate and that he certainly not be an inferior person. On the contrary, the person not able to understand properly might misinterpret the essence of Truth. There could be no argument about this Truth as that would be too subtle to digest. It could be 'ananya prokte' as the Supreme is identical to the Self; 'na asti ara gatih; or when transmigration is not referred to; and 'na agatih' or of non realisation! In other words no interpretation is possible by logic and argument as being subtle than the atomic quantity , is but only taught by Self-experience! Hence the distinction of Paraa Vidya and Aparaa Vidya!

Who indeed is the Instructor to direct the Individual and his Mind! I.1) Om Keneshitam patati preshitam Manah kena praanah prtathamah pratiyuktah, Keneshitaam vaachamimaam vadanti chakshu shrotram ka u devo yunakti/(Who instructs one's own mind to reach and react to any object or situation so that it further directs one of the 'Panchendriyas' or 'jnanendriyas' - the sensory organs and 'karmendriyas' or the functionary organs to act! Who is the foremost to activate Praana the Vital Energy and demand the obedience of mind to revitalize for setting the action-reaction cycle! Who again is the original source that rejuvenates speech to utter and ears and hear! 'Ka u devo yunakti vaacham chakshu shrotram!' or who indeed is that unique and ever resplendent Being directing towards their sensory recipients of speech, vision and hearing organs!)

I.2) *Shrotrasya shrotram manaso mano yad vaacho ha vaacham sa u praanasya praanah, Chakshusha chakshuratiomuchya dheeraah pretyasmaah lokaadamritaah bhavanti/(Since that Great Source of Energy and Effulgence is the Ear of all ears with the faculty of hearing, the Mind of the minds, the Speech of speech, the Life of lives, the Eye of all eyes and so on the persons of High Learning do realise that all the organs and senses are essentially Self Born- albeit against the principle of self sufficiency in a body- since Self Realisation or Awareness is clearly distinguishable from the body faculties! If Sun, Moon, Fire and Speech were non-existent, then how human beings could manage their actions! The reply would be that the Self serves as his light that would enable the human to sit, go about, work and return home. Thus the light is within the body itself yet indeed distinct from it; the awareness or the consciousness is different from the organs and senses; there is light within other than the body, yet that Self itself! The person called the Self comprises of awareness or knowledge of the senses of vision, hearing, touch, smell etc all directed to and emerging from its own radiance and illumination within. The Inner Self as the Supreme is totally independent, unique and All Pervasive yet creates myriad forms of all the homogeneous and untarnished purity called Consciousness; it is stated that those discerning persons do visualise the Self in the hearts of themselves as that is not corruptible by material pulls nor subject to the influences of body organs and senses. May there be eternal peace and contentment to withdraw themselves into introspection and discard frivolities and absorb the magnificence of the Self! Now having talked of the faculties of shrotra-vaacha-chakshu-manasa, an elaboration is attempted on 'Praana' the vital energy. The Self-Creator was the source of happiness; who indeed would inhale and exhale and if this source of major joy were non-existent, how could the supreme space within the heart would have sustained! The Self is the driving force of Praana as the upward breathing and Apaana as the downward breathing; indeed Praana or the Vital Force energises the body parts and senses like speech, vision, hearing and thinking by mind. The Self is seated in the middle part of the body yet all expansive and is worshipped by all the Devas; in the Universal context, the Self moves about like the Swan compared to Sun as a swan symbolising all pervasive consciousness)*

I.6) *Yanmanasaa na manute yenaahur manomatam, tadeva brahmatvam viddhi nedam yadidam upaasate/ ('Manas' or mind, which too is among the body organs representing thoughts, intellectual power and depth of comprehension is no doubt different from speech as described above. Yet as in the case of speech is also disabled to visualise about the Inner-Self. It certainly does control all the limbs and senses of the body regime like speech, but is not what Brahman nor its alternate version of the Conscience that could replace even certainly the ability of speech. May it be that mind in the driver's seat of the limbs and senses that might coordinate the body functions but in the context of bodily instincts alone it is unable to see, hear about, feel, smell and speak of Brahman nor is qualified to reach the Inner Consciousness. Mind, speech and the life force and the comparative virtues of these major players in Life. Prajapati*

designed three items viz. the mind, the organ of speech and praana the vital force; normally it is stated by many that they are absent minded, or that they have not noticed, or they have not properly heard; thus it is through one's mind that one hears, notices or sees. Mind is the deposit of desire, resolve, doubt, faith or want of these faculties, steadiness or wavering, sense of shame or shamelessness, intelligence or dullness, fear or courage and so on. Mind reacts if one is touched or sees or hears and so on. Notwithstanding the high status in the context of body based faculties, mind is indeed however not qualified to think deep about Brahman)

To know one does not know but desires to know yet remains unknown is all what all one knows!

II.1) *Yadi manyase suvediti daharamevaapi nyuunam tvam vettha brahmano rupam, yadasya twam yadasya deveshu atha nu meenaasyameva te manthe viditam/* (The teacher poses a question to the student whether he knows much about Brahman and exclaims that the latter might perhaps realise an outline but not in depth; the student said that he knew not much that he claims that optimal knowledge might still delude him; the student might have to deliberate to further perfect the Realisation. Indeed, this Absolute Power is never seen by anybody as it is not a sense object and as such, it is its own evidence since it is the ability of vision by itself; similarly It is never heard as it is not an object of hearing but is the Singular Hearer and the embodiment of hearing itself; It is never the Thought as the object of Thinking Ability but the personification of Thought and Intellect by itself; It is this Absolute Power that the unmanifested Ether is permeated all over. Brahman or the Supreme Energy is indeed the direct and instantaneous Self within all the species and yet, is beyond and afar the attributes of hunger, thirst, desire, lust, anguish, envy etc. That Reality is the Ultimate Goal and the Truth of the Truth!')

IV.8) *Tasyai tapo damah karmeti pratishthaa Vedaah sarvaangaani Satyam aayatanam/* (Intense concentration coupled with faith in totality, ceaseless renouncement and refrain from sense objects and desires, besides the utmost performance of prescribed duties constitute the cornerstones of Self Discipline; indeed Rites, Sacrifices and the attendant Karma kaanda are the action oriented legs while Vedas represent the 'sarvangaas' or the limbs and Truthfulness is the Abode. In this context, the experience of realisation of Brahman by Indra and Virochana representing Devas and Danavas respectively as described by Chhandogya Upanishad VIII.vii-xii is highly relevant. Both of them with the sole objective of dominating the worlds performed severe Tapasya, Sacrifices, Celibacy and extremely severe schedule of karma kanda even without each other's knowledge. Finally, Prajapati obliged them with his appearance and advised them to attain the state of tranquility and bliss. Both of them entreated Him to learn way and means of attaining so that they could further intensify thier efforts to attain deep knowledge, application of mind and practical abilities. Prajapati smiled and instead of losing composure as neither of the two be disappointed said: *ya esha akshini purushah drishtyaa esha aatmeti/* That is: the person that is seen in the eye is the Self and that is Immoral, Fearless and that is Brahman indeed! He further quipped: This one clearly seen in water and that one is in the mirror; whom do you think looks clearer! Then he delared in all seriousness: This one is seen very clearly in all these! Truly indeed the Individual Self and the Supreme Self are just the same. Having said thus, Prajapati disappeared. On seeing their own reflections, both Indra and Virochana saw their own reflections, and while Virochana returned happy and self-believed that indeed he was the unchallenged hero of invncibility of the worlds, Indra knew that there was a catch tried again to vision Prajapati for a clarification and practised Sacrifices with intensified zeal and fervour. In his repeated vision, Prajapati gave the analogy of a dream stage when the Self was unaffected as body organs and senses were withdrawn excepting mind and hence the Self was unaffected since eventually the body would perish but the Self or the 'Antaraatma' was eternal. As

Indra was still not convinced and performed tapasya yet again, Prajapati finally explained: the mortal body shrouded by death and destruction is also the abode of the Self which by itself is bodiless yet immortal. The outer covering of the body is subject to pleasures and pains, but the basic inner light has nothing to do with the darkness and some flashes of light. The serene and relaxing Self being established and identified its own image called the Supreme is a witness of the activities of the jnaandriyas and karmendriyas headed by mind. The Immortal Self is like the horse drawing a cart as a spectator to the deeds of the body and all the deeds of the Self are squarely responsible by the body/sensory organs which are mortal and mind is the driver who too is mortal! The eternal horse takes to yet another carriage afresh with another set of organs, senses and a driver too! Undeniably indeed the entire Universe inclusive of all divinities do esteem and worship the Self by the might of knowledge, resolve, introspection backed by Sacrifices, deeds of virtue and unified meditation. He also sees within the secrets of the worlds; this was what Prajapati asserted again and again to Indra/ This magnificent Brahma Vidya about the splendour of the Self is so easy to know but unattainable to digest!

### **Aitereya Upanishad**

**[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi: 'Karma and Prapti' or Desire and Eligibility is Lakshmi Devi all about!]**

The Virat Swarupa and the concerned ruling Elements clamoured for Abodes and Food and the Supreme conferred the concepts of 'Karma' and 'Prapti' viz. Desire and Deed and Fruit and Deservedness: I.ii.1)

*Taa eta Devataah srushtaa asmin mahatarnave prapatan tam ashanaaya pipaasaabhyaam anavaarjat; taa enam abruvaan aayatanaan nah prajaaneeh yasmin pratishthaa annam adaa eti/* ( The Virat or the prototype Human Being, besides the various Devatas as created were initially abandoned into an Ocean of Existence or 'Samsara' and were subjected to hunger and thirst; they all prayed to the Supreme Creator as to where would be their abode and hunger that could fulfil their sustenance and satisfy their basic needs of existence. They stated that the World was like an Ocean full of hunger, thirst, sorrow and disease and then two objects were hurled down into the ocean of 'Samsara' viz. 'Karma' and 'Praptam' or Action and Result! Thus the fate of each Being has been decided on the basis of Its own Deed and Fruit! To enable sustenance of the Beings, these two foremost inputs or criteria became evidently revealed. Each individual as has been provided common body parts and senses and were left for themselves to utilise the facilities and opportunities intelligently for their betterment or unwisely for their own ruin! The quantum, quality of opportunity is indeed common to one and all but the sagacity or foolishness of each Being's actions decide their individual proclivities!

Then He materialised a human being and Devas were extremely delighted and entered into the Human

Body: I.ii.3) *Tabhyah purush aanyat taa abruvan, sukrutam bateti purusho vaa vasukrutam, taa abraveed, ythaaya taanam pravishaateti* ( Then He brought the prototype 'Virat' or the human being and Devas felt extremely happy as the principle of 'Sukruta' or ideal Abode was perfectly suited in the three senses of being a model Product of 'Maya' or Illusion created by Him, the Principle of Virtue and the Creator as Paramatma himself! ; then Bhatgavan asked them to enter into their respective abodes of the Virat Purusha)

Various Devas entered respective stations like Agni in mouth's Speech; Vyayu as nose's Praana; Surya in Vision and Eyes; Dishas as ears and hearing; Vanaspati in skins and touch; Chandra in heart; Mrityu in Out Breath and Jala Deva as excretions and progeny! I.ii.4) *Agnir vaak bhutwaa mukham praavishad, Vaayuh praano bhutwaa naashike pravishad, Adityah chakshur bhutwaakshini pravishad, Dishah*

*shrotram bhutwaa karnou praavishann, Aoushadhi vanaspatayo lomaani bhutwaa twascham praavishaamsh Chandramaa Mano bhutwaaa hridayam praavishan, Mriyur apaano bhutwaa naabhim praavishad, aapo reto bhutwaa shishnam praavishan/* (Agni Deva entered the mouth of the Beings in the form of Voice or Speech; Vayu Deva made his entry into the nostrils and not only as Praana or Life but also as the capacity to smell; Surya Deva entered the eyes and afforded vision or the sense of sight; Dasha Disha Deva or the Lord of Directions entered the ears and bestowed the sense of hearing; Vanaspati Deva or the Lord of herbs, plants and trees entered the pores of skin and hairs and granted the sense of ‘sparasha jnana’ or that of touch and absorbing power; Chandra Deva firmly entered into the heart and mind to control the psyche and of reactive mode of behaviour; Mrityu Deva the God of Death entered the navel in the form of Apaana or the compressed air which indeed is the control of Life Force and of out-breath. And finally Jala Deva or the God of Water, as also of the urge of urination of the generative organ and passion that results in the discharge of semen through it.)

Bhagavan also accommodated hunger and thirst to share body organs since these are not Devas I.ii.5)

*Tam ashanaaya pipaashe abrutaam aavaabhyaam aviprajanaaneeheeti te abraviit, etaasva eva vaam Devataashvabhajaami, etaasu bhaaginnou karomiti: tasmaad yasyai kasyai cha Devataayai havir gruhyate bhaaginyaa vevaasyaam ashanaaya-pipaashe bhavatah/* ( Bhagavan having thus accommodated berths in the body of the Beings to various Devas, heard the voices of hunger and thirst and pacified them too and directed them to share the senses of various organs like speech, breathing, hearing, touching, mental energy, and reproduction; indeed these are but feelings; as and when human beings perform oblations in respect of various Devas, then hunger and thirst are become an integral part of the oblations as cooked food and ghee!)

Then He materialised a human being and Devas were extremely delighted and entered into the Human Body: I.ii.3) *Tabhyah purush aanyat taa abruvan, sukrutam bateti purusho vaa vasukrutam, taa abraveed, yithaaya taanam pravishaateti* ( Then He brought the prototype ‘Virat’ or the human being and Devas felt extremely happy as the principle of ‘Sukruta’ or ideal Abode was perfectly suited in the three senses of being a model Product of ‘Maya’ or Illusion created by Him, the Principle of Virtue and the Creator as Paramatma himself! ; then Bhatgavan asked them to enter into their respective abodes of the Virat Purusha)

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Having materialised food, Bhagavan tried to seek its ready absorber/ taker among the body organs and their sense extensions :I.iii.3)

*Tad enad aabhisrushtam parantya jighaamyamshat tad vaachaa jighrikshat tannaashaknod vaachaa graheetum; sa yad hainad vaacha grahaishyaad abhivyaahritya haivaannam atrapsyat/* (The food thus got created was not palatable and hence he sought to persuade it with encouraging speech and conversation but still could not succeed);[ the food remained unconsumed despite the efforts of nice breathing; it remained uneaten even by the help of good vision or by its attractive sight; no satisfaction of nice appreciation of the quality of food tempted the consumer; no touch of the food helped to generate interest to actually consume it either; the mind nor the generative organ helped interest in the actual consumption of the food, but finally the out breathing of Vayu or Air did the trick.]

How does Bhagavan then enter the Body of a Being! I.iii.11)

*Sa ikshata katham nvidam madrate syaaditi sa ikshata katarena prapadya iti, sa ikshata yadi vaachaabhi vyahatahrtam yadi pranenaabhi praanitam yadi chakshusaa drushtam yadishrotrena shrutam yadi twachaa sprushtam yadi manasa dhyaatam yadyopaanenaabhya paanitam yadi shishh vistrushtam ata kohyamiti/* (Bhagavan then felt that if all the tasks are performed by various Devas concerned and if food too as the sustaining source is provided, then how himself could enter the body! If expression is through the organ of speech, breathing is through the nose, vision is through eyes, hearing is through ears, touching is by skin, and thinking is through my mind, and emission is by the reproductive organ, food is absorbed by the Vital Force, then what is the role by Bhagavan! Indeed in this cycle of cause and effect syndrome, does Bhagavan get ignored as the Ruler has appointed agents and the latter steal the show of existence instead! Also, He should witness the continuous fun of the organs and senses that each Being experiences by way of speech, smell, vision, hearing, touch experience, reproduction and the role of the monitor of mind!

Bhagavan then decides to enter as Consciousness through the cleavage entrance of ‘Kapaala’ or the mid-portion of human head and enjoys three abodes of each Human Being viz. awakeness-dream stage and deep sleep of ‘Sushupti’! I.iii.12)

*Sa etam eva seemaanam vidaryata dwaaraa prapadyata, saishaa virdrutirnaama dwaah tadetan naandayanam, Tasya traya aavasayaastraayaha swaapnaah, ayam aavasatoyam aavasata iti/* ( After opening that very end, Bhagavan enters through the opening known as ‘vidriti’ or the gap or the crevice which indeed is very delightful; that cleft at the parting portion of hair on the ‘crown’ area would indeed be appropriate as eyes-ears-nose are the abodes of Staff Members. Further, He has ‘trayah swapnah’ or three kinds of Abodes viz waking, dream and deep sleep! It is stated

that the right eye signifies the waking state or of full consciousness, the mind represents the dream state and the space within the human heart functions as deep sleep stage.

Bhagavan thus enters the human body as the ‘Antaratma’ or the Individual Soul! I.iii.13) *Sah jaatobhutaani abhivyaiktyaat kim ihaanyam vaavadishad iti, sa etam eva Purusham Brahma tataamamapashyat idamadarsham iti/* (As soon as a Being is born, Bhagavan enters the body of all but the awareness as the individual Soul or ‘Antaratma’ is perceived mostly in human Beings. He or she identifies with the Self and realises of being a man or woman, the state of mind of being happy or otherwise, body defects or abilities and so on. In other words, the Self owns the pluses and minuses of existence. As Almighty enters the body, the Purusha inside realises this awareness indeed; the Antaratma or the Individual Self recognises too but as camouflaged by organs and senses does conveniently perform indiscretions !)

‘Kah ayam atma? Or which is that Self worship worthy! III.i.1) *Om koyamaatmeti vayamupaasmahe katarah sa atmaa, yena vaa pashyati, yena vaa shrunoti, yenavaa gandhaanaajighrati, yenavaa vaacham vyaakaroti, yenavaa swaadu cha vijaanaati/* (These questions are indeed relevant: Who is this that one needs to worship: The Antaratma or the Self! If so which one is this Self! Is this Self by whom one sees, smells odours of, one who hears about, by whom from one converses with, or by whom one distinguishes as of sweet or sour nature! Are there two Souls on this body, one with praana or the Vital energy or a distinctly another!)

The reply would be the ‘Antaratma’ or Inner Consciousness III.i.2) *Yad etad hridayam manaschaitat, Samjnammajnaam prgjanam medaa drishtir dhartir matir maneeshha juutih smritih sankalpaah Kraturasuh kaamo vasha iti, Sarvaani evaitaani pragjnaanasya naama dheyaani bhavanti/* (The various nomenclatures of mental power called Intellect are the heart can assume ‘Samjnanam’ or emotive sentience being the state of consciousness, ‘Aagjnaanam’ or Authority, ‘Vigjnaanam’ or worldly awareness or knowledge, ‘pragjnaanam’ or instant mental responsiveness, ‘medha’ or brain power and retention capacity, ‘dhrishti’ or discernment and perception through senses, ‘matih’ or capacity to think pros and cons, ‘manisha’ or mastermindedness skill planning, ‘juutih’ or capacity of forbearance, ‘smriti’ memory power, ‘sankalpa’ or ability to initiate and decide, ‘kratuh’ or determined tenacity and dedication, ‘asuh’ or calculated sustenance, ‘kaamah’ or craving obsession, and ‘vashah’ or forceful possession. All these are in short rolled into one word viz. **Conscience**. Indeed, its essence is heart and mind. Heart is the product of Varuna and water while heart emerges from mind. Mind is the offshoot of Chandra. Together, these constitute praana or the Vital Energy. Now the conscience as super imposed with various forms of senses viz. speech, vision, hearing, touch, taste and generation could cognize the Self while Brahman per se cannot be done so)

Self Consciousness is permeated from Brahma down to a piece of grass! III.i.3) *Esha Brahmaisha Indra esha Praja Patir ete sarve Deva imaani cha Pancha Maha Bhutaani Prithivi Vaayuraakaasha Aapo Jyotisheetyetyetaaneemaani cha kshudra mishraaneeva/ Beejaanitaranichetaraani chandjaani cha jaarujaani cha swedajaani cha chodbhujjaani chashwaa gaavah Purushaa hastino yaatkincheda Praani jangamam cha particha yaccha sthaavaram sarva tatpragjnaanetram pragjnaane pratishthitam pragjnaanetro likah pragjnaa pratishthaa pragjnaanam Brahma/* (This Self or Conscience is alike Brahma, Indra, Prajapati, all the Devas; Pancha Bhutas or Five Elements of ‘Prithivyaapastejovaayura akaashas’ or Earth, Air, Fire, Air and Sky; besides the huge creations as also tiny creations like Yonija or born of womb, Andaja or born of eggs, Swedaja or born of sweat, Udbhuja or born of sprouts of earth;

also four legged and two legged creatures, like horses, cows, elephants, human beings, and those of Charaachala or beings of mobility and stationary fixtures like mountains and hills. This entire ‘Srishti’ or Universal Creation is indeed guided by the Supreme Conciousness, set up by the Supreme Conciousness, guided by the Supreme Conciousness and supported by the Supreme Conciousness. Indeed all the Jnaanendriyas, Karmendriyas, Pancha Bhutas, Organs and Functions, in fact each and every attribrute and action of the Totality of Universe is the Supreme Self that rolls the functions of Karta-Karma-Kriya!)

### **Kaushitaki Upanishad**

**[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi:Life terminates all kinds of materialistic desires and rebirth decides how much is the ‘Yogyata’ as Lakshmi’s carry-forward]**

[Kaushitaki Upanishad describes how a Departed Soul of extraordinary Virtue passes by the glorious ‘Deva Yana’ upto ‘Brahma Loka’ and on his entry, Brahma asked as to who that entering Soul was and pat came the reply: Aham Brahma asmi!]

Concepts of Deva Yana upto Brahma Loka: 1-2) *Ye vai ke chaasmaallokaat prayanti chandramaasam eva te sarve gacchanti, tesaam praanaih purva paksha aapyaayate taan aparaa pakshena prajanayati, etad vai svargasya lokasya dvaaram yascchandramaastam yah prati aahatam atisrijate: atha yo na prati aahaa tam iha vrishtir bhutva varshati sa iha keeto vaa, patangovaa, matsyovaa, shakunir vaa, simho vaa, varaaho vaa parashvaan vaa, shardulo vaa, purushovaa, anyo vaa teshu teshu sthaaneshu pratyajaayate, yathaikarmaa yathaa vidyam, tam aagatam pracchati ko sheeti, tam pratibruyaat: vichakshanaad ritavo reta aabhritam paanchadashaat prasutaat pitriyaavatah, tam maa pumsi kartaryerayadhvam pumshaa kartraa maatari ma nishincha/ sa jayaa upajaayamaano dvaadasha trayodasha maaso dvaadasha trayodashena pitrasaasam tad videham pratitad-videham, tan maratvomartya vaa abharadvam tena satyena tena tapasaa riturasmy aartavosmi, kosi, tvam asmeeti, tam arisrijate/* (As and one leaves the world they are all destined to reach the Moon. If the person departs during the Shukla Paksha or the brighter fortnight ending Purnima, then he thrives on the vital breathing spirits and in the Krishna Paksha ending Amavasya, then for sure is destined to be born again and thus indeed the Moon is the gate way to the world of Swarga or other wise. The Soul having reached the gateway seeks entry to higher lokas and if the gates are opened the Soul would be by extremely fortunate; other wise joins the rains down back to earth. During the return journey perhaps the experience of heaven or hell are perhaps faced. As per the karma phala, the Being is reborn as worm, insect, fish, bird, lion, boar, snake, tiger, or a human being. When born thus, the person is born in the twelfth or thirteenth month and when asked about its identity, then the reply would be that an agent brought its seed on the womb of a mother by a father. The persistent question as the true identity of the Praani who herebefore the twelfth or thirteenth month of the delivery was , the reply came out : *tvam asmeeti/* or ‘I am you!’ In other words the True Identity of the SELF before the actual birth persists , but no sooner that the birth takes place than the thick cover of Ignorance and Maya would prevail and then only the individual is set free armed with a seasonal admission and temporary entry permit to Existence is accorded, free for its bodily actions and

Description of ‘DevaYaana’ upto Brahma Loka I.3) *Sa eta Deva yaanam panthaanam aapadyagni lokam aagacchati sa Vaayu lokam, sa Varuna lokam, sa Indra lokam, sa Prajapati lokam, sa Brahma , tasya ha vaa etasya lokasyaaro hrado muhuurtaa yeshtiyaa vijaraa nadilyo vrikshah saalajyam samsthaanam, aparaajitamaayatanam, Indra Prajaapati dvaara gopau, vibhu pramitam, vichakshanaasandi amitaujah paryankah, priyaa cha maanasee, pratirupaacha chakshushi, pushpaani adaayaavayato vai cha jagaani*

*ambaaschaambaavaseesh cha apsarombayaanadyah, tam ittamvid aagacchati, tam Brahma haabhidhvaavatah, mama yaashasaa vijaraam vaa ayam nadeem praapan na vaa ayam jarayishyateeti/* (As the Jeevatma of the blessed person's life of immense virtue, sacrifice and learning gets terminated and enters the distinguished Deva yaana or the Path of Devas instead of the routine normal of Pitru yaana, It enters foremost the world of Agni, then the Vayu Loka, onward the Varuna loka, then to the Indra Loka of Swarga, further up to the Prajapati Loka and ultimately the Brahma Loka. The World of Lord Brahma or that of Hiranya garbha has the distinct symbols of the 'Aara' Lake representing as it were the 'Arishad Vargas' or the typical enemies of the Beings especially of human beings of Kaama-Krodha-Lobha-Moha-Mada-Matsaryas or of excessive desires, anger, narrow mindedness, arrogance and envy; 'Muhurtas' or the moments that tend to enflame the pro-active inclinations of exercising acts of virtue, like Sacrifices, Charities, Meditations and so on; 'Yeshtikas' or those 'muhurtas' which furiously fan negative hurdles that seek to destroy desires and encourage evil elements; the River Viraja or the Ageless or 'Vigata Jara'; 'Ilya taru' or the Ilya Tree which represents Earth; 'Saalaja samsthaana' - the 'Saalaja Pattana' or the City of Saalaja which denotes the curved bow strings akin to the banks of Saala Vriksha or the Tree of Fame, typically signifying abundance of water in multifarious forms like rivers, lakes and water flows, besides fertile farms and gardens around; 'Aparaajitam' or the Invincible Raja Mandir of Hiranyagarbha; 'Prमितam Vibhu' or the Glorious Hall of the Lord; 'Vichakshana' Simhaasana or the Unique Throne of Brahma; 'Aasandi Sabha Vedit' or the Central Platform; 'amitaujaah' or the Couch, 'Maanasi' and 'Chakshushi' or the beloved ones of Brahma both abundantly adorned by and offering flowers, besides universal 'Ambas' or mothers, nurses, nymphs, and rivers. It is into that Unique Brahma Loka, the Outstanding Soul of Glory and Splendour that the individual traverses by Deva Yaana after death, from where none ever returns! And indeed it is from that Loka of magnificence and grandeur, none at all returns nor retreats from and is not easily accessible either! )

**I.4)** *Tam pancha shataani aprasasaam pratiyanti, shatam phala- hastaah, shatam aanjana hastaah, shatam mailya hastaah, shatam vaaso hastaah, shatam churna hastaah; tam brahmaalankaarena alalam kurvanti, sa brahmaalankaarenaalankrato brahma vidvaan brahmaabhipraiti; sa aagacchatidram hradam, tam maanasaatyeti, tam itvaa samprativido majjanti; sa aagacchati muhurtaan yeshtihan tasmaad apadravanti, sa aagahhati, vijaraam nadeem tam manasavaatyeti, tat sukrita-dushkrite dhanutevaa, tasya priyaa jnaatayah sukritam upayanti apriyaa dushkritam; tad yathaa rathena dhaavayan ratha chakre paryavekshetaivam aho raatre paryavekshetaivam sukrita dushkrite sarvaani cha dvandvaani, sa esha viskrite vidushkruto brahma vidvaan brahmaivaabhipraiti/(Towards the Individual Self five hundred Apsaras / nymphs rushed as soon as he arrives in the Brahma Loka to welcome him, hundred of them with fruits in hands, hundred with 'anjanaas' or ointments, hundred with flower garlands, one hundred with 'vastras' like garments, and another hundred with scented perfume powders. They adorn him with OM like Brahma himself welcoming him. He goes upto the Lake 'Aara': he crosses it by his mental power; on approaching the Lake and as the 'yeshtikas' afore- mentioned and those with 'samvida' and 'prativida' or thoughts of approved and disapproved nature are rid of and purified. He then reaches by mind again the River Viraja the Ageless and alights a chariot recognising the wheels of good and bad and upon the pairs of opposites drives on to Brahman.)*

**I.5):** *Sa aagacchatilyaam vriksham tad brhma gandha pravishati, sa aagacchati saalajyam samsthaanam tam brahma rasah pravishati, sa aagacchati aparaajitam aayaatanam tam brahmateja pravishati, sa aagacchati indra prajaapato dvaara gopau taav asmaad apadravatah, sa aagacchati vibhu pratimam, tam brahma yashah pravishati, sa aagacchati vichakshanam aasadeem brihad rathantare saamane*

*purvau paadau shyaitanaudhase chaapau paadau, vairupa vairaje anuchye shaakvara raivate tiraashchi, saa prajnyaa prajnyaa hi vipashyati, sa aagacchati amitaujasam paryankam sa praanas tasya bhutan cha bhavishyaccha purvau paadau, shreescheraa chaaparau bhadrayajnaayaajaneeye sheershanye brihad rathaantare anuuchye, Richascha Saamaani cha praachinaatanaani, yajushmi tirashchinaani somaaashva upastaranam ugeethoparaascha yah shrieer upabarhanam, tasmin bramaste, tam ittham vit paadednavaagra aarohati, tam brhmaa pricchati hoseeti, tam pratibruyaat/(The blessed chosen and distinguished Individual then arrives at the Ilya tree and the fragrance of Brahma enters into him; he then moves on to the City of Saalajya, then to the abode of Aparajita as the the smoothening aroma of Brahma sinks deep into him; he further approaches the two illustrious Deities of Indra and Prajapati positioned as the gate keepers and finally arrives at the hall of Vibhu as the glory of Brahma is soaked into him. He then visions the Simhasana the golden and bejewelled throne, whose fore feet are the Saama Veda verses ‘Brihad’ and ‘Ratnankara’ while the ‘Sayita’ and ‘Naudhasa’ of Saama are the two hind feet, the ‘Vairupa’ and ‘Vairaja’ are the two lengthwise side pieces where the two cross pieces are stated as ‘Saakvara’ and ‘Raivata’. As he approaches the couch named ‘Amitaujas’ or of immeasurable radiance, ‘Bhadra’ and ‘Yajaayajniya’ constitute the head pieces; Rig verses and Saaman chants are the stretched chords lengthwise while the Yajus formulas as the crossed ones. The moon beams are the cushion, Ugitha the bolster and prosperity the pillow. Brahma sits on this couch and asks the visitor: ‘who are you!’.*

As the illustrious Individual Visitor reaches Brahma Loka, his identity explained I.6): *Riturasmi aartavosmi akaashaad yoney sambhuto bhaaryaayai retah, samvatsarasya tejo, bhutaasya bhhutasyaatmaa, bhutasya bhutasya tvam aatmaasi, yas tvam asi soham asmi, tam aaha koham asmeeti, satyam iti, bruyaat, aimtadyat satyamiti, yadanyad devebhyascha pranebhyascha tat sad, atha yad devaascha praanaascha tattyam, tadetayaa vaachaabhivyaahritaye satyamiti, etaavad idam sarvam aseeti evainam sarvam aaseeti evainam tad aaha, tad etacchlokenaabhyuktam/(The reply from the visitor is: Indeed the Self is the Truth in Reality! It is the Self all Beings and Brahma Himself in origin! My past tense was that of a season and was intensely connected with ‘Kaala Maana’ the Time Schedule. It was from the ‘Antariksha’ that I got sourced initially and from the womb of a woman as in the normal process of Creation. I am thus the Self of every Being just as you too are That too. Thus the reply to your question as to who am I, the true reply should be that **I am you!** I am the Truth the Real Truth! Whatever is distinguished from Devas (sense organs) and vital breaths is ‘Sat’ while Devas and the vital breaths are the ‘tyam’, hence the expression of ‘Satyam’ as explained in a Rig hymns further)*

Worship of Surya to eradicate sins and Chandra for life’s success and wealth II.7: *Athaatah, sarva jitaah Kauseetakestriny upaasanaani bhavanti, sarvajiddha sma Kaushiakir-udayantam Aadityam upatishthate yajnopaveetam krutvodakam aaneeya trih prasichyodapaatram vargosi paapmaanaam me vrindhiti, etayaivaavrita madhye santam udvargosi paapmaanam ma udvrindheeti, eta yavaavritaastam yantam samvargosi paapmaanam me samvridhdhanti, tad yad ahoraatraabhyam paapam akarot sam tad vrinkte, tatho evaivam vidvaan etayaivaavritaadityam upatishthate yad ahoraatraabhyaam paapam karoti, sam yad vrinkte/ (Maharshi Kaushitaki performs three ‘Dainika Suryopaasanas’ or daily venerations to Surya Deva to root out his sins to the rising Sun at the early mornings, mid day Sun and the Sunsets; he would each time perform the investiture with his ‘Yajnopaveetam’ or the Sacred Thread, having fetched water in a vessel and sprinkling it on his head and body and recite the following relevant mantras at the Sun rise, mid Sky Sun and Sunset respectively: *Vargosi paapmaanaam me vridhiti; udvargosi paapmaanaam ma udvrin - dheeti, samvargosi paapmaanaam me samvridhdhanti/* or Pratah kaala Surya Deva! Deliver me from my sins; Aparahna Surya Deva! Do deliver me from my sins; Saayam Surya Deva! Do kindly*

absolve me from my sins of the day and night. As thus recommended by the Maharshi, three daily homages as prescribed are sure to absolve his sins of the day on a recurring basis!)

**II.8:** *Atha maasi maasi amaavaasyaayam vrittaayaam pashchaa chandra maasam drishyamaanaam upatishthetaitayaivaavrita harita trine vaa pratyasyati, yan me susheemam hridayam divi chandra - masi shritam manyeham maam tad vidvaamsam maaham putryam agham rudam iti, na hy asmaat purvaah prajaah praititi nu jaata putrasya tathaajata putrasyaapyaasva sametu te sam te paayaamsi u yantu vaajaa yam aadityaa amshumaapyaayanteeti, etaas tisraa richo japvitvaa maasmaakam pranena prajayaa pashubhir aapyaayayishthaah yosmaan dveshti yam cha vayam dvishmas tasya praanena prajayaa pashubhir aapyaayaya svaandreem aavartam aavarta adityaasyaavritam anaavrat iti dakshinam baahum anvaavartate/* (As the new Moon is seen on the western Sky, that is on Amaavasya at the end of the Krishna Paksha or the dark phase, individual needs to throw two blades of green grass and offer his prayers stating: may my heart rest on the bright Moon and bestow its grace to abandon all my worries for the welfare of my children; may I be granted to increase my vigour so that abundance of milk and food be gathered even to gladden the heart of Aditya too -the inference here being that while Chandra is the female partner of Surya the Agni being the husband; may as a result of such abundance of food and milk facilitate my vigour too to enable me to acquire further progeny and alongside may my family acquire further cattle too to support the enhanced size of the family! Thus the individual prays Chandra in Rig Veda verses repeatedly further stating that there should not be stress on the 'praana' or the vital force of either his or of his children or even his cattle even. Thus having prayed to Chandra, the individual turns to pray to Indra and Surya)

**II.9:** *Atha pournamaasyaam purastaacchandramaasam drishyamaanam upatishtheta etayaa vaavrita, Somo raajaasi vichakshanah, pancha mukhosi prajaapatir braahmanaas ta ekam mukham tena mukhena raajnotsi, tena mukhena maam annadam kuru, raajaa ta ekam mukham, tena mukhena vishnotsi, tena mukhena maam annadam kuru, shyenasta ekam mukham, tena mukhena maa pakshinotsi, tena mukhena maam annadam kuru agnishta ekam mukham tenemam lokamatsi tena mukhena maam annadam kuru, tvayi panchamam mukham, tena mukhena sarvam bhutaani atsi, tena mukhena maam annadam kuru, maasmaakam praanena prajayaa pashubhir avaksheshthaah yosmaan dveshtiyaccha vayam dvishmas tasya praanenaprajayaa pashubhir avaksheeyasveti, daivam aavartam aavarta adityasyaavritam anvaavarta iti dakshinam baahum avaavartate/* (As one worships Chandra Deva on the night of the full Moon, as it appears in the East of the horizon, the worship would be similar as above. Further, the prayer should state: Chandra Deva, you are the King Soma as the Pancha Mukha Brahma the Lord of Creation! Brahma is of one mouth of yours. With that mouth you eat the Kings; with that mouth you make me an eater of food. The King is another mouth and with that mouth you sustain and feed the Subjects of the King. It is with that mouth he makes me viz. this as the worshipping of the Individual too. Now the hawk too is one mouth of yours and with that mouth, you eat birds. It is with that mouth that he makes the worshipper an Individual. Agni is another mouth of Brahma with which the whole world is eaten from. Lord Brahma! Within You is the Fifth mouth! We request you, Lord Brahma! not to waste away the vital breath as that sustains us, our offspring and our cattle. Apparently the inference in this stanza is about the 'Varnaashrama' of Brahma, Kshatriyas and others! Now, having prayed thus the Individual who worships Surya Deva foremost and then Chandra Deva now, where he turns towards Devas for veneration)

**II.10:** *Atha samveshya jaayaayai hridayam abhimrshat yatte susheeme hridaye shritam antah praaapatau tenaamritatvasyashaane maa tvam putryam agham nigaa iti, na hy asyaah purvaah prajaah prateeti/* The Worshipping Individual retires then and as he is about to withdraw into his bed then he converses with his wife and soothes her with his conversation and says: as we should have trust and faith with our prayers and surrender ourselves to the will of Prajapati, indeed He would never ever let us down and our children. May you never fall into sorrow as he would surely ensure that our children would never die before us.)

**II.11:** *Atha proshyaayan putrasya murdhaanam abhijighret, anga angaat sambhavasi hrudyaad adhi jaaayase, aatmaavai putra naamaasi sa jeeva sharadhaa shatam asaaviti naamaasya dadhaatyasmaa bhava, paraashur bhava, hiranyam agram bhava, tejo vai, putra naamaasi sa jeevaa sharadha shatam asaaviti naamasya grishnaati athainam parigrihnaati, yena praja patih prajaah paryagrhinat tad arishtyai tena tvaa parigrihnaami ashaaviti, athaasya dakshine karne japati asmai pranyadhi maghavaan rjeeshin iteendra shreshhaani dravinaani dheteti savye, ma chethaa, maa vyvasthitaah, shatam harada aayusho jeevasva, putra te aamnaa murdhaanam abhijighraameeti, trirasya murdhaanam abhijighret gavaam tvaa hinkaareabhiinkaaromeeti trir asya murdhaanaam abhinkuryaat/* (Then the person who has so far prayed to Surya, Chandra, Indra and Prajapati, on his return from his meditations and worships, goes out and finds his son, embraces him passionately and exclaims that the son was his great gift of Prajapati himself and was born out from him limb by limb, heart by heart and blesses him to live for hundred years with health, fame and prosperity; he exalts him stating that even if lived like a stone, he should be an axe and of gold. He further says that just as Prajapati embraces and blesses his creatures, may the son too deserve the same; may Indra bestow the best of 'Iham and Param' since indeed as the sons truly save the fathers from 'Punama Naraka'!

### **Mundakopanishad:**

**[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi: Materialism supported by Virtue opens gates of Bhoga-Bhagya-Yogya!]**

Self as the Source of Brahman attainable by Yoga, Karma, Tapasya and Truthfulness: III.i.3) *Yadaa pashyah pashyate rukma varnam kartaaram paramam brahma yonim, tadaa vidvaan punya pape vidhuya niranjanah paramam saamyam upaiti/* (As indeed when the Seeker of Reality finally confronts the vision of the golden hued Over Lord and merges with the non duality of Purusha and the Self as the **Source of Brahman**, the Seeker attains equation and then the riddance of gunas and features, merits and non merits, 'punya paapas' and indeed that is what all the highest goal! Maitri Upanishad describing the Yoga method is quoted vide VI.18: *Tathaa tat prayoga kalpah praanaayaamah pattyaadhaaro dhyaanambhaaranaa tarkah samaadhih shadangaa iti uchyaate yogah, anebna yadaa pashyam pashyati rukma varnam kartaaram Isham Purusham Brahma yonim; tad vidvaan punya paape vihaaya parevyaye sarvam ekeekaroti; evam hyaaha: yathaa parvatam aadeeptam naashrayanti kadaachana/* or the Yoga way for achieving identity, control of breath, total withdrawal of senses, deep meditation, intense concentration, contemplative enquiry and absorption is stated to be the 'Shadanga Yoga' or the six folded yoga to attain the identity with the Supreme; as animals and birds do not attempt mounting burning mountain peaks, so sins would find no shelter in those who is absorbed in Brahman! Again Kausheetaki Braahmana Upanishad vide I.5 is quoted: *Tad yathaa rathena dhaavayan ratha chakre paryavekshetaivam aho raatre paryavekshetaivam sukrita dushkrite sarvaani cha dvandvaani, sa esha visukruto vidushkrito brahma vidvaan Brahmaiva -abhipraiti/* or a person driving a chariot would

examine the two wheels before riding it in the same way as at the day and night, the good works and the opposite; similarly a vidvan surpasses the good and evil and then only seeks to reach Brahman after a thorough self-examination or introspection! )

III.i.5) *Praanohtesha sarva bhutair vibhaati vijaanan vidvaan bhavate naativaadee, Atma kreedaaatmaratih kriyaavaanasha Brahmavidaam varishthah/* ( As a person of wisdom is fully aware of the common knowledge that existence is essential and praana or th vital force is th key factor, he would rather target the Self or the Antaratma instead of getting into the rigmarole of esoteric exercises and show off knowledge but delight in and get enrossed in the Self as per established routes. This is why Bhagvad Gita vide Sankhya Yoga, Chapter Two, Stanza 47 underlines the fundamental Principle: *Karmanyevaadhikaaraste maaphaleshu kadaachana, maa karmaphala heturbhu maa te sangotva karmani/* or Bhagavan Krishna emphasises to Arjuna that one has only the liberty of performing the prescribed duties as they would have no control of the end results or of the quality of reaping the fruits!

Having given the descriptions about the release of the Inner Self consequent on death, the physical conditions prevalent at the time of death, how a being transmigrates from one body to another, the beginning of the quest for Brahma, how Vidwans looked about this quest, the methodology followed by Brahama vettaas and the prescribed Scriptures in this context, the variations in the approaches to realise Brahman especially in respect of the role of Pure Intelligence and Ignorance, the decisive positions of Atmagjnas in the search of Bahman, the unique significance of the Paramatma, Brahma Nishtha, and now a Preface to *that* Self and proposal about the Sadhana is being discussed: ‘That’ distinctive and singular is identified with intellect in the midst of organs and senses. It lies in the elemental ether which is in the heart and is the commander , protector and the dividing line of worlds. Brahmanas seek to realise ‘That’ through the learning of Vedas, Sacrifices, charities, austerities, and moderate use of enjoyments. In fact, ‘grihastas’ eventually become ‘Sanyasis’ or monks discarding homes, families, children, wealth and reach the stage of abandon and reject desires. Then they start the quest of the Truth and Illumination by the process of systematic elimination stating: *neti, neti* or not this, not this! This is because of the established scriptural evidences as well as ‘tarka’ or reasonings backed by Knowledge, Vidya and most importantly the Intuition called perception instinct. Then the realisation arrives in the process Examination: Is it perceivable, does it decay, is it attached; is it fettered, does it suffer injuries; the reply being an emphatic ‘no’, then the self examination begins: Have I done a good act, say a sacrifice, charity, desires, renunciation, acquisition of the ‘relevant’ knowledge and so on. Once the Individual reaches the stage of ‘no return’, then the pluses and minuses hardly matter to him at that most volatile stage when doubts cease to prick the Inner Conscience; indeed at that state or threshold of Realisation, the Self becomes devoid of merits or demerits since the evils are burnt into ashes like the blazing Fire burns the fuel, the impurities of gold are ridden and conviction firmly conquers and the Vision of The Brilliant Truth of the Self being the Supreme prevails! )

III.i.5) *Satyena labhyastapasaa hyesha atmaa samyajnaanena brahmacharyena nityam, antashareere jyotirmayo hi shubhro yam pashyanti yatayah khseena dishaah/* (The Self is achievable through the understanding as to what is truth and untruth as also tapsya or austerity with control of mind and senses, as indeed the best form of such tapasya is the control of mind and senses; it is out of this ‘samyak jnaana’ or the knowledge in completion as backed by tapsya is the gateway to Enlightenment; some of the essential inputs of such ‘samyak jnaana’ are ‘ nitya brahma charya’ or abstinence for good; ‘ jihvaamritam maya’ or straightforwardness, non pretentiousness, and falsehood; ‘antashareera shubhrata’ or a clean and blemishless inner conscience leading to ‘Atmajjoti’ or Self Illumination. That indeed is the Path of ‘Parama Nidhaana’ which truly indeed is hiranmaya or the golden hue!)

III.i.6-9) *Satyameva Jayate naanrutam satyena panthaa vitato Deva yaanah, yenaakramanti rishayo hi aaptaa kaama tatra tat satyasya paramam nidhaanam// Brihaccha tad divyam achintyarupam sukshmaaccha tatsukshmataram vibhaati, duuraat suduure tad ihaantike cha pashaatsva ihaiva nihitam*

*guhaayaam/ Na chakshusaa grahyate naapi vaachaa naanyar Devaih tapasaa karmanaavaa, jnaana prasaadena vishuddha sattvah tatastu tam pashyate nishkalam dhyaayamaanah// Eshonur aatmaa chetasaa veditavyo yasmin praanah panchadhaa samvivesha, praanaischittam sarvam otam prajaanaam yasmin vishuddhe vibhavati esha aatmaa//* (The Unique Motto that Bharata Desha had rightly adopted is ‘Satyameva Jayate’ or Truth triumphs and never the Untruth. It is by the path of Truth that Devas tread and thus is called Devayana. It is again that very path that Rishis and Seekers of the Eternal Truth ascend by to finally achieve its heights. Brahman is attainable only through the disciplines of Truthfulness and similar traits: It is ‘Divya’ Self-Resplendent; ‘Achintya Rupam’ or of Unimaginable Form; Sukshmantaram or Subtle like ‘Antariksha’; Vibhaati or of such illumination of Surya Chandraadis; ‘sudure’ or extremely distant to the ignorant since the wise are awareness as deep within quite nearby; and ‘guhaayam’ or is deep in the cavity of everybody’s Self, but imperceptible to the blind and ignorant. Indeed it is incomprehensible by the sensory organs and faculties of vision, speech, and so on except through the minds’ eye that too by intense ‘dhyana’ fully backed by ‘Karma’ and ‘Dharma’; It is reachable by ‘jnaana prasaadena vishuddha sattva and jnaanamaya’ or only through the favourable medium of knowledge and purity of thought and deed. The subtle Self is within the heart where the Life Energy Praana enters the body of five forms of ‘praanaapaanodaana vyaana samaanas’ into the subtle Self hidden by the sensory organs but attainable clearly by the vision within.)

III.i.10) *Yam yam lokam manasaa samvibhaati vishuddha sattvah kaamayate yaamscha kaamaan, tam tam lokam jayate taamscha kaamah tasmaad aatmajnam hyerchayed bhuri kaamah/* ( So far what ever afflictions had been experienced so far are instantaneously faded and replaced by the person concerned of pure consciousness and now on the screen of his inner vision could experience the lokas of his choice, be it the world of Devas or Manes, whatever desires are thought of are fulfilled now with the Brahma Jnana. Indeed the Knower of the Antaratma the Pure Consciousness or the Self possessed of all the abilities can obtain and world or its joys instantly!)

Role of Maya and Cause of Re-Birth: III.ii.1-4) *Sa vedaitat paramam Brahma Dhaama yatra vishvam nihitam bhaati shubhram,upaasate puru -sham ye hi akaamaaste shukram etad ativaranti dheeraah// Kaamaanyah kaamayate manyamaanah sa kaamabhirjaayate tatra tatra, paryaptakaamasya kritaatanastu ihaiva sarve praviliyanti kaamaah// Naayamaatmaa pravachanena labhyo na medhayaa, na medhayaa na bahunaa shrutena, yamevaisha vrinute tena labhyastasyaisha aatmaa vivrinute tanum svaam// Naayamatmaa balaheenena labhyo na cha pramaadaattapasos vyapyalingaat, etairupaayair yatate yastu vidvaamstashaisha aatmaa vitate Brahma dhaamaa!* (Indeed, the persons of great knowledge and enlightenment having become desireless seek to overcome the eventuality of rebirth and concentrate on the worship of the Supreme Abode of Brahman. But, those who continue the pursuit of some desirable ends, even while brooding on the virtues in general, do have some of their wishes still unfulfilled and thus continue the cycle of rebirth due to the fact that the totality of causes is yet to be destroyed! The Self is not possible of accomplishment neither ‘pravachanena’ or by extensive and intensive study, nor ‘medhaaya’ that is by way of high level of absorption and power of comprehension, nor ‘bahudha shrutena’ that is by hearing the preachings by many Learned persons: this is only available by passionate thirst and unique dedication as a singular Mission of Life: ‘esha atmaa tasya vivrunute svayam tanum’ or by one’s own gift as a Self Revelation! All kinds of spiritual disciplines including knowledge, absence of delusions as created by the play of Maya, high level abstinence are no doubt among the proactive factors, but the Will of Almighty would be the supreme factor! In any case, the definite climate is created for the attainment of the Self by the negation of principles as it is not in the realms of possibility by one’s succumbing to forces as weakness of mind and its lack of resolve, susceptibility to delusions, knowledge without monasticism and so on.)

The Ultimate Accomplishment, its nature, pattern, and emancipation : III.ii.5-6) *Sampraapyainam Rishayo jnaana triptah kritamaano vitta-raagah prashantaah, te sarvagam sarvatah praapya dheeraa yuktaatmaanah sarvam evavishanti// Vedaanta- vijnaana-sunishchitaarthah -sanyaasa yogaadyatayah*

*shuddhasatvaah, te brahmalokeshu paraantakaale paraamritaah parimucchya- nti sarve//* (Once having visualised the Ultimate Truth as the very Self and none else, the Rishis become 'jnaana triptas' or contented with that outstanding revelation and as 'kritaamanaah' or getting established in the identity of the Self, experience the qualities of 'veetaraagah' and 'prashaantah' or freedom of attachments and composure as all the senses get totally withdrawn. They thus perfect themselves as dispassionate, tranquil Souls merge themselves into the All Knowing having once for all snapping the physical adjuncts created by the thick layer of ignorance ! Those have transformed themselves as the Supreme Self` being the 'Vedanta-Vijnaana-Sunischitaarthas' or with the mastery and sharpness of Veda Jnaana, have since turned out as 'shuddha satvaah' or purified in mind through 'sanyasa yoga' or the yoga of monk like existence of solitude, worship and contemplation. At 'paraantakaale' or the time of termination of life, these glorious Souls become 'brahma lokeshu' as 'paraamritaah' or of Immortality just as without the footprints of birds untraced on the surface of running flow of water! However, words of caution have been sounded that the mystery of Brahma Vidya should not be imparted freely to the undeserving; Svetaashvatara Upanishad vide VI.22 states: *Vetaante paramam guhyam puraakalpe prachoditam, naaprashaantaaya daatavyam naaputraayaashishyaaya vaa punah/* or the unique mystery in the Vedaanta as declared in the ages of the yore should be imparted to those whose credentials of Self Control were not tested but safely perhaps to trusted sons and students!)

## **Prashnopanishad**

**[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi: Time Cycle reveals how much Wealth- Heath-Happiness a Human Life deserves!]**

From where and whence Life is born, sustained and then departs!

III.1-2) *Kuta esha praano jaayate, katham aayaati asmimschareere, aatmaanam vaa pravibhajya katham pratishthate, kenotkraamate, katham baahyam abhidhatte, katham aadhyaatmam iti// Tasmai sa hovaacha, atiprashnaan prucchasi, brahmishthoseeti tasmaat teham braveemi/* ( Wherefrom and whence human life would be born, how would Praana enter the body, how does it distribute itself and settle in the body; in what way would it depart' what are its external supports and would indeed connect itself with the Individual Self!).

III.3- 5) *Atmaanaa esha praano jaayate, yathaishaa purushe chhaayai tasminn etad aatatam, mano kritena aayaati asmin shareere// yathaa samraadevaadhikritaan viniyunkte, etaan graamaan etaan graamaan adhitishthasveti, evam evaisha pranah itaraan paanaan pruthak pradhag eva sannidhatte// Paayuupasthe apaanam, chakshuh shrotre mukha naasikaabhyaam praanah svayam pratishthe, madhye tu samaanah esha hyetaddhutam annam samam nayati, tasmaad etah saptarchisho bhavanti//* (From One's own Self or the Inner Consciousness viz. the Maha Purusha, Praana or Life is generated and fixed and as an effect of the body and mind as also the resultant actions follow. Purusha or the all pervasive yet resident of one's heart or the Antaratma is the self effulgent, formless, existent within and without, unborn, devoid of praana, mind and thoughts but by his decision materialised pure-imperishable-incomprehensible yet Realisable reflection of the Self. The person called Self comprises awareness of the senses of vision, hearing capacity, touch, smell-all directed to and emerging from his own heart and the light within. Even being steady and stable, he remains where he exists and wander by way of imagination or in a dream state of mind. He exists here yet imagines in a non- real phase of mind by sheer ignorance and flight of fantasy! Action follows Action; as the Individual Self transmigrates from one birth to another, the erstwhile subtle body or its subtle mind is transferred to the new gross body's mind and then

the previous desires and works get terminated and a fresh account of paapa punyas gets created! Now in the fresh birth, the Principal Praana engages the other pranas or the organs accordingly seperately! The ‘apaana’ or the out breath is located in the organs of excretion and generation, Praana, the chief of the main life breath is in the eyes, ears, mouth and the nose; the ‘Samaana’ or the equalising breath is in the middle and that is what receives food as that has the cause for distributing energy all through the body from the seven flames in the stomach , when as that digestive energy reaches the heart and as per the directives of the brain in the head the channels of distribution are despatched to seven organs viz. the two each of eyes, ears, nostrils and the mouth.)

III. 6-7) *Hridi hyesha Atmaa, atraitad ekashatam naadeenaam taasaam shatam shatam ekaikaashyam dvaasaptatir dvaasaptatih pratishakhaa naadee sahasraani bhavanti, aasu vyaanascharati// Athaika - yordhva udaanah, punyena punyalokam nayati, paapena paapam, ubdhaabhyaam eva manushya lokam//*

(The heart in the subtle Self is connected to some hundred and one nerves of importance each one of these is described as with hundred divisions and each of such divisions is stated to be of 72000 sub-branches or arteries, among which permeates ‘Vyana’ of the Pancha Pranaas, activising the various directions of the heart spreading all over the joints, shoulders and vital parts. It is this Vyana of the Pancha Pranaas that demands of the body parts of deeds that require strength to perform. In the context of the process of death, the status of the physical nerves and how Sun influences these is described: the veins of the body issuing out of the fleshy bulge called lotus shaped heart is charged with juices of varied colours akin to human desires. The heat of the Sun causes bile which when comes into contact with phlegm in the nerves assuming different colours as accentuated by wind contacts. As life departs, the Self goes upwards through the Sun rays and the praani reaches the Sun within the time that mind travels. The nerves connected to the heart are hundred and one. At the time of departure, one of the nerves-Brahma Nadi- of the blessed ones reaches the crown of the head . While the opening of that nerve enables Immortality, vyana through other exit points totalling nine indicates definite return to the cycle of rebirths. Now the reference to Udaana; this vital force moves everywhere in the body from top to toe. When it takes an upward trend it leads to Deva Lokas and as it takes a downward trend it leads to ‘manushya loka if it is ‘ubdhaabhyaameva’; or as a result of paapa- punyaas or sins and virtues)

III.10-12: *Yatchistastenaisha praanam aayaati, praanaastejasaa yuktah sahaatmaanaa yathaa samkalpitam lokam nayati// Ya evam vidvaan praanamveda na haasya prajaa heeyate, amrito bhavati, tadesha shloka: // Utpattim aayatim shtaanam vibhutvam chaiva panchadhaa, adhyaatmam chaiva praanasya vijnaayaamritam ashnute, vijnaayaamritam ashnute, iti//* (Whatever frame of mind and thoughts occur to a human being at the time of the end of life, indeed those very thoughts and feelings along with the functioning of the organs similarly attuned do surface then. Then the prime Praana of the dying person along with Udaana , the Consciuousness tapers off and ‘ praana yuktah tejasaa nayati lokam yathaasankalpitam’ or the Life Force along with the light within leads to the lokas as felt and deserved! Any person of knowledge who understands of what praana as all about certainly knows that the Departed Soul or the Antaratma then merges in its own origin. In this context, there is a relevant verse: A person of knowledge of Praana would thus be sensitised with its origin, entry, place of residence and the process of exit by achieving its next destination as per one’s own actions of a mix of virtues and vices; very few attain Immortality and the majority return back to Life again; this is the Truth of Life and that indeed again is the Truth of Life!)

## Maha Narayanopanishad

**[Relevance to Devi Lakshmi: Vishnu decides' Karma Phala' of all Beings and Lakshmi enforces!]**

Prajapati the Immortal: Stanza 1: Ambhasya paare bhuvanasya madhye naakasya pushthe mahato maheeyaan, shukrena jyotirishi samanu pravishthah Prajaapatishcharati garbhe anantah/ Prajapati in the form of endless waters generated Bhur-Bhuvah- Swah or Bhumi-Aakasha-Swarga and above all a seed in the form of a foetus which multiplies into countless species as the latter are born-preserved for a while and degenerated. *Sukra* or Prajapati himself enters *Pranis* or Beings and after sustenance and destruction then *Jyotirishi* or transmigrates the *Antaratma* or the Inner Conscience. Thus the Paramatma replicates into *Antaratma* and the *Jeeva* or the Embodied Being rolls on in the eternal cycle of births and deaths merely carrying the load of *Karma* or the sum total of *Paapa Punyas* in the cycle of Time or the *Kaala maana*. Stanza 2: *Yasmin tridasamcha vichaiti sarvayasmin Devaa adhi vishve nishaduh, tadeva bhutam tadu bhavyamaa idam tadakshare parame vyoman/* Prajapati the *Karta* having created the *Bhokta* or the recipient declared that He is the cause of existence of every creature as embodied besides the entirety of of all the causes too including preservation-dissolution-repeated transmigration of Souls too. As the imperishable *Antaratma* the Inner Conscience, Paramatma is the 'raison d'tre' as manifested *Vyoman* or *Aakaasha* which is but a constituent element of the Universe and in turn was the cause of the four elements of Prithivi-Aapas-Tejas-and Vayu or the Earth-Water-Fire -and Air.

Stanzas 4-5: *Yatah prasuto toyena jeevaan vyachasarja bhumyaam yadoshamdheebhih purushaan pashumscha vivesham bhutaani charaacharaani/ Atahparam naanyadaneeyasam hi paraatparam yanmahanto mahaantam, tadekamavkyatarupam vishvam puranam tamasah parastaat/* The Universe got manifested by Prakriti - the *alter ego* of Paramatma- including the Pancha Bhutas or the Four Elements besides *bhumyaam- charaacharani bhutaan-oushadheebhi-Purushaan- pashun* or the great earth-moving and immovables-herbs / food- human beings-and all kinds of species.( Chhandogya Upanishad is quoted: vide VI.iii.1-4) *Teshaam khalveshaam bhutaanaam trinyeva beejaani bhavanti, andajaam, jeevajaam udbhijam iti// Seyam devataikshata, hantaaham imaashtisro Devataa anena jeevena aatmaanu pravishya naama rupe vyakaravaaniti//* (Creatures or Beings acquiring own Souls are of three kinds of seeds, viz. those which are born of eggs/ Andajas like birds, serpents; born of wombs like human beings and animals viz. jeevajams; and born of plants viz. uddhbhujas or those due to sprouting; another category is stated to be svedajas or born of mire and body warmth like bugs and lice but these too are stated to have been born of udbhujas basically. Now it is that Deity in the form of an Individual Self which enters into these three kinds of bodies minus however its organs and senses)

Thus Prakriti assumes countless forms and features as She is *tamasah purastaat* or beyond darkness and *Paraat param* and *aneeyasam* or the highest than the highest and the subtle most excepting Paramatma!

Jaatavedaagni invokes Maha Lashmi- Shri Sukta Text and Meaning:Stanza 47-49: Gandhadwaaraam duraadharshaam nityapushtaam kareenishineem, Ishwareem sarva bhutaanaam taamihopahvaye shriyam/ Shreem bhajatu Alakshmeerm nashyatu, Vishnu mukhaa vai Devaashchandobhiril-lokaannapajyamabharyajatu, mahaah Indro vijra baahuh shodashi shrama yacchatu/ Swasti no Maghavaa karotu, hantu paapmaanam yosmaan dweshti/ Originated from Shri Suktam, Jataveda Agni is sought to invoke Maha Lakshmi as the originator of fragrances as being difficult to approach but the personification of abundanance and opulence who is the ruling power of materialism and wealth as human beings seek to attain literally from their physical toil and the soil of earth and cows. The next

stanza from Taittireeya samhita I.7.5 seeks to bestow Lakshmi and eschew Alakshmi the totality of Negativism. May Lord Vishnu the ‘alter ego’ and his partner form Devi Lakshmi being the embodiment of auspiciousness be worshipped as prescribed in Sacred Scriptures and to this effect , may Lord Indra be armed with his thunderbolt to shield against the evil energies and Chandra Deva redouble up the flow of happiness to us by smashing obstacles and ushering in the ever- fresh tides of optimism and success in our endeavours.

Swaah to Dhanya-Dhana Lakshmi Section 77.2) *Yathaakupam shatadhaarah sahasradhaaro akshitah, evaa me astu dhaanyah sahasradhaaram akshitam, Dhana dhaanyai swaah/* As in the case of a perpetual well possesses hundreds and thousands of springs, may we entreat and worship Dhana-Dhanya Devi Lakshmi to bestow us with never ending supply of grains from thousands of resources. May we offer our oblations with ‘tathastu’ mantra swaah/ Taittireeya Upanishad III.ix.1 is relevant: *Annam bahu kurvita tad vratam prithivi vaa annam, akaashonnaadah, prithivyaam aakaashah pratishthitah, Akaasho prithivi pratishthitaa, tadevadanne pratishthitam, sa ya etadannaanne pratishthitam veda pratishthati, annavaamannado bhavati, mahaan bhavati prajayaa pashubhir brahmavarchasena, mahaan keertayaa/* (May food be plentiful on Earth: *Prithivi vaa annam* or Earth is food. *Akaashonnaadah* or Sky too is plentiful of Food. *Akaashoprithivi pratishthita* or Sky is supported by Earth. Thus one food is based on another. He who is aware of these realities of food, earth and sky are blessed indeed and has an overview of the Universe: ‘Annamannaado bhavati, mahaan bhavati, prajayaa pashubhir brahmavarchasenamahaa keertayaa! May the Universe be plentiful of food with blessings of excellent progeny, cattle, radiance of purity and glory. As the prayer goes ‘Sarve janaa sukhino bhvantu’ or may Almighty bestow happiness and fulfillment to one and all! Thus one becomes the enjoyer, the enjoyment in essence and Brahman the very source of bliss!)

Section Seventy Eight of Maha Narayanopanishad: The quintessence of Satyam the Eternal Truth: Satyam param parah Satyah Satyena na suvargaat lokaan kadaachana nachyavante sataah hi Satyam tasmaat satye ramante/ Truthfulness is ‘*par excellence!* Truth alone is paramount! Truthfulness is bliss. Having accomplished Truthfulness none would ever slip down. Persons who attain it are named as ‘Sat’ or persons who reach the pinnacle and they indeed are of Satyam or Truthfulness!

Tapas-Dama-Shama-Daana-Dharma to attain Liberation 1-5: *Tapa iti tapo naanashanaaparam yadvi param tapastad dhurdhusham tad dhuraadhasha tasmaad tapasi ramante/ Dama iti niyatam Brahmachaarinaastatasmaad dame ramanti/ Shama itaranye Munas- tasmaadchameramante/ Shama ityaranye muna yastasmaacchame ramante/ Daanamiti sarvaani bhutaani prashasanti daanaannaati dushkaram tasmaat daane ramante/ Dharmam iti Dharmena sarvamidam parigriheetam, Dharmaannaatidushcharam tasmaaddharme ramanti/* Several persons of virtue that ‘tapas’ or austerity is a sure gateway to liberation and thus follow the principle of austerity and be fully contented with It. But some others religiously follow the path of ‘dama’ or detachment from the lure of Panchendriyas and the pleasures of the sensory organs and pursue that principle of total withdrawal vigorously while revel in the promise of liberation. Yet others like hermits practising ‘shama’ or calmness and peace of mind in the surroundings of forests and delight themselves in the prized aspiration of ‘nirvana’. A sizeable chunk of persons of virtue seek to the precept of ‘daana’ of food, money, housing, kanyas, nava dhaanyas, ghee, and also several valuables made of gold and precious stones- to select and well deserved men of letters; such ‘daana kartas’ no doubt aspire for Ultimate Paramananda! Strict followers of ‘Dharma’ or overall Life of Virtue as per Scriptural Duties or what all is prescribed in Veda-Vedaanga-Puranopanishads to the

greatest possible are happy, contented and aim at the post life path of ‘deva yaana’ or the celestial path to finally accomplish Brahmata and further to Bliss!

Other means of Liberation viz. Procreation, Yajna Karyas, Maanasika / Inward Worship, and Sanyasa  
7: *Prajanaiti bhuyaah tasmaat bhuishthaah prajaayante, tasmaat bhuishthaah prajaanane ramante/*  
Several sections of Society strongly believe that procreation of large progeny by way of biological continuity is a means of Immortality and Liberation of their Souls. [ A full section of as many as 28 stanzas are devoted in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad; stanzas VI.iv.1-3 as follows: Procreation duties of man-woman on the pattern of a Sacrifice and rituals on arrival of a child VI.iv.1) *Esham vai bhutaanaam prithivi rasah, prithivya aapah, apaam oushadhayah, aoushadheenaam pushpaani, pushpaanaam phalaani, phalaanaam purushah, purushasya retah/* (This section deals with the ceremonies related to procreation for securing a son of good quality. A person who is an adept in the meditation of Vital Force and the method of the Mantha Ceremony as described in the previous pages, await to meet his wife at an appropriate time as also secure the seed of essence from the body would reap the best of opportunity for the procreation. Indeed, earth is the essence of all the Beings in the universe and is like honey to them all while water is the essence of, and surrounded with, the earth. Further, herbs are the effects of water and earth such as flowers, fruits, and seeds of human beings) VI.iv.2) *Sa ha Praja- patireekshaam chakre, hantaasmai pratishthaam kalpayaaneeti; sa streeyam sasruje; taam srisht -vaadha upaasta; tasmaat striyam adha upaaseeta, sa etam praanaacham graavaanam atmaanaa eva samuda paraayat, tenainaam abhya srujat/* (Prajapati, the Creator cogitated that since seed would be a precondition to procreation, he created a woman. Having created her as a fit receptacle to receive the seed that would need to push into) VI.iv.3) *Tasyaa vedir upasthah, lomaani barhah, charmaadhisshavane samiddho madhyatastau mushkau; sa yaavaan ha vai vaajapeyena yajamaanasya loko bhavati, (taavan asya loko bhavati) ya evam vidwaan adhopahaasam charati, ashaam streenam sukrutam vrinke/ Atha ya idam avidwaan adhopahaasam charati, asya striyah sukrutam vrunjate/* (A woman’s lower part is the (Sacrificial) altar, with her hairs as the -sacrificial- grass, her deep skin as the place for dissemination, the two labia surround the fire pit in the body while the man does a seemingly vaajapeya sacrifice or a ritual performance. The quality of the good act would result in fulfillment leading to worthy and creditable conception). The Upanishad further quotes vide VI.iv-20-23: VI.iv.20) *Athainaam abhipadyate, amoham asmi saa twam; saa tvamasi amoham; saamaaham asmi, Rukvam; dyaur aham prithivi twam; taavehi samrabhaavahai, saha reto dadhaavahai pumse putraaya vittaye iti/* (Then the Karta embraces his wife asserting that he was the ‘Praana’ or the Vital Force and that she was the speech; that she was the speech and he was the vital force.; that he was the Saama Veda and she was the Rik Veda; that he was the heaven and she was the Earth! And then he invites her for union so that they would generate a male child!) VI.iv.21) *Athaasyaa uuruu vihaapayati- vijiheethaam dyaavaa prithivee iti; tasyaamartham nishthaaya, mukhena mukham samdhaaya trenaam anulomaam anumaarshti: Vishnur yonim kalpayatu, twashtaa rupaani pimshatu, Aasinchatu prajaapatirdhaataa garbha dadhaatu te; Garbham dhehi sinivaali, garbham dhehi Prutushtake, Garbham te Ashvinou Devaadhattaam pushkarasrujou/* ( Then she spreads her thighs apart as the heaven and earth and as he strokes thrice reciting: Let Vishnu prepare the womb, Twashta various body forms, Pajapati fills up, and Dhaatru place the seed as Ashvini Devas the seed with lotus) VI.iv.22) *Hiranmayi arani yaabhyaam nirmantataamashvinou, Tam te garbham havaamahe dashame maasi sutaye, Yadaagnigarbhaa prithivi, yathaa dyuorindrena gvarbhini, Vaayu dishaam yathaa garbhamdadhaami te asaaviti/*(The two Ashvini Devatas curl and twist a flame with two golden sticks enabling a minute germ to grow over ten months with earth as the germ, heaven as pregnancy and air as its abode) VI.iv.23) *Soshyanteem adbhir abhyukshati; Yathaa Vayuh pushkaranteem samingayati sarvatah, evate garbha ejatu sahaavaitu jaraayunaa: Indrasyaayam vrajah krita sargalah sapaishrayah, tam Indra nirjahi garbhena saavaraam saheti/* ( As and when the woman gets ready to bring out the foetus , the Devas sprinkle water while the wind gets agitated in the lotus pond on all the sides and the foetus as covered around and protected by Indra Deva’s fold and the latter would enable to cause the delivery) ]

Stanzas 8-10: *Agnaya ityaah tasmaadagnaya aadhaatavyah/ Agnihotramityaah tasmaadagnihotre ramante/ Yajna iti yajena hi Devaa divam gataastasmaad yagje ramante/* Some Yagnavettas very strongly get committed to Vedic Yagnas and get totally convinced that only the chosen route as per Vedic methodology would open the gates of Moksha in their post- Life. As prescribed by Vedas offering oblations to Panchagnis viz. Garhapatya, Anvaahaaryapachana or Dakshinaagni, Agnedhareeya, Aavasatya and Aahavaneeya. Vedas declare that a devoted person to these Five Agnis as per the prescribed procedure would get elevated to safety and reach the gates of Liberation. Some who are surfiat with strong conviction that *yaavajjeevam agnihotram juhuyaat* or through out one's life long be committed to daily consecration to Agni Karyas as a sure path to Bliss.

Stanza 11: *Maaasam iti vidvaamsah tasmaad vidvaamsa eve maanase ramante/* Inward worship and constant introspection deep in one's mind is the sure path to Self Realisation. This calls for intensive concentration, assement and withdrawal of materialistic desires, 'panchendiya nigraha' and close application to the Eternal Truth vis-à-vis the ephemeral human existence. Deep perception of Reality and the irresistibile pulls and pressures of Samsara need to be balanced against the Absolute Truth!

Stanza 12: *Nyaasa iti Brahmaa, Brahmaa hi parah parihi Brahmaa taani vaa etanya varaani tapah si nyaasa evaatyarechayat ya evam Vedotyupanishad/* Sat Nyasa-Sannyaasa-is far superior surpassing austerities; Brahma the Hiranyagarbha asserts that Sanyaasa is by far superior to all types of accomplishing 'Nirvana'! This has been reiterated by Vedopanishads and various other Scriptures too.

#### SECTION FOUR FROM OTHER SOURCES

Varalashmi Vrata: Preferably on the first Friday-failing which on the following Fridays of Shravana Month, several parts of Bharat, especially in Dakshina Bharat, married women invariably observe this Vrata with dedication and faith. Subsequent to the compulsory act of any Vrata-Puja- Shubha karyas or auspicious deeds, initial invocation and worship of Ganesha ought to precede along with Kalsasa Puja. This should follow up with Vara Lakshmi's 'Praana Praishtha' Mantras: *aam, hreem, hrum, haim, hroum, hrah,* along respectively with 'kara nyaasa' and 'angayaasa' followed by *asunite punarasmaasu chakshuh punahpraanamihano dhehi bhogam jyokpashyema Suryamuccharanta manumate mridayaa nah swasti/ Aavaahitaa bhava sthaapitaa bhava suprasanaa bhava sthiraasanam kuru!* Now, initiate the Puja: *Padmaasane padmakare sarva lokaika pujite, Narayana priye Devi supreetaa bhava sarvadaa/ Ksheerodaarnava ambhute kamale kamalaalaye, Susthira bhava me gehe Suraasura namaskrite/ -Sarva mangala maangalye Vishnuvakshasthalaalaye aavaahayaami Devi supreetaa bhava sarvadaa// Sa kumkuma vilepanaamalikachumbi kasturikaam, Samanda hasitekshanaam sasharachaapa paashaan - kushaam/ Ashesha jana mohineemarunamaalya bhushaambaraam, Japaa kusuma bhaasuraam japavidhou smaredambikaam/* Vara Lakshmi Devataam 'dhaayaami'. *Asanam: Amulya Ratna saaram cha nirmitam Vishwakarmanaa, Pashyaani prakrushtaani varaani durlabhaani cha, Aasaanamcha vichitram cha Maha Lakshmi pragruhnataam/* (Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi! May I offer in your service an invaluable and distinguished seat made of Choicest Jewels specially designed and crafted by Vishwakarma, the Celestial Designer!) *Paadyam: Shuddham Gangodakamidam Sarva Vandita meepsi - tam, Paapedhma vahni rupam cha gruhyataam Kamalaalay/* (Kamalaalaye! This pure and hallowed Ganga water is borne by the heads of one and all as the same is endeared and revered by them; this is considered as Agni Swarupa which burns off all kinds of sins; do kindly accept it to wash your sacred

feet); *Arghyam: Pushpa chandana durvaadi samyuktam Jaahnaveejalam, Shankha garbhashtitam shuddham gruhnataam Padma vaasini/ Shuddhodakam cha paatrastham gandhapushpaadi mishritam, arghyam daasyaami te Devi grihnaata Surapujite/* (Padmavaasini! This Ganga water in a Shankha along with flowers, Chandana, Durva and such other consecrated material is offered to you as a welcome drink)

*Sugandhi Pushpa thailam: Sugandhi pushpa thailam cha Sugandhaamalaki phalam, Deha Soundrya beejam cha gruhnataam Shri Harey Priye!* (Shri Hari Priye! This fragrant oil extracted from Amala fruit is a pleasing application to enrich physical beauty and skin smoothening; do please allow it to be used as a bathing device); *Dhoop : Vriksha niryaa swarupam cha Gandhadravayaadi samyutam, Shri Krishna kaantey dhupam cha pavitram prati-guhyataam/*(Shri Krishna Kantey! I proffer ‘dhoop’ or the aromatic smoke of incense material mixed with a vegetable gum; do kindly accept this smoke offered with sanctity); *Chandan: Malayaachala sambhutam vriksha saaram manoharam, Sugandha yuktam sukhadam Chandanam Devi gruhnataam/* (Devi! this chandana ‘gandha’ which originated from the chandana tree on Malaya mountain is not only sweet-smelling but also provider of coolness; I request you to apply on your body to give soothing effect); *Deepam: Jagacchasthuh swarupam cha dhwaanta pradhwanasa kaaranam, Pradeepam shuddha rupam cha gruhyataam Parameswari/* (Parameswari! Kindly allow this Sacred Light which is the vision of eyes, remover of darkness and a symbol of Purity to please you and light the surroundings); *Naivedya: Naanopahaara rupam cha nanaa rasa samanvitam, Naanaa swaadukaram chaiva Naivedyam Pratigruhnataam/* (Devi! I am tendering this ‘Naivedya’ or the offering of various eats and juices which have been prepared with taste and flavor; I should be obliged of these snacks are consumed to please me). *Anna: Annam Brahma swarupam cha Pranarakshana kaaranam, Tushtidam Pushtidam chaiva Devyaannam pratigruhyataam/* (Devi! Annam/ food is considered to be of Brahma Swarupa; food is also a life saving material which ensures eating-satisfaction and enhances strength in the natural way; I request you to taste this food); *Kheer: Shaalyakshata supakvam cha sharkaraagavya samyutam suswaadu samanoharam, Swaadu yuktam Maha -Lakshmi Paramaannam Pratigruhyataam/* (Maha Lakshmi! This Kheer or cooked rice with sugar and ghee is specially prepared for your taste; please taste this preparation); *Swaastika Mrishtaanna: Shakaraa gavya pakvam cha suswaadu samanoharam, Mayaa niveditam LakshmiSwaastikam pratigruhnataam/* (Lakshmi! This is ‘Mrishta- anna’/Sweet rice called Swastika which is a mix of sugar and ghee in cooked rice which is being offered as a Naivedya to you for your kind acceptance). *Phala: Naanaa vidhani ramyaani pakkvaani cha phalaanicha, Swaaduyuktaani Kamaley gruhyataam phaladaani cha/* (Devi Kamaley! These are various fruits ripe for eating, which are not only sweet luscious but also desire-fulfilling; may I present these juicy fruits for approval). *Dughdha: Surabhistana sambhutam swaadu samanoharam, Martra -amrutam sugavyam cha gruhnataamachyuta priye/* (Achyuta Priye! This pure milk which is fresh from Surabhi cow’s udder is meant for Martyaloka residents and is tasty like ambrosia; I beseech you to taste it and gratify me!) *Gud / Jaggery: Suswaada rasa samyuktamikshu vriksha samudbhavam, Agnipakkamati swaadu gudam cha prati- guhyataam/* (Devi! this jaggery has been made of sugarcane juice heated up and solidified; indeed this is very sweet and fresh; please savour this). *Mrishtaanna: Yava godhuma sashyaanaam churna renu samudbhavam, Supakvam guda gavyaaktam Mrishtaannam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! This is a sweet preparation made of wheat and ‘Yava’ grains-mix, nicely cooked with jaggery and ghee which too is very appetizing for favour of your taste); *Pishtak: Shasyachurnodbhavam pakkvam Swastikaadi samanvitam, Mayaa niveditam DeviPishtakam pratigruhyataam/* (Devi! This pisthak made of rice powder with Swastika and other signs is a fried and crisp savoury for your taste); *Eik/ Sugar cane: Paarthivo vriksha bhascha vividha dravya kaaranam, Suswaadurasa samyutam Eikshuscha pratigruhyatam/* (Devi! This sugar cane is an extraordinary tree on Earth and is a source of

several bye products like jaggery, sugar and simple juice from raw cane; this juice is indeed very sweet and succulent; it is my prayer that you may drink up this juice!); *Vyanjan: Sheeta vaayu pradham chaiva daahey cha sukhadam param, Kamaley! Gruhyataam chedam vyajanam shweta chaamaram/* (Kamaley! In this stuffy climate, a white ‘chamara’/ hand fan would certainly bring relief and happiness; may I serve you with ‘Vyanjana’ for your comfort); *Taamboola: Taambulamcha varam ramyam karpuraadi suvaasitam, Jihwaa jaadyacchedakaram Taamboolam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! This ‘Taamboola’ made of tender betel leaves and fragrant materials like ‘karpura’/ camphor and other scented edible digestibles would provide freshness and good feeling to your tongue and mouth; may I tender this to you); *Jala: Suvaasitam sheetalamcha pipaasaa naashakaaranam, Jagajjevaa rupamcha jeevanam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! To quench thirst, there is nothing like very cold, nicely scented and life-reviving water; do please accept this as well); *Maalya: Deha soundarya bijam cha sadaa Shobha vivardhanam, Kaarpaasaja cha krumijam vasanam Devi gruhyataam/* (Devi! The bouquets and garlands made of a wide variety of fresh and perfumed seasonal flowers provide invaluable joy to the wearers of these as also enhance beauty and grace to them; it is my privilege and unique opportunity to proffer these flowers to you); *Achamaneeya: Punya tirthakam chaiva Vishuddham Suddhidam sadaa, Grhnateem Krishna Kaantey twam ramyamaachaneeyakam/* ( Krishna Kaantey! This ‘Tirtha jala’ which is sanctified on its own as also purify others is highly worthy of ‘Achamaneeya’; do accept the same); *Shayya: Ratnasaaraadi nirmaanam pushpachandana samyut, Ratnabhusha bhushaadhyam sutalpam Devi gruhnnataam/* (This invaluable and highly comfortable bed with soft cotton and silk clothing, which is bejewelled and treated with fresh and intoxicating flowers and fragrances, is tendered to you Devi! please do accept this for your relaxation); *Apurva Dravya: Yadyad dravyamapurvam cha Prithivyaapi durlabham, Deva bhushaarbhogyam cha taddrayam Devi gruhnnataam/* (Devi! Not only these but whatever invaluable and even impossible materials are available on Earth or elsewhere that are worthy of adorning your body would be available at your nod of head!

**[An alternate version of Puja is to recite the Shri Sukta Mantras as follows:**

*Hiranya varnaam harineem suvarna rajastarajaam, Chandraam Hiranmayim Lakshmin jaatamevo mamaavah// Sahasra dala padmastaam swasthaam cha sumanoharaam, Shantaam cha Shrihareh kaantaam taam bhaje jagataam prasuum/ ---Shri Varalakshmi Devyai namah--Aavaahayaami/ Taam ma aavaha jaatavedo Lakshminanapagaaminim, Yasyaam hiranyam vindeyam gaamashvam purushaanaham// Amulya ratnasaaram cha nirmitam vishwa karmanaa, Aasanam cha prasannam cha Maha Devi pragruhyataam/ Shri Varalakshmi Devyai namah Divya simhasanam samarpayaami/*

*Ashwa purvaam ratha madhyaam hasinaada prabodhinim, Shriyam Devimupahye Shriirmaam Deveemupahvaye Shriirmaam Devijushataam// Shuddha Gangodakamidam sarvavantitameepsitam, Paapedhmavahnirupam cha grihyataam Parameswari/ Shri Varalakshmyai namah-Paadyayoh paadyam/*

*Kaamsosmitaam Hiranya praakaaramaardraam jvalanteem trptaam tarpayanteem/ Padmesthitaam padma varnaam taamihopahvaye shriyam// Pushpachandana durvaadi samyutam jaahnavi jalam, Shankha garbha sthitam shuddham grihyataam padma vaasini/ ShriVaralahshmyainamah-arghyamidam/*

*Chandraam prabhaasaam yashasaa jwalanteem Shriyam loke Deva jushtaamudaaraam, taam Padminimeem shartanamaham prapadye, Lakshmirme nashyataam twaam vrine// Punya tirthaadikam chiva vishuddham shuddhidam sadaa, Grihyataam krishna kaante cha ramyamaachamaneeyakam-Shri Varalakshmi Devyai namah mukhe aachamaneeyam samaspayaami/*

*Adityavarne tapasodhijaato vanaspatistava vrikshetha bilwah, Tasya phalaani tapasaamudantu maayaantaraayaascha baahyaa Alakshmi/ Sugadhi Vishnu tailam cha sugandhaamalaki jalam, Deha Soundarya beejam cha grihyataam Shriharipriye/ Shri Varalakshmi Devyai shuddhodakena snapayaami/*

*Upaitumaam Devasakhah keertischa maninaa saha, praaturbhutosmi raashtresmin keertimiddhim dadaatume// Soundarya mukhaalankaaram sadaa shobha vivardhanam, kaarpaasajam vasanam Devi grihyataam/ Shri Vara Lakshmi Devyai namah Vastra yugmam samarpayaami/*

*Kshutpipaasaamalaam Jyeshthaamalakshmir naashayaamyaham, Abhutimasamriddhim cha sarvaannirnudame grihaat// Shiva vaayupradechaiva dehe cha sukhadaa vare, Kamale grihyataam cheme vyajana shweta chaamare/ Shri Vara Lakshmi Devyainamah vyajana chaamare veejayaami/*

*Gandhadwaaraam dhuraadarshaam nityapushtaam kareeshineem, Ishwarigim sarva bhutaanaam taamihopahvaye shriyam// Malayaachala sambhutam vriksha saaram manoharam, sugandha yuktam sukhadam chandanam Devi grihyataam/ Shri Vara Lakshmi Devyai namah Shri gandhaan dhaarayaami/*

*Manasah kaamamaakuutim vaachassatya mashimahi, Pashuunaagum rupamannaya mayi shrisshraya taam yashah// Ratna swarna vikaaramcha dehaalankaaravardhanam, shobhaadaanam Shrikaram cha bhushanam pratigrihyataam/ Shri Vara Lakshmi Devyainamah sarvaabharaani samarpayaami/*

*Kardameva prajaabhutaa mayi sambhava Kardama, Shriyamvaasaya me kule Maataram Padma maalineem/ Naanaa kusuma nirmaanam bahy shobhaapradam param, Sarva bhuta priyam shuddham maalyam Devi pratigrihyataam/ Pushpam samarpayaami/]*

This is followed by Anga Puja along with Om aim hreem shreem with each: *chanchakaaya namah paadoupujayaami-chapalaaya namah jaanunipujayaami-peetaambaraaya namah urum pujayaami-kamala vaasinyai namah katim pujayaami-padmaalayaayai namah naabhim pujayaami-madana maatrenamah stanou pujayaami- Lalitaayai namah bhuja dwandwam pujayaami-Kambukanthaayanah kantham pujayaami- Sumukhaaya namah mukham pujayaami-Shriyai namah oushthau pujayaami-Sunaasikaayai namah naasikaam pujayaami-Sunetrai namah netre pujayaami- Ramaayai namah karnou pujayaami-Kamalaalayai namah shirah pujayaami- Shri Varalakshmai namah sarvaannyangaani pujayaami/*

This puja is followed by recitals and Pushpa puja of Lakshmi Ashtottara and Sahasra naama puja with flowers. Then the dhupa -deepa-naivedya-taambulaadi.

*Dhupa: Dashaagulam guggulopetam sugandham cha manoharam, Dhupam daashyaami te Deveshi Varalakshmi grihaanatam/ Vriksha niryasa rupamcha gandha dravyaadi sayutam, Shri Krishna kaante dhupam pavitram pratigrihyataam/*

*[Shri Sukta prakaarena: Aapahsrijanti snigdhaani chikleeta vasame grihe, nicha Deveem maataragum shriyam vaasayamekule// Shri Vara Lakshmi Devyai namah dhupamaaghraapayaami/]*

*Deepah: Ghritaakta varti samyuktamandhakaara vinaashakam Deepam daasyaami te Devi grihaana muditaabhava/*

*[ Shri Sukta prakaarena: Ardraam pushkarinim pushtim suvarnaam hemamaalineem, Suryam Hiranmayim Lakshmiim jaatavedomavaavah// Shri Vara Lakshmi Devyai namah deepam darshayaami]*

*Naivedya: Naivedyam shadrasopetam dadhimajjya samhutam, naanaa bhakshya phalopetam grihaana hari vallabhe/*

*[Shri Sukta prakaarena: Ardraam yah karineem yashtim pingalaam padmamaalineem, Chandraam Hiranmayim Lashmeem jaatavedomamaahah// Naanopahaara rupamcha naanaavirasa samanvitam,*

*naanaa swaadukaram chaiva naivedyam pratigrihyataam/ Shri Vara Lakshmi Devyai namah naivedyam samarpayaami]*

*Om bhurbhuvassuvah tatsaviturvarenyam, bhargo Devasya dheemahi dhiyoyonah prachodayaat, satyam-  
twartena parishimchaami/ Amritopasranamasi/ Om Praanaaya swaaha, om apaanaaya swaaha, om  
udaayanaaya swaaha, om vyanaaya swaaha, om udaayana swaaha om samaanaaya swaaha, madhye  
madhye paaniyam samarpayaami, uttaraaposhanam samarpayaami, hastaprasnalanam-paadah  
prakshaalanam samarpayaami- shuddhhaachamaniyam samarpayaami.*

*Taambulam: Pugeephalasamaayuktam naagavalli dalairyutam, karpura churna samyuktam taamboolam  
prati grihyataam/*

*[Shri Sukta prakaarena: Taam ma aavah jaatavedo Lakshminanapagaamineem, yasyaam hiranyam  
prabhutam gaavo daashyoshvaan vindeyam purushaanaham// Taambulam cha varam ramyam  
karpuraadisuvaasitam, Jihvaajaadyachedakaram taamboolam Devi grihyataam/Shri Vara Lakshmi  
Devai namah, taambulam samarpayaami/*

*Neeraajanam: Neeraajanam samaaneetam karpurena samanvitam, tubhyam daasyaamyaham Devi  
grihyataam Vishnuvallabhe// Saamraajyam cha viraajam chaabhi Shriyaachanogrihe, Lakshmi  
raashtrasya yaa mukhe tayaa maa sagumsrijaamasi// Karpura deepa tejastwam agjnaaa timiraapaha,  
Swaami preetikaram chaiva mama suokhyam vivardhaya/ Shri Vara akshmi Devyai namah karpura  
neeraaganm darshayaami/*

*Neeraajanaanataram aachamaneeyam samarpayaami/*

*Dhyaana : Padmaasane Padmakare sarva lokaika pujite, Naaraayana priye Devi supreetaa bhava  
sarvadaa/ Mantra Pushpa: Yopaam pushpam veda pushpavaan prajaavaan pashuman bhavati; agnirvaa-  
vaayurvaa- asouvai tapannapa-nakshatraani vaa-parjanyaavaa-samvatsaravaa-yopsunaavam  
pratishthitaam veda pratyeva tishthati- --tanno vishnuh prachodayaat//*

*Pradakshina: Yaanikaani cha paapaani janmaatara kritaanicha, taani taani pranashyanti pradakshina  
pade pade/Namastryilokya janani namaste Vishnu vallabhe, traahi maam bhakta varade, Vara Lakshmi  
namo namah// Atha 'Nava Sutra Tora grandhi puja': Kamalaayai namah prathama grandhi pujayaami-  
Ramaayai namah dwiteeya grandhi pujayaami-Loka maatrenamah triteeya grandhi pujayaami-  
Vishvajanyai namah chaturgrandhi pujayaam- Maha Lakshmyai namah panchama grandhi pujayaami-  
Ksheeraabdhii tanayaayai namah shashtha granthi pujayaam-Vishva saakshinyanamah saptama  
grandhim pujayaami- Chandra sahodaryai namah ashtama grandhim pyjayaami- Hari vallabhaayai  
namah navama grandhim pujayaami/ Now, the Mantra tying the 'torana' or the trimeric coated thread of  
auspiciousness states as repeatedly nine times states: badhnaami dakshina haste nana sutram shubha  
pradam, putra poutraabhi vridhdhimcha sowbhaagyam dehi me rame/*

*Thereafter Brahmana vaayana is offered with the Mantra: Indiraa pratigrihnaatu Indiraavai dadaaticha,  
Indiraa Taarakobhaabhyaam Indiraayai namo namah/ Goddess Lakshmi herself is the giver, taker or  
acceptor, may be they are all blessed! We all prostrate to her for ever! The Vrata concludes as follows:  
Yasyasmrityaa cha naamoktyaa tapah puja kriyaadishu, nyunam sampurnataam yaati sadyo  
vandetamachyutam/ Mantra heenam kriyaa heenam bhakti heenam Maheshwari, yat pujitam mayaa Devi  
paripurnam tadastute/ Anayaa Kalpokta prakaarena kritayaa shodashopachaara pujayaa Bhagavati  
sarva Devaatmika Vara Lakshmi Devataa supreetaa suprasannaa varadaa bhavatu/ Mama ishta  
kaamyartha siddhirastu/*

Reading or hearing the relevant Auspicious 'Katha' and reciting the Japa of Moola Mantras including:  
'Shri Beeja' (Shreem), 'Maya Beeja' (Hreem), 'Kama Beeja' (Kleem), and 'Vani Beeja' (Aim), followed  
by the word 'Kamala vaasinyai' ie. the Mantrarajaa viz. SHREEM HREEM KLEEM AIM KAMALA  
VAASINYAI SWAAHAA/, the Vrata is signified as fulfilling!

Lakshmi and Kubera Pujas: *Lashmiryaa Lokapaalaanaam Dhenu rupena samsthitaa, Ghritam vahati  
yajnerthaa mama paapam vyapohatu/ Agratassantu mey gaavo gaavomey santu prishthatah, Go mey  
hridaye santu gavaam mey santu vasaamyaham/ ( Lakshmi has assumed the Form of a Sacred Cow for all*

the Lokapaalakaas to facilitate Yagna Karyaas by way of supplying plentiful ghee. May She destroy all my sins. May She stay with ahead and behind me as also in my heart. I do unfailing worship to the calf and bull too to enable milking and carrying weight respectively . If ‘Govardhana Parvata’ is in the reach, or else materialise a formation of the Govardhana, do perform the Parvata and worship Krishna by invoking both the Govardhana and Krishna : *Shri Krishna preetyartham Govardhana Pujanam Gopaalapujanam cha karishye/* Then recite the Mantra: *Gopala Murtey Vishvesha Shakratotsava bhedaka, Govardhanakrita cchatra pujaam mey Hara Gopatey! Govardhana dharaadhaara Gokulatraana kaaraka, Vishnubaahukritacchhaaya gavaam koti pradobhava/* (Gopaala Murti! Vishvesha! You had resisted the observance of Indrotsava Vrata and lifted the huge Govardhana Mountain as an umbrella and saved Gokula from the fury of incessant rains created by Indra; do kindly provide abundance of cows and milk); so saying ‘Shodashopacharaas’ or the formal services of sixteen offerings like Dhupa-Deepa-Naivedyaas to Go-Gopala-Govardhanaas and provide Go daana- Anna daana- Trina Daana- Dhana Daana to Brahmanas and BaliDaana in favour of Govardhana, climaxed by Brahmana Bhojana and Pratyaksha Go-Pradakshinaas.

### Pradhaana Lakshmi-Vishnu Kshetras

1) Shri Ranganam at Tiruchinaapalli as dakshinaabhi mukha Shri Ranga -natha shaayi and Shri Ranga Lakshmi on the banks of Kaveri River along with Chandra Pushkarini and Punnaga Tree in the premises of the Temple. Shri Ranganam Temple is perhaps unique in terms of its largest and most sprawling area in Bharat. Situated right on River Kaveri as an island, its length is approx. 16 miles and width some three miles. The actual Temple has seven ‘prakaaraas’ or boundary wall constructions, eighteen big or small ‘Gopuras’ and a middle street and four sub streets with houses reserved for pandas or priests, brahmanas and others. Inside the fourth circle, there is a very big ‘Mandapa’ or a raised platform with a ‘Sahasra Stambha’ or a thousand pillars-actually 960- on which are figures of horses and ‘Muthis’ as horsemen. In the fifth enclosure on the southern side there are two gopuras and on the northern gopura there is a beautiful Garuda mandapa with a sizeable Garuda Murti. There is a circular shaped Sarovara named Chandra pushkarini where devotees take bath regularly. Near to the Pushkarini is situated a tree named Kalpa Vriksha, and old idols of Lord Shri Rama and Vaikunthanatha. There behind is the famed Shri Ranga Nayaki Lakshmi Temple, opposite which is Kamba Mandapa, where in the olden times, Poet Kamba himself used to recite the Glorious Kamba Ramayana. In the sixth enclosure there is a western gate leading to the seventh enclosure and to its north is the Shri Ranga Nayaka’s own temple. Behind this Mandir are kept under a shaded low ceiling a number of Deva Murti Idols. Yet another such shaded ceiling there are the Idols of Acharya Ramanuja, Vibhishana and Anjaneya vigrahas. From there itself Shri Ranga Mandira Shikhara could be seen. In fact there are stairs leading to the Shikhara and there atop, one could witness the Idol of Vaasudeva. Shri Ranga Nayaka in his Mandir is witnessed lying as ‘shesha saayi’ as the latter spreads out five of his hoods as the umbrella to the Lord. Near at the feet of Ranga Nayaka are the Devi Ranga Nayaki and Vibhishana as seated. There besides, the Vigrahas of Sri Devi and Bhu Devi as the Utsava Vigrahas or Idols meant for Parikrama are placed too. Significantly enough, the southern side of the Main Mandir flows River Kaveri’s principal flow and all the flows are reachable by well laid straired steps. From the Shukla Pratipada Tithi till Ekaadashi of every Pousha month there are splendid celebrations with special pujas and allied activities as climaxed with Vaikuntha Ekaadashi. The background of this world renowned Sri Ranga Temple was that Lord Brahma himself presented the most hallowed Vigrahas of Sriranga Nayaka and Nayaki to King Ikshvaaku the son of Vaivaswata Manu pursuant to an extreme Tapasya; originally, Shri Ranga Nayaka /Nayaki Vigrahas were installed at

Ayodhya and that Mandir became the most sacred descendant Kula Vighras for generations. In Treta Yuga, Cholaraja Dharma Varma was invited once by Emperor Dasharatha to Ashwamedha Yajna and being greatly impressed by the Sri Ranga Nayaka returned to his Kingdom to perform severe Tapasya; a gathering of Maharshis approached the Chola King and sensitised him that Sri Ranga Nath was himself coming down to his Capital. Meanwhile, Lord Shri Rama killed Ravanaasura at Lanka and returned to Ayodhya in connection with Rama Rajyaabhsheka Celebrations. As Lord Rama distributed send off gifts, King Vibhishana desired to receive the gift of Sri Ranga Nayaka Nayakis. As Vibhishana was returning to Lanka, several Devas strongly felt that the just ravaged Lanka after the Battle was not suitable for the insallation of the Vighras and selected the island of Kaveri river; Vibhishana was no doubt disappointed that he could no longer perform the daily worship but Devas suggested that he could visit the selected spot daily for the worship; more so the King Dharma Varma conceded to grant the gift of Dasaratha that Sri Ranga Nayaka be shifted to the ideal Kaveri Island. Vibishana reconciled to the proposal that he might visit Sri Ranga as so shifted to Kaveri; during one of his chariot rides to the New Temple from Lanka, Vibhishana's chariot hit a Brahmana and as the latter died, the co- Brahmanas caught hold of Vibhishana and were about to kill him while the latter prayed to Lord Sri Rama as the Lord granted long life till the end of the present Kalpa even as his mortal body would disappear so that his immortal self could serve the Lord's another Swarupa as Sri Ranga Nayaka till the Kalpaanta! Hence his presence along with Sri Raga Nayaki as a shasha sayi at ri Ranga Mandir! But Devarshi Narada at once gave the news to one and all in Ayodhya and Lord Rama appeared before the Brahmana in distress facing death and assured that a blunder made by Vibhishana was of Rama's too. As such, the deceased Brahmana got immortalised as an Alwar and till date there is a Shankara Guru kula and Vani Vilas Mudranaalaya at Sri Ranga!

2) Koliyur-Nichulaapuri or Vorayyur near Trishirahpalli where Sundarraja and Vaasa Lakshmi wed in the presence of 33 crore Devas on the banks of a rivulets of Kunmurutti and Kalyana Tirtha 3) Tiruvellaarai or Shvetagiri 10 miles north of Shriranga is the divine temple of Pundarikaaksha with his wives Pankajavalli and Champakavalli Lakshmi Swarupas; this is also the hallowed birth place of Padmaksha or Uyyakkondaar and Vishnuchitta or Aingaallvar. Shri Vishnuchitta and Shriparakaala performed the Mangala Shasana or consecration to this Kshetra.4) Anbil or Dhanvinahpura near Trichy and Lagudi where one could vision Nambi Sundarraja and Allkiyavalli or Sundaravalli as Shesha shaayi; it is stated that Lord Brahma and Maharshi Valmiki had visioned the Vishnu Swarupas. Alvar Bhaktisaara did Mangala Shashana to this Place. 5) Tirupper nagara or Koviladi, Shriramanagar is situated some ten miles from Tanjor where Appakuduttaan Raghunatha and Devi Lakshmi are visioned. This place is on River Kaveri and IndraTirtha where Maharshis Upamanu and Parashara visited and Alvars Bhakti Sagara, Shathagopa, Vishnu chitta and Parakaala did the Mangala Shasana. 6) Kadambanore Uttamara koil north to Sriranga and Anbil is the Temple of Sri Purushottama and Puva Devi Lakshmi as sesha saayi and this hallowed Tirta was visited by Sanaka-Sanandana-Sanaatana-Sanat kumaras and Alvar Sriparakala did mangala shasana or sanctification.7) Tanjaimaamani koel or Sharanya nagar near Tanjavur comprising three Temples viz. Shri Neela Megha Bhagavan and Sainkamala Valli or Red Lotus Devi Lakshmi as consecrated / Mangala shasana by Alvars Bhutayoi and Sri Parakala; Nrisimha and Tanjai nayaki Lakshmi visioned by Markandeya Maharshi and the third Temple of Manikuntapper/ Manikundala Perumal and Ambujavalli Lakshmi Devi 8) Tirukkandiyur or Khanda Nagar is some four miles from Tanjaimani kovil with Bhagavan Hara shaapa vimochana Vishnu and Kamala valli Lakshmi depicting Shiva slicing off Lord Brahma's fifth head on his hand and Vishnu pardoning Shiva; this temple was stated to have visited by Agastya Muni and Alvar Sriparakala consecrated the Temple. 9) Cuddalore or

Sangama Pura is about a mile from Tiruvaiyaaru on the kaveri river banks again where Vaiyagam or Jagadraksha seated along with Padmasana Valli; this was visited by Maha Muni Nandaka and revived and consecrated by Alwar Parakaala 10) Kapilasthalam is four miles away from Cuddalore with the Temple of Gajendra Varada Bhagavan with Ramamani Poktaamara Lakshmi as shesha saayi on the banks of Kaveri and is also called Champakaranya; this sacred Tirtha was famed as both Gagendra and Kapisthala as was visioned by King Gajendra and Bhakta Hanuman; it was consecrated by Alwar Sant Bhakti Sagara. In fact, Alwar Bhaktaanghirenuka was born at Tirumandi-kkudi some four miles away from Kapilasthalam. 11) Pullabhudungudi is another sacred Place very near to Tirumandikkudi where Vallinvalli Rama or Rama with very strong bow and arrows along with Pottamaraiyal / Lotus Lakshmi visioned as sesha saayi or in lying condition. This is the Griddhra Tirtha too where the huge Kite who prevented Ranasura to abduct Devi Sita but could not despite the best efforts of the bird and got blessed by Rama to attain salvation. Alwar Sant Shriparakala had done the consecration of this Temple. 12) Aadanur ( Gopuri) is hardly a mile away from Pullabhudungudi where devotees witness Aandalakkamaayan or Bhaktaananda Murti Raghunadha along with Devi Ranganaayaki Lakshmi even as Bhagavan was in lying position. This Kshetra is also famed as Surya Pushkarini. Alwar Parakala is stated to have visioned 'Kaama Dhenu' or the Celestial Cow fulfilling desires of all visitors. 13) Tirukkundai or Kumbakonam is away by five miles from Aadanur where Aaravamuda Perumal Sharangapaani Bagavan is in a lying posture with Komalavalli Lakshmi nearby. River Kaveri and Hema pushkarini are nearby and Hema Maharshi was stated to have the Perumal actually visioned the Sharangapani Perumal himself. The illustrious Alwars Bhutayogi, Maha Yogi, Bhaktisaar, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Parakaala did the consecration of the Great Temple. Sant Bhaktisaar passed away at this very hallowed Place. 14) Tiruvishnugaram or Akasha Nagar is about four miles away from Kubhakonam where Uppiliappan or the Lord Vishnu of Salt features and Bhumi Lakshmi are popular in standing position. This place is also blessed with Arti Pushkarini (Ahoratra or Day and night). Garuda Deva, Maharshi Markandeya, Kaveri and Dharma were stated to have visited this Temple and Alwars Maha Yogi, Shathagopa and Shri Parakaala had performed the consecration. Interestingly, Uppiliappan receives the 'naivedya' of saltless food only. This place is also Tulasi van. Alwar Shathagopan performed sanctification of the this Uppili Appan Temple. 15) Tirunaarayur or Sugandhagiri Temple stands six miles south east of Kumbhakona where Lord Nambi and Nambikkai or Purna and Purni are the deities of Maha Vishnu and Devi Lakshmi and the Temple is situated on the banks of Mani Mukta River. Alwar Sant Shri Parakaala sanctified the Temple along with hundred cows. Interestingly, this Temple of Nambi-Nambakkai is famed for the killing of an Asura who had forcibly taken away the daughter of Muni Medhavi and restored her back to the Sage. Another episode of this Temple related to a Rakshasa who stole the 'Vairamudi' or Pearl headgear of the Lord but Garuda Deva confronted the Rakshasa and in the scuffle, the 'Manimukta kireeta' fell down in a waterbody which became popular as Mani mukta River. Till date, on significant festival days of the Temple, the Kireeta is taken in a procession, but each time the 'Vairamudi' is weighed, it weighs very differently. There is a Garuda Idol worshipped in the Temple. Incidentally, this hallowed temple is more popular as the Nacchiyar Koel or the Lakshmi Devi's Temple even more than the Nambiar's Temple! Alwar Parakala was unable to sanctify this Temple as he did to many others and interestingly enough he got absorbed on his end as with the Nayika bhaava or with the unique mindedness of the Devi herself! 16) Tiruccherai also called Saarakshetra is just three miles way from Sugandhagiri Temple and Saaranatha Bhagavan along with Saara Lakshmi is worshipped as in erect position of standing; Devi Kaveri as the River worships the Main Deities at the time of Tula Sankranti in the month of Kartika stated to praise Saara Lakshmi as of far greater Mahatmya than that of Ganga Devi!

Alwar Sant Shri Parakaala performed Mangala shasana here! 17) Nandapuri Vishnugaram is also situated three miles south of Kumbhakonam. At this sacred place are Vishnugar, Jaganaatha, Nathanatha accompanied by Champakavalli Lakshmi where there is Nandi Tirtha too. It is stated that the illustrious Shibi Chakravarthi visited this hallowed place and had the 'saakshat- kaara' or actual vision of Maha Vishnu[ Sibi was tested by Agni and Indra assuming the forms of a pigeon chasing a kite and when prevented by Sibi, the kite demanded the pigeon as its food but the pigeon demanded safety of its very life. Finally, the King measured an equivalent flesh from his thigh as of the pigeon's meat and settled the noble principles of Dharma and Nyaya-Virtue and Justice and became the most ideal King ever!] Similarly Nandi Deva too was blessed by Nathanadha and immortalised the title of Nandapuri Vishnu! Alwar Sriparakala consecrated the Kshetra. 18) Tiruvelliyankudi or Bhargavapuri is a Place of Divinity again 5 miles from Kumbakonam where the devotees see for themselves the Kolabilli Raman or Vichitra Kodanda Raman accompanied by MarakataValli Lakshmi as the Lord is in 'shesha shayana' posture. This temple is also blessed with Shukra Pushkarini the Brahma Tirtha, as visioned by Brahma, Indra, Sukra and Maharshi Parashar too. Alwar Sri Parakaala performed Mangal Shaasana at this place of high virtue. Maharshi Shukracharya overcame his blindness as was caused by Lord Vamana the 'Avatara' or incarnation of Maha Vishnu as he stopped the flow of water from the vessel of King Bali while the latter sought to pour the water from the Vamana's vessel as donating the three lokas in charity and created an obstruction in the nozzle of the Daana Paatra or the charity vessel. 19) Teraullundur or Rathapaata Sthala some three miles off Kutralam Railway Station is blessed with the temple of Amarudhi Appan Devadhi Deva along with Devi Senkamalavalli or Aruna Kamala valli Lakshmi in standing position. Dharma, Uparichara Vasu and Kaveri had the divine vision of the Deva-Devis and Alwar Parakala performed the Mangala Shasana of the Temple. The background of this Appan and Kamala valli temple is recalled as once there was an argument between the Vasu Devata and Maharshis in regard to a point of dissent in the context of performing yagnas and in the argument, the chariot of the Vasu fell down from the sky to earth due to the curse of the Maharshis! It is also stated that Dravida Poet who scripted Ramayana viz. Kamba was born at this very place. 20) Tiruvindalur or Indrapur which is three miles near Mayavaram Junction has the divine temple of Sugandha Vananatha, Maruviniya Mandan Bhagavan along with Chandra shaapa vimochanavalli or Pundarikavalli Lakshmi in 'veera shayana' posture. This Temple has sacred water body viz. Indu Pushkarini, besides the presence of Kaveri River. Chandra Deva prayed to Vishnu to get rid of the curse of his father in law Kashyapa Maharshi as the latter received the complaint of his daughters viz. the thirty one Naksharas that Chandra was in excessive love for Tara the wife of Devaguru Brihaspati in complete neglect of the wives. Alwar Parakala consecrated this holy temple. 21) Shirupuliyur or Vyaghrapura near Parelam Railway Junction at Kollumaagkadi where Arulmakadal or Karuna Samudra Bhagavan is stationed in the holy Temple along with Tirumaa magal Devi or Samudra Kanya Lakshmi in 'sesha shayya' posture near Ananta Sarovara or Manasa Pushkarini. Both Veda Vyas and Vyaghrapaada had the celestial vision at this place while Alwar Shriparakala sanctified the Temple. 22) Tirukkanna - puram or ShriKrishnapur, Kanvapura is on way from Peralam to Tiruvaayur at Nannilam is the hallowed Temple of Shouriraja Bhagavan and Kannapura/ Krishna pura Nayaki Lakshmi in standing position where there is Nityapushkarini as visioned by Kanva Maharshi. Alwars Shathakopa, Kulashakara, Vishnuchitta and Parakaal had together sanctified this Temple. There is a scar on the face of the Shouriraja Bhagavan as the Chola King Kumikantha out of vengeance took to a spree of converting Vishnu Temples destroyed replacing with Shiva Mandiras and a singer at this Kannapura Temple sang very emotional songs meaning as to why Shouriraja tolerated this betrayal of Vishnu Devotees and threw the cymbal at the Bhagavan's idol and even now that scar on the Idol's face continues even as the King

was punished for his misdeeds! 23) Tiru Krishnamangai or Krishna Mangalapur near Tiruvaayur is the sacred Temple of Bhaktavatsala Bhagavan along with Abhisheka Valli Lakshmi. Varuna Deva and Lomesha Maharshi had 'saakshaatkara' of the Bhagavan. Local devotees have firm belief that several Devas do personally worship the Idols in view of certain evidences noticed by them. Sri Parakaal Alwar had conecerated the idols in the past. 24) Tirukkannank- gudi (Krishna Kuti) on Tiruvayur-Kouvilore line is situated the holy Temple of Shyamalamenipperumal Bhagavan and Aravindavalli Lakshmi as also Ravana Pushkarini. Maharshis Bhrigu and Gautama visioned the Vishnu- Lakshmi Swarupas and Alwar Sriparakal consecrated the Temple. 25) Tirunaagai or Nagapattinam is famed for the Koil of Soundraya Raja Perumal and Soundaryavalli Lakshmi in standing position where Saara Pushkarini is the famed waterbody. This was the very Temple where Alwar Sriparakaala had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Lord. Incidentally, there is the Sundara Raja Perumal Koil in Madurai too as the Lord is seated on a throne with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi as also a Madhuvalli Lakshmi sub temple seperately. 26) Kaalisseerama Vishnugaram or Trivikramapur near Shiyali Railway Station is blessed with the Temple of Trivikrama Murti Bhagavan along with Amritavalli Lakshmi are in standing posture where Chakra Tirtha and Shankha Pushkarini too are ever flowing. Shri Ragavenrda Swami spent his last days of life here. It is locally believed that Maharshi Ashtavakra had the 'saakshatkara' at this holy temple. Incidentally, Ulaganadha Perumal Koil in Kanchipura with Vamana Deva with foot up hitting the high ceiling as acoompanied with Devi Amudavalli Lakshmi is a famed Vaishnava Temple, besides of course the famous Varadaraja Swami Koil. 27) Tiruvaali Tiru nagari or Parirambhapura near Shiyali again is known well as the koil of Sundara baahu Bhagavan and Amritavalli Lakshmi where two pushkarinis viz. Ilaakshani and Ahladini. This was the temple where Prajapati had the 'saakshatkara' of the Vishnu- Lakshmi Swarupas and so did Alwar Parakaala who also sanctified the Temple. 28) Manimand Koil or Tirunaagur-Nagpuri Koil is near Vaideshwaram Koil has the sacred Nara-Narayan Bhagavan and Pundarikavalli Lakshmi as seated in a pranava viman. This temple is blessed with Indra Pushkarini and Rudra Pushkarini. Both Devendra and Ekadasha Rudras had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Lord and Alwar Parakala performed the consecration of the deities. 29) Vaikuntha Vishnugaram or Vaikunthapura is Tirunaagur with Shri Vaikunthanaath Pundarikaaksha and Devi Vaikunthavalli Lakshmi as seated in the Ananta vardhana vimana; both Lakshmi Pushkarini and Uttanka Pushkarini are well known here as Uttanka Muni and Upachara Vasu had the 'saakshatkaara' of the Deities and Alwar Sriparakaala performed the temple's 'mangala shaasana' or sanctification. 30) Arimeya Vishnugaram or Nabhapur is situated in Tirunaagar itself where the temple of Kunjamaagkutta Perumal or the Dancer on Clouds and Devi Arunakamala Valli Lakshmi are seated on Uttunga Vimana. This temple has two Tirthas viz. Koti Tirtha and Amuda or Amrita Tirtha. Uttanga Muni visioned the Deities and Sriparakaala had performed the 'Mangala Shashana'. 31) Vishnupurushottamam or Purushottama Temple is again situated in Tirunaagar itself with Purushottama and Devi Nayaki and this hallowed Mandir has the flow of Ksheeragandhi Pushkarini while Upamanyu Muni visited and had the 'saakshatkaara' and Alwar Sri Parakala consecrated the Temple and the Idols. 32) Semponseya Koil or Swarna Mandira too is in Tirunaagar with Swarnaranga natha and Allimaamlar Lakshmi in standing posture as Kanaka Tirtha and Nitya Pushkarini flow and Rudra deva visioned and Alwar Sri Parakaala had sanctified. 33) Tiruttendri-yambalam or Lakshmi Ranga natha in Tirunaagara has two principal deities viz. Senkanamamaal or Arunaakhsa Bhagavan and Senkamala valli or Aruna kamala valli Lakshmi in 'shayana' posture; this Kshetra has Surya Pushkarini while Shesha Deva visioned and Sriparakaala had sanctified the Mandir. 34) Tirumanikkudam or Manikuta is near by Tirunaagur with the temple of Manikutaka naayaka and Devi Tirumakal Lakshmi with Chandra Pushkarini while Garuda Deva had 'saakshaatkaara' and Sri Parakaala Alwar had sanctified. 35) Near by

the Tirumanikkudam is the temple of Tirukkaavalampaadi or Talavan with Gopala Krishna Bhagavan and Devis Rukmini and Satyabhama as visioned by Vishvaksena, Mitra and Rudra Devas as the Alwar performed the mangala shasana, while Padma Pushkarini flows near by. 36) Tiruddevanaar Tokai or Keelaicchhaalai Deva nagar near Tirunaagur with the idols of Deva naayak and Kalamakal or Samudra Kanya Lakshmi along with Shobhana Pushkarini while Maharshi Vasishtha had the 'saakshaatkara' or direct darshan. 37) Tiruvellakulam or Swetahrada near Thiru Devanaar is the Koil of Bhagavan Krishna Narayana along with Devi Purvartirumkala Lakshmi as the Sweta Pushkarini flows and Ikshvaaku vamshiya Svetaraja visioned the Deities. 38) Parthanpalli or Partha sthala also around Tirunaagur is blessed with the presence of Taamirai natha or Padmanatha accompanied by Taamirai nayaki or Padma nayaki in standing posture. Shankha Pushkarini flows here. Varuna Deva, Ekadasha Rudras and Partha Arjuna were fortunate to have their actual vision of the deities and as stated at most of the temples, Alwar Sriparakaala performed the mangala shasana here too. 39) Talaicchanka- naamnamadiyam / Talaicchenkaadu or Shankhapur is hardly three miles away from Parthanapalli where there is a Temple of Naamandiyapperumal Velasudapperumal or Bhagavan Chandra paapa vimochana Chandrakanta along with Devi Tallechanga Nachiyar - Senkhamala Valli or Aruna Kamala Valli blesses the devotees in the standing position. Chandra Deva and Devas had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Deities in celebration of the annulment of curse to Chandra. Bhrgu Yogi Alwar, besides Parakala Alwar had dandified the Temple. 40) Tillai Tiruchitrakutam near Chidambaram-the city otherwise popular for the Akasha Linga as Nata Raja- is also the sacred temple of Govinda Raja Bhagavan and Devi Pundarika Valli in shayana or lying position. There is a Pundarika Sarovara too at this Temple. Maha Deva and 3000 dikshitaas besides Kanva Maharshi had 'saakshaatkaara' of the Deities in the Temple. Alwars Kulashekara besides Parakaala had performed 'mangalaashasana'. 40) Tirukkunadal or Madurai hosts Sundara Raja Perumal accompanied by Vakulavalli, Marakata valli, Varaguna valli, and Madhuravalli Lakshmis too seated comfortably. ChakraTirtha and Hema Pushkarini are the two water bodies. Maharshis Bhrgu and Shounaka had their 'saakshatkara' At this hallowed Temple. Alwar Vishnuchitta and Sant Parakaala performed 'mangalaashasana' at this Temple. 41) Tirumohur or Maahur is some seven miles away from Madurai is the temple of Kala Megha Deva and Mohurvalli or Meghavalli Lakshmi in standing position. At this Temple there is a Ksheeraabhdhi Pushkarini. Rudra, Brahma, Indra and several Devas were all blessed with Megha Deva Vishnu and Meghavalli Lakshmi with their celestial darshan. This was the Place where Vishnu turned into the form of Mohini and distributed Amrit to Devas and subsequently assumed the swarupa of Kaala Megha, as prayed by the Devatas. Alwars Shathagopa and Parakaala did mangalaashasana at this temple. 42) Tirumaaliramcholai or Vrishabhadri is some 12 miles from Madurai being the famous *Alagar Koil*. References to this Mandir are made in a number of Puranas including Varaha Purana, Vamana Purana, Brahmada Purana and Agni Purana! Yama Dharma Raja performed Tapasya to Maha Vishnu by assuming the form of a Vrishabha or a bull and secured his Darshan and thus this Mountain is known as Vrishabhaadri. When in his ecstasy as Maha Vishnu appeared before Yama, the latter danced and from the 'nripura maala' or a string of trinket bells tied around his feet fell out a bell that materialised a water spring called Nripu Ganga, stated to be a wash out of sins by taking bath in it. One needs to purify by the body bath and enter the Temple of Bhagavan Alagar and the original installation of Sundara Raja Narayana / Kalagar along with Sridevi and Bhudevis on either side was performed by Yama Dharma Raja himself. None knows as to when the construction of the Temple was made but the belief is that Shri Poigai Alwar, Bhutattalwar and Payalvar are traced back to have venerated the Idols even during Dwapara Yuga times as given in Vaishnava Scriptures. Even Pandavas along with Draupadi Devi visited the Temple and stayed in the cave of the Mountain worshipping Alagar Bhagavan

and till date there is a Pandava Shayya or the bed rocks in the cave during their 'Agjnata Vaasa' or Living In-cognito following their agreement with Kauravas as they lost the bet in a dice game. The daily abhisheka of the Main Deity continues to be performed by the Nripura Sarovara water only since any other type tends to discolour the Deity. Karuppu Swami is venerated with daily pujas as he is the guardian of the entire establishment at the Temple. A grand festival is celebrated now for five days on Chaitra Shukla Chaturdashi as Bhagavan Sunderraja on the Purnima day commences his Yatra from Madurai reaching Nanduiyur after crossing Vegavati River, rest overnights there, reach Tenur, Ramaraya Mandapa, Mysore Raja Mandapa and return to Vrishabhadri on the fifth day. Another such festival for five days is also organised from Ashadha Shukla Purnima. 43) Srivilliputtur: Famed for Ranganannar Mandir, this Place is some 16 km from Viruddhunagar the birthplace of Perialwar Vishnuchitta Swami, whose daughter Andal or Godamba, stated to be of Devi Lakshmi's Manifestation. This hallowed Place is the abode of Ranganatha / Ranga Mannar as affectionately popular. The Ranganatha Mandir is known for wall paintings depicting Bhagavat Leelas and Incidents of Maha Bharata. At the Sanctum of the Temple are the Idols of Ranganatha and Godamba. At this Temple itself is situated another Mandir underneath which is the Murti of Bhagavan Nrisimha and on the upper level is Seshashayi Vishnu with Devi Lakshmi at his feet, besides Vatapatrasaayi Murti in the company of Garuda Deva and of Maharhis like Durvasa. Nearby the Rangmannar Temple is a Sarovar where Andal Devi used to bathe. Some distance away is Shiva Linga Vishwanatha and a separate Parvati Mandir, where Shiva Ratri Festival is observed. Further to the Shiva Temple is situated a Lord Venkateshwara Mandir with Sridevi and Bhudevis. *Shankarnarayana Koil* is a unique presentation of Shankara and Narayana as half body parts as in the concept of Arthanareeshvara of Shiva- Parvati; interestingly the Hari-Hara Deva Idol is installed in between the two separate Murtis of Shankara and Narayana!

44) Tirukoshtiyur or Goshti pura : Some 10km from Tirupattur on Trichy-Shiva Ganga highway, 50 km from Shiva Ganga and hardly 15-16 km from Karaikudi is Tirukoshtam where Tri Murtis conferred each other as to how to exterminate Hiranyakashipu and was also the birthplace of Nambi Andar the Preceptor of Ramanuja Acharya. More so, this hosts the famed Tirukoshtiyur Temple where Lord Perumal is worshipped in a four tier structure in distinct postures as Bhagavan Ktishna in dance form, Soumya Narayana as in shayana / reclining posture, Adheeshta Narayana and the final one as Paramapada natha. It was at the top tier that Ramanujacharya was administered the Ashtakshari Mantra *Namo Narayanaya namah* by his Guru Nambi Adar in the presence of Swami Narasimha. To learn this mantra, Ramanujacharya is stated to have visited 17 times from Srirangam but the Guru declined to meet him each time; as and when he knocked at the Guru's door, he introduced himself as 'Ramanuja has arrived' but there was no response and finally on the 18<sup>th</sup> time he announced saying ' your beloved Ramanuja has arrived and the Guru opened the door. The legend is recalled that having conferred like wise at Ahobilam another famed Vaishnava Sthala for planning the termination of Hiranyaaksha by Vishnu's 'Varahavataara' in the past, this would be another 'Goshti' or serious discussion since Hiranyakshpu achieved the boon of non execution of a species of neither a man nor animal and not even a Deva. At the Goshti finally it was decided that the Asura could be killed by a special species viz. Nara + Simha or Narasimha! Hence the solution arrived was that Hiranyakashipu could be killed despite the boon received by the demon. The festivals observed at the Temple are Chitrai Tiruvila (April-May), Maasi Magham (Feb-March) and Adipooram (July-Aug) each for 10 days. Alvars Bhutayogi, Maha Yogi, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Parakala had all performed mangala shasana to this very sacred Tirtha.

45) Tirummeyyam or Satyagiri is on way from Trichinapalli-Manadurai Railway Line where Satyagirinath Bhagavan and Uyyavadaal Lakshmi. This Place has Satyagiri, Satya Tirtha, and Kadamba Pushkarini. Satya Devata was stated to have had his celestial darshan here. 46) Tiruppullaani or Darbha shayana: The next Railway Station from Rameshwaram is Ramanatha puram where Darbha Shayana Mandir is distinct and popular as Kalyana Jagannatha Devassilaiyar Bhagavan and Devi Kalyana Valli / Devasmilai Lakshmi are presented in standing posture. Before launching the program of Ravana Samhara, Samudra Setu bandhana was the very first step and thus the worship to Samudra Deva was performed. As Samudra Deva did not initially respond even as Rama requested the Samudra Deva by spreading a bed of Darbha grass, Rama lied on the bed conveying his protest. Finally he had to threaten the Samudradeva that he would destroy the Seas as Samudra appeared and apologised to Rama and as a result, the high tides subsided and the Sea waters lost their pounding speed and roar. Hence the fame of the Darbha shayana Kshetra and the importance of the Mandir with the big Idol of Kodanda Rama with his Dhanush! This Place too is worthy of snaanam, dana and puja especially in Hema Tirtha and Shukra Tirtha besides an Ashwattha Vriksha. Tiruppulani is also situated where Rama inclined as a 'Darbhasayi' (lying on a Darbha mat) soliciting Varuna Deva to facilitate smooth cross-over of the Sea to reach Lanka; Shrines of 'Nava Grahas' whom Rama prayed to remove obstacles during the ensuing Rama-Ravana battle. Maharshi Darbharani had his celestial vision of Rama as darbha shaayi. *Devipattana* also away some 12 miles is where barren women are blessed with progeny as also Jagannadha Shrine where Ravana's brother Vibhishana surrendered to Rama and was made the King of Lanka later on. Skanda Purana refers to this Place as that for hiding the remaining followers of Mahishasura killed by Durga Devi, as they drank the waters of Dharma Pushkarini where Rama performed puja to Nava Grahas but Shri Rama pulled them out and destroyed them at Chakra Tirtha since Sudarshana pulled the Asuras out and terminated. Devi pattana is also called Nava Pashayana a Stone Pillar signifying Nava Grahas.

47) Tiruttamkaalore or Shitodyaana pura in near Shivakaashi where stands a 'divya kshetra' where Appan, Tanakaalappan and Anna nayaki and Ananta nayaki are visualised in standing position. It is stated that Pandya King Shalya had the divya darshan of the Appan and Nayaki and so did Shri Vallabha and Vyaghra Rishis while Alvars Bhuta Yogi and Parkala had sanctified the Divya Vighras and the Temple. 48) Sirippillur at its Railway station on Viruddh nagar and Tenkashi Raiway line is famed for its Periyalvaar or Vishnuchitta Swami's birth as also that of his illustrious daughter ANDAAL or GODAMBA, considered as the incarnation of Sri Lakshmi herself. This hallowed Place has the Temple of Sri Ranga Nath or Ranga Mannar and Godamba as of Lakshmi form. The Main Deities are in shayana posture being under a Vata Vriksha with Garuda Deva in service. The Temple premises has Tirumukkula Tirtha and Alwar Vishnuchitta had performed Magala shasana.

49) Sri Varamangai/ Totadri- Nanganeri: From Tirunelveli to about 20 miles is the sacred Temple of Vanamalai Perumal (Devanayaka Totadri) and Devi Varangmai Lakshmi as they are seated in 'padmaashana'. This extra-ordinary Vaishnava Kshetra of Dakshina Bharata is near to the heart of Shri Ramanujacharya and one of the Moola Peethas of his whose Upa danda, Kaashthasana or the Seat on which he sat, theshankha chakra mudras as always cherished by him are still preserved. Besides the principal deities, also present are Sri Devi, Bhu Devi, Neela Devi, Vishvaksena, Garuda, Chamara graahini, and Chandra-Suryas. It is stated that Brahma Deva, Devendra, and Maharshis Bhrigu, Lomesha and Markandeya achieved their divine vision and Alwar Shathagopan did mangala snaana. According to Kshetra Mahatmya, the Vanamala Perumal was dug up deep from Earth, and from his body there were some dig pits or cracks felt on the body of the Idol and that is why there is a 'taila snana' or oil bath of the

idol daily! Half of the oils used for the 'tailabhishkas' are deposited in the Pushkarini which is taken by the devotees for curing incurable skin and indigestion / wind diseases since the waters of Pushkarini possess herbal values from the 'abhishekas'. *This is the center of Totadri matha.* The charana padukas or the foot wear of the Totadri Perumal are considered as Vishnu Chitta Alwar himself.

- 50) Tirukkurinkudi or Kurunga nagar: From Totadri/ Vaanmaamalai to some 8 miles south-west is Kurung nagar where Bhagavan Tiruppalkadala Nambi along with Kurukkungudivalli Lakshmi; this Bhagavan is also known as Vaishnava Nambi, Malai Mela Nambi, Ninnar Nambi, Iduna Nambi, Tiruppalkadala Nambi. Parama Shankara himself had the divya darshan of the Bhagavan, while Alvars Bhaktisaara, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Sriparakaal had performed 'mangala shaasana' / sanctification.
- 51) Tirukkukurur or Alwar-Tirunagari-Shrinagari: In between Tirunelveli and Tiruchendur is the Temple of Adi Nath Perumal and Adi Nayaki in standing posture. At this Place flows Tamra River as also Brahma Tirtha. Brahma, Alwar Sathagopa and the famed poet Madhura Kavi are stated to have divya darshana of the Perumal. The legendary background of this place is described as Bagavan Adi Nath directed Lord Brahma to perform Tapasya – *Hey Ka, Kuru!* Or Brahma Deva! Do perform Tapasya or intense meditation at this Sacred Place! Incidentally, this is the Mukti Place of Alwar Sant Shathagopa!
- 52) Tulaivillimangalam or Dhanvi Mangala: Two sacred Temples are situated at Alwar Tirunagari viz. Devanath Bhagavan and Devi Karundkingya Lakshmi as also Aravinda Lochana and Kumudakshivalli Lakshmi. The River Tamraparni and Varuna Tirtha are near these twin Temples. Indra, Vayu and Varuna Devas had the benefit of divine vision of these deities. Alwar Shathakopa had consecrated these temples.
- 53) Shri Vaikuntham has the hallowed temple of Kallippiraan Vaikuntha natha Bhagavan and Vaikuntthar valli Lakshmi both in standing posture on the banks of Tamraparni river, besides Prithu Tirtha. Devaraja Indra and Devas who accompanied had the celestial vision and Alwar Shathagopa did the sanctification.
- 54) Varagunamangai or Varaguna is close to Sri Vaikuntham with the Temple of Vijayaasana Bhagavan and Varaguna Lakshmi are seated comfortably facing east. At this hallowed place are Deva Pushkarini and Agni Tirtha. Agni Deva had the celestial vision and Alwar Shathagopa performed Mangala Shasana.
- 55) Tiruppulinkudi or Chinchakuti is close by a mile to Varaguna where there is the temple of Karyanchanavendan Bhagavan and Malaramangai Nacchiyar or Padmajavalli Lakshmi are in shesha saayi posture facing east. Varuna tirtha and Nirruti Tirtha are situated at the Temple premises; Nirruti Dikpaala, Varuna and Dharma Devatas had 'saakshatkaara' and Alwar Shathagopa did the 'Mangala Shaasana' here.
- 56) Tirukkulandai or Perinkulam Brihattadaag is seven miles near Shri Vaikuntham, where Maayakoothan Bhagavan along with Kulandai Valli or Ghata Valli Lakshmi are signified in a standing posture. Perunkullam or Brihattadaag is adjacent to the holy temple. Brihaspati had the celestial vision.
- 57) Tirupperai or Shri Naampura is south west of Alwar Tiru nagari as at 51 above. This is the sacred temple of Makarengukkulaikkaadan / Makaraayita karna paasha Perumal and Devi Makaaayitakarna-paasha Naacchiyar or Nayaki Lakshmi seated eastward. The Temple premises has the sacred Tirtha named Shukra Pushkarini. Brahma, Ishana Rudra and Shukra had all their 'divya saakshaatkaaras' here.
- 58) Tirukkollur or Mahanidhipura near by a mile to Tirupperai has the sacred temple of Bhagavan Vaittamanidhi / Nishepanidhi along with Devi Kollurvalli Lakshmi as lying on 'shesha shayya'. Kubera and Madhura Kavi had the divine vision of the deities and Alwar Shathagopa did the 'mangalashasana'.
- 59) Tiruvantapuram: Trivendram, the Capital of Kerala State, is better known as the Unique Tirtha Sthana being the Abode of Ananta Padma Swami in 'Anantavanam' mentioned in Maha Bharata and Brahma Purana. Lord Padmanabha as relaxing in Yoga Nidra on the soft bed of of Ananta the celestial Serpent bestows the fulfillment of desires of Deva-Danavas, Yogi-Rishi Ganas and sarva charaachara jeevas,

especially human beings. The legendary background of this manifestation of Maha Vishnu the singular Preserver of 'Srishti' / Creation as known through Puranas and Epics was that Maha Vishnu disguised as a mischievous boy, who wantonly spoilt a Sacred 'Salagrama'-representing Bhagavan Himself-which a Sage worshipped and out of anger he chased the boy. As the Swami found the boy subsequently wandering on the Sea Beaches, a fisher woman heard a shouting at a boy whom the Swami identified ; she was threatening to throw the boy into the forest near Anantankadu Nagaraja Temple ie the place infested with poisonous serpents. Having got a clue, the Swami discovered the mischievous boy at the Temple forest; as expected the boy was hanging on the top of a 'Illuppa' Tree; even as he saw the boy, the tree branch got broken and suddenly he manifested himself as huge figure of Anantashayana Murti the Vishnu Swarupa with Ananta as his head at Tiru Vollom, nabhi at Tiruvanantapuram and lotus feet at Tiruppadapuram! Swami was dazed as he never ever even in dreams was that boy full of pranks! He broke down in a trance and having recovered somewhat, prayed to the Lord in ecstasy and beseeched him to shorten his alarmingly big swarupa to that of thrice his 'danda' or staff. Even so, the figure got shortened in three parts viz. *Tiru mukham, Tiru vudal and Tiruppaadam*- that is: Mangala Mukha-Mangala Deha-Mangala Paada or Lotus Feet of Auspiciousness. The Swami offered Naivedya of Rice Kanji, Uppu manga or Salted Raw Mango pieces in a coconut shell. The huge Swarupa of Ananta Padma naabha was installed in a Temple after anointing with chandana kasturi etc. and so on in an appropriate new Temple with the assistance of the King, Brahmanas and Bhaktas on a single massive stone platform with carved embellishments. The Swami is reclining on the Maha Sarpa Ananta / Adi Sesha with hoods facing inwards signifying contemplation. Down his right hand is a Shiva Linga while the Swami has her consorts Sri Devi representing prosperity and Bhu devi representing Patience and Power are seated nearby even as Lord Brahma seated on a Lotus emerges from the Swami's navel. He is surrounded by some 1200 shaligrams from Nepal's Gandaki River banks. Over the Samadhi of the Sadhu Mahatma who discovered the Swami was arranged to the west of the Main Temple, and subsequently the Bilwa Mangala Krishna Mandir stood up over the Samadhi. Two major Shrines inside the Temple are of Ugra Narasimha and Krishna Swami. Ekadashi days are special. Two major Festivals are Alpashy in Oct- Nov and Phanguni in Mar- April each for 10 days; besides every Navaratra is celebrated when Alankaras change daily. Also Laksha Deepam festival is celebrated for 56 days onec in every 6 years, the latest being in Jan 2014 when the atmosphere is simply celestial with Veda Pathanas, Cultural and other activities are continuous and full of faith. Dress code is compulsory and entry restrictions are strictly enforced. The Temple is indeed very opulent with considerable gold, jewellery and liquid cash. Besides ths glorious Temple, Tiruvananta puram is proud of very many other illustrious Temples of repute and faith venerated by thousands of yattris through out the year despite the Seasonal aberrations.

60) Tiruvattaar Adi Keshava ( Parashurama Kshetra): From Trivendram to Tiruvattar the distance is some 7 km where on the banks of River Tamraparni, the Temple of Adikeshava and Marakata Valli Lakshmi is popular. The height of the idol of Adi Keshava as Sesha shaayi Adi Keshava. is as of some 16 feet; from one 'Dwar' or gate, the Bhagavan who is in a lying posture is visible with his Shri Mukha or propitious Face, the second 'dwar' displaying his 'Vakshasthala' or the region of his heart, and the third dwar displays his lotus feet, with his body crushing a Rakshasa. The legendary belief is that the Demon prayed to Brahma and in his liberal mood, allowed free access to a 'Kadali phala vana' / banyan fruit garden to assuage his hunger; but the demon started harassing the Brahmanas and Rishis interfering in their 'Dharma Karyas' and the latter appealed to Vishnu who suppressed the demon; the latter appealed to Vishnu to always be under his body in that posture. This famed Kshetra is also called Parashurama khetra

as Lord Parashu Rama had the 'saakshaatkaara' of Adi Keshava. Alwar Shiromani Shathagopa executed the 'mangalaashaasana' of this Kshetra.

- 61) Janardana: From Trivendrum to Varkala is some 16 km where Janardana Temple is famed for ever-emerging 'dhup' or the scented smoke of 'Sambrani' or Agarbatti made of scented crystals called 'mengruk' a bye-product of bamboo. In fact yattris collect the raw material of dhup from the Temple as that wards off diseases of skin as also a 'drishti' to children and garbhinis or pregnant women. Yattris bathe in a water fall collected from the Arabian Sea merging into a local sub-river and this Tirtha has sweet water called locally as Paapa Mochan or Rinamohan, Savitri, Gayatri and Saraswati; in fact persons observing Samudra Snaanas invariably take their baths at this Sacred Tirtha and then seek the darshan of Janardana whose Temple is at a height after ascending a few steps and washing their feet at a Chakra Tirtha near the entrance of the Temple. In the Center of an open area is the Temple surrounded by smaller Mandirs of Shasta Kumara, and Shankaa beside a Varta Vriksha, in which the main Deity Lord with a four handed Form of Shyama Janardana. The story of the Temple is recalled that once Brahma was performing a holy yagna and during this austerity period, a Sadhu who was moving about at the yagna premises asked for food and as food was served, the Sadhu expressed at the disappointment at the variety and quality of food served. Brahma being the host apologised for the quality. Brahma realised that the principal host Vishnu himself was the Sadhu and prostrated to Janardana who displayed his own form as Brahma requested him to be in same form for ever as the latter consented and ever since the miracle of the Vighraha emitting the scented smoke of Agarbattis always with the scented crystals available aplenty.
- 62) Tiruvansparisaaram (Ramya sthala): Near Naagar koil is the Tiruvaal Maarban or the Ramya Vakshah-sthala of Venkatchalapati Bhagavan along with Kamalavalli Lakshmi seated purvaabhi mukha. In the premises of the Koil is the Lakshmi Tirtha. In fact, Sumudra snana is stated as of significance here as Kanyakumari Kshetra is only 20 miles southward to this Temple. Vinda Devi and aari Raja are stated to have had divine darshan of the Deva-Devis while Alwar Shathagopa performed mangala shasana here.
- 63) Tiruchchenkunur or Sourabh pur: In the state of Kerala on way to Tiruvananthapuram and Virudhnagar Railway line there is a town ship named Kottaarkara from where some 30 miles there is a Sacred Temple of Bala Krishna Bhagavan and Senkamalavalli or Arunakamala valli Devi on the banks of River Tiruchitraaru or Chitra. Shankara deva prayed to the Deities in connection with the killing of Padmasura.
- 64) Kuyttinaad or Shardula nagar is near Tiruchendunur has the hallowed Temple of Maayappiraan/ Adinath Bhagavan with Swarnatantuvalli Lakshmi. Near this Temple flows Papa vimochana Tirtha. Sapta Rishis had the divine vision of Adinatha while Alwars viz. Shathagopa and Parkala did the sanctification.
- 65) Tiruvanvandur is near Tiruppuliyur and Papanashanam and the Sacred Temple of Paampanyaippan or Paapanaashana Bhagavan along with Kamalavalli Lakshmi in standing posture. Maharshi Markandeya and Brahmarshi Narada had the 'saakshatkaara' of the Bhagavan and Devi Bhagavati blessed both them.
- 66) Teruvallivaal or Keralpur is near Teruvanvandre has the temple of Kolappiraan/ Gopala Krishna and Devi Selvatirukollindu or Balakrishnaayaki. In the premises of this Sacred Temple is the Ghantaakarna Tirtha, besides the River Manimaala. Alwar Sant Shathagopa enjoyed the divya darshana of the Deities.
- 67) Tirukkudittaanam has the temple of Adbhuta Narayan and Kalpavalli Lakshmi which is not far from Keralpur. This koil in its premises with Bhumi Tirtha had in the days of yore blessed King Rukmanga by the Narayana-Lakshmi Deities[ as quoted from Narada Purana, the King enforced his subjects to observe Ekadashi Vrata by way of fasting and puja to such an extent that the pressure on Yamaloka decreased and traffic to Vaikuntha got a boost on deaths!] Alwar Shathagopan conducted sanctification of this Temple.
- 68) Tiruvaaranvallai Arranmulai or Samridi Sthala is a few miles away from Sirabhpur mentioned at 63

above. Here Bhagavan Tirukkuralyappan or Shesha bhogaasana and Maha Lakshmi are seated in 'Padmasana' as the temple has Veda Vyasa Sarovara and is on the banks of Pampa River. Brahma Deva had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the deities and Arjuna had the distinction of performing the Idol 'Pratishtha'.

69) Tirukkaatkarai / Maruttat is at Idepalli on Ernakulam- Shornoor Railway line where stands the divya kshetra of Kaatkarai Appan or Maruttataadhisha Bhagavan along with Devi Peruncchelpa nayaki Lakshmi. Maharshi Kapila was blessed here with the darshan of the Murtis and Kapila Tirtha is present!

70) Tirumallikkalam ( Shri Mooli dhaam) is at Angamali-Ernakulam- Shoranur Railway line and the well known temple there is of Tirumulikkalam or Sri Moolidheesha and Devi Madhura veni Lakshmi. Maharshi Hareeta was blessed with his divine vision. The Temple which has a Brihat tadaka was sanctified by Alwars Shathagopa and Parkaala. 71 & 72) Vidvatpura and Nava pura Divya Koils on the Shoranoor-Calicut Railway line itself are two Temples of sanctity, one near Pattaambi and another at Enkolam. These are Vidvatpura and Navapura. The former is the Abode of Vidya Bhagavan and Devi Vidya vardhini and the latter is of Bhagavan Narayana and Bhagavati Malarmangai or Devi Puyshpavalli. The former had the saakshatkara of King Ambarisha while the latter by Gajendra while Alwars Shathagopa and Parkala had performed mangala shaasana of the both these two Temples and the Deities.

73) Tiruvayindira puram or Ahindrapur has the Temple at Cuddalore of Deva nayak Bhagavan and Devi Vaikuntha Nayaki Lakshmi. This Place is on the banks of Garuda River and also Shesha Tirtha in its precincts. Both Garuda and Chandra were fortunate of the sakshatkaara of the deities while Acharya Vedanta Deshika scripted 'Deva Nayaka Panchaashat' and dedicated to the Deities. It was at this very place Sri Vedanta Deshika organised 'Aoushadhagiri' and also had the divya darshan of Hayagriva Bhagavan too. The illustrious Alwar Parkala had the fortune of performing the 'Mangala shaasana'.

74) Tirukkovalore on the Villupuram-Katpadi Railway line is the Temple of Aayanar Trivikrama Bhagavan and Pankajavalli Naacchiyar Lakshmi are presented. Bali Chakravarti and Mrikunda Maharshi had their divya darshan of Trivikrama and Lakshmi at this very temple. This is the hallowed Temple where Saroyogi, Bhutayogi and Mahayogi not only had divya darshan and initiated Paramapada yatra!

75) Tiruvallikkoni or Vrindaranya Kshetra is a cluster of Temples at Chennai viz. the famous Partha Saarathi Temple along with Rukmini, Lakshmi, Pradyumna, Anirudda, Balarama, and Satyaki in Ananda Vimana all in standing position. The belief is that Maharshi Veda Vyasa had done the Pratishtha and Maharshi Atreya initiated the Araadhana. Arjuna, Sumati Maharaja, and Tondaiman Chakravarti had the 'saakshaatkaara'. Mannaatha Bhagavan and Devi Vedavalli in shesha shayya posture had the benefit of 'saakshatkaara' by Bhrigu Maharshi. Tellyasingar or Nrisimha Deva is in another cluster of temples as he blessed Maharshi Atri and Jaabaali with celestial vision and moksha too. Chakravarti Tirumakan or Lord Shri Rama along with Bharata, Lakshmana, Shatrughna along with Devi Sita is visioned by the devotees as standing in the Pushpaks Vimana facing southward. Deva Perumal as seated on Garuda Deva on sesha vimana is also in another temple cluster as Maharshi Saptaroma had the celestial vision. There is a Kairavini Sarovara in the Temple premises which is stated to merge Pancha Tirthas of Indra-Soma-Meena-Agni-Vishnu and Maharshis viz. Bhrigu, Atri, Marichi, Markandeya, Sumati, Saptaroma and Jaabaali all performed tapasya. Alwars Mahayogi, Bhaktisaara, and Parkaala did mangala shasana here.

76 & 77) Tiruninnarvur and Tiruvevvalur viz. Tinnanore and Veekshaaranya respectively are the two sacred places situated on the Chennai-Arkonam Railway line. The former is known for the temple of Bhaktavatsala Bhadraadri Bhagavan and Devi Ainnaietta Tayar or Jagajjanani which was visioned in physical swarupas by Varuna Deva while the latter temple of Bhagavan Veera Raaghava and Kanakavalli Lakshmi by Shalahotra Maharshi. Varuna and Hutaashana Tithas are present respectively. 78) Tirukkadikai or Ghatikaachala is a very significant Kshetra which offers ready evidences and proofs of problems of

preta badha and vyadhi nivritti or deadly experiences of ghosts and instant relief of body ailments. This temple is dedicated to Yoga Nrisimha and Devi Amritavalli and is situated atop a hill some eight miles away from Sholingur on the Arkonam-Baaja Road. There is a Tatkala Pushkarini & a Hanuman Mandir. 79) Tiruneermalai or Toyadri is some three miles south of Pallavaram Station near Chennai is again a cluster of temples, viz. Neela megha varna and Padmahasta Lakshmi, Ranganatha and Ranga nayaki, Saanta Nrisimha, Ulaganda or Trivikrama, and Charavarti Tirumakan Shri Rama. Maharshis Valmiki/ Bhrigu and Markandeya, besides Bhakta Prahlada had all the divya darshana of the respective Deities. 80) Tiruvidvendai or Varaaha Kshetra near Vandalore Station near Chennai off some 13 miles is the Sacred Temple of Varaha Swami and two of his consorts of Komalavalli and Akhilavalli, and Maharshi Markandeya had the celestial vision of the Deva-Devis. 81) Tirukkadalmaalai at Chengalpat-Tirukkulakunnam is known for the temple of Sthala shaayan Bhagavan along with Neelamangai Lahshmi where Garuda River flows. Maharshi Pundarika had the celestial vision. One renowned wrestler named Mahamalla Nrisimha Varma hailed from this place and as such is named Mahamallapur. This is also the birth place of Alwar Sant Bhuta yogi too.

82. Hastigiri / Varada Raja Temple in Kanchipura is the most famed Kshetra of Vaishnavasampradaya besides Tirumala Balaji and Srirangam. The Varada Raja Temple is encircled by three broad enclosures with its east facing eleven storied gopura with the west facing main entrance and the sanctum of Varada Raja Swami. Its passage from the gopura gate to the sanctum is from the Shata stambha mandapa where the procession of the Utsava Vighras commences. Near to the Mandapa is the Koti Tirtha Sarovara also called 'Anantasara' leading to a bridge and a Madapa and the Temples of Bhagavan Varaha, Sudarshana and Yoga Nara Simha on one side and on the other side is the Ramanujacharya Vighraha and the Vaishnava Peetha Complex, being renowned Eight Maha Peethas like Shri Rangam, Tirukoshthi, Melkote, Udipi and so on. Ahead the Garuda Stambha in the second enclosure is the Lakshmi Mandira of Sri Perum Devi and Vishnu Vahanas like Hanuman, Elephant, Horse, Garuda, Mayura, Tiger, Lion, Sharabha etc. In the third enclosure is the Varada Raja Temple within a high rise platform called Hastagiri like 'Iravata' as also Yoga Nrisimha, Vishwakshena. Varada Raja Swami is in the posture of a Sesha Shaayi even as lying on a float of water as presumed. The Sanctum of Varada Raja is called Vimana approachable by a staircase of 24 steps and inside the dwara he is Shyama Varna Chaturbhuj with shalagramas as his garland along with his Utsava Murti also. Having had their darshan, yatis take down the staircase and down the sanctum in a parikrama sight the Idols of Andal, Dhanvantari, Ganesha and others. Detailing the Varada Raja Mahatmya, Maharshi Markandeya recalls in Kamakshi Vilasa that Lord Brahma after the conclusion of his Ashwamedha Yagna at the Hari Kshetra on the Hasti Shaila Shikhira extolled Varada Raja Swami as 'Jagan Mohanaakara' or the Universal Mesmeriser with his 'Chaturbahu' Shankha-Chakra- Gadaa-Padma Mudra with his appearance as 'Jagadarakshra'. Markandeya then narrated a legend about the origin of Varada Raja as quoted: Lakshmi and Saraswati asked Brahma to give his honest opinion as to the superiority between them and almost immediately Brahma favoured Lakshmi Devi. Saraswati was highly disappointed and even annoyed with Brahma and took away the 'danda' or an Insignia that Vishnu once gave to her which was the power of Brahma enabling the latter to undertake Srishti or Creation of 'Charaachara Jagat' or of the Moveable and Immoveable Beings. Thus the action of Brahma to create was disabled. Brahma did not wish to entreat Saraswati to return the Srishti Danda but left for Himalayas to perform penance to Vishnu to request for an Emblem with Vishnu Amsha to Create instead of a Saraswati-oriented Crest. Vishnu was pleased with Brahma's Tapas and directed Brahma to perform hundred Ashwamedha Yagnas. Brahma then decided that instead of performing

hundred such Yagnas it would be sufficient to execute one Yagna at the Hari Kshetra and asked Vishwakarma the Architect cum Builder of Devas to construct a huge Yagna Shaala right opposite the Idol of Narasimha; he discarded Saraswati as his partner at the Yagna but preferred Buddhi Devi as his 'Yagna Patni' to share the duties of a wife as prescribed. Brahma invited Devas, Devarshis like Narada, besides Gandharva-Yaksha- Kinnara-Apsara; Siddha- Saadhya-Muniganaas and decided to perform a Year- long Yagna; he worshipped Ganeshwara first to facilitate the Yagna without obstacles and then worshipped Yoga Narasimha Swami and initiated the Yagna with formal Mantras by appointing Kumara Swami as Adhavarvu, Maheswara as Udagaata, Varuna as Prastota, Yama Dharma Raja as Hota and Indra who performed hundred such Yagnas in the past as the Yagna Brahma. Since Brahma did not invite Saraswati to participate, she was furious and created powerful flames with her Maya Shakti with a view to destroy the Yagna but the Saviour of the Hari Kshetra viz. Vishnu arrested the Maya Shakti's both the hands and disabled her. Saraswati took it as a challenge and released Kapalika Shakti but Vishnu in the Form of Nara Simha destroyed the Shakti. Enraged by her discomfiture, Devi Saraswati released 'Daithyaastra' but Daityaari Narayana made the Astra futile. Vagdevi then created 'Karaala Vadana Kalika' and instructed the Maha Shakti to demolish the Yagna but Vishnu assumed an Eight-Hand Swarupa and having suppressed the Shakti sat firm on her shoulders. Finally with all her powers being overcome, Saraswati was humiliated and swooned out of anger and frustration and took the Form of 'Pralaya Swarupi' called Vegavati River with disastrous speed from Brahmaloaka down to Earth heading towards the Hari Shaila. Vishnu sensed the impending danger and decided to resort to her 'maanabhanga' or assault her physically; having become nude he stood before the lightning flash of gushing waters and like a Huge Log lied across against the flow. Saraswati having visioned Narayana's nudity was thus put to shame and without being able to face him entered a 'Bhu bila' or a big fissure of Earth and escaped. Then the Yagna commenced without any hindrance; the Yagna Pashu or the Sacrificial Horse was let loose and returned invincible and at the successful completion of the year long Yagna, the 'Purnaahuti' or the Ultimate Offering to Agni as the climactic Homa of Cow's ghee was accomplished and Brahma visioned a Massive Flood of Illumination on the Eastern Sky and offered wide and palmful of concentrated homage to that Spendour. That was the most awaited Moment of Sweta Varaha Kalpa's Vaivasva Manvantara- Krita Yuga- Nrisimha Bhagavatmika Samvatsara- Vaishakha -Shukla Paksha- Chaturdashi's Hasta Nakshatra Suryodaya when Devadhi Deva the Supreme Lord of the Universe manifested himself from the Yagna Homaagni' as **Varada Raja Swami** and handed over the Insignia of Srishti to Brahma Deva. The latter went into raptures and placed the Insignia on his chest with tears of joy and got non-plussed momentarily. After recovering from the pleasant shock, Brahma Deva installed Bhagavan on the Hasti Shaila on a 'Suvarna Simhasana' or a Golden Throne in the presence of Devas and other Celestial Beings and Maharshis; in order to cool down the charged and excited atmosphere as also to supposedly quench the thirst of Narayana who was just manifested from Agni, Brahma performed 'Abhisheka Snaana' to Varadaraja with potful thousands of Kamadhenu's ghee with chantings of Sacred Veda Mantras and offered 'Shodashopacharaas' or the traditional Sixteen Services such as Aasana- Vastra-Yagnopaveeta-Gandha-Dhupa- Deepa-Pushpa- Phala-Naivedya- Tambula-Mantra Pushpa-Sangeeta-Veda Pathana- Tambula-Chhatra-Chaamaraas. The formal Puja was followed by bhojanas (Hearty Meals) served to Special Invitees with Bakshya- Bhojya-Lehya- Chokshya-Paneenias to all concerned in the Maha Yagna. Also Anna Santarpana or Free Meals were organised to the entire citizens of Kanchipura. Vishwakarma made a 'Pratibimba Swarupa' or Replica of 'Aalaya'; and 'Nagara' Pradakshinas or Temple wise and Nagari wise Pradakshinaas or circumambulations were done on Elephant-back; in fact daily worships, Bhojanas and 'Gajotsavas' were also organised ever since. Pleas

by all these arrangements, Varada Swami addressed ‘Brahmaadidevaas’ and Munis : *Yathaaham Virajaa teerey mama Vaikuntha pattaney, Jagadvyaapana sheelaavaad Vishnurityabhidhaayutah/ Prasiddho nivasaamyatra tathaa Kaanchi- purottamey, Harikshetram samaashritya Sarvaabheeshta pradaanatah/ Varadaabhidhayaa khyaato nivasaami niranantaram, Sarvey bhavanto madbhaktaassada maddarshaney rataah/ Sarvadaattraiva tishthantu Vaikunthaadati paavaney, Varshey Varshey Meshamaasi mama Janmadiney Shubhey/ Ghrivadhaaraa sahasraabhishechanam mama pujanam, Utsavamcha prakurut Viprabhojana purvakam/* (My Bhaktaas! Just as I had settled in Vaikuntha on the banks of River Viraja and got spread all over the Universe as Vishnu, I will now reside in the Hari Kshetra of Kancheepura; hence those desirous of visioning me could do so with my name as Varada or he who would be the Bestower. In fact I will stay here for good thus making Hari Kshetra as significant as Vaikuntha if not even better! You may therefore even reside at this Kshetra. Every year on my birthday during Mesha month you should all therefore perform ‘Goghrita dhaaraa sahasra -abhishekaa’ or thousand Abhishakaas of Cow Ghee ( bathing) of my Murti and celebrate this day as a Festival and of ‘Brahmana Bhojana.) Then Brahma Deva addressed all the Invitees of the Yagna to follow the instruction of Varadaraja Swami and assured that those who would participate in the Festival on the lines as instructed would secure ‘Maha Phala’. Maharshi Markandeya narrated to King Suratha one telling instance about a devotee who actually experienced this kind of Maha Phala : In the past, one Vaadaadhyayi Vipra named Bhanuvarna of Gokula on the banks of River Yamuna visited Kanchipura and happened to perform ‘Ghrivaabhisheka’ most coincidentally on the ‘Janma dina’ of Varadaraja Swami at the Hari Kshetra and on return to Gokula after some time passed away; Bhanu varna was being flown to Swarloka by Devaganaas to honour him with the status of Indra but ‘Haridootaas’ intercepted his Soul and took it away to the Everlasting Vishnupada; such indeed was the graceful gesture of Varadaraja Swami! Whoever recites the above account of Varadaraja Swami would certainly secure Varadaraja Darshana, as assured by Maharshi Markandeya.

83. Venkataachala Mahatmya: *Venkataadri samam sthaanam brahmande naasti kinchana, Venkatesha samo Devo na bhuti na bhavishyati/* ( There indeed is no God like Lord Venkateshwara on Earth and none else like the self-manifested singular Deity worthy of faith, commitment and total dedication for now and for ever)!

Crossing the Seven Hills of Vrishabhadrri named after Nandi, the Shiva Vahana; Anjanaadri of Lord Hanuman; Neeladri named after Shakti Neela Devi; Garudadri the Vishnu Vahana; Seshadri named after Lord Shesha the comfortable serpent bed- abode of Vishnu; Narayanadri named after Lord Narayana and finally the Venkatadri the hallowed Temple Tirumala Venkateshwara is the ‘Deva Sthana’ of Andhra. This is one of the wealthiest and most visited Hill Shrines of Hindu Pilgrimage at a height of 3200 ft or 976 m approx. approachable by foot, road, rail and Air, beckoning the glittering ‘Suvarna Shikhara’ or Golden Top, *par excellence!* Around the Temple, the most significant places of interest included are Axakasha Ganga, Srivaari Sacred Feet, Paapa vinashana, Shri Ramanuja Shrine, Swami Pushkarini, Varaha Swami Temple and down the hills the famed Shri Padmavati Temple.

Being the Outstanding and World famed Tirupati-Tirumala Divya Kshetra, the most Sprawling Temple Town of Balaji literally elevates the yatri to heights of Sacrifice and Faith on the bedrock of Dharma. Magnetising devotees from far and wide, the torrential flood of yatri is perennial here. Indeed Lord Venkateshwara is the wealthiest God of the World, crossing the hopes of the Pope in the Vatican City! *Shrinivasapuraa Vedaah Shri Nivasaparaa makhaah, Shrinivasa paraah sarvey tasmaadanyatra*

*vidyate/ Sarva Yagna Tapodaana tirtha snaane tu yat phalam, Tat plalam koti gunitam Srinivaasasya sevayaa/ Venkataadri nivasam tam chintayan ghatikaadwayam, Kulaikavimshatim dhutwaa Vishnu loka maheeyate!* (All the Vedas do merely propose Bhagavan Shrinivasa only exclusively. All the yagna karyas do target Shrinivasa only. Indeed, all kinds of Bhakti or devotion merge into and identify with Shrinivasa alone. The totality of Yajna, Tapa, Daana, Anushthaana and Tirtha Snaanas falls far short of Shrinivasa seva! Those residents of Venkatachala engrossed in the true service of Venkateshwara shall liberate the souls of the previous twenty one generations and qualify themselves too to Vishnu Loka). The yattris invariably halt over at Tirupati down the Tirumala's Seven Hills where Govinda Raja Temple set up by Ramanujacharya with the Shesha saayi Narayana is the Main Attraction with some 15 smaller Deva Mandiras in and around the Sanctum. One of the Ashta Peethas of Ramajucharya is also significance here. Tirupati is also the Abode of Kodandra Rama, Devi Sita, Lakshmana and Huanuman. Once up the Seven Hills, the prime destination no doubt is that of Lord's Divya darshana, yet the primaries are the Kalyana gattaa for the Hair Sacrifice, Swami Pushkarini followed by Varaha Swami darshana and then to the Q complex to Vaikuntha for the climactic experience of bliss. Most significant Tirthas up the Hills are Akasha Ganga, Paapa nashana Tirtha, Vaikuntha Guha dhara, Pandava Tirtha, and Jaabali Tirtha. In the 'Vaishnava Khanda' of Skanda (Kartika) Purana, Varaha Deva gave 'Upadesha' (instruction) of the Sacred Mantra *Om Namah Shri Varahaya Dharanyu Uddharanaya Swaha* to Bhudevi and its significance; the Mantra fulfills all desires and leads to liberation. A Manu called Dharma recited the Mantra persistently and attained Moksha; Indra chanted it and regained his throne that was occupied by demons therebefore and Anantha the Chief of Serpents secured such extraordinary strength as to hold the weight of Prithvi (Earth) on his hoods. Bhudevi expressed her gratitude to Varaha Deva to have saved from the grip of Demon Hiranyakasipu as also taught the Great Mantra. She admired Varaha Deva for providing the power and perseverance to hold the weight of huge mountains and desired Him to describe to her the names of some of the illustrious Mountains the weight of which was borne by her. These include Sumeru, Himachal, Vindhya, Mandarachal, Gandhamadhan, Chitrakoot, Malyavaan, Pariyatrik, Mahendra, Malay, Sahya, Simhachal, Raivat and Anjana; in the South of Bharat the most significant are Arunachal, Hasthiparvat, Grudhrachal, Ghatikachal and most importantly the Narayana Giri or Venkatachala which possesses the Seven Tirthas in the Mountain Range viz. Chakra Tirth, Daiva Tirth, Akasha Ganga, Kumaradhari Kartikeya, Papanashani, Pandava Tirtha, and Swami Pushkarini. Varaha Deva affirmed that in Krita Yuga, the most important Mountain Range was that of Anjanagiri; in Treta Yuga it was Narayana Giri; in Dwapar Yuga was Simhachal and in Kali Yuga again the most sacred mountain range is Venkatachala. In Magha month when Surya Deva is in Kumbha Rasi on Purnima day coinciding with the Makha Star, Skanda worships Venkateswara on the banks of Swami Pushkarini Tirtha at the noon time and devotees performing 'Snaan' and Puja as also 'Annadaan' are blessed by the Lord. Similarly, Snaans, worships and charities at Venkatachal are highly beneficial on the auspicious timings when Surya is in Meena Rasi on Purnima with Uttaraphalguni in Thumbha Tirtha; when Surya is in Mesha Rasi on Purnima with Chitra Star in Akasha Ganga at early mornings; when Surya is in Vrishabha Rasi in Visakha Shukla / Krishna fortnights on Dwadasi Sunday / Tuesday at Pandava Tirtha on evenings; on Sundays of Shukla / Krishna fortnights, coinciding Saptami at Papanashana Tirtha; on Brihaspati / Vyakteeta Yogya, Star Pushya / Sravana Mondays etc; Varaha Deva described to Bhudevi that Emperor Akash decided to perform a Grand Yagna on the banks of Arani and while tilling, he found a girl child and as he was issueless, brought her up as their own, named as Padmavati. Once Sage Narad met Padmavati as she was grown up as an eligible bride and predicted that she would be the wife of Lord Srinivasa of Venkatachal. Almost immediately she met a Stranger in the Royal Garden and introduced

himself as Anant or Veerapati from Venkatachal Mountain and that he was hunting a wolf. Padmavati's companions rebuffed Ananta Deva that hunting was prohibited in their garden. Anantha returned but desired intensely that Padmavati should become His life partner and sent Vakulamala to the court of Emperor Aakash to negotiate their wedding. The Emperor had no bounds of joy and the holy wedding of Lord Venkateswara and Padmavati took place in style and grandeur when Devi Lakshmi was present to make Padmavati happy and comfortable, whereafter they all resided in Tirumala bestowing boons to lakhs of Devotees till date. Varaha Deva narrated the background of Padmavati's earlier birth as Vedavati to Bhudevi. Vedavati was a companion of Devi Lakshmi and when the latter became Rama's spouse as Sita, she left for forests to perform Tapasya, but demon Ravana misbehaved with her and she ended her life by jumping into fire and cursed Ravana that his entire clan would be wiped out because of a woman. Sita was abducted by Ravana by creating such circumstances that Maricha was converted as a Golden Deer; Sita took fancy for it and prevailed Sri Rama to chase the animal which deceitfully wailed as though Rama was in trouble and Lakshmana had to leave Sita alone even by drawing a Lakshman Rekha that none could cross. The vily Ravana dressed as a Tapsvi revealed his real form as soon as she was prevailed to cross the fiery Lakshman Rekha and forcibly took her to Lanka. After Rama killed Ravana, there was 'Agni-Pariksha' (Proof of Purity / by Fire), Sita came out unscathed. But the real fact was that Agni Deva hid real Sita in Patala and Agni's wife Swaha assumed the role of Maya Sita; in fact Vedavati's earlier birth was of Swaha Devi! Thus, Vedavati / Swaha turned to Maya Sita was Padmavati. Devi Prithvi enquired of Bhagavan Varaha as to where and how to secure the 'Darshan' (Vision) of Lord Venkateswara and the former replied that He would mention of those future happenings as recorded in the past. There was a Nishad (Hunter) in Shyamak Jungle named Vasu and his wife Chitravati and Son Vira. Nishad was the Chief of his clan living honestly and peacefully by eating cooked rice and honey. Both his wife and he decided one day to a nearby forest to search for additional stock of honey and entrusted the responsibility of looking after his followers and daily chores to Vira, their son. The daily practice was that the family cooked rice and mixed with honey, offered the same as Naivedya to Venkatachalapati and ate the Prashad. But, Vira in their absence for the day offered some portion of the honeyed rice into Agni, some to tree bushes and the rest was consumed. On return from the other forest, Vasu became furious to learn that no offer of the honeyed rice was made to Venkatachalapati but gave it away as described above. Vasu felt agitated and remorsefully guilty and even tried to kill his son for what was considered as Sacrilege. Lord Venkatachal appeared before Nishad in full glory with His four hands, fully ornamented and armed and stopped Vasu from harming his son; he was completely taken aback. The Lord said that the acts of his son Vira were in fact worth emulation and not condemnation for he did a homam (Offering to Agni); homage to Nature and only the remainder was consumed with dedication as 'prashad'. Nishad was so happy that he heard this from Bhagavan Himself! Varaha Deva also narrated an incident related to King Tondaman and Nishad. As an ideal Prince, he imbibed all the qualities required of a King, viz. of nobility, intellect, valour and devotion to Almighty. Once he took King's permission for hunting in Venkatachal forests, chased an elephant, crossed the River Swarnamukhi and reached the Ashram of Brahmarshi Suka and an Idol of Goddess Renuka nearby. As he proceeded further, he found a 'Pancharangi' (Five Coloured) Parrot screeching the name of 'Srinivasa, Srinivasa' and followed the bird till the mountain top. There he met Nishad who informed that the parrot was very dear to Suka Muni as also to Bhagavan Srihari and hovered around the Pushkarini Tirtha; by so saying the Nishad desired to have a Darshan of the Lord and the Prince too accompanied him. Thondaman was indeed thrilled with the Darshan and witnessed the 'Naivedya' of Cooked rice and honey performed by Vasu Nishad. He was overpowered by the magnificent experience of the Lord and thereafter met Suka Muni and secured his

blessings that soon he would become a King after his father's retirement and serve Srinivasa for long time to come. A few days after Thondaman's return to his Capital, he was made the King and started settling in his throne. Suddenly after a few months, Vasu the Nishad approached the Palace in an agitated manner and told the King that he dreamt chasing a 'Varaha' which entered a thick bush, that he started digging up and swooned, that his son was also near him, that the Varaha entered his mind and body and made him say the following: 'Nishada! You must reach King Todarman and ask him to perform 'Abhishek' with lots of milk to a 'Shila' (Stone) underneath this thick bush, pull it out and ask a 'Shilpi' (Sculptor) to prepare an Idol of my features with Bhu Devi on my left lap, set up plants of Tamarind and Champa as are loved by Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively and invite learned Sages and Brahmanas to attend a grand function to be hosted by Tondaman and wait for my further instructions. The King followed the instructions as conveyed by Nishad and called Sages and Brahmanas to a Grand Puja of Varaha Deva and Bhu Devi through an underground passage and continued the daily practice of taking bath, worshipping the Murthis of Varaha and Bhu Devi and arranging 'Prashad' or the left-behinds of Naivedya to Brahmanas and visitors. As this practice got routinised and the interest of Bhaktas snow-balled gradually, a Brahmana stranger approached the King that he was on way to Kasi, Prayaga and a few prominent Tirthas but his wife was unable to travel as she was in the family way; he requested the King to provide accommodation and food to his wife and generally supervise her welfare. The Brahmana returned very late after several months but unfortunately the wife had a miscarriage and died just a couple of days before the return of the Brahmana after visiting several Pilgrimage Centers and Tirthas. The King got frightened at the tragedy as he gave a surety to the Brahmana's wife and approached Srinivasa, who instructed that the Queens as well as the body of the Brahman's wife should be made to take bath in the Asthi Sarovar Tirtha and as the queens took dips in the holy water and came out, the Brahmana's wife too would emerge. The Brahmana was thrilled at the miracle witnessed by co-devotees! Raja Todarman followed the practice of worshipping Srinivasa with golden lotuses daily. He found one day some Tulasi leaves pulled out from muddy plants and wondered how this indiscretion happened. As the King was wondering about this, there emerged a voice saying: "There is a pot maker (Kumhara) who also did daily Puja to me with the muddy Tulasi leaves from his house and that I have accepted his worship too!" The King reached Kurmapuri in search of the Kumhara, who replied to the King that he never ever did any puja to Srinivasa! But when the King said that there was a voice which said these words, the Kumhara and his wife recalled the voice of Srinivasa in their earlier births that as and when a King would knock their hut, and then a Pushpa Viman would arrive to pick them to Vishnuloka! Indeed that had just happened! The King returned to Venkateswara Temple to perform worship again after this unusual happening and Srinivasa appeared before Tondaman and bestowed him the blessing of a lasting Abode of bliss. Parikshit, son of Abhimanyu of Pandavas, was no doubt a noble and virtuous King, but unfortunately did the unpardonable sin of hanging a dead serpent around the neck of Samika Muni who was in deep Tapasya and his son Shringi cursed Parikshit that he would be dead within a week as a result of a snake bite. Takshak was assigned the task of killing Parikshit but Brahmana Kashyap who could indeed have prevented the tragedy and even demonstrated his ability to do so, was won over by dubious means by Takshak and Kashyap who did the sin was sought to be washed off by a bath in Swami Pushkarini and worship to Srinivasa, as advised by Shakalya Muni. Indeed the sin of Kashyap was eradicated by the Grace of Lord Venkateswara. Another illustration of the Sanctity of Snaan in Swami Pushkarini was given by Sutha Maha Muni to Rishis at a Congregation at Naimisharanya (The forest of Naimisha). A King of Chandravamsa called Dharmagupta was a rare example of nobility and virtue. He went hunting and by the evening desired to perform the Puja of Gayatri and was delayed to late hours and

had to stay back on a tree. A lion came running after a wolf and ascended the same tree; it asked the King not to worry and would not hurt him in any way. It asked the King to come to an understanding that it would sleep off half night and he might sleep off the other half. The lion tempted the wolf to drop the King down and share a good portion of the King. The wolf rejected the proposal outright as ingratitude was a far heinous sin than the 'Panchapatakas' or the Five known major sins. During the other half of the night when the King was to guard the wolf, the lion gave a similar proposal to him; he accepted and tried to drop the sleeping wolf. But luckily, the wolf was saved and preached the King against ingratitude and gave a curse to the King to become a mad man. It said that he was a Sage, named Dhyanakashtha, who could take any form and told the lion that in his earlier birth he was a Minister in the Court of Kubera and was cursed by Gautama Muni to become a lion as he was standing naked in the Sage's garden with his woman. As regards Dharmagupta's curse for ingratitude, Sage Jaimini suggested a bath in the Sacred 'Swami Pushkarini' on Venkatadri on the banks of River Suvarnamukhi, followed by worship of Lord Venkateswara. Suta Maha Muni described that those who purify themselves in the Pushkarini would surely avoid hells named Tamisra, Andhamisra, Rourav, Maha Rourav, Kumbhipak, Kaalsutra, Asipatavan and such others. On the other hand, the devotees attain the 'Punya' of performing Aswamedha Yagna and achieve Buddhi (Intellect), Lakshmi (Wealth), Kirti (Fame), Sampatthi (Prosperity), Gyan (wisdom), Dharma (Virtue), Manoshuddhi (Purity of mind) and Vairagya (Other Worldliness). Krishna Tirtha is a Tirtha named after a deeply devoted Brahmana whose Tapasya was so severe and extensive that his body developed mole-hills (Valmikas) and Indra rained forcefully to wash off the mud. Lord Srinivasa was impressed by the relentless and highly dedicated devotion and blessed him with His Darshan, created a Tirtha after his name, declared that those who have the fortune of bathing in it would become as learned and focussed and bestowed Salvation to him. Paapanaasha Tirtha is such a powerful place that even merely uttering its name, sins of the past and present get vanished. There was a Brahmana named Bhadrmati who had enormous knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures but was acutely impoverished having six wives and several children. His each day was a harrowing experience of poverty with several mouths to feed. One of his wives named Kamini told him one day that her father met Sage Narada who described Tirtha called Papanashana lying on the Venkateswar Mountain cluster was a big draw and a bath, preferably after giving away a small token 'bhudaan' to a deserving Brahmana followed by a darshan of the Lord would abolish poverty, and fulfil all human desires. This emboldened Bhadrmati to travel along with his family to the Srinivasa Mountain. He was fortunate to obtain on way a token of five feet of land. The entire family took bath in the Papanashana Tirtha and gave away charity of the five feet of land to a deserving Brahmana. Bhagavan Vishnu had instantly appeared before Bhadrmati; the latter was extremely thrilled at the darshan and eulogised Him as follows: *'Namō Namasthekhila karanaaya, Namō namasthekhila paalakaya/ Namō Namastheyemara nayakaya Namō Namō Daithya vimardanaya/ Namō Namō Bhakthajanapriyaya, Namō Namah Paapavidaaranaya/ Namō Namō Durjananashakaya, Namasthesthu Tasmāi Jagadeeshvaraya/ Namō namah Karanavamayaya, Naraayanaathivikramaya/ Shri Shankha chakraasi gadaadharaaya, Namasthesthu tasmāi Purushottamaya/ Namah payoraasi nivaasakaaya, Namasthesthu Lakshmi pathavyayaya/ Namasthesthu Suryadyamitha-prabhaaya, Namō Namah Punyagathaagathaaya/ Namō Namokyenduvilochanaya, Namasthesthudey Yagna phalapadaaya/ Namasthesthu Yagnaangavilochanaya, Namasthesthu thye Sajjanavallabhaaya/ Namō namah Kaarana Kaaranaaya, Namasthesthu Shabdaadi vivarjitaaya/ Namasthesthuthybheshtha sukhapadaaya, Namō Namō Bhakta -manoramaaya/ Namō namasthedbhuta karanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Manda radhaarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Yagnavarrahanaagney, Namō Hiranyakshavidaarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Vaamana rupabhaaje,*

*Namasthesthuthey Kshatrakulaanthakaaya/ Namastheshuthey Ravana mardanaaya, Namasthesthuthey Nanda sutaagrajaaya, Namasthey kamalaakaantha Namasthey Sukha daayiney, Ashritarathi nashiney tubhyam bhuyo bhuyo Namoh/*. As Bhadramati praised Lord Srinivasa, He blessed him to enjoy full-swing prosperity to him and family and attain Moksha to him thereafter. ‘Akasha ganga Tirtha’ was well known for bestowing boons to the highly erudite and dedicated Brahmana called Ramanuja. He did Tapasya of rigorous nature on the banks of Akashganga by standing with ‘Panchagni’ (Five flames) around him during the hot summer mid-days and under the sky in heavy rains fully exposed chanting the Ashtakshari Mantra ‘Om Namoh Narayanaya’; he ate dry leaves fallen from trees for years together, for some years by drinking water and many other years by consuming air only. Finally, Bhagavan appeared and Ramanuja who was almost dying with the severity of his Tapasya became fully normal and healthy instantly. He received the boons that the Place of Akasha Ganga where Ramanuja had the fortune of discovering Vishnu in person would be an Eternal water-spring and those who performed ‘Snaan’ would change his entire life style and become an ideal Bhakta and at the end they would have no other birth and would get salvation. In another context, Akash Ganga was immortalised as the Tirtha where Devi Anjana executed penance, since she and her husband Vayu Deva were not blessed with a son. Vishnu Bhakta Sage Matangi directed Anjana Devi to reach River Suvarnamukhi, far south of Vindhya Mountain, reach Vrishabhachal on whose top was situated the famous Swami Pushkarini, worship Varaha Deva and Venkateswara, proceed to north, find Akashaganga and perform Snaan in a formal manner along with Vayu Deva. The Sage confirmed that if the couple did so, a Son of unparalleled prowess and ‘Swami Bhakti’ (Loyalty to the Master) would be born, to be called Hanuman who was invincible by Devas, Raakshasas, Sages, Brahmanas, Celestial and human beings. As Anjana Devi followed the instructions to the last letter and spirit, Bhagavan Venkateswara appeared before her and blessed that such a Son would be born that his parents would indeed be proud of and play a pivotal role in Treta Yuga as the most powerful personality of ‘Shiva Amsha’. Besides the above, Venakatachal has quite a few other Tirthas like Chakra Tirtha where a Maha Muni Padmanabha prayed to Srinivasa to chase away the dread of Rakshasas and Bhagavan stationed His Sudarshan Chakra known for dispelling the fear of Evil Spirits; Varaha Tirtha, Pandu Tirtha, Tumba Tirtha, Kapila Tirtha, Kumara Tirtha, Jaraharaadi Tirtha Traya, Phalguni Tirtha, Deva Tirtha, Jabaali Tirtha, Sanaka Sanandana Tirtha, Asthi Sarovara Tirtha, Kataha Tirtha and Manvadyashtottara Tirtha. Thus the outstanding significance of Tirupati-Tirumala Deva’s unparalleled magnificence of Lord Venkateswara!

84) Tiruvekka or Yatthottakari: This is very near to at Kanchipura Varada Raja Bhagavan’s Temple. Shri Yatthottakari Bhagavan and Devi Komalavalli Lakshmi are presented at a Temple as the former is in a shesha saayi posture. In this temple, there is a Saroyogi Pushkarini as Sant Saroyogi was born here. Brahma and Devi Saraswati had their divya darshanas. 85) Ashtabuja also near Varadaraja Temple in Kanchi is dedicated to Bhagavan Adikewshava Chakradhara and Devi Alarmelmangai where King Gajendra had his divya darshana. 86) Tiruttanka near Varadaraja Temple presents Valukkoil Perumal or Deepa Prakasha Deva and Devi Marakavalli Lakshmi. Acharya Vedanta Deshika was born here. Devi Saraswati had her ‘sakshataakara’ at this Temple. 87) Uragam / Trivikrama is in Shiva Kanchi Kshetra being a distinguished Avatar of Vishnu as Vamana Deva, the Vighraha is oversized almost hitting the ceiling with one of his feet lifted up. This form of Trivikrama Vishnu is just like as a hooded serpent. 88-89-90-91) Neerakam or Neerakara again near Kanchi at the surrounding sub-temple of Uraga Trivikrama temple is Aradhya Deva Bhagavan Jagadeesha accompanied by Neelamangaivalli Lakshmi; likewise at the sub-temple of Uraga Vaamana is Kaarakam presenting Aradhya Deva Karunaakara and

Devi Padmaamani; and Kaavarnam too as the surrounding main Trivikrama temple presents Shri Kalwar or Meghaakaara and Devi Kamalavalli Lakshmi. Similarly the fourth sub temple is Araadhya Deva Adi-Varaha and Devi Anjillaivalli. These four sub temples were celestially visioned by Akrura-GarhaRishi-Devi Parvati and Ashvatta Narayana respectively.

92) Paatakam or Pandavadoota is in the Main Kanchi itself where Bhagavan Pandava doota and Devis Rukmini- Satyabhaamas are visioned. Always Bhutayogi, Mahayogi, Bhaktisaara and Parkaala had performed mangala shaasana, while King Janamejaya and Maharshi Harita had their divya darshanaas.

93-95) In the Main Kanchi itself , there are the small sized temples viz. Pravalavarnam, Parameshwara Vishshnugaram and Tiruppukkuli but of far reaching significance. Bhagavan Pravalavarna Bhagavan and Devi Pavalavalli who blessed Ashvini Devatas with their divine vision. Juat nearby is Haritavarna Bhagavan and Marakatavalli Lakshmi who granted saakshaatkaara to Bhriгу Maharshi; Vishnugaraam with Paramapadanath and Vaikunthavalli as actually visioned by King Pallavaraya; and at Tiruppukkulli or Gudhra Kshetra with Vijayaraghava Bhagavan and Marakatavalli as visioned by Jatayu which fought with Ravana and sacrificed its life to save Devi Sita.

96) There is a famed Kshetra named Singavellukutram on Kadapa- Guntakal Railway Line, very popular as Ahobila. *Aho veeryam aho shouryam aho bahu parakramam, Narasimham para daivam aho bilam aho balam/* Ahobila Kshetra is a popular Vaishnava (Vadakala) Kshetra split at two levels called in the Telugu local language as 'Eguva' and 'Diguva' or Upper and Lower levels- in the 'nallamala' forests of Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh at the distance of 40 km from Nandyala or 150 km from Hyderabad at the Nallamala forest range at an altitude of 1000 ft. plus. That is the fabled Abode of Lord Narasimha or Prahlada Varada, the fourth incarnation of Maha Vishnu to terminate Hiranya Kashipu the demon who rescued Prahlada the illustrious Vishnu Bhakta. Amrita Valli is the corresponding Devi Lakshmi of the Godeless. Ahobila Kshetra opposite the Akshaya Tirtha where devotees purify themselves with snanas, before entering the Sacred Place portrays nine forms of Narasimha spread among nine Temples viz. Bhargava Nrisimha bestowing Lakshmikara siddhi or excellent prosperity as incarnate at the lower level of Ahobila, Yogananda Nrisimha also at the lower level signifying the aspect of compassion and overcoming problems of one's life; Chatravata Narasimha representing Ketu Graha bestowing comforts of Life and expertise in Fine Arts; Ugra Nrisimha Temple at the upper level along with Chenchu Lakshmi or a Goddess as of a local Tribe Leader's daughter who sought to cool down the fierce form of the Lord and eventually married to her representing Dei Lakshmi herself and teaching devotees the qualities of courage and timidlessness yet of maturity; Varaha Narasimha Swami at the upper level again along with his consort of Lakshmi; Malova Vara Nrisimha along with Shri Lakshmi at Lakshmi Hill granting total fulfillment and auspiciousness to devotees; Jwala Nrisimha as had just annihilated Haranya kashipu since a pond of brick colour with which the Lord had just washed his hands with the blood of the demon called Rakta gunta Tirtham; Paavana Nrisimha or Kshetra Ratna Nrisimha or Pamulati Nrisimha Swami who provides safety and succor to devotees and finally Karanja Nrisimha or He who represents Shadvidha or six types of austerities and purities viz. those of 'Kara- charana- vaak- kaaya-karma- shravana- nayana' or by hands, legs, tongue, mouth, body, actions and mid- borne nature! At the Ahobila Complex, the significant Festivities are Phalguna Month celebrations, Janma Nakshatra ( Swati) Mahotsavas, Gramotsavas, Monthly Celbrations and Tirumanjana Sevas. *Simhachala Tirtha*: Some 16 km near Vishakapattanam in Andhra Pradesh is another significant Nrisimha Kshetra in Bharat is at Simhachala or the Lion Giri viz. Varaha Lakshmi Nrisimha of 15<sup>th</sup> century built by Gajapati Raja of Kalinga, the present

part of Odisha State and King Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagara also attended the Opening Ceremony Brahmotsavas as given in available Inscriptions. The Legend about this incarnation of Nrisimha is due to the curse to the Gate keepers to Maha Vishnu's Vaikuntha by Brahma Manasa Putras viz. Sanaka Sanandana Sanat Sanatana Kumaras who were stopped entry; the respective Danavas were Harayaksha in Varaha; Ravanaasura and Kumbhakarna in Shri Rama Avatara, and Kamsa and Shishupalain Krishnavatara, besides Hiranya kashipu in Nrisimha Avatara. The Bhakta saved from Hiranya kashipu in the Nrisimha Avatara was Prahlada. Special Festivals at Simhachala are of Akshaya Trititeeya with Chandana Lepana or Alankara with Gandha and during Vaishakha Month. The main attractions at the Temple are a fantastic Stone Ratha and a 16 pillored Mandapa depicting Dashawataras and many Nrisimha Swarupas.

97) Dwaaraka: Skanda Purana in its Prabhasa Khanda describes in detail Dwaraka Dhaam's Mahatmya. *Api keetapatangaadyaah Pashavoya sarisrupaah, Vimuktaah Paapinah sarvey Dwarakaayaah prabhavatah/ Kim punarmanavaa nityam Dwarakaayaam vasantite, Yaa gatih sarva jantunaam Dwarakaa pura vaasinaam saa gatirdurlabha nyunam Muninaamuttheretasam/ Dwarakaa vaasinam drushtwaa sprushtaa chaiva viseshatah, Mahaa paapa viniirmuktaah swartga loke vasantite/ Paamsavo Dwarakaaya vai vaayunaa samudiritaah, Paapinaam muktidaah proktaah kim punardwaaraabhuvi/* (By the grace of Dwaraka, all kinds of sinners born as krimi keetakas or flies, pashu pakshis or serpents- all attain salvation; what else one has to say about those who visit or reside there and become surfeit with Bhagavan Shri Krishna's darshan and worship! Those residents of Dwaraka should attain such kind of salvation as even illustrious Maha Munis with extraordinary control of physical organs and senses might possess! Dwaraka vasi's darshana or sparshana or mere touch, would destroy human's gravest sins and bestow long stay in Swarga. Even the sand flown by the wind of Dwaraka would destroy all the sins; why talk of residence in Dwaraka itself!) Such is the narration by Markandeya Maharshi in this Purana! He further describes that those persons who spend time at Lord Krishna's idol at Dwaraka are blessed and fulfilled deserving to be saluted and prostrated to. Further those devotees of Shri Krishna have the opportunity of bathing his sacred head with milk should reap the fruits performing Ashwamedha Yagna. But those devotees who, with no return favour from the Lord, perform affectionate yet devotional bathing to him should be blessed with Moksha. After the snaana, those who dry and wipe his body with a clean cloth would have his or her past and present sins. Those after bathing and dressing up, decoration of him with a fresh fragrant flower garland while the sound of conch shell is rendered and recite his sahasra naama with faith and dedication, then each word of the 'namaavali' would fetch him the fruit of giving away the daana of a kapila cow per each stanza of it. Additionally the recital of Gita, Gajendra moksha, Bhishma stava, or any of the Stotras by Maharshis would have the same benefit:

*Yoga Shastraani Vedantaan yoginah Krishna sannidhou, Pathanti Ravi bimbam tu mithwaayaanti layam Hareyh/ Gitaa Naama shasram tu stavaraajastavanu smritih, Gajendra mokshanam chaapi Krishnasyaa staviya durlabham/*

(Those Yogis recite Yoga shastra and Vedanta in the presence of Krishna shall break the barriers of Surya mandala and enter right into Vishnu Dhaam. The Five Maha Stotras viz. Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu Sahasra naama, Bhishma Stava Raja, Anusmriti and Gajendra Moksha are indeed the dearest Stotras of Bhagavan Shri Krishna. As briefly narrated the Mahatmya of Dwaraka from Skanda Purana, the basic and immediate cause for Lord Krishna headed by Yadavas is explained in Maha Bhagavata Purana, Vishnu Purana, Maha Bharata etc. Maha Bhagavata describes as follows: Pursuant to the termination of Kamsa,

the tyrant King of Mathura -who had the discredit of imprisoning his own father Ugrasena out of ill justified ambition as well as his own sister Devaki and brother in law Vasudeva out of fear that their son Krishna,yet unborn might kill him- the two Queens of Kamsa, named Asti and Prapti, approached their father Jarasandha the evil Monarch of Magadha. Jarasandha attacked Mathurawith some twenty three 'akshouhinies'of infantry, cavalry and elephantry and challenged Krishna and Balarama. But as Krishna was to fight with massive opponents even with a minor number of Army basically with Kamsa's carry-forward loyalties, he called for his (Vishnu's) Saaranaga Dhanush with limitless arrows or his mace/ gada named Koumudi while Balarama's Hala or Plough and Musala. Thus Jarasandha despite his huge Army was no match and ran away from the battle. But he regrouped and strengthened his army again and again, each time getting routed. There were such attacks by some seventeen times. When Jarasandha was expected to attack for the eighteenth time, his allies viz, the alien mleccha forces called Yavanas headed by Kalayavana attacked Mathura with a massive thirty million barbarians of desperation and cruelty. Then Krishna and Balarama calculated that no doubt they could face the combined Army of Jarasandha and Kalayavana too but discretion being the better part of valour, especially since Yadava Army should not be hurt at all even in small number, they thought of a Master Stroke: one to eliminate Kalayavana by tricking him and another to shift their Capital of Yadavas from Mathura to Dwaraka. They planned to build a new Capital City named Dwaraka on the West Coast , a modern City with 12 gates and all amenities and asked Vishwakarma, the Architect-cum-Builder ; the latter created a beautiful and well structured fortress touching the western Sea. By means of His mystic Yoga Maya or the power of Illusion, the citizens of Mathura got transferred lock-stock and barrel, over night to Dwaraka and found themselves in their own luxurious Palaces. Even as Balarama was defending Mathura, Lord Krishna attracted the attention of Kalayavana, passing singly by foot, by the main gate of Mathra; Kalayavana followed Krishna closely but always unreachable with some distance apart and led the Mleccha into a Mountain Cave. Thinking that Krishna known for his tricks had himself assumed a new form as an old and haggardly man inside the dark cave kicked him forcefully as the old man was fast asleep. Indeed, the old man was none other than Muchukunda, the son of Mandhata of Ishvaaku dynasty. He was the defender of Demi- Gods from Daityas for long in Treta Yuga and Lord Kartikeya the Commander-in-Chief appreciated Muchukunda's efforts and granted him rest and sleep till Lord Vishnu Himself as his Avatara named Krishna would bless him at a later date in Dwapara Yuga. As Kalayavana forcibly kicked Muchukunda, the former burnt off Kalayavana by his angry looks and realised Krishna as his Saviour when Krishna instructed Muchukunda to perform Tapasya. Thus Krishna got rid of Kalayavana even all the Mathura resident Yadavas got nicely transported to their new Capital Dwaraka! Incidentally, Jarasandha finally got killed by Bhimasena, thanks to Krishna's finger-sign advice to Bhima to tear Jarasandha's body into two and throw the two parts apart topse-turvey; after Bhima killed Jarasandha some thousands of Kings defeated in wars besides countless youthful girls kidnapped were liberated. Skanda Purana prescribes the method of Yatra to Dwaraka Dhaam; after satisfying with wholesome meals to good Vaishnava Bhaktas, the yattris need to sleep on the ground peacefully observing Celibacy and while travelling keep reciting Vishnu Sahasra naama, Purusha Sukta, Shrimad Bhagavatam etc. Then having taken bath in Gomati Nadi, Chakra Tirtha etc. enter the Dham with extreme devotion and total faith.The then Dwaraka township got drowned in the Sea anyway as soon as Lord Krishna disappeared and assiduous researches over considerable time reveal- though contradictory- that the ancient Dwaraka is perhaps under Arabian Sea at Kathiawad. The newly constructed Dwaraka- some 450 km from Ahmedabad- is stated to be on the banks of Gomati River but one version is that this is not Gomati but an extended body of Sea water, and that is why some call Dwaraka as Gomati Mukha where nine ghats have

been constructed viz. Sangama Ghat, Narayana Ghat, Vaasudeva Ghat, Go ghat, Parvati ghat, Pandava ghat, Brahma ghat, Suravana ghat and Sarkari ghat. The Main Mandir called Dwarakaadheesh ( also called Ranchodrai Mandir but one of the devotees was stated to have transferred the earlier Shama Sundara Chaturbhuj Murti took it away to Dhakor and another similar Murti appeared in a Well at a Ladwa village and thus got replaced here); this Mandir is said to have been built in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7th century. As it stands now has a shikhar height of 170 ft. its entry gate named Swarga Dwar and exit gate as Moksha Dwaar. Besides other Mandirs around Dwarakaadheesha Main Mandir, near Moksha dwaar there is Kusheswar Shiva Mandir which is significant as the legend prescribes that in case the Yatri not obtaining the Darshan of Kusheswara Linga, half of the Dwaraka Yatra Phala is taken away by Daityas. Sharada Mandir is another highlight of Dwaraka as Adi Shankaracharya established one of the Main Peethas as at Puri, Badari, Shringeri and Kanchi.

*Bet (Island) Dwaraka/ Shankho dwar:* is some 15 km from Dwaraka which in the past was a full-fledged Port before the development of Ohka Port. On way from Dwaraka to the Bet is the famed Rukmini Devi Mandir some 2 km near the Main Temple stated to have been built in the 12 th century. In the 'Bet' itself is the old Shamkho Narayan Mandir and the Idols of the Queens of the Lord viz. Lakshmi, Radha, Satyabhama and Jambavati. Shri Krishna Mahal also earlier called Pradyumna Mandir, besides Rancchod and Trivikrama Mandir are ther too on the Bet. In fact, there are Shivalayas, Vaishnava Temples, Hanuman and Devi Mandirs are scattered all over. The well known Gopi Talaab is nearby where Gopikas were stated to bathe often.

98) Ayodhya: *Akaaro Brahmatah proktam Yakaaro Vishnuruchyate, Dhakaaro Rudra rupa sha Ahodhyaanaama raajate/ Sarvopa Paatakaairyuktair rahmahatyaadi paataakai, Na yodhyaa shaktate yasmaattaam ayodhyaam tato viduh/* (Skanda Purana, Vaishnava Khanda Ayodhyaa) Ayodhya is defined as ' A- kaara is Brahma, Ya-kaara is Vishnu and Dha-kaara is Rudra Swarupa; thus Ayodhya is a composite form of Tri Murthis. Maha Pataakas too are demolished by naming the Name of Ayodhya!) Valmiki Ramayana in Bala kaanda exclaims: *Manunaa Maanavendrena saa Puri nirmिता swayam/* (Manu confirms that he himself constructed Ayodhya himself!) In his opening introduction of Ayodhya Kaanda of Skanda Purana, Maha Muni Suta greets Bhagavan Shri Rama saying: *Namaami Parama-atmanam Ramam rajiva lochanam, Atasikusuma shyamam Ravanaantaka mavyayam /* ( My greetings to Lord Shri Rama the Paramatma who is lotus eyed and of blue colour the terminator of the cruel and vily Ravanaasura). Ayodhya puri is so sancrosanct that sinful beings could ever enter it, let alone reside there! From his right foot thumb emerged Ganga and Sarayu river got manifested from left foot thumb. That is why both the Rivers are Sacred and worthy of prostrations and bathing in these rivers is as effective as destroying Brahma hatya sin. Even before the Avatara of Shri Rama, Ayodhya was the Capital of Surya Vamsha Kings of Ikshwaku; the latter was the son of Vaivashwata Manu and to this dynasty belonged to the illustrious Bhagiratha, Ambarisha, Nahusha, Yayati, Nabhaga, Ajan and Dasharatha. Skanda Purana in Vaishnava Khanda, Ayodhya Mahatmya gives the account of Veda Vijnana Vishnu Sharma whose severe Tapasya attracted Maha Vishnu darshana and the Pandita's request to him him the boon of constant Vishnu darshana; in turn Maha Vishnu instructed Sudarshana Chakra to dig up Bhumi and bring up Ganga from Patala Loka and the resultant Sacred Water flow was materialised as *Chakra Tirtha*. Earlier, Brahma himself resided at Ayodhya even before the incarnation of Shri Rama and hence the emergence of *Brahma Kund* . Brahma conveyed to Devas about the significance of this Tirtha -as given in Skanda Purana- would be such as that whoever performed formal snaana at the Kund and gave away daana would have been deemed as securing Ahwamedha yagna phala and blessed to fly as clad in Divya

Vastras to Brahma Loka for residing there till the ensuing Pralaya. From Brahma kunda to the not too far Sarayu River is *Runa Vimochana Tirtha* where Muni Lomasha popularised specially among his followers who were delighted as the debts of one's very existence by way of births and deaths to parents and sons and the teacher, quite apart from the material debts of the current and past 'janmas' are cleared by snanas at the Tirtha. To the east of the Runa Vimochana Tirtha is the *Paapa mochana Tirtha*. Skanda Purana narrates the story of Panchala desha Brahmana was Maha Paapi who became conscious of his heaping stocks of sins and casually heard the conversation of a Group of Sadhus visiting Ayodhya. He visited Paapa Vimochana Tirtha along with them and happened to bathe on a Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi and also performed daana karyas and he realised an unusual transformation in his psyche and was surprised to vision a Viman beckoning him and flew to Vishnu dhaam. Ahead of the glorious Paapa machana Tirtha is the *Sahasra dhaara Tirtha* which is known for demolishing all obstacles in life and overcoming enemies by mere snaana with faith and mental discipline. This indeed was the very Tirtha where after the close of the entire Ramayana, Lord Shri Rama instructed Lakshmana to bathe and by his own Mantra Shakti assume the Form of Adi Sesha! Actually, the background was that when Shri Ram who had once had an important visitor viz. Kaal Devata about which even Lakshman was unaware and instructed Lakshman not to enter and allow any visitor to enter either. Lakshman was faithfully guarding the entry of Rama Nivas by taking sincere rounds up and down the 'dwaar'. Meanwhile Maha Tapaswi Durvasa Maharshi who is noted for his short temper arrived and affectionately asked Lakshmana to let Ram inform of his arrival for Rama darshan. Lakshman being aware of Durvasa's shaapa shakti alerted Rama of the Muni's arrival. With a view to protect his own Satya Vak Paripalana of Lakshman's disobedience despite his instruction, Rama had to resort to the extreme step of asking Lakshmana to perform Prana tyaga of Lakshmana. As Lakshmana took the form of Adishesha and visited Indra Loka even as the Sahasra Manis and their luster vanished, the lest the Tirtha place on Sarayu diminish significance, Indra and Devas arrived on the Spot ensured and in fact doubled its glory and sanctity and named it Sahasra Dhaara Tirtha and Lord Shri Rama blessed the title too for the benefit of posterity and Loka Kalyan. *Swarga dwaara dhaara*: Skanda Purana further describes as follows: Every Tirtha darshana has one's own benefits yet Swarga dwaara Tirtha has its own: Pratah kaala snana, japa-tapa-havana-upavasa-darshana-dhyaana-adhyana- daanas have their distinct results and those beings like the Chatur varna humans, mriga-pakshi-jala chara-krimi keetakaadi pranis happen to die at this Tirtha are qualified to direct access to Swarga and Vaikuntha dhaam. Bhagavan Vishnu in his Avatara Swarupas, especially of Shri Rama with his wife and brothers are stated at this Tirtha to select beings for their respective Punya Phalas and decide their 'nirmayas' based on their own past karmas overshadowing their contributions at the Swarga dwaara snaanas and punya karma mix. And so does the presence of Kailasha Vaasi along with Devi Parvati and their followers would oversee the process of selection of Beings for the Higher Loka Prapti, asserts the Skanda Purana. Near Swarga dwaara is the Nageshwara nath Mandir; it is stated that originally this Murti was originally made of Kusha grass but later King Vikramadyta resurrected and re-established the Idol with Veda mantras in a move to revive several 'Praachina' or age old Mandirs in Ayodhya. Yattris perform Pinda daana at Swarga dwaara Ghat with great devotion and bhakti. *Chandra Sahasra Tirtha* where Chandra sahasra vrata Udyapana is performed as also Argha danas are done on every Purnima Tithis to Chandra-Rohini Devis. *Swarna Tirtha* where Maharshi Vishwamitra's sishya Koutsu Muni called on Raghu Rama once and said that he wished for so much of wealth which he desired to give to his Guru which Rama too might not possess. Shri Rama thought for a while and requested the Muni to please stay back in his court of Ayodhya overnight. Then Shri Rama invited Kubera Deva to bring considerable gold and on receiving it gave it away to Koutsu Muni. Next morning, Rama gave away all the gold given by Kubera and kept up

his word by redonating the same to the Muni and truly satisfied him. This Swarna Tirtha had thus attained a gold-bestowing reputation and fulfill the material desires of who ever performed worship by way of snaana- daana-Japas with utmost faith. One of Ayodhya's major Mandirs is *Kanak Bhavan* which is quite big and mention worthy whis was supposed to be of Shri Ram's 'antahpura' or the interior palace hall where Devi Sita resided too. There are big sized Sita Rama Idols seated on a throne together in the Mandir as also the idols of the very past which were however smaller. From Kanaka Bhavan away is the most famed **Shri Rama Janma Sthaana** which was stated to have been rebuilt as Masjid Babri ; this Masjid which became the hot controversy was partially destroyed to make way for the original now albeit as a small make believe Mandir. Near to Raa Janma Sthaana are Sita Rasoyi or kitchen, Kopa bhavan or the Place where the love-fight Rama- Sita couple stayed; Ratna Simhasan or the Royal Throne made of jewels, Ananda Bhavan or the Palace of Joy, Ranga Mahal or the Hall of Music and Dance etc. The other Places worthy of visiting in Ayodhya's Sarayu River banks include *Lakshman Ghat* with a five feet Lakhmana Swami in the Mandir exclusively dedicated to him; *Ahalya Ghat* where Lord Rama is stated to have performed Yagna; *Hanuman gadhi* on an elevated sixty steps an Lord Hanuman in seated form; *Darshaneshwar*, *Mani Parvat* with Ashoka Stupa of broken 200 ft; *Dantana Kund* where Rama was stated to have had his mouth wash, where also Gautama Buddha, while in Ayodhya too rested. *Dasharatha kund* was the Place some few km. away on Sarayu River banks where King Dasharatha's 'Antya Dahana' was stated to have been performed. A mini- Parikrama of some 4 km around Ayodhya touches Ramaghat, Raghunadha Das gaddi, Sita kund, Agni Kund, Vidya kund, Mani Parvat, Kubera parvat, Sugriva parvat, Lakshman ghat, Swarga dwaar and back to Ram ghat. While no doubt Shri Rama Navami Celebrations on Chaitra Shukla Navami are famed for several days every year, Shravana Shukla Paksha festivities and Sarayu River snaaas are considered as very sacred, especially on Kartika Purnima.

Naimishaaranya: In the 41st Adhyaya of Uttarakanda of Kurma Purana makes a detailed reference of Naimisharanya when Suta Muni in his address to Rishis and Brahmanas said as follows: *Idam Trailokya vikhyatam Teertham Naimishatanyamuttamam, Maha Devapriyakaram mahapaatakanaashanam/* (This Naimisha Tirtha is reputed all over the Trilokas as the most beloved of Maha Deva and the demolisher of all kinds of blemishes and sins.) The Purana further states that Lord Brahma materialised this Tirtha to facilitate the Tapasya of Maha Munis like Marichi, Atri, Vasishtha, Kratu, Bhrigu and Angira and their generations as these Maharshis made express supplication to this effect. Brahma told the Maharshis: *Satram sahasramaasadhwam Vaangmanodoshah varjitaah, Deshamcha vah pravakshyaami yasmin desho charishyatha/* (Maharshis! Do perform thousands of Yagnas by sacrificing all kinds of vocal and mental shortcomings; I shall specify a Sanctified spot where you could perform these deeds of virtue) So saying Brahma materialised a Manomaya chakra or Mind borne wheel and asked the Maharshis to follow it soon. He further said: *Yatrasya nemih sheeryet sa Desha Purusharshabhaah, Tatomuvaacha tacchakram te cha tatsamauvrajan, Tyasya vai vrajatah kshipram yatra nemirashershayat, Naimisham tatsmrutam naamna punyam sarvatra pujitam/* (Where-ever the Manomaya chakra's outside circle would break off, that specific spot would indeed be worthy and highly auspicious of executing all deeds of virtue like Yagnas and so on). That Spot indeed has eventually become famed as having been frequented by Deva, Gandharva, Yaksha, Naaga, Rakshasas too besides Maharshis and Brahmanas who all seek Parameshwara. *Anna daanam tapastaptam snaanam japyaadikam cha yat, Ekaikam paavbayet paapam sapta janmakrutam Dwijaah/* (What ever Punya Karyas like Danas, Tapa, Snaana, Japaadis are executed here should indeed root out all types of sins for seven previous births with retrospective effect). In the days of yore, Vaya Deva himself narrated the Brahmanda Purana as scripted by Brahma to Rishis

performing yagjnas here. Also Rudra Deva along with Pramatha Ganas was in the habit of freely moving about this hallowed Naimisharanya! *Atra praanaan parityajya niyamena Dwijaatayah, Brahma lokam gamishyanti yatra gatwaa na jaayate/* (At the last stages of life the prescribed regulations are to eke one's life and indeed be eligible to pack up for Brahma Loka itself and would not have to have a rebirth!). Besides Kurma Purana, Chapters of Shiva Purana, Maha Bhagavata, Maha Bharata and so on are devoted about the Naimisharanya Tirtha where Suta Maha Muni rendered discourses to congregations of Sages headed by Shaunaka Muni about the Eighteen Maha Puranas after performing daily Yagjnas at this hallowed Naimisharanya where the Kala Chakra's peridhi or the circumference or outer circle called 'nemi' collapsed here and hence the Hallowed Place has been called Naimisha on the banks of Gomati River, off 160 km from Luknow the Capital of Uttar Pradesh. Naimisha is also one of the major 51 Sacred Spots for Pitru Sthaanas and the practice of Somavati Amavasya Tarpanas are still organised. During Dwapara Yuga, Balarama Deva performed Yagjnas here, besides Veda Vyasa divided the single Veda to four distinct Vedas, scripted Maha Bharata here too and various other Scriptures. Lalitha Devi's worship is performed at the main Mandir here while Chakra Tirtha is of legendary background. This Tirtha attracts thousands of devotees to perform 'snanas' till date especially on Pournamis and Solar/Lunar eclipse days. *Chakra Tirtham maha Punyam sarva Paapa pranaashanam, Vateete madhya bhage tu prithvyaaah sarvanathakam/ Kurukshetre tu yatpunyam Rahugrassita Divakare, Tat phalam labhate naiva Chakra Tirthasya majjananaat/ Naimishe Chakra tirtheshu snatwa Bharata sattama, Sarvavyaadhi vinirmukto Brahma loka maheeyate/* -Maha Bharata Shanti Parva. (Chakra Tirtha is Maha Punya Prada and Maha Paapa vinashaka; the Tirtha is as significant as that of the Chakra created by Brahma's heart; the maha Phala that is accrued to snanas at Chakra Tirtha is stated to be that one attains at Kurukshetra on Solar Eclipse day when Rahu devours Surya. Snanas at Chakra Tirtha are such as the unique smasher of all sins) It is believed that Chakra Tirtha is fathomless and delegations of British swimmers and navigators desirous of disproving the myth organised experiments by diving upto 1000 mts or 30,000 feet depth and gave up for want of oxygen reserves. There is also a 18 ft high Hanunan Idol carrying Rama and Lakshmana on his shoulders as having rescued them from Mahi Ravana hidden in Patala Loka. The local belief is that when Indrajit the son of Ravana was killed in the Ramayana Battle, Ravana asked his brother Mahi Ravana the King of Patala; a conspiracy was hatched to somehow abduct Rama Lakshmanas and despatch them to Patala so that the brotheres could be sacrificed to Chandi Devi. Vibhishana now in Rama's camp came to know of the plot and warned Hanuman to be vigilant but assuming Vibhishana Rupa, Ravana succeeded in abducting Rama Lakshmana in deep sleep and despatched them to Patala. Hanuman realised the deceit and reached Patala and with the help of Makaradhwaaja who was Hanuman's sweat born son helped entry into Patala and destroyed Mahi Ravana and carried them on his shoulders to Chakra Tirtha at Naimisha. Devi Bhagavata describes the significance of Lalitha Devi Mandira at Naimisha as that of Vishalakshi Mandira at Varanasi: *Varanasyam Vishalakshti Gauri Mukha nivasini, Kshetre vai Naimishaaranye proktaa saa Linga dharini/* It may be recalled that 51 Shakti Pithas were given in detail in the earlier pages of this Script, but actually 108 Shakti Peethas are stated and the Linga Dharini Lalitha Devi's heart in part [besides at Baidhyanath Dham as Jaya Durga in Jharkhand] also fell of Devi Sati's mortal body at Naimisha. Apart from Vyasa Shukadeva Sthaana afore mentioned, Swayambhu Manu and Devi Shatarupa 'Taposthaana' too is mention worthy as the lineage of Fourteen Manus including the current Vaivaswata Manu got initiated since then. The famed Dashaashwamedha Yagna or the tenth Ashwamedha performed by Shri Rama, Devi Sita and Lakshmanaadi brothers and wives was a memorable success here at Naimisha on Treta Yuga. Annapurna and Vishwanatha mandir at Naimisha is known for devotees executing Pitru

Karyas. Dadhichi Kund Snana is stated to be of great importance as that is the Sacred Place where Dadhichi Muni donated his backbone and body with which Indra made Vajrayudha and many other armoury of Devas with which Vritrasura was executed for Loka Kalyan or Universal Relief and Auspiciousness. Suta Muni Gaddi and Pancha Prayaga on the banks of which Akshaya Vata Vriksha are worthy of not missing by yatri. Naimisharanya Parikrama of some 4-5 km covering most of the Sacred Places mentioned is possible. More than this organised tours are conducted from far off Places upto Lucknow for Yagjna karyas and Bhagavata Saptahas for week long stays at Naimisha which provides unique spiritual solace and fulfillment. Hardly 5 km from Naimisha is Gomati River known as Dhouta-paapa and Sita kunda Tirthas too, where Devi Janaki was bathing getting ready for Ashmamedha Yagnas!

100) Mathura : Puranas signify the Uniqueness of Mathura which is called with varying names like Madhupatra, Madhupuri, Mathura or Madhura as this was described in Itihasas was rid of the torments by Madhu Daitya by Shatrughna the younger brother of Lord Shri Rama of Ramayana and more so as the Sacred Place of Bhagavan Krishna. Varaha Purana describes: *Na vidyate cha Patale nantirikshe na maanushe, Samaanam Mathurayaahi priyam mama Vasundhare/ Saa ramyaa cha sushastaa cha janmabhumistathaa mama/* (There is no other more beloved Tirtha like Mathura for me even better than those in Patala, Antariksha or Bhuloka) *Maha maghyam Prayage tu yat phalam labhate Narah, Tat phalam labhate Devi Madhuraayaam dine dine/* ( The same fruitful results that one could reap at Prayaga the Sangama Place of Three Holy Rivers of Ganga-Jamuna-Saraswati on Magha Month's Pournami is normally available each day at Mathura) *Purna Varha sahasram tu Varanasyaam hi yat phalam, Tat phala labhate Devi Madhraayaam kshanamna hi/* (Residing thousand years at Kasi is considered as fruitful as a 'Kshana' or a moment at Mathura). Similarly, the visit to Pushkara Tirtha and stay there on Kartika Pournami is indeed fruitful and that would bless a person to accomplish with Mathura Yatra. Vishnu Purana also describes that snana and darshana of Mathura Krishna on Janmashtami, Yama Dwiteeya, and Jyeshtha Shukla Dwadashi are considered to be of great consequence. Vajramandali has twelve Sacred 'Vanas' viz. Madhunvana, Kumudavana, Kamyakavana, Bahula vana, Bhadravana, Swadiravana, Shrivana, Mahavana, Lohajinghvana, Bilvavana, Bhandiravana, and the most popular Brindavana. While each of these Vanas have their own significance, indeed Brindavana is of utmost prominence. Padma Purana underlines the special status of Brindavana: *Guhyad guhyatamam ramyam madhyam Brindaavanam Bhuvi, Aksharam Paramanandam Govindasthaanamavyayam/* (Brindavana on Earth indeed is the body of Bhagavan Srikrishna itself and is seat full of joy and even the touch of the dust would pave the way for salvation. When asked about the way to attain ukti, Bhagavan Krishna smilingly replied that let 'Vraja raja' or the dust from Vraja Bhumi may fall on your head! The old name of Madhura was Madhuvana where in the days of yore Swayambhu Manu's grandson Dhruva who sparks on the sky as a Star was directed by Narada Muni to perform severe Tapasya stating *Punyam Madhuvanam yatra saannidhyam nityadaa Hareyh!* and Bhagavan Vishnu blessed him to attain stardom! Madhura on its banks flows Yamuna River and as many as twenty four main 'ghats' are spread out like Vishrama Ghat, Prayaga ghat, Kankhala ghat, Bindu ghat, Bangali ghat, Surya ghat, Chintamani ghat, Dhruva ghat, Rishi ghat, Moksha ghat, Koti ghat, Brahma ghat, Ganesa ghat, Manasa ghat, Dashashwamedha ghat, Chakra tirtha ghat, Krishna ganga ghat, Soma tirtha ghat, Brahma loka ghat, Ghantaabharana ghat, Dharapatana ghat, Sangama Tirtha ghat, Nava Tirtha ghat, and Asikunda ghat Each of these Ghats has an episode to describe such as Vishrama ghat where Krishna and Balarama rested for a while King Kamsa was killed; Asikunda Ghat is renowned as Varaha Kshetra and so on. On all the four sides of Mathura are four Shiva Mandiras viz. Bhuteshwara in the Western side, Pippaleswar on the Eastern side, Rangeshwar on the Southern side and on the Northern side is Gokarneshara. *Dwarakaa* -

*dheshwara* is the most well known Mandir. Besides the other Mandirs are Gatathama Narayana, Vaaraaha, and Govinda Mandirs. Mathura Parikrama is applauded in Varaha Purana: *Mathuraam samanuprasya yastu kuryaat Pradakshinam, Pradakshini kruta tena Sapta Dwipa Vasundhara/ (Those who perform parikramas of Mathura are stated to have done so around Sapta Dwipas from Vasundhara/ Earth).*

Brindavana: About 8 km from Mathura is Brindavan comfortably reachable by motor and on way one could see Gita Mandir. Many perform Parikrama to Brindavan daily too. Brahma Vaivarta Purana details the origin of Brindavan that in the Satya Yuga King Kedar's daughter Brinda performed intense Tapasya to attain Krishna Bhagavan [ mortal Krishna was an Incarnation in Dwapara Yuga] and Bhagavan blessed Brinda with his darshan and Brinda Devi was the principal figure in the Rasa Leelas stated to have been performed with Brinda at Brindavana by Lord Krishna the Avatar in Dwapara Yuga. The significant places on the banks of the Sacred Yamuna River are Kaliya Hrada at Nandanavana where Bala Krishna punished Kaliya serpent; Yugala ghat where Yugala Kishora Mandir with Radha Krishna Idols are present; Radhavallabha Mandir with swaambhu Shalagrama shila, Shri Ranga Mandir, Govinda Deva Mandir, Shahji Mandir, Biharji Mandir of Thakur, Krishna Balarama Mandir (Iscon), Madan Mohan (Chaitanya Maha Prabhu) Mandir, Garud Govinda Mandir, Jaipur Mandir, Radha Damodar Mandir, Radha Ras Bihari Ashta Sakhi Mandir, Kesi Ghat where Krishna decimated Kesi demon etc. Not far from Brindavan are Gokula, Mahavana, Baladeva, Nandagaon and Govardhana some 10 km from Mathura. Vraja Desha Parikrama stated to be of 84 kms of distance with a duration of 16 days would witness among others Madhuvan, Talavan, Kumudvan, Danvaktra dhwamsa, Vallabhavana, Radhakund, Govardhana, Paraseeli which Vallabhachaya followers consider this Place as Brindavana, Kamavana, etc.

100) Tiruvaayippadi: This is a Shri Krishna Leela sthala. Lord Nava Mohana Krishna along with Devis Rukmini and Satyabhama are visualised as standing together viewing Nanda Deva.. Alwar Vishnuchitta and Goda Devi had their divya darshana

(101) Badarika Dhaam: *Narayanah prabhu Vishnuh shaswatah Purushottamah, Tyasyaatishasah Punyaam vishaalaam Badarimanu, Ashramah khyayate punyastrishu lokeshu vishrutah, Anyatra maranaan muktih sadharma vidhipurvakaat, Badari darshanaadeva muktih pumsaam kare khyaatam/* (Maha Bharata) ( Bhagavan Narayana who is eternal and all pervasive Purushottama and is stated to get concentrated in Badari without exaggeration as its Ashramas are stated to be seats of Maha Punya of universal renown; deaths in all other Punya Kshetras are known for bestowing mukti to any human being especially on practice of one's own Varna dharma but Badari Darshana in itself would suffice to achieve the goal.)

102) Deva Prayaga: Distance from Rishikesh to Devaprayag is 28 km. approx. possible by motor cars etc. where River Bhagirathi the Ganga flow from Gangottari and Alaknanda from Badarinath merge together and is just less than a km. ascent away from Lakshmana Jhoola at Rishikesh adjoining three mountains known as Grudhrachal, Narasimhachal and Dashyaradachal. This is also called Sudarshana Kshetra popular for offering Pitru shraaddha and Pitru pinda dana. This is the straight run to Badarinath.

103) Jyotishmutt: This Vishnu Kshetra is some 103 miles away from Haridwar where Parama Purusha Bhagavan along with Parimalavalli Lakhmi is lying as shesha saayi and Devi Parvati had their darshan.

104) Shaalagraamam or popular as Muktinarayana is famed in Nepal, some 100 miles from Gorakpur where Sri Murti Bhagavan and Shri Devi Lakshmi is standing northward. This Kshetra is situated on the banks of River Gandaki and the Temple is also signified with Chakra Tirtha. This is indeed the hallowed

place where *Saalagramashilaas* are available aplenty. Brahma, Rudra and all the Devas had their divya darshanas at these magnificent banks of Gandaki.

105) Haridwar: *Swarga dwarena tattulyam Gangadwaram na samshayah, Tartaabhishekam kurvita kotitirthe samahitah/ Labhate Pundarikamcha kulam chaiva samudbhavet, Tatraika ratri vasena gosahasraphalam labhet/ Saptagange trigange cha shakraavate cha tarpayan, Devaan pitruscha vidhivat punye lokey maheeyate/ Tatah kankhale snatwaa triratiro poshito narah, Ashwamedhaapnoti Swarga lokam cha gacchati/* -Padma Purana, Adikhanda, Tirtha Yatra Parva (Haridwara is undoubtedly akin to Swarga Dwara. Those who bathe at the Ganga there are as good as taking bath at Crores of Tirthas, reaping the fruits of performing Pundarika Yajna and bringing to repute one's own Vamsha. Stayintg at Haridwar over night bestows the return of charities of Sahsra Godaana. Performing Sacred Snanas at the banks of Sapta Ganga, Tri Ganga and Shakravarta and offering Deva Pitru Tarpanas would establish themselves with name and fame in these Lokas; thereafter performing sacred baths at Kankhala and observe fasting for three successive nights shall indeed reap the benefit of Ashwamedha Yagna and after the termination of life shall take to the path of Swarga)

Haridwar is also called Haradwar, Ganga Dwaar and Mayapuri. It is stated to be a combine of Five 'Puris' viz. Mayapuri, Haridwar, Kankhal, Jwalapur and Bhimgoda. It was at this Place that Brahmarsi Narada was enlightened by Sapta Rishis by way of a Maha Bhagavata Saptah in a large gathering of Munis and Vishnu Bhaktas. The most significant spot in Haridwar is Brahma Kunda or what is popularly known as 'Hari ki Pauri'. Besides Ganga Dwar or Brahma kund or Hari ki paidi are situated in Haridwar another four Tirthas viz. Kushavarta, Bilwakesara, Nila Parvata and Kankhal- *Gangadware Kushavarte Bilwake Nilaparvate, Snaatwa Kankhale Tirthe punarjanma na vidyate/* (Vidhi poorvaka Snaana and Darshana of Bhagawan Vishnu would certainly qualify for no rebirth and Vaikuntha Prapti at each of these.) These Five Sacred Places represent Pouranic Significance as follows: *Brahma Kunda or Hari ki Pauri or Vishnu's foot steps:* Chakravarti Bhagirath had the outstanding reputation of bringing down Ganga from Vishnu's feet in Vaikuntha down to Kailasha as absorbed in the 'Jata jootas' or Maha Deva's course head-hair pleats. As Bhagirath further did Tapsya to Maha Deva, the Holy Ganga flowed down to Earth and another King Sweta prayed to Brahma Deva to let parts of the River to flow to his Kingdom and the flows came upto Brahma Kunda. Since Bhartruhari the brother of King Vikramaditya performed penances to Maha Deva on the banks of Brahma Kund and achieved Salvation, Vikramaditya constructed steps of the Kunda famed subsequently as *Hari ki Paidi*. This has come down as the legend of the yore. *Gavu ghat:* The southern side of Brahma Kund has come to acquire the popularity of redeeming Go hatyhadhi patakas by the Sacred Bathings at the Gavu ghat. *Kushavarta ghat:* Once Dattatreya performed severe 'Tapas' on the banks of Ganga not far from Gavu ghat as he kept his belongings viz. Kusha or the mat of Kusha grass, clothing and kamandalu or the water vessel on the banks of Ganga; one fierce wind blew away these items on the banks in circular fashions and since then the Ghat was then christened as Kushavarta. 'Pitru Karyas' and 'Pinda Danas' especially on Mesha Samkranti days are stated to go a long way resulting in 'Punar janma naasti' or no rebirth again. It is at this Ghat there is the Mandir of Shrivana nath. Vishnu Ghat, Maya Devi Mandir, Ganesh ghat, Narayani Shila, Niladhara and Nileshwar, Kalimandir, Chandi Mandir, Anjani Mandir being that of Hanuman's mother, and Gouri shankar Mandir are all lined up there. *Bilwakeshwar:* Not far from 'Hari ki Paidi' the Bilwakeshwara Mandir is stated to the erstwhile abode of Maha Ashwatara Naga of Patala who frequented it for Maha Deva darshan and 'snaanas' at this Tirtha is stated to bestow the Shiva Tulya status. *Kankhal:* This is the Sacred Tirtha which is the joint flow of Niladhara and Kankhal where nomad Munis used to necessarily halt and wash

off all traces of 'Khal' or wickedness. *Daksheshwar Maha Deva* Mandir assumes outstanding significance in view of its Pauranic background of Daksha Prajapatis's Brihaspati Yagna to which his daughter Sati Devi's non invitation due to his hatred to his son-in-law Parama Shiva but still she attended the Yagna and was extremely offended by her father and as such resorted to the extreme step of self immolation in 'Yogaagni' when Maha Deva went berserk with fury, totally destroyed the yagna and beheaded Daksha Prajapati. With a view to mitigate the unusual fury of Maha Deva, Vishnu had to use his Chakra and quietly sliced off Sati Devi's mortal remains and threw away into fifty one pieces which eventually came to be famed as so many Shakti Peethas signifying Devi Sati's body parts as are venerated till date with awe and wonder. As Devas prayed to Maha Deva in torrential 'Stutis', He gradually cooled down and being a known embodiment of mercy and forgiveness, relented to the Prayers of Devas and allowed to the beheaded Daksha to replace the latter's head with that of the goat meant for sacrifice at the ruined yagna and revived the Prajapati back to life! That is why this Holy Place is of unusual Mahatmya and yatri to Haridwara and is stated that their yatra would be futile without worship at Daksheshwara Maha Deva! This Holy Tirtha attracts unprecedented yatri on Shiva Ratri for its legendary background! Besides the above Tirthas, Haridwar has other Tirthas too like Sati Kund, Kapila Sthaana, Bhima Gouda, Sapta Dhara, Satya Narayana Mandir and Veerabhadreshwar each of which has their own background! From Haridwar to approx. forty miles is situated *Shuka taal* where Vyasa Maharshi's son Shuka Deva taught Maha Bhagavata Purana within a week's time to Panadava's descendant King Parikshit on the banks of Ganga. *Devaband* or Devivan some 8 km near Mujaffarnagar off Shaharanpur is known for Durga Mandir where *Durga Saptashati* was recited first as believed by 'Vidwamsas' of erudition.

106) Rishikesh: Hrishik-isha or Vishnu is the Supreme Lord of senses or alternatively Rishik-isha the Over-Lord of Rishis who controls senses. One view about the origin of this Holy Tirtha is that Rishi Raibhya's severe tapasya culminated in Maha Vishnu's darshan at Kubjamrika or Mango Tree (Skanda Purana) while another legend refers to the Tapasya of Brahmana Devadutta to Maha Vishnu as he had staunch faith in the identity of Vishnu as distinct from Shiva. Meanwhile, Indra commissioned Apsarasa named Pramlocha to test the Brahmana's ability to control his senses but failed and the result was their daughter named Ruru who on realising the background of her birth pursued Tapasya to 'Shiva Keshava' and Vishnu appeared and blessed. Varaha Purana thus states: *Maamevaavehi Vishnum swam maa pashya-swaantaram mama, Awaamekena bhaavena pashyastvam siddhimaapyasi/ Purvamantara bhavena drishtavaanasi yanmama, Tena vighnobhavad yena galitam swattapo maha/* (Do realise that Vishnu and Ishwara are just the same and in order to attain siddhi or Salvation soon, this basic identity be underlined. In the past the severe tapsya performed failed and ended up in obstacles) Another legend about the origin of Rishikesh signifies that once Maha Deva was annoyed about Agni Deva's indiscretions and there were severe flames that destroyed the area; Agni atoned for his sins at this Tirtha and thus resulted in the Agni Tirtha. Popularly known as Muni Reta or the Sands of Rishis, this highly Sacred Land was also the Place where Lord Shri Rama performed penance to achieve the abilities to terminate Ravanaasura and the land marks which enabled Rama Lakshmana to cross the Holy Ganga into deep forests are still existent as hanging concrete bridges converted from jute rope bridges-popularly named as Lashman and Ram jhoolas. This Sacred Kshetra is also acclaimed as the Universal Capital of Yoga. .

107) Shri Vaikuntha or Paramapada: Shri Vaikuntha is the Ultimate and Eternal where Vaasudeva Narayana along with Maha Lakshmi lies gloriously on the Ananta Naaga. That is the Sacred most Sthala where Viraja flows, Soma Savana vriksha grows and Shriphala is tasted ever. Anantha, Garuda,

Vishvaksena and such others have their 'nithya darshana'. Alwars Saroyogi, Maha Yogi, Bhaktisaara, Shathagopa, Kulashekhara, and all the rest of Alwars performed mangalaashasana to this Vishnu dhaam!

108) Ksheera Sagara or Tiruppaalkadal: The Ocean of Milk flows among with Sapta Samudras. Ksheerabndi Nayaka and His Consort Ksheeraabndi Nayaki is in yoga nidra on the bed of Shesha right on the AmritaTirtha. Brahma, Rudra and all the Devas are enjoying their 'Saakshatkaara', while Alwar Sanths are in constant meditation.

Thus concludes the Account of the Prakhyaata Vishnu and Lakshmi Sthalas by the Glorious Alwars across Bharata!

#### A few other Vishnu-Lakshmi Swarupa Temples

Annavamam: Distant by 80 km from Rajamundry and 125 km from Vishakhapatnam on Ratna giri hills on the banks of Pampa River, 'Anna varam' literally meaning 'The Boon of whatever one wishes for' is the Temple of Veera Venkata Satya Narayana and Devi Ananta Lakshmi Satyavati- both as the Symbols of the Supreme Deity of Satya or Truth. To reach the Temple up by the hill are some 428 steps and it was conceived as of the form of a Chariot with four wheels at the corners; in front of the entrance there is a Kalyana Mandapa leading to the Sanctum up by stairs is the Main Idol and the two shrines of Vana Durga and Kanaka Durga. While the ground level presents 'Pada darshana' or the vision of the Feet of the Lord, the upper portion is the upper part of body part of the Lord with an impressive moustache. The legendary background of the Temple is that both Meru the tallest mountain in the Universe and his wife Menaka performed unusual penance to Lord Vishnu and the latter was pleased and granted the benediction of two sons viz. Bhadra and Ratnakara. Both the sons in turn performed Tapasya and by the grace of Bhagavan Vishnu Bhada took the form of Bhadrachalam as the personification of Shri Rama and Ratnakara as Satya Narayana. To day Annavamam has come to pick up ever growing visitorship with year round Kalyanas, Special Kalyanas in May, Devi Navaratra Festival in September, Shravana Shuddha Ekadashi celebrations, Prabha and Teppa Utsavas, and Jala torana festivity.

Bhadrachalam: Based on a dream by a female devotee of Lord Shri Rama named Pokala Dammakka that three Swayambhu or self manifested Vighras of Shri Rama, Devi Sita and Lakshmana were lying in the jungles of Bhadrageri hills, Bhakta Rama Das viz. Kancherla Gopanna- the nephew of Akkanna the Financial Controller of the Court of Nawab Tanisha-built a Grand Temple in 1620 AD partly financed by donations and largely out of a loan from the Treasury of Tanisha which could be repaid and thus got imprisoned and subsequently repaid to Tanisha by two youthful Princes presumed as Rama and Lakshmana themselves. The Temple faces west to the banks of River Godavari at Bhadrachalam, some 35 km from Kottagudem, 120 km from Khammam, 160 km from Rajamandry and 325 km from Hyderabad in the Telangana Region of Andhra Pradesh. The Deity is seated in Padmasana posture with legs crossed carrying in four arms the Shankha-Chakra-Gada-Sarangas with Devi Sita and Lakshmana on either side. The Temple stands on a three pillar structure with inscriptions from Ramayana written by Ramadas. There are two Kshetra Palakas of the Temple viz. Yogananda Jwala Lakshmi Narasimha and Anna Purna sahita Vishweshwara Shiva. There are also the Shrines of Vinayaka and of Nava Grahas. Annual Kalyanotsavas on the eve of Shri Rama Navami in March-April and Vaikuntha Ekadashi Mukkoti celebrations in Dec- Jan when the darshan is through 'Vaikuntha dwaara' are such huge draws of visitorship comparable only at Tirupati-Tirumala. In Bhadrachala itself are the other important Temples of Abhaya Anjaneya, Raja Rajeswari, Ayyappa, Sai Baba, Harnath Baba, Venkateswara and Govinda Raja.

At Places nearby by a distance of 35 km is the Parna shala where Maricha enticed Devi Sita asking Rama to follow and Ravana kidnapped her. Two other Places to visit are Jatayu paaka some 2km away where the giant bird Jatayu recognised Sita being abducted and Rekka palli some 55 km far where Ravana killed Jatayu in a fierce fight. In essence, Bhadrachala is as significant a Kshetra of Shri Rama as Tirumala is for Lord Venkateswara in terms of crowd pulling and Temple prosperity.

Chennai: The illustrious Capital of Tamilnadu is famed as the cultural hub of religion, fine arts especially of vocal and instrumental music, and the Southern way of tradition and simplicity. The city is popular for Kapileshwara Temple with Maha Linga, and separate shrines for Devi Parvati and Lord Subrahmanya besides of the idols of Nataraja, Nayanars / Shiva Bhaktas, Ganesha, Dakshina Murti, Navagraha Complex, and Mayureshwara Linga and Devi Parvati being worshipped by Mayura hence the name of Mailapura as situated in the City. Shri Partha Sarathy temple is a huge complex of Bhagavan Krishna as Arjuna's charioteer, Lord Partha Sarathi accompanied by Devi Rukmini, Balarama, Satyaki and others. Also, the Temples of Lord Balaji, Madhya Kailash, Ashta Lakshmi, Ayyappan, and Sai Baba Temples, and scores of Ganesha, Subrahmanya, Anjaneya Temples are of great popularity. Months long Tyagaraja Maha Aradhana Sabhas are annual fixtures celebrated with participation of artistes from all over especially of vocal, instrumental, natya classicals.

Chilkur: Balaji Temple on the banks of Osmania Sagar in Hyderabad itself popular as Visa Balaji the bestower of boons especially foreign visits attracts millions of visitors every year. The Temple is a rare example of those exceptional few in Bharat which is neither under Government control nor accepts donations in 'hundis' as all Temples in Bharat do and also dis-allow Special Treatment to select public personalities. The legend behind this Temple is as follows: Lord Venkateswara at Tirumalai Hills near Tirupati appeared in their dreams to an old couple devotees- who were regular visitors from the jungles of Andhrapradesh to Balaji all along for their lifetime but since unable to do any further- and assured that they need not do so as Balaji and his consorts Sri Devi and Bhudevi would arrive there itself near a specific mole hill area in the jungles! The couple organised search teams and dug up while they discovered to their amazement and shock of their life time hit a solid single rock which carried a Stone Idol of Lord Venkateswara with Sri Devi and Bhudevi on either side; but there was oozing of blood near the chin and chest but the blood flow subsided gradually and the idols were installed in a thatched hut as the villagers found the miracle of blood coming out of rock! The word went around the villages and reached the Akkanna Bukkanna brothers, the uncles of Bharachala Rama Das and they installed the idols in proper and befitting vedic manner in a large temple complex. Eversince then, the popularity of the Temple gained rapid momentum and as of now some thousands of visitors-reaching beyond the level of lakh plus, by weekends, get attracted. The devotees thronging the Temple usually perform 11 pradakshinas for the fulfillment of their specific desires ranging for travel overseas for higher studies and employment opportunity, matrimonials, improvement of health and so on. Once their vows are fulfilled then the visitors perform 108 circumambulations by way of thanks giving and asking for fresh favours. The numerical 11 at the request stage signifies: 1 for Soul and another 1 for Body and Soul Fullment; on achievement of the desires concerned the 108 figure signifies as follows: 1 for the blessing desired- 0 or Zero signifying Maya of human existence and the numerical 8 denotes the eight body parts. While performing 108 pradikshinas the respective Mantras to be recited are as follows: *Om Namō Venkateshaya Namah/* for success in business; *Om Namō Aksharaaya Namah* for success in studies; *Om Bhuta Bhavyaya Namah* for good health; and *Om Prathamaya Namah* for Self- Improvement and Contentment.

Dakor: Some 90 km off Ahmedabad the Capital City of Gujarat Dakor is a great attraction to Yatris, most essentially the Rancchodraya Mandir. As to how Rancchod Krishna was transferred from Dwaraka to this Place has already been explained in describing the Dwaraka refernece above. Dakor's extraordinary devotees named Vijaysingh Bodaana and his wife Gangu bhai always used to literally measure the miles of distance from Dakor to Dwaraka back twice a year to bring 'Tulasi Dala' to place at the feet of Dwarakaadheesh earlier called Rancchod Bhagavan twice a year for 82 years. As the couple became too old still persisting the yatras, Bhagavan had extreme compassion and told them that then onward there was no need to visit him but would himself come to Dakor. Then Bhagavan Rancchod travelled by a bullock cart and the royal couple installed the Pratima at Dakor itself to facilitate them to worship eversince till their final departure and absorbed them into Vaikuntha! This appears to have occured in 1212 AD. and eversince then Kartika Purnima celebrations have never stopped there after. Meanwhile the Bodana Murti of Rancchod was stolen and was hidden locally. Once the Dwaraka Pujari visited once to Dakor and identified the Murti there but out of avarice ageed to exchange it against that much of gold in weight even as it actually weight to a Tulasi Leaf and the nose jewel of the wife of Bodana Chief's wife; simultaneously the Dwarakaadheesha appeared in the dreams of the Dwaraka Pujari and summoned him to return to Dwaraka forthwith and some six months later the Murti was recovered from a well in Dwaraka itself and that Murti was finally installed in Dwaraka Kshetra! Besides on all the Purnima days of the year, Sharad Purnima celebrations at Dakor are so significant and crowded that special buses and ralways have to be organised especially from important cities, towns and villages of Gujarat, Rashastan and Maharashtra. Besides Rancchod Mandir, the other important Places to be visited are Gautami Sarovar, Maakhani Aaro where the Bodani Chief's wife used to tender with her own hands butter balls to Bhagavan and even now the processions from Dakor are halted at this place and naivedya is offered with sweetened butter and distributed! The processions are also necessarily haleted at Lakshmi Mandir on the banks of Gomati Talaab. *Galteshwar* is some 15-16 km away from Dakor and its 'Shikhar' fell down long ago and is approachable by broken roads but the Mandir as such is full of life with a sparkling Shiva Linga and now the abode of several Sadhus and yogis with wall paintings of Murtis facing a canal called Galti merging into Mahi River. This was the famed Galva Maharshi's Ashram, referred to in Puranas. Many visitors from not only Dakor but Anand the big township called the Milk City of India.

Gaya: A number of Puranas like Padma Purana, Agni Purana, Vayu Purana, besides Maha Bharata's Tirtha Yatra Phala asserted: *Yeshtavyaa bahuvah putraa yadyekopi Gayam vrajet, Yajeta vaashwa – medhena neelam neelam vaa vrushamutsrujet/* ( One should aspire for the births of many sons so that atleast one could perform a Horse Sacrifice or at least a ' Blued coloured Vrishabha Visarjana' or a bull's freedom, being desirous of redemption of the Pitru). Maha Bharata's Tirtha Yatra chapter sates: *Tato Gayam samasaadya Brahma chari samahitah, Ashwamavaapnoti gamanadeva Bharata/ Atraakshasaya vato naama lokeshu vishrutah, Pitrunaam tatra vai dattamakshayam bhavatiPrabho/ Maha nadyamupa-sprushya tarpayet Pitru Devataah, Akshayaanaapnuyaalokaankurlam chaiva samudbhavet/* (Thus those visiting Gaya Kshetra, observing Brahmacharya or celibacy shall reap the fruits of executing Ashwa - medha Yagna; then at the Akshayavata there which is reputed in the Three Lokas make what ever offerings to Pitru Devas are made would have everlasting fruits. There itself after performing formal snaana in the Maha Nadi and execute Deva-Pitru Tarpanas would fetch access to Akshaya Lokas and redeem the souls of the dead pitrus of their respective 'Kulas'. Vayu Purana in the Chapter relating to Gaya Tirtha Mahatmya asserts: *Gayaayaam nahi tat snaanam yatra Tirtha na vidyate, Saannidhyam sarva tirthaanaam Gayaa tirtham tato varam/ Brahma jnaanena kim saadhyam gogruhe maranena*

*kim, Vaasena kim Kurukshetre yadi putro Gayaam vrajet/* ( There is no other Place or Tirtha like Gaya since all the Tirthas are as though so intimate and near to Gaya Tirtha. Among the four major means of Mukti are accomplishment of Brahma Jnaana, Kurukshetra nivasa, termination of one's life in a Cow shed and Pindadaan by one's own sons at Gaya!) The legend of Gaya Tirtha is recalled in Agni Purana in the Tirtha Mahatmya: Gayasura, the King of Rakshasas did fierce Tapasya to Maha Vishnu as the latter granted him the boon of materialising a Maha Tirtha by Gayasura's name. All the human beings and Asura-Daityaadi had the darshan of Gauasura and reached Vaikuntha as who ever had his darshan did not have to visit none else to achieve Vaikuntha. Devas and Bahma Deva approached Vishnu as the latter advised to approach Gayasura to let Brahma and Devas perform yagna over Gayasura's huge head. Gaya was in deep sleep and did not respond but still Brahma and Devas were in the process of executing the Yagna and could not perform 'Purnaahuti' the grand finale of the Yagna was still pending. Meanwhile when Gayasura woke up and wished to get up but could not. The Asura became shaky and tried hard to wriggle out from the fire pit, Vishnu advised Yama dharma Raja to keep a heavy boulder on Gaya's head and occupy the Asura's entire body of some eight km. of length till the purnahuti was over. The heavy boulder itself had a background connection: Maharshi Marichi the son of Brahma Deva was once resting in sleep and instructed his wife called Dharmavata to press his legs and not disturb his sleep other wise she would turn as a boulder. Meanwhile Brahma arrived and the wife faced a dilemma whether she should obey her husband's instruction not to disturb or announce the arrival of Brahma himself. She set aside Marichi's curse even as she faced the eventuality of her turning as a boulder. She gave a return curse to Marichi to have created an awkward situation for her that Marichi would have to face Maha Deva's wrath in some another connection and entered Agni and purified herself performing tapsya for thousand years. Lord Vishnu thus took advantage of the boulder which was blessed with the foot prints of Devas and utilised for Yama Dharma Raja to place it on Gayaasura's head which eventually became famed as Deva Shila-Sarva Deva Swarupa- Sarva Tirtha mayi- and the unique Pujnya Shila. Even after the Shila was placed on his head the Asura was still breathing and hence Vishnu had to place on his 'Gada' or Mace to fully sniff him out by adding his own presence to this Gaya Tirtha. This 'Adi Gada' was the backbone of Gajasura which was eventually turned by Deva's Architect Vishwa karma. The most outstanding Pitru Tirtha in the Universe, to which the Pitru Loka keeps close attention to look forward to the sons of mankind looks forward to Shraddha karmas and Pinda daanas. These Karmas not only redeem the souls of the ancestors by their performance but equally to collect bags of fulfillment to the Shraddha Kartas as far higher proportions manifold. The significant Places worthy of visit at Gaya are *Phalgu River* which is filled up only during the monsoon season essentially and is situated under the Gada -dhara Mandira quite adjacent to its sangama with Dakshina Saraswati. Basic Shraddha karmas are performed on the banks of this River. *Vishnupada* is the main Mandira on the banks of Phalgu River where there is an 'Ashta kona' or eight angled Vedi or Platform there is a significant sign of Vishnu Paada. Outside the Mandir, there are two 'Mandapas' where normally visitors perform shraddhas and nearby there is a prominent Mandir of Garuda Pratima as also Jagannatha and Lakshmi Narayana Mandirs. Not far is *Gadadhara Bhagavan* Mandir with his 'chaturbhuj' or of four arms. *Gaya shira sthaana* and *Gaya Kupa* are to the south of Gayadhara Mandir and not far there is the Mandir of *Munda pushta Devi* with eighteen hands. *Adi Gaya* stated to be one of the oldest Places some south west of Munda Pushta is popular for Pinda daanas in a place some few steps down this level. *Surya kunda* is some two hundred yards from Vishnu Pada and the Tirthas of Uduchi , Kanwal and Manasa are present, besides a Mandir of the four armed Murti of Surya narayana called Dakshina Manasa Tirtha. *Jihva lola* is a peepul tree some 80 yards south of Phalgu bank. *Sita Kund* and *Ram Gaya* are the black stone made of King Dashratha by his own hand and

Bhatarashrama Vedi or platform also with Matanga Rishi's foot print respectively. *Uttara maanasa Sarovar* where Uttaraarka Surya and Shila Devi Murtis are present and to the North- west of the Sarovar there is a Mouneshwar and Pitamaheshwar Shiva Mandir where yattris performing Shraddhas observe silence and proceed to Surya kunda. *Ram shila* is a hill some one km approx. north to Phalgu under which is the Ram Shila Kund named Sarovar and Shiva Mandir. From Ram Shila some 200 yards south there is a Banyan Tree which is the Place of *Kaaka bali-Yama bali and Shwaana bali*. From Ram Shila some two and half km. west are *Preta shila and Brahma kund*, the latter being a perfect Sarovar; from Gaya the Pret Parvat is about 4 km approx. Brahma sarovar is what leads a good road and Pret shila is reached by taking some 400 steps ascent. *Vaitarani* is a Sarovar led by the southern 'Phaatak' or road of Gaya; *Bhim Gaya* is at the north-west turning of Vaitarini where there is a Bhimasena Murti. *Bhasma kut-Goprachara* is on a small hillock of the south west of Bhim gaya where there are Janardana Mandira, Mangala Devi/ Mangaleshwara Linga Mandira and Goprachara Tirtha where Brahma is stated to have performed Go daana still recognised with the wooden rod signage. *Brahma sarovar* near Vaitarini Sarovar is famed for Gada Khanda of Vishnu Bhagavan fell and till date yattris perform parikrama. *Akshaya vata* near Brahma sarovar is within a four walled garden the center of which is a Vata Vriksha and Vateshvara Mahadeva Mandir. *Gadalola Sarovara* near Akshaya vata within which is a Gada swarupa Pillar with which Vishnu after killing Gayasura washed and cleaned up his mace. *Mangala Gauri-Avimukeshwara nath* Mandir on a hill top near Brahma Sarovar is situated some 125 steps; it is stated that any person with none to accompany could alone perform shraaddha by merely keeping three pindas with curd and without tilas in one of the right hands of the Chaturbhuj Bhagavan. Next to Mangala Gauri hill is another such hill where there is a Hanuman Sthaan and Kund which is called *Akasha Ganga* and underneath the hill is *Patala Ganga and Kapila dhaara*. From Vishnu paada Mandir about less than a km. is *Gayatri Ghat and Gayatri Devi Mandir* also Lakshmi narayana Mandir, Prithvishwar Shiva Manduir and Gayaditya naama Chaturbhuj Surya Mandir. Some one km. distance on way to Bodh Gaya is a 'parvata' and some 500 steps above it is *Brahma Yoni and Matru yoni*. From Gaya by 3 km approx. is the Holy *Saraswati River* as also a Saraswati Mandir. *Dharmaranya* has Dharma Raja Mandir with two wells into which pindadas are performed and those desirous of male progeny are deposited into a 'Rahat Kupa' where Pandavas headed by Yudhishtar performed shraddha there and being desirous of male children deposited the pindas in the wells. From Gaya to *Budha Gaya* is some 7 miles where there is a stone called 'Bouddha Simhasana' where under a Bodhi Vriksha, Buddha was stated to have meditated and attained enlightenment; but now that tree is also stated to have been since replaced by a Peepul vriksha!

While Pitru Karyas at Gaya Tirtha are invariably abridged in the current flow of contemporary life, the prescribed Time Schedule is for a week covering the tasks are as follows: Day One: Having duly bathed in Phalgu River, shraddha karmas including Sankalpa-Agni Homa in favour of Devas-Pitru Tarpana-Pinda Daana-Brahmana bhojana-Dakshinaa Karya krama and Daana are to be accomplished; in the morning Snaana Sandhyas are done at Gayatri Tirtha, Madhyahna Snaana Sandhyas at Savitri Kunda and evening Snaana Sandhyas at Saraswati Kunda. On the second day, one has to visit Preta Shila and perform pinda daanas at Brahma Kunda and Preta shila, from there pinda daanas be done at Rama Shila, and at Kaaka (crow) Bali sthana and swaana (dog) bali sthaana. On the third day after Phalgu snaana, one should visit Uttara Manasa and after tarpan-pinda daana-Uttaraarka darshana, mouna dharana or observig silence, arrive at Surya kunda, Dakshina Manasa Tirtha-snana-tarpana-pinda daana and Gadaadhara darshana / puja. On the fourth day after Phalguna snana and pinda daana at Matangavaapi, Dharmeshwara darshana-pinda daana and reach Bodh Gaya and shraddha under or near shraaddha karma. On fifth day

after phalguna snaana, Brahma sara-snaana - tarpana- pinda daana; Amrasechana, Brahma sara pradakshina and Kaaka-Yama- swaana bali and snaan again. On the sixth day, after Phalgu snaana, visit Vishnu pada, Rudra pada, Dakshinaagni pada, Garhatya pada, Aavaheena pada, savyaa pada, Apasavya pada, Surya pada, Kartikeya pada, Krouncha pada and Kashyapa pada darshana and shraaddha followed by pitru tarpanas at Vishnu pada and pinda pradana at Gaya shira pada. On the final seventh day, after phalguna snaana, perform Gadalolapara snaana, shraddha and bhojana pradana to three or atleast one Brahmana. This seven day observance is for those who desire to perform only 'sakaama' shraaddha formally. Also during the Ashwin Krishna Paksha, the prescribed schedule is- Pratipada: Shraddha and Kaak bali at Brahma kunda-Preta shila-Rama kunda and Rama shilaadi; Dwitiya: Pinda daana at Uttara Manasa, Udichi, Kankhal, Dakshina Manasa, and Jihwa lola; Tritiya: Sarasvati snana and shradda at Matanga vaapi, Dharmaranya, and Bodha Gaya; Chaturthi: Brahma sarovara shraddha and 'aamra sechana' and Kaka bali; Panchami: Pinda Shraddha at Vishnupada Mandira at Rudrapada, Brahma pada and Vishnu para with 'Ksheera shakraanna' Shraaddha; from Shashthi to Ashtami, pinda daana be performed in Vishnupada Mandira on a Sixteen Veda Naama Mandapa the names of the sixteen Vedis being Kartikapada, Dakshinaagni, Garha paryagni, Aavagha- niyagni, Suryapada, Chandrapada, Ganeshapada, Dadhichapada, Kanvapada, Matangapada, Krounchapada, Indrapada, Agastyapada, and Kashyapapada; on Ashtami there is a sixteen vedi Mandapa at the same padas there would be a Gaja karna tarpana with milk. On Ashwin Krishna Navami, Shraaddha is performed at Rama gaya and pinda daana at Sita Kund for three generations of mother, father's mother and grand mother pinda daana; on Dashami Pinda daana at Gaya shira and Gaya kupa; on Ekadasi guda or jaggery- pinda daana at Mundapushta, Adigaya, and Dhoutapaada with tils; on Dwadashi, pinda daana be performed at Bhim gaya, Goprachara and Gadaalola; on Trayodashi after Phalgu snaan as usual followed by Ksheera Tarpana at the Tirthas of Gayatri, Savitri and Saraswati respectively in the morning-noon- evening respectively; on Chaturdashi Vaitarini snaana and tarpana be performed; on Amnavasya shaddha and Brahmanbhojana be performed under or near Akshaya Vat and finally, on Ashwin Shukla Pratipada Gaya shradda is concluded on Gayatri ghat with Curd-Akshata Pinda daan. This is the basically designed Gaya Tirtha Pinda daana vidhi!

Guruvayur: Some 30 km. away from Trissur is the most celebrated Krishna/ Vishnu Temple in Bharat, counted among the Pancha Maha Keshava Mandirs or the Five Outstanding Vishnu Temples viz. Jagannatha of Puri on Orissa; Dwarakaadhesha in Dwaraka, Gujarat; Nathwara Krishna in Rajasthan; and Venkateshwara Balaji in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh and now the Guruvayur Ayyappan in Kerala. Guru-Vayu are the two Devas viz. Deva Guru Brihaspati and Vayu Deva were invoked by Sage Uddhava the close associate of Lord Krishna, at the time of destruction of the City of Maha Dwaraka as Yadava vamsha was destroyed and Lord Krishna too terminated his 'Avatara'. Udhava was shocked at the tide of events and more so the ancestral Pratima of Vishnu at his Dwaraka abode was found missing from his worship chamber. He was somehow able to savlge the Idol and prayed to Guru and Vayu. As per Bhakta Uddhava's supplication they carried it along the coastal line and on way stopped over to witness the Shiv-Parvati Nritya which was mesmerising even as they had the obligation to safe deposit the Vishnu Pratima some where properly. After the Tandava of Shiva Parvati, they prostrated to them who asked them of the purpose for which there halted there. On knowing the purpose, Bhagavan Shiva heartily recommended that place where they themselves spent their soujourn at Rudratirtham the northern side of the Place they suggested the 'Guru Vayu' Place for the proposed Krishna Mandir suggested for installing Uddhava's Vishnu Idol! Meanwhile Parashu Rama after witnessing the insallation of Vadakkunatha Shiva Linga at

Trissur was in search of a further Place for his Tapasya appeared and after prostrating Shiva Parvatis also endorsed the precise spot for the Guruvayur Krishna Temple. Rudra Tirtham eventually got dried up in parts and extended upto Mammiyur where there stands as Mammiyurappan Temple some 3 km distance away. This was because Prachetas the ten sons of King Prajinabarhi and Suvarna sang Rudra Gita a hymn in praise of Lord Vishnu and thus the Rudra Tirtham got extended till Mammiyurappan Shiva Temple. Guru and Vayu consulted Vishwakarma who created the original Guruvayur Temple. The Temple eventually became the nucleus of Dharma and magnificence of Vaishnava Karyas to such an extent that Narada Purana made elaborate references to the last days of Dwapara Yuga and Maha Bharata events: As King Parikshit died of Taksha Sarpa Raja and King Janamejaya performed Sarpa Yagna to avenge his father's death in which thousands of serpents were called up and sacrificed till Brahmana Astika stopped the Yagna and Takshaka was saved, Janamejaya became a victim of incurable leprosy. Then Sage Atreya, the illustrious son of Atri Maharshi, counselled to visit Guruvayoor and worship Lord Krishna in the form of Guruvayurappan and fall on his feet till his cure; King Janamejaya rushed to that Temple and worshipped him for ten years. Finally he was cured of leprosy and called up Sage Atreya who showed signs of snake bite as that bite proved ineffective due to his saving the King by Ananta Maha Sarpa / Bala Rama, the brother of Lord Krishna! In course of time, the Temple was totally dilapidated and was in ruins. The King of Pandya desha was stated to have been cursed by Sarpa dosha and went on a Tirtha Yatra awaiting a specific day and time for his death. As he saw the ruins of Guruvayur, he decided to re-build trying to follow the original architectural grandeur and got involved so much that the day and time of what was suggested for the curse to happen was over and the Brahmanas who made the calculations earlier for his death suggested that the impact of the curse was totally washed out by the fruits gained from the reconstruction of the Temple! It is also stated that Adi Shankara stayed at Guruvayur Krishna Temple for long and established the Puja Rituals since followed till date! The legend is that Adi Shankara and Sage Narada were travelling by the Sky on every Ekadashi in the Prabhata time well before sunrise and on one occasion Adi Shankara overshot and was about to miss the Temple, but the Lord pulled down the Acharya by his ears and the surprised Acharya found himself at the feet of Guruvayurappan's feet and the Acharya broke down into the recital of 'Govindashtakam'. Indeed the Principles and details of Rituals laid down by Adi Shankaracharya are valid till date. The day starts with the waking of the Lord with the melodious notes of Nadaswara followed by Nirmalya Darshana or the clearance of 'Nirmalya' of the previous night's puja at 3am. Sriveli or taking the Utsava Vighraha around the Temple premises on decorated elephant is performed every day thrice. Dress code to seek darshan inside the Temple and the Sanctum is strictly enforced. Guruvayur Utsavas are for 10 days in the month of Kumbham (Feb-Mar) when Elephant race is a special draw; the Devassom maintains 45 and odd elephants donated by devotees. Guruvayur Ekadashi of Vrischika (Nov-Dec) is significant too. In fact, every Ekadashi is special, especially for Vilakku (Lighting) Puja.

Keshava Raya Pattana: This Tirtha falls in the Kota Division of Rajasthan and is renowned for its Kartika Purnima Mela and festivities. On the banks of Charmanvati or Chambal River, there is an ancient Kshetra named, Jambukaranya and Jambumargeshwara and Vishnu Tirtha; on the hill top there is this Keshava Raaya Murti with four hands ahead of the idol being a 'Garuda stambha' / pillar. The legend about this Holy Tirtha relates to 'Agjnaana Vaasa' or the hiding place in the safe hands of Keshava raaya and in the vicinity of Vishnu Tirtha where Pandavas were performing Yajna Karyas and the old Yagna shaala is still intact. Pandavas installed four Shiva Lingas more in addition to Jambumargeshwara viz, Gupteshwara, Kedareshwara, Sahasra Lingeshwara and so on. After this first phase of Agjnata vaasa in the care of

Keshavaraya himself, Pandavas proceeded to Virat nagar by assuming the changed Forms in the court of King Virat ie Yuddhishtar as Kanku Bhat, Bhima as the Royal cook, Arjun as Brihannala the Eunuch Dance Teacher of the Princess Uttara Devi, Nakula as Horse Doctor at the Royal Stable, Saha Deva as the Physician of Royal Cows and Devi Draupadi as Sairandhri, the Queen's Maid! Another legend about the Mandir of Keshavaraya Bhagavan was that the Past King of the Area named Ranti Deva once had a dream that in the jungles on the banks of Charmangavati River, there were two Idols of Keshava raya with four hands in white stone and and also another Shyama varna chaturbhuj in black stone would be dug up. Accordingly, the King commenced systematic digging by his soldiers and finally succeeded securing the same and installed both the idols separately as per Sacred Mantras formally. Yet another story related to this Tirtha was that even before this Mandir was built up, Lord Parashu Rama having waged 21 battles to eradicate the Kshatriya clan finally retired to forest life for 'tapas'.

Khatu Shyama Rajasthan's *Khatu Shyama* is quite popular from far off places to Ringal, Palsana for darshan of Shamji Bhagavan, as the Mandir draws unusual but orderly crowd patiently waiting for the same, especially on Jyeshtha Shukla Dwadashi, Kartika Shukla Dwadashi and Phalguna Shukla Dwadashi and in any case on all Dwadasis. The legendary background is that Bhima of Pandavas had an affair with Hidimba Devi during Pandava 'Vanavasa' or forest life for twelve years and begot Ghatotkacha whose son was Barbarika. Even before the Maha Bharata battle, Lord Krishna sliced off the head of Barbarika but granted the boon of manifesting as Lord Shyama himself in Kali Yuga and would be venerated by his devotees bestowing them of fulfilling all their wishes, especially on Dwadashis, the days of special significance for Bhagavan Krishna. *Saalar* is another Sacred and Unique and exclusive Anjaneya Mandir of Rajasthan approachable from Seekar Railway Station on South West Railways, pulsating especially with floating but fast moving crowds from dawn till near midnight on all Tuesdays and Saturdays. The Temple known for its spick and span appearance of enlightened Yatis seeking favours for fulfillment; decent facilities for stay overnights are assured to distant yatis. This Place is well known for safety and high marks for decency and any evil doing is instantly punished by Lord Hanuman Himself!

Kurukshetra: *Kurukshetram gamishyaami Kurukshere vasaamyaham, Ya evam satatam bruyat sopi Paapaih pramuchyate/ Paamsavopi Kurukshetre Vaayuna samudiritaah, Api dushkrita karmaanam nayananti paramam gatim/ Dakshinena Saraswatya drushadvidyuttarena cha, ye vasanti Kurukshetre te vasanti trivishtape/Manasaapyabhikaamasya Kurukshetram Yuddhishtara, Paapaani vipranashyanti Brhama lokam cha gacchati/ Gatwaa hi shraddhayaa yuktah Kurukshetram Kurudvah, Phalam prapnoti cha tadaa Rajasuyaasshwamedhayoh/* ( Even the mere resolve of visiting and staying at Kurukshetra would demolish sins and the dust carried by the winds from there shall indeed purify sinners and lead them to higher planes of virtue. Kurukshetra sprawls all over the region from Rushadwiti from the north to Saraswati River in the south and blessed are those who reside in this are considered to be in heavenly surroundings. The thoughts of undertaking dutiful yatra to Kurukshetra by themselves evaporate blemishes while those who actually complete the yatra as per the regulations specified would have reaped the fruits of executing Rajasuya and Ashwamedha Yagnas-Shatapata Brahmana Upanishad). It is stated that Maharshis most initially pronounced VedaMantras at this hallowed banks of Saraswati River and it was this very tirtha that Brahma and Devas performed Maha Yagnas and indeed it was this Sacred Land where Maharshis like Vasishtha and Vishwamitra attained Brahma Jnaana. It was this very Place that the Dharma Kskhetra of Kurukshetra fought Dharma Yuddha for eighteen long days and Virtue triumphed against Viciousness and vindicated Adharma for good. It was this very Place again where Lord Srikrishna delivered the eternal message of Bhagavad Gita to posterity as the Quintessence of Veda Shastra Purano -

panishads put together! The origin of Kurukshetra is vividly described in the Essence of Vamana Purana which appeared vide [www. Kamakoti.Org/ Articles](http://www.Kamakoti.Org/Articles) as also on Google as follows: At the beginning of Satya Yuga, there was a King named Ruksha of Chandra Vamsha who begot King Samvarna. On assuming Kingship, Samvarna entrusted his royal duties to his Guru Vasishtha and moved about carefree. While he was in a Forest named Vibhaja, he met a Deva Kanya called Tapati and both of them got mesmerised with each other. On return, Vasishtha Maharshi learnt of the King's infatuation as the latter was neither eating nor behaving properly. Similar was the situation with the Deva Kanya Tapati. Vasishtha learnt from his Divyadrishi that the Deva Kanya was the daughter of Surya Deva, entered Surya mandala and requested Surya for the alliance and both of them were happily married to eventually beget a boy called **Kuru** who was married to Devi Soudamini. After Kuru became the King, Kuru tried all possibilities of endearing his Praja and during his 'Dharma Paalana' or Virtuous Administration, there were no problems of poverty, thefts, misdirected judgments and health limitations and soon became a popular King. Then he travelled to become more and famous and victorious and entered Daitavana where he saw the Sacred River Sarasvati which was called Brahma Putri, Harijihva and Sudarshana Janani. He derived extreme happiness and satisfaction in the River and towards north of the River and decided to construct a 'Samanta Panchaka Dharmasthaan' spread over an Area of five yojanas width and length. It was learnt that there were five such 'Vedikaas' where Shambhu Deva performed Pancha Yagnas, of which the Uttara Vedi on the banks of River Sarasvati was known as the most renowned; the Madhya Vedi as popular at Prayaga Kshetra, Purva Vedi was at Gaya Tirtha, Dakshina Vedi was at Jagannatha puri and the Paschima Vedi was at Pushkara Kshetra. King Puru decided to add the Panchama Vedi to be constructed as Samantaka Panchaka Dharmasthana. He procured a golden plough and a pair of animals to commence tilling the land. Indra Deva approached the King Kuru as to what was he desirous of doing and the reply was that he had decided to construct an 'Ashtaanga Bhumi' of *Tapah Satyam Ksamaam Damaam Krushaami Shoucham Daanam cha Yogamcha Brahmacharitam* or Meditation - Truthfulness-Endurance-Mercy-Cleanliness-Charity-Yoga and Celibacy which should be called Ashtanga Farming! Indra further asked: Where would be a number of ploughs and how would you procure seeds from! The reply was that Indra should not make fun of an honest endeavour as Indra left quietly. The King himself commenced tilling some four to five yojanas of land daily. Then Lord Vishnu appeared and asked the same question of Indra as to where would he secure the seeds. The King said convincingly that the seeds would emerge from his body. Vishnu asked the King to extend his hand so that the former could plough and the King could spread the seeds. The King faithfully extended his right hand and at once Bhagavan cut off his hand with his chakra to several pieces! Kuru then extended his left hand and Vishnu sliced off that hand too to thousand pieces. The King offered his thighs one by one which too were cut. Finally King Kuru offered his head and then Vishnu was convinced that the King was very serious in his resolve and asked him to ask for a boon. Kuru replied: *Yaavadetan -mayaa krushtam Dharmaksetram tadastucha, Snaataanaam cha mrutaaaamcha mahapunya phalam twiha/ Upavaasamcha Daanamcha cha snaanam japyam cha Madhava, Homayagna -dikam chaanyachubham Vaapyashubham Vibho/* (May this Place which I had tilled be declared as Dharma Kshetra; may this Place become a Sacred one where bathing or even dying attain Maha Punya. May the virtuous deeds of Upavaasa-Snaana-Daana-Japa-Havana-Yagna etc be paid for with multiplied fruits!) The King further prayed to Vishnu that he along with Parama Shiva should reside at this Kshetra always. Vishnu not only granted the boons asked by the King but also blessed the Hallowed Place to be called as Kuru Kshetra, that his fame and name would be eternal as long as the Universe would last, that this Kshetra called Kurujangala would be protected by Chandra naamak Yaksha, Vaasuki naamak Sarpa, Shankukarna naamak Vidyaadhara,

Sukeshi naamak Rakshseswara, Ajaavan naamak King, Mahadeva naamak Agni and so on. Some eight thousand arrows-men would ensure that sinners of extreme nature would be prevented to perform bathings in the Kshetra ; there is a 'paapa vinaashaka' and Sacred Tirtha known as Pruthudaka or Pohovaa Tirtha here and Brahma collected the waters of various Maha Samudras, Punya Tirthas, Rivers and Sarovaraas into it! Brahmasara Tirtha: Maharshi Lomaharshana stated that Brahmasara Tirtha was originally spread from Sannihita Sarovar at Rantuk Sthaana to Ojas Sthaana and further upto Chaturmukha Sthaana; but over passage of time, the Tirtha occupied the space from Viswasvara Shaana to Asthipura and from Vriddha Kanya to Oghavati River. Half way of the Tirtha, it was believed that Rudra attained 'Sthaanutva' or 'Sthiratwa' (Solidification). Meanwhile, Maha Muni Markandeya prayed to Devi Sarasvati flowing in the form of the illustrious River obliged the Muni to accompany him wherever he wished him to lead and the Muni requested her to link up Brahmasira to Ramahlada to Kurukshetra and thus the latter assumed further significance; In the Kurukshetra Tirtha thus one secures the 'maha phala' of bathing and worshipping in Seven Vanaas viz. Kaamuaka Vana, Aditi Vana, Vyasa Vana, Phalaki Vana, Surya Vana, Madhu Vana, and Sheeta Vana; besides nine Sacred Rivers viz. Sarasvati, Vaitarani, Aapaga, Mandakini Ganga, Madhstra, Vaasu Nadi, Koushiki, Drushdyati or Kaggar, and Hiranyavati. Kurukshetra Thirtha Yatra needs to be initiated by obtaining the permission of the Yaksha called Rastuk, proceed to Aditya Vana where Devi Aditi was stated to have performed her Tapasya in favour of her sons viz. Devataas; proceed to Vishnu Sthaan called 'Savana', visit VimalaTirtha to worship Vimalaswara to reap the fruit of attaining Rudra Loka; Kaushiki sangama to wash off the blemishes stored thus far; Dharani Tirthato seek relief for 'Aparadhaas' of devotees; Daksheswara Shiva in Dakshaashrama to attain the fruit of Ashvamedha Yagna; Shalukini Tirtha ; then move on to Saptirdadhi to thrash up fears of serpents; then worship Rastuk Dwarapal for an overnight stay there for Kshama Prarthana and Abheestha Siddhi; then visit Panchanaada Tirtha, Koti Tirtha, and Jwaala Maheshwara. Pilgrims to Kurukshetra are advised to definitely perform 'Pitru Devaarchana' at the famed Pushkara Tirtha which was constructed by Parashurama Deva and it was believed that worship there would bestow fulfillment of wishes sought by the devotees. Surya Grahana Snaana at the nearby Sarovara called 'Saannihitya' is stated to provide access to Swarga after one's life. Essentially, Brahmasara Sarovara and the adjacent Sannithisara are deemed as Kurukshetra. Puranas clarify that far well before Maha Bharata Battle, King Kuru built Brahmasara and Sanniti sara Sarovaras. However, there is a misconception that Dwaipayana / Parashara Sarovar is Kurukshetra itself as that sarovar was actually where Duryodhana and Bhima fought the last leg of Maha Bharata Battle. Factually speaking, Brahma sara and Sannihitisara are at Thanesara township off Kurukshetra by a mile. Brahmasara Sarovara and the adjacent Sannithi sara are approx. 5 km wide and as much of length each. Parashara Sarovara is approx 13km from Thanesara. Surya grahana snaanas are normally performed at Thansara Sarovaras or specifically at Jyoti sara where Lord Krishna along with Yaduvamsheeyas arrived from Dwaraka as per the Dashama Skandha of Maha Bhagavata before the Maha Bhrata Battle. It is said that apart from Surya Grahana days, Somavati Amavasyas also yield Maha Phala on performing Snana-Dana-Puja to Surya Deva. Incidentally, portions of Bharata Pita Magatma Gandhi's ashes were formally immersed in the Kurukshetra Sarovara in 1948. The Samnihita besides Brahmasara has special significance for Pitru Tarpanas: Vishnu Dharmottra script underlines: *Punah Sannihityaam vai Kurukshetre visheshatah, Archayeccha Pitrustatra sa putrastwanrunobhavet/* (At the Sannihita Tirtha inside Kukurshetra, whatever Pitru Tarpana and Shraddhas are dutifully executed are highly fulfilling in reducing 'Pitru Runa' or the indebtedness to Pitru Devatas.) Also Vamana Dwadashi, Krishna Janmashtami, Vijaya Dashami of Navarattras are noteworthy for worship at this Tirtha. Thanesara or Sthaaneshwara Tirtha already referred

to in the earlier pages on Kedarnath where Shiva-Vishnu Identity was established is so significant that even sprinkling of water on one's head, let alone a snaana, would demolish bodily ailments; in fact, \*King Vena the erstwhile form of Prithu Chakravarti of Dhruva's lineage was cured of his leprosy by such sprinkling of this water! [\* King Vena was an evil doer and Maharshis of the day forcibly churned his body to destroy the evil in it and Prithu Chakravarti the epoch making Conquerer of the entire Universe emerged and eventually he controlled Bhu Devi ran away from his control in the form of a cow but Pruthu subdued her and forced her to yield that kind of milk as various beings ranging from Devas to all celestial beings, Danava-Rakshasa- Daithyas, Rishis, humans, Nagaadi Patala vasis etc in the form that they desired like Devas sought Amrita, Danavadis desired blood, Manushyas asked for foodgrains, Nagas wanted poison and Rishis opted for Tapas! Hence Bhudevi is since named as Prithwi after Pruthu Chakravarti!] Pandavas worshipped Sthaneshwara before Maha Bharata battle for victory. *Chandra Kupa* (well) is in the midst of Brahmasara Sarovara land where Yudhishtara installed 'Vijaya Stambha' after the victory at the Battle. *Bhadra Kali Mandir* not far from Sthanu Tirtha's Shiva Mandir is one of the 51 Shakti Peethas aforementioned as at Kurukshetra where Devi Sati's right ankle bone fell. *Bana Ganga Tirtha* some kilometer from Brahmasara is the Place where Arjun of Pandavas hit his arrow to let a flow of water spring from Earth to quench the thirst of Bheeshma Pitamaha the grand father of Kourava Pandavas. Quite near to Thaneshwar is *Naabhikamal Tirtha* where Brahma was materialised from the Lotus top that emerged from Lord Vishnu's navel where Brahma's one of rare temples in Bharat besides a Vishnu Mandir too are situated. From Kurukshetraby a less than a km are *Karna Kheda* where Dana Karma gave away considerable charity to Brahmanas before the Great Battle of Kaurava Pandavas of Maha Bharata. From Karna Kheda is the *Aapaga Tirtha* where Pirtru Tarpanas are performed especially on Bhadrpada Krishna Paksha Chaturdashi afternoon. In the adjacent neighborhood of Kurukshetra are *Narakataari* where Bhishma the grand father of Pandavas ad Kaurava cousins was laid down on Shara Shayya or bed of arrows awaiting the arrival of Uttarayana to end his life as he had the boon of so doing by his mother Ganga Devi. *Kubera Tirtha* is on the banks of Saraswati River where Kubera the Lord of Wealth performed a famed Yagjna. *Markandeya Tirtha* near Kubera Tirtha again on Saraswati River Banks performed worship to Surya Bhagavan and attained final Salvation after living through 'Yugaantaras' and beyond Kalpas. *Dadhichi Tirtha* near Markandeya Ashram is the Illustrious one where Maharshi Didhichi- the son of Bhriгу Maharshi the Brahma Manasa Putra or the mind born son of Brahma gave away in charity to Deva Chief Lord Indra Deva the Maharshis backbone from which Devas materialised Vajrayudha to destroy Vritrasura the most invincible Demon Son of Vishwarupa Maharshi the son of Twashata in a Brahma Yajna. Dadhicha mastered the Narayana Kavacha. *Aditi Kunda* was the Ashram of Devi Aditi the wife of Maharshi Kashyap the mother of Devas who gave birth to Vamana Deva the Avatar of Vishnu. Besides, there are also Soma Tirtha, Karna Vadha Tirtha, Jayaghara where Arjuna killed Jayadratha who killed the famed Abhimanyu and took his revenge by stopping Sun set as an illusion created by Lord Krishna as Arjuna swore that Jayadratha would be killed before Sunset. *Parashara-father of Veda Vyasa- Hrada* or the Ashram of Parashara and the Sarovara nearby where Duryodhana on the last eighteenth day of Maha Bharata Battle challenged by Bhima, Duryodhana to come out from hiding and entered into a duel or one- to- one -battle and finally got killed by Bhima. *Jyotisara Tirtha* is the Place where the epoch making **Bhagavad Gita** was rendered to Arjuna.

Madurantakam: Considered as significant by Yatris, especilally the followers of Ramanujacharya who assumed 'diksha' as a Sanyasin at this Vakula Kshetra where a Vakula Vriksha is still in place, Madurantakam is proud of its legendary past. In this erstwhile form of Vakularanya, there was a

hermitage of Vibhandaka Rishi from where interesting references were obtained: in Satya Yuga, Lord Vishnu directed Brahma putras to worship him and get identified with himself at this Sacred Sthala. During Treta Yuga, Lord Rama after killing Ravana and installing Rameshwar Maha Linga passed through Vakularanya and instructed Hanuman to set up a Rama Temple with his parivar for worship by posterity. Eventually, Ramanujacharya's diksha followed near the Rama Mandir under the Vakula Tree by way of Pancha Samskara of 'Taapa' (Sapta samudrankana), 'Pundra' or Tilaka, 'Namadheya' or assigning a suitable name, 'Mantradaana' or according 'Mantropadesha' and finally 'Yagna' / Viraja homa and so on. There are interesting references in Tamil/ Telugu books kept in the well preserved Library at the Kondada Rama- Janaki Temple of date about an 'Anikut' built across a violent water body creating floods in paddy fields causing enormous losses in the adjoining rural economies. A British Expert named Mr. Place for Flood Control was commissioned for constructing a strong and expensive bridge and as plodded by local engineers called on the then Vaishvanava Head of Madurantakam who advised to build a Janaki Mandir; jokingly the British Expert replied that most certainly he would do so in case the new bridge could with stand the powerful spate during the next flood season. The bridge got ready in time and the floods too were round the corner. One fateful night, the spate was so severe that Mr. Place had no sleep in the other side of the most powerful spate ever and floods at both sides were certain to submerge including the fairly distant places where he was staying himself; next morning he resolved to initiate the construction of Janaki Temple which is now in position!

Maha Baleshwar: This Kshetra which is some 120 km from Pune in Maharashtra is an important Tirha Sthaan for several reasons: it is the most ancient Place where Trimurtis viz. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara performed long tapasya before Srishti or Creation of the Universe; it was the most sacrosanct Place where Lord Brahma performed Yagna before he was authorised to do so by Vishnu and Maheshwara on the understanding that the Universe hence to be created by Brahma would be preserved till periodical interregnums between one period viz. Yuga to another and get destroyed by Rudra Deva; it was also the Place where two Daityas named Ati Bal and Maha Bal attacked Vishnu but though Ati Bala was destroyed Maha Bala had the boon of invincibility by any male power. But this limitation was finally resolved as Devas headed by Brahma and Vishnu payed to Adi Maya who in turn killed Maha Bal too; yet another qualification of Maha Baleshwara pertains to the fact that the famed Krishna River as originated as a part of the Pancha Nadis viz. Krishna, Savitri, Venya, Kakujjati or Koyna and Gayatri Nadi; Krishna is of Vishnu Swarupa, Venya is of Shankara Swarupa and Kakujjati as also Gayatri were of Brahma Swarupas. Such was then legendary magnificence of Maha Baleshwara. At the Maha Baleshwar Mandir, the Shiva Linga is in the form of a Rudraksha as split at places and is full of water always oozing out from the Linga and it is strongly believed that this water flows out from all the five rivers mentioned. The Place where Lord Brahma performed the Yagna is some two km away from the Mandir and from there the forest really looks fearful as it is infested with wild animals and serpents. There there is a cave inside which there is stated to be a Yagna Vedi. In Maha Baleshwar, there are also two other ancient Mandirs of Ati Baleshwara and Koteswar too which are older than the Maha Baleshwar itself. Nearby there are also Krishnabai Mandir where there is a Brahma Kund which not only collects the water from the five rivers mentioned above but also of Saraswati River. The Swayambhu Shiva Maha Linga at Maha Baleshwara is one of the most Sacred Spots. Quite apart from being one of the Sacred Places, Maha Baleshwar is an ideal and excellent holiday resort hill station of some 5 hour drive of 180 km from Mumbai and 120 km from Pune, bound by green valleys and high peaks of 5000 ft. popularly called by tourists as Wilson Sun Rise Point as also known for Arthur Seat Point, Kate Point, Needle Hole Point and

Three Monkey Point of Three Natural Stone Formations akin to Three Monkeys signifying Mahatma Gandhi's sayings of: Do no evil, speak no evil and hear no evil!

Melkote/ Yadagiri: is considered as one of the most important Vaishnava Kshetras in Dakshina Bharat, besides Shri Rangam and Kanchi puram in Tamil nadu, Tirupati Balaji in Andhra Pradesh. Of the 108 Vaishnava Kshetras all over Bharat, Yadavagiri's Narayana Mandira is reckoned among the essential one. The utmost significance of this Tirtha is mainly due to Guru Ramanujacharya's long association with and residence for about sixteen years. He was also responsible of 'Punaruddharana' or revival and reconstruction of this Kshetra. Besides the Main Temple of Narayana and the Utsava Murti of Parikrama-the original Sampatkumara Swami, there is a Panchatarani Tirtha also called Veda Pushkarini. Besides on the Mountain nearby there is also a Yoga Nrisimha Mandir. Paridhana shila is reputed as the Rock where *Bhagavan Dattatreya* took to Sanyasa; Ramanujacharya too is stated to have repeated his Sanyasa once again by assuming the Dhama again with a fresh set of Kamandalu, Kashaya vastra etc. after bathing at Panchatarani. Even the practice is followed by several Sanyasis of Vaishnava Faith. There is an interesting story popular in the Area: when once Ramanujacharya experienced shortage of 'Tirumana' or the 'Sweta mrittika' or white earth paste with which Vaishnavites decorate their foreheads with 'Tilaka' and kept on worrying in his night sleep; at an early morning dream, Bhagavan Narayana appeared and told that there was a plentiful stock of Tirumani available with Him and directed the Acharya to reach a specific Tulasi Vana in the Mountain garden. After his snaana and daily 'Anushthana', Mahatma Ramanuja ascended the mountain with his close associates and reached a Tulasi Garden as directed; he dug up down a foot underneath and discovered a Narayana Pratima along with Tirumani. The Acharya built a Mandir and installed the Idol formally with Veda Mantras! Another interesting story is in circulation about Ramanujaacharya in the Temple premises. When the Acharya arrived at the Melukote Mandir there was no Mula Vighraha of Narayana was missing and the Parikrana Vighraha named Sampat Kumara Swami was installed instead since the Soldiers of Delhi Badsha plundered the Yadavagiri Temple and took away the Narayana Vighraha and presumably gifted to Delhi Badsha. On realising the background, the Acharya visited Delhi and approached the Durbar; the Acharya was asked to approach the Princess as the Vighraha was gifted to her and she kept it as a memento! She not only agreed to return but also desired to accompany it to witness its re-installation at Yadaagiri. But alas! On her way itself she succumbed to a heart attack and died as though there was a dispensation of divine justice!

Nathdwara: Not far from Marwad and not even from Ahmedabad is the most famed and highly popular Tirtha on Ahmedabad-Delhi line at Marvad Junction of Western Railways with excellent road connections. Also there are decent and comfortable places to stay at Nathdwara. The most important Mandir which is ever crowded is of Shri Nathji, reckoned as one of Bharat's outstanding Vaishnava Peethas run by Vallabhacharya Vamsha Tilakaayata. Shrinathji's miracles are described as many: Once when there was an apprehension of Muslim Rulers invading Vraja Bhumi, the Pratima of Shri Natha was taken to a safer place in Mewar and when was being moved out, the bullock cart by which it was being brought, broke its axis and gave way at the Bilwara Village. It was then presumed by those responsible for the shift decided to install the Pratima there itself; since its installation, the miracles displayed were so many that today, mere darshan with faith of the yatri has proved as definite fulfillments. Shri Nath's puja is performed with great 'Nishtha' or purity of body and soul at the Temple. In fact, the visitors get moved being replete with joy and vibration of body and heart! As the darshan is provided in intervals of time, many devotees are desirous of repeat darshans in spite of waiting their turns in meandering queues. The Mandir affords to spend fortunes on its upkeep thanks to its rapidly increasing income and

assets. The Prashad at the Temple is as delicious and sacred as at Jagannatha Mandir at Puri, as here too the Prashad is fully devoid of 'sparsha dosha' or the blemish of touch! Nearby in the vicinity of the Mandir are the Idols of Navanita Laala, Vithalnatha, Kalyana kaaraya, Madanmohana, and Vanamaali at their Mandirs. In one Temple Devi Meera bai is also seated blissfully. Kankaroli's Dwarakaadheesha and the Chaturbhuj Rupanarayana Mandirs are also not too distant from Nathdwara.

Pandaripura: Another very auspicious and popular Tirthas in Maharashtra is Pandarpur which is keenly worshipped and frequently visited by Bhaktas and by Yatris especially on Ekadashis, more so as this happens to be the Dham of Vithoba and Rakhumayi ( Devi Rukmini) besides the permanent Places of Tukaram, Namdeo, Ranka banka, Narahari and such other illustrious Sants. Maha Bhakta Pundareeka was originally responsible for the installation of the Idols on the Sacred banks of River Bhima also called Chandrabhaga. The installed Idol Vithoba carved in black stone stands on the legendary stone which Maha Bhakta Pundarika threw at Bhagavan to stall his entry into his room where his beloved parents were about to sleep, even with his full knowledge that Bhagavan himself was waiting the Bhakta's door step! The Idol is standstill with both Bhagavan's hands resting on his 'kamar' or both sides of his back. Devi Rakhu mayi is installed in a separate Mandir in the vicinity. Mandirs of Balaram, Satyabhama, Jambavati and Radha Devi are outside nearby. On the banks of Chandra bhaga River are the Chandra bhaga Tirtha, Soma Tirtha and so on as also Narada Mandira and Ten Shiva Lingas, besides Vishnu Pada Imprint besides the Mandirs of Gapalji, Janabai, Ekanath, Namdev, Jnaneeshwar and Tukaram. The legendary background of Pundareeka's installation of Vithoba is as follows briefly: A youth named Pundarika was living in a forest village with his aged parents named Janudeva and Satyavati and originally he was quite an obedient son but after wedding, he started ill treating them to a point that they decided to leave for Kasi even till their death. Pundarika came to know of the plan and he too decided to accompany the parents along his wife. On way to Kasi, he harassed the parents to their great discomfort. In a village on way, they were too tired and halted for a few days at an Ashram, even as Pundarika intensified his mal treatment to his parents. One night he dreamt that two maidens named Ganga and Jamuna provided great service at the Ashram; but after all it was not dream but reality. Pundarika tried next morning to talk to them and indeed their names were as per the dream. They gave him a curt talk and said that a person who treated his parents ill were like worse than animals as even beasts would not treat the parents as he did. Pundarika felt a shock and suddenly realised that parents were like Gods and since then there was a sea change in him. His bhakti to parents as well as to Vishnu got intensified; he had since treated the parents like Gods and Lord Vishnu was so pleased that he appeared at Pundarika's door step. Even while the latter realised that Vishnu himself was standing out, he did not want to disturb the parents who were about to sleep after their meals so affectionately and devotedly he gave to them just then. To ensure that Vishnu should not enter the hermitage, he threw a brick outside to let the Lord know that the parents be better not disturbed! The Lord correctly got Pundarika's message and waited at the door step. After the parents slept off peacefully, Pundarika came out and aplogisingly fell at the feet of Vishnu and mumbled 'Oh Lord, I did not want to leave on your arrival as I was just putting my parents to sleep! Do pardon me! The Lord was so moved that he offered to grant a boon to him and rightly Pundarika asked that he be near to the Lord for ever! The latter agreed to do so and said that by he be henceforth known as Vittoba since Pundarika addressed the Lord by that very name and the Place wherever the bhakta would install his Idol be known as Pundari pura!

Ryali: Connected with the legend of Kshira sagara Madhana of Amrit, the Avatar of Jatan Mohini is popular; the Temple of Jagan Mohini Keshava Swami near Kakinada and Rajamandri is popular with the

Vigraha as of Romantic Face of Keshava and on the rear side with the enchanting profile and countenance of Devi Jagan Mohini!

Sakshi Gopal: is hardly 4-5 km away from Puri and that is why yatis normally worship at Jagannaantha Mndir and proceed to Sakshi Gopal and nearby Radhika Mandir too. One should normally perform snaana and then seek Gapala Darshana and puja offering Tulasi dala maalas to the Deity and fragrant flowers like jasmines to Devi Radha. There is an interesting legendary back ground stated in connection to the Sakshi Gopal Mandir: once an old Brahmana desirous of walking up to Sakshi Gopala Mandir from Puri and as in olden days there were neither buses or trains and not even proper roads. On way, the old Brahmana met a Brahmana youth and he too was desirous of Gopala darshana. The youth took great care to the Old companion and became friendly. In fact, the youth took excellent care and service to the aged Brahmana. They both had very fulfilling darshana and spent enjoyable time on the return to Puri. The old Brahmana was well to do while the youth was not only poor but an orphan too. On the return journey itself the old man decided to marry off his daughter to the youth and conveyed so on the way back. On arrival at Puri both reached the house and conveyed the wedding news to the daughter who readily felt happy, but the sons had other plans of a rich boy in the neighbourhood and even proposed to the boy and parents awaiting the father's final return and consent. There came a tussle between the two families and the matter was referred to the King. The latter asked the Brahmana youth to whom the promise was made asked whether there was any evidence when the old man conveyed the wish to do so. The youth replied that Sakshi Gopala himself was the evidence. The youth went back to the Mandir and in great faith asked the Deity in privacy. A voice was heard that the youth should return and Gopala would follow the youth, but should not look back at any cost, lest only the Gopala Pratima would follow but not Gopala himself. The jingling sound of Lord Gopala's anklets continued all the way back and the youth was happy to have really brought Gopala himself. The King and his court's men besides the family members heard the jingling sounds and when the youth turned back finally the King and all concerned as also the youth were amazed to witness the Sakshi Gopala's Idol standing stilled. The King then performed the wedding of the youth with great pomp and show. He also made elaborate plans for installing the new Vigraha of Sakshi Gopal in a Vijaya Yatra in the premises of Jagannatha Mandir itself. In fact, the 'Naivedya bhog' daily offered to Jagannatha used to be first offered to Sakshi Gopal in the Main Mandir premises. But Lord Jagannath appeared in the dreams of the King that this new Vigraha had actually entered the Satya narayana Idol at a Mandir some 5-6 km away from Jagannatha Mandir; the King then worshipped that Satya narayana Temple very often and that Temple got intensified in its popularity. Meanwhile the Sakshi Gopala in the premises of Jagannatha Temple lost its sheen as the latter was dejected without the company of Devi Radha. In course of time, the Mahapatra or the Head Purohit of Jagannatha Temple gave birth to a female child with the 'Amsha' of Vrshabheswari Kumari and she was called Lakshmi. She came of age gradually but her father Bilveshwar Mahapatra started noticing that the Mala or garland of flowers as decorated around the Sakshi Gopal's neck in the previous night was reappearing on Lakshmi's bed; this coincidence came to be the talk of the town. The King installed a Radha Mandir in the premises of Sakshi Gopal and Mahapatra decided to marry off his daughter Lakshmi at the same Muhurat of Devi Radha's installation. But Lakshmi passed away at the very same time of Radha's installation! As all these events happened on Kartika Shukla Navami, this day of the year is celebrated with the Darshan of Sakshi Gopal and Devi Radha as exist in the premises of Jagannatha Temple as also at the original Sakshi Gopal Temple off Puri!

Tiruvallur: Away by 15 km is the lesser known but legendary Varadaraja Temple of Veera Raghava Swami as Sesha saayi with his right hand kept on the head of Maharshi Shalihotra; this Temple also has a Lakshmi Mandir with her name as Kanakavalli or Vasumati. In the premises of the Temple is a Sarovar called Hutashana Tirtha and two other Mandirs of Shiva Linga and of Devi Parvati. The background of this Temple was that the two notorious Madhu-Kaitabha Daityas hid themselves in a dense forest then known as Veekshararanya and Bhagavan Vishnu came to know about this and landed himself in the Ashram of a Rishi named Shalihotra who was always in the habit of providing help to guests of virtue. He took extra care for the new Atithi as he was impressed by his conduct and Dharma readily participating in Agni Karyas and Karma kanda along with the Rishi. As time elapsed the guest one after their meals gave the biggest surprise to the Muni that he himself was Vishnu with the mission of killing the two daityas! After his mission was fulfilled Bhagavan blessed the Maharshi and bestowed him Vaikuntha Sthaana. Further miracles at this Place followed: Veekshanaranya King called Dharmasena was blessed with a daughter named Vasumati was of Lakshmi Swarupa and she came of age and got her married to a Prince Veeraagava and visited the Temple of Veeraraghava; both of them intensely identified with the Vighrahas and got absorbed into them; since then Kanakavalli and Vasumati came to be addressed by either name while the Prince's name continued for ever! The Pousha Month's Bhadrapada nakshatra is thus celebrated at this Temple every year ever since. There was a King named Pradyumna in Satya Yuga who prayed to Narayana for long time and eventually had his darshan of Bhagavan who granted his wish to secure a male child; besides he also blessed that the significance this Kshetra be intensified and there appeared a Hutaashana Sarovara to wash off the sins of Yatris.

Tiruvattaar Adi Keshava: From Trivendram to Tiruvattar the distance is some 7 km where on the banks of River Tamraparni, the Temple of Adikeshava is popular. The height of the idol of Adi Keshava as Sesha shaayi Adi Keshava. is as of some 16 feet; from one 'Dwar' or gate, the Bhagavan who is in a lying posture is visible with his Shri Mukha or propitious Face, the second 'dwar' displaying his 'Vakshasthala' or the region of his heart, and the third dwar displays his lotus feet, with his body crushing a Rakshasa. The legendary belief is that the Demon prayed to Brahma and in his liberal mood, allowed free access to a 'Kadali phala vana' / banyan fruit garden to assuage his hunger; but the demon started harassing the Brahmanas and Rishis interfering in their 'Dharma Karyas' and the latter appealed to Vishnu who suppressed the demon; the latter appealed to Vishnu to always be under his body in that posture.

Tripunattarai: Being a suburb of Kochi, the then Capital of Cochin kingdom, in the banks of River Purna and the Palace Township of the King, Tripunittara is known in olden days as the Purna Veda puri or the Place of all Vedas; it was also called as the Pooneeram or the quiver to keep arrows in which Arjuna kept an Idol of Vishnu which Lord Krishna gifted to Arjuna and as the Place identified for the installation of the Idol, Arjuna was asked 'Pooneeram terai' or open the quiver! 'Terai' also denotes harbour or the mouth of the Sea, is Tripunattarai happens to be the Gate of the back waters of the Sea at the harbour! Being the Palace Hill Town, Tripunattari is also the erstwhile Capital of the Kingdom and continues still as the Culture Capital hosting the major dance forms of Kathakali, Mohini Attam and Fine Arts especially of percussion instruments etc. all developed and sustained for long under the Royal patronage. But more importantly as the Tirtha Place with famed Temples, like Poornantaresha Temple with Santana Gopala Moorti as the central attraction, Dharma Sasta-Ayyappan Temple and several Bhagavati Temples, Rama, Shiva and other Devi Temples. Santana Gopala Poornaanttaresha Temple is indeed outstanding as is referred to in Maha Bhavagta Purana: a pious Brahmana lost his child even soon after it was born; he accused the King Ugrasena of Mathura as a Brahmana Dweshi, Vishaya maanasa, and Kshatriya bandhu -

all typical disqualifications of an Ideal King as in the earlier ages there were kings like Prithvi, Harishchandra and Rama whose main concern was 'Praja kshema' and none else. Unfortunately, the Brahmana couple lost their children in succession and the frustrated Brahmana attempted suicide in the Royal Court when Arjuna and Krishna were also present as Ugrasena was the grandfather of Krishna. Arjuna felt very bad at the tragedy befallen to the Brahmana and announced that he would bring back the dead kids from any part of the Sapta Dwipas, as he had the boon of entering all the Dwipas. He then explored Jambu-Plaksha-Salmaali-Kusha-Krouncha-Shaka and Pushkala Lokas and as a desperation decided to offer his life by jumping into Homagni. Being his best friend and devotee Krishna prevented Arjuna to do so and together they searched the higher lokas like Vaayu-Agni-Varuna- Yama Lokas and even Brahma Loka. The then launched the search for Vaikuntha but the path to that Loka was of pitch darkness; Krishna accompanied by Arjuna with the help of the lustrous radiance of Sudarshana Chakra ahead landed with difficulty at Vaikuntha where Maha Visdhnu welcomed them as Nara and Narayana and blessed them with the boon of returning the Souls of the children of the Brahmana. It was at that time that Maha Vishnu himself gifted an Idol of himself to Arjuna and install it at an appropriate Kshetra and with an appropriate name; Lord Ganesha was commissioned by Maha Vishnu to assist Arjuna in this Mission. Ganesha disciverd the suitable place at Poorna Vedapuri on the banks of Poorna River and at the Sacred Time of installing the Vishnu Idol, Ganesha asked Arjuna saying 'Poornam terai' to enable the Vishnu Vighraha to be installed and both of them named the Vighra as Poornataresha Santana Gopala since who so ever worships the Lord in that form would indeed be blessed with auspicious and illustrious children! Tripunattarai is also famed for the Shiva Temple where Bhagavan Shiva is displayed as in the form of a Kirata or a hunter when Maha Deva once again sought to test Arjuna's prowess of archery or Dhanurvedya of which the latter was rightfully proud of since he had the distinction of destroying 'Matsya Yantra' to win the hand of Devi Draupadi and even giving a historic twist of destiny in landing Draupadi to the dilemma of having to wed all the Pancha Pandavas simultaneously! Hence the test that Maha Deva gave to Arjuna the opportunity to examine whether his Kirata Swarupa's arrow could just strike the wildpig at the same speed and finesse that would kill by Arjuna's arrow as that of Maha Deva in Kirata form! As a gift of appceiation, Maha Deva gave the boon of 'Paaashupataastra' to Arjuna. Such indeed was the mercifullness and magnanimity of Maha Deva, instead of Arjuna's claiming the fame of equalling Arjuna's equality! Shiva Swarupa is thus extolled: *Dharaadhara shyamalaankam chhurikaa chaapa dhaarinam, Kirata vapusham vande Paraatmaanameshwaram!* (To Maha Shankara, with the body manifestation of blue sky like unique splendour and as in the Swarupa of a Forest Hunter, my sincere and faithful prostrations to you!)

Udipi: Inside the long stretch of Parashurama Kshetra right from Western Ghats of Bharat coastline down to the Arabian Sea, covering Gokarna to Kanyakumari, Udipi is also an important insider of the Kshetra where Chandradeva himself performed long Tapasya to Maha Deva and the latter granted his darshan in the form of Chandra sekhara Shiva Swarupa as at Udipi of the present day as Rajatapeetha pura, Roupya pitha pura and Shivali being nearest big Tirtha from Mangalore Railway station; from Mangalore to Udipi is of a distance of 25 km approx. Udipi is the illustrious Place of Madhvacharya Matha in the Ananteshwara Mandir as Achyutaprakashacharya the preceptor of Madhvacharya instructed the latter to be the Head of the Matha. Just as Adi Shankaraacharya propounded the Advaita Discipline of Hindu Thought that Paramatma is just One and Absloutely Singular, Madhvacharya deviated from that thought and distinguished Paramatma from Jeevatma or the Atma Within viz. the Soul inside a Being with a Life-Span or a perishable Entity without being ever Permanant which Paramatma is. The Madhva Matha is

thus the nucleus of the Dwaita Thought essentially existent in the premises of the Ananteshwara Mandir. *Krishna Matha* is in the same premises being the North east of Aanantshwara Mandira. On the ceiling of Krishna Mandir are the hanging decorations of silver leaves and golden flowers in garland forms. As one enters, there is an Idol of Madhvacharya and before that is Lord Krishna's Shalagrama Shila as also of Garuda, besides the same brass vessels with which Madhwacharya performed puja himself. On the four sides of Krishna Mandir are eight Mutts of the Sishyas of Madhvacharya; the core sishyas of the Acharya are in what is called 'Atyokrishta' parampara or the lineage at Palimar Matha, while Admar Matha is for the sishyas of Nrisimha Tirtha and so on. Abjaranya Titha is significant as that was the Sacred Place where Chandra Deva achieved Maha Deva's darshan as Chandra sekhar. Indrani Tirtha on a hill top some 2km from Udipi is stated as the Place where Shachi Devi secured the Darshan of the Five Faced Durga as a Swayambhu Shala grama and a Mandir was set up eventually. Also there is a chain of Durga Mandirs in four directions of Udipi at Belur in South, Kaanarpadi in west, at Puttur in North, and at Kadiyali in South- all within a range of 1-3 km. Similarly there are four Subramanya Temples in the precincts of Udipi as Mangoidu, Tangodu, Mricchila kodu and Ariyodu- all being of repute. On the banks of Arabian Sea nearby, Madhvacharya also set up Badaa Bhandeshwara Bala Rama where Samudra snaanas are performed at the timings of Surya- Chandra Grahanas, Amavasyas, and other festival days. It is stated that Parashu Rama set up Seven Mukti Kshetras on the banks of Arabian Sea at Rajhatapeeth, Kumaraadri, Kumbhha Kashi, Dhvajeshwara, Shankara Narayana, Gokarna and Mookambika.

#### Shri Ram's Vanavasa Parikrama:

It is more difficult to chart a route for Ram's journey during his period of exile. Firstly this is pan-India journey, secondly, Ram, Lakshman and Sita also wandered in the Dandaka Forest for more than 10 years. This mighty forest would encompass in today's date almost the entire state of Madhya Pradesh including parts of Gujarat and Maharashtra on the West and Karnataka on the South. Hence this makes it even more difficult. Still we have charted a basic route, which can be seen here in this map. There are many places that Ram visited during this 14 year period during which he had the good fortune of meeting with some of most enlightened sages and beings of that period. They were of course very delighted to meet with Ram themselves with many of them having been foretold the coming of Ram, they waited for years conducting severe penance for that fortunate time to arrive.

1) Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh: was the capital city for the Isvaku Dynasty (Suryavanshi) of Kings. This was also the city where Son of Dasrath, Shri Ram was born (appeared). In twelve kilometers vicinity of Ayodhya there exist holy places like Veda Kund, Sita Kund, Janaura etc. that are also part of the journey of Shri Ram's 'vanvas' (exile) route. It was also from Ayodhya that Shri Ram started his journey along with Sita and Lakshman. Ayodhya was a majestic city comparable to any international city of modern times almost eleven kilometers in length full of parks, gardens, theatres and modern infrastructure and facilities for its citizens. The citizens of Ayodhya loved their Kings.

It was at Tamsa River, Uttar Pradesh that Shri Ram along with Sita, Lakshman and Sumantra Minister (Mantri) rested on their first night. The modern name for Tamsa River is Madhar River and the place from where she flows is called Gora Ghat. This place is about twenty kilometers from Ayodhya. On the banks of the Tamsa River there is a place known as Purva Chakiya. The citizens of Ayodhya followed Shri Ram until this spot after their dearest Ram departed from Ayodhya. Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sita disguised themselves and left this spot in the middle of the night so that none of the people would be able to follow him.

2) Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh on the banks of Gomati River that Sage Valmiki had an ashram. It was from here that Shri Ram crossed the Gomti river. The old name of Sultanpur was Kushannathpur, which was

named after the son of Ram, 'Kush'. Vadrathi River, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh The present day name Sarkani River which is situated around 8 kilometers from Pratapgarh in the Eastern Direction. Shri Ram had crossed this river near the town of Mohanganj, as per Valmiki Ramayan. Sandika River (Sayi River), Mohanganj, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh is situated at a distance of twelve kilometers from Pratapgarh. This place is also commonly known as Dev Ghat. Shri Ram has crossed this river from this spot. There is also a Shiv Temple here that was established by Bharat. This place has been mentioned in the Valmiki as well as Tulsi Ramayan. Further, Balukini River, Pratapgarh, Ramkaleva, Uttar Pradesh is approximately 15 kilometers from Pratapgarh in the Southern Direction. Shri Ram had crossed this river here as has been mentioned in the Valmiki Ramayan.

3) Prayag ( Allahabad), Uttara Pradesh: A) Shringverpur or the current name Singrora, the capital of Nishad Raj Guha. This place is situated around twenty kilometers North of Allahabad. Shri Ram has rested on a bed of grass here. The next morning he crossed the Ganga River from here and proceeded to the Bharadwaj Ashram. The incident of "Kevat Prasang" took place here. B) Sita Kund, Shrinverpur, Prayag. This holy pond is around two kilometers from Shrinverpur. It was from here that Shri Ram sent back their beloved minister Sumantra to Ayodhya. C) Sangam, Prayag: This is the divine meeting place of the three holy rivers of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. Shri Ram himself praised this spot for its spiritual powers, which could uplift mankind. Bharadwaj Rishi had his ashram here. Shri Ram had rested in this ashram for a night. Ram Charita Manas as well as Valmiki Ramayan give a lot of importance to this place. D) Yamuna Ghat, Simri, Prayag: Shri Ram along with Lakshman and Sita crossed the Yamuna River. In the Valmiki Ramayan the reference to Lakshman constructing a boat to cross the river has been made for this place. After resting overnight on the Simri Ghat Shri Ram crossed the river using the boat made by Lakshman. There are many places on River banks of Yamuna related to the exile period of Shri Ram like Akshay Vat, Sita Rasoi (Jasra Bazaar), Rishiyan (the abode of Rishis), and so on.

4) Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh: A) Ramnagar: Shri Ram walked along the banks of the Yamuna River in his onward journey. After crossing the Yamuna River, he reached what is known in today's time as Ramnagar. This place is birthplace of Tulsi Das, the great poet who has written Ram Charita Manas. B) Valmiki Ashram, Lala Pur, Chitrakoot: After visiting Sage Bharadwaj's Ashram, Shri Ram reached Valmiki's Ashram and he spent the night here. It was here that Sage Valmiki himself suggested to Shri Ram to make Chitrakoot his home for a few days. C) As suggested by Sage Valmiki, Shri Ram reached Chitrakoot Dham. Shri Ram made his ashram on the Kamadgiri Mountain near the Mandakini River. There were many sages, holy men and Rishis who had made their ashrams (abodes) near the Kamadgiri Mountain. It was this divine spot where Shri Bharat met with Shri Ram and took his padukas (slippers) with him to Ayodhya to place on the throne. Chitrakoot has many places of pilgrimages in its vicinity like Madakini River, Bharatkoop, On the banks of the Mandakini River – Spatik Sheela, Hanuman Dhara and Atri Ashram, Gupt (Secret) Godavari. All these sacred places strengthen the place of Chitrakoot as a one of the most important places of pilgrimages while tracing the footsteps of Shri Ram's journey of exile. After the visit of Bharat to Chitrakoot, many citizens of Ayodhya had started to visit this place. Many of the holy men and sages in this area started to feel disturbed by the presence of so many people and it then that Shri Ram decided to leave this place. Hence all in all Shri Ram would have stayed in Chitrakoot for only about one or two years only. The majority of his exile period he spent in the Dandak Forest. D) Amravati, Chitrakut, Uttar Pradesh: Around 7 kilometers from Atri Ashram, in the middle of the jungle, there is a beautiful place called Amravati. One of the ancestors of Shri Ram called Ambrish had conducted an intense penance here for many years. After leaving Chitrakut, Shri Ram came to Sage Atri's Ashram. It was here that the Sati Anusuya (pure and chaste wife of Sage Atri) gave the sermon of "Pati Vrata Dharma" (service to husband) to Mother Sita. After resting in Sage Atri's Ashram for one night, Shri Ram spent the next night at the place of penance of Ambrish (his ancestor). It was in this forest that Shri Ram killed the Rakshas named Viradh. In the vicinity of Amvarti there is a village called Jamunihayi. There is a very dark and dangerous looking pit called 'Viradh Kund'

(pond). This pit is situated three kilometers from Amravati. After killing the demon Viradh, Shri Ram had buried him here.

5) Sharbang Ashram, Satna, Madhya Pradesh: Around 13 kilometers from current day Chithara Station, Satna, where the Shabrang Ashram of the Ramayan is situated. After the slaying of Viradh, Shri Ram visited this ashram. It was here that he had the divine 'darshan' of the God Indra. After having the 'darshan' of Shri Ram, Shabrang Rishi with Yogic Fire destroyed his body and attained salvation.

6) Ramtek, Nagpur, Maharashtra: Ramtek is a beautiful mountain near the city of Nagpur. Shri Ram stayed here for some time. This mountain is also connected with the writer Kalidas who wrote the famous poem 'Meghdoot' according to some historians. Approximately 9 kilometers from here there is a place called Salbardi near which there is a pilgrimage spot called Sita Nahani. According to popular legend, Shri Ram proceeded to the ashram of Sutikshan Muni from here.

7) Nasik, Maharashtra: A) Sutiksha Muni Ashram: Sapta Srungi; After meeting with Sharbang Rishi, Shri Ram reached the ashram of Sutikshan Muni who had spent 10 years in the Dandaka Forest before reaching here. Sutikshan Muni was the disciple of Agastya Rishi. Shri Ram rested here for some time. He killed many of the demons residing in this area and also took a vow that he would rid this area of all the evil influences. There is an ancient temple of Goddess Sapta Srungi here, which attracts many pilgrims. It is said that Markandeya Rishi wrote the Durga Saptastuti at this holy place. According to popular legend, Durga Ma killed the demon Mahisasur at this place, which is represented by a hole in the mountain, which can be seen till today. The demon was hiding behind the mountain when Durga attacked him. B) Agastya Ashram: Pimparner, Nasik: Approximately 16 kilometers North of Nasik there is an ashram called Agasteshwar Ashram. Sutiksha Muni had guided Shri Ram to his Guru Agastya Rishi. Sage Agastya presented Ram with many divine weapons and powers here. He also advised Ram to make his Ashram on the banks of the Godavari River and live there. C) Panchavati: Nasik; On the banks of the Godavari River there is place popularly known as Tapovan, which is the actual Panchvati of the Ramayan era. It was here that Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sita resided here in a small hut. The incident of the cutting off the nose of Demoness Shupnaka took place here. It is from here that 'Nasik' derived its name as the Sanskrit name for nose is 'Nasika'. Khar, Dhooshan, Trishara and 14,000 other Demons were slain by Shri Ram in this area after they attacked Shri Ram on hearing about this incident from their sister. The kidnapping of Sita by Ravan, The slaying of Mareech and the Slaying of Jatayu by Ravan all took place in a forest known as Jansthan in this area. In the ancient times, the ashram of Gautam Rishi was in the holy town of Trimbakeshwar (one of the twelve Jyotirlingas) nearby. In order to release himself of the burden of a curse on him, Gautam Rishi had created the Godavari River.

8) Tuljapur ( Maharashtra): There is a famed temple of Devi Tuljabhavani here. It is believed that Shri Ram and Sita roamed in the forests near the temple. It is also here that Lord Shiva and his wife Sati came for the 'darshan' of Shri Ram and Sita. Sati took the form of Sita and tried to get close to Ram in order to test his purity.

9) Ramdurg, Belgaum, Karnataka: A) Kaband Ashram: Kardigud, Near Ramdurg, Belgaum, Karnataka In the Indian state of Karnataka there is a village called Kardigud where it is believed that Kaband Ashram was situated. Shri Ram and Lakshman slayed the demon Kaband here. After he was killed, Kaband became a "Gandharva" (equivalent of angel) and left for his heavenly abode. Before leaving he had requested Shri Ram to visit the Ashram of Shabri. B) Shabri Ashram: Sureban, Near Ramdurg, Belgaum: Around 14 kilometers in the Northern direction from Ram Durg, near the town of Gunga is placed called Sureban. This is place where Shabri, who was a disciple of Sage Matang lived. She had waited long years for her dear Ram to arrive, and on his arrival she fed him berries which she had tasted herself to make sure that they were sweet. This angered Lakshman but Shri Ram pacified him because he could see her intense love and devotion towards him. It was Shabri who then

instructed Ram to approach Sugreev in the search for his beloved wife.

10) Hampi, Karnataka A) Hanuman Halli: Koppal, Hampi: This was the place where Hanuman met Shri Ram and Lakshman for the first time. In fact Sugreev had sent Hanuman to meet with them in order to make sure that they were not the spies of his brother and archenemy Bali. The mighty Hanuman lifted Shri Ram and Lakshman on his shoulders and took them on Rishimukh Parvat to meet with Sugreev. The capital city of Sugreev 'Kishkinda' is also near by. B) Bellari, Hampi: Near the ancient Kishkinda, around four kilometers from the town of Hampi, there exists a Mountain called Malbhavant (Prastravan) where Shri Ram has spent the monsoon season. The places to see around this area include Bali Bandara, Anjani Parvat (mountain), Matang Rishi Mountain, Spatik Sheela. It was on the Spatik Sheela that the Varan (monkey) Sena (army) had collected for the first time. Hanuman had given the news of Sita to Shri Ram at this place.

10) Tiruchallapalli, Tamil Nadu: The old name for this town is Trishirapalli. This was the abode for Ravan's brother Trishira and so named after him. On the banks of the Kaveri River here there is a beautiful Shiva Temple, which is said to destroy sins. According to popular legend, Shri Ram had prayed to Lord Shiva here in order to free himself of the sin of slaying Khar and Dooshan. On his way to Lanka, Shri Ram had stayed here.

12) Rampad, Kodikarai, Vedaranyam, Tamil Nadu: Along with the entire Vanar (monkey) Sena (army), Shri Ram had proceeded towards the Southern direction from this town. It was also from this place that Shri Ram had the first view of the sea. The footprints of Shri Ram are still found in the forests of this area.

13) Ramanadhapuram, Tamil Nadu: Ramnathpuram is on the shores of the water bodies on the Southern tip of India. It is on the way to the holy pilgrim town of Rameshwaram. It is believed that the foundation stone of the Ram-Setu Bridge constructed by Ram and the entire army to cross over to Sri Lanka is placed here in a small village called 'Chedu Karai'. One can still see the foundation stones of this architectural wonder ten feet below the waters of the ocean. Vibhishan, after having been insulted by Ravan came to seek the help of Ram at this place. The entire strategy for the war was also devised in this town. Places worth to visit in the neighborhood include Vilundi Tirth, Ekanth Ram, Agni Tirth, Ram Jaroka, Kodanda Ram Mandir, Jata Tirth and Darbhashainam. It is believed that it was in Darbhashainam, that Shri Ram made a Darbhashayana (a seat of grass) and prayed to Varun Devta (God of the Sea) for three continuous days for giving him passage to Lanka. Varun Devta appeared after three days and advised Ram to build a bridge across the sea to Lanka.

14) Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu: Rameshwaram is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas in India. Shri Ram had established a Shiva Linga Temple here using the sand from the sea. Approximately one or two kilometers from this Temple, Nala vanara (monkey) along with the other vanaras (monkeys) had made the bridge to Lanka. This bridge was constructed in five days only. Shri Ram crossed over to Lanka with his entire army using this bridge and camped at Suvel Parvat (Mountain). NASA has used modern satellite technology to photograph this bridge and they have actually unearthed an ancient bridge connected India to modern day Sri Lanka!

15) Dhanushkoti: Skanda Purana in reference to Setu Mahatmya describes: ' On the shores of the Southern Seas is the most sacred and boon-bestowing Dhanushkoti which is also the high point of destroying ' Maha Patakas' like Brahma Hatya, Suraapaana, Swarna harana, Guru-Shishyadi gamana. This is also the provider of plentiful prosperity and Kailasa Moksha Prada. It uproots indebtedness and poverty for ever. Incidentally, Dhanushkoti partially got submerged into Sea owing to recent cyclonic devastation and partly ascribed to Shri Rama's own arrows. This historic meeting point of three high Seas of Hind Sagara-Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea is the hallowed Tirtha for Sacred Snaananas, Shradha-Pinda pradaanas and Daanas.

The Legend continues to state that Lord Shri Rama after killing Ravana and his generation except Vibhishana who was subsequently made the King of Lanka, there followed a series of awe-inspiring incidents like Devi Sita's Agni Pariksha, Hanuman's despatch to Kasi to fetch a genuine Shiva Linga for installation at Raneshwara, his delayed action to do so, Devi Sita's installation of Sand Linga, and travel by Pushpaka Vimana back to Ayodhya for the most auspicious Shri Sita-Rama Kalyana at Ayodhya!

**Conclusion:** Recalling the broad import of 'Dharmaacharana' as emphasized in the Introduction of the Upanishad Section of this Script, common Dharmas of householders are recalled from Parashara Smriti and Veda Vyasa **Smritis** as follows: *Grihastu dayaa yukto Dharmamevaanuchintayet, Poshya vargaartha siddhyartham nyaayavartaa su buddhiman/* (It is expected of Grihasthas or house holders to be always engaged in compassion, just conduct, and observance of Virtue as also the upkeep of the family members on the path of worthy upbringing, training and of justice). *Nyaayoparjita vittena kartavyam hyatma rakshanam, Anyaayena tu yo jeevet sarva karma bahishkrutah/* (The grihasthi is never ever to deviate from the practice of living with well earned money within his means and maintain his family with uprightness being far aloof of undeserving temptations of life). A 'daana' if given to a very poor and helpless, especially to a 'Vedaadhyayi' would instantly add several years of healthy and contented on going life itself! But he who mismanages to gain houses, fields or even barren land by foul means from another party would not recompense by acts of digging wells, performing yagjnas, and giving away charity of several cows!. Vyasa Smriti adds : This truism needs to be stressed again and again that there could be no better dharma as evidenced in Grihastha ashrama. Those who observe these Ashrama Dharmas with conscience are rewarded with the fruits of Sarva Tirtha Darshana. *Guru bhakto bhrutya poshi dayaavaannasuyakah, Nitya japi cha homi cha Satya vaadi jitendriyah/ Swadaaro yasya santoshaha paraadaaraa nivartanam, Apavaadopi no yasya tasya tirthaphalam gruhe/* (Those grihastis who pay great attention to Guru and elders, take full care of servants with sincerity, essentially of kindly disposition, being of non-complaining nature, observing nitya gayatri japa homas, satyavaadi or highly truthful, self restrained of his physical limbs, fully contented with his own wife and respectful of other females, and of impeccable character and reputation are doubtless the recipients of the Sarva Tirtha phala without visiting none and being totally home bound) *Para daaraan Paradravyam harate yo dine dine, Sarvatirhaabhishekena paapam tasya na nashtati/* (Those grihastis who have no desire for other females and other's money at any time make the Sarvatirtha-abhisheka punya into insignificance! ) *Maata Pitrou param tirtham Gangaa gaavo visheshitah, Braahmanaat Parama tirtham na bhutam na bhavishyati/* (The grihasthi would normally consider his father and mother as Punya Tirthas and especially so the Go Maatas or cows; but Brahma as the Atithi is indeed the Parama Tirtha as never in the past nor in the future times!) *Indriyaani vesheekritya Griha eva vasonnarah, Tatra tasya Kurukshetram Naimisham Pushkaraanicha/* (Any person might as well stay in one's own home if only he keeps his physical parts and mental faculties are controlled utmost; indeed his own home is as good then since that itself is Kurukshetra, or Naimisha or Pushkar like Tirthas!) *Gangadwaaramcha Kedaaram sannihiti tathaiva cha, Etaani Sarva Tirthaani krutwaa Paapaih pramuchyate/* (His own home then would be as near and purifying as Haridwar, Kedarnath and such other Tirthas since that indeed is the singular sin destroying Tirtha) Whatever money that is actually spent on the needs of the family members apart from that spent on daana dharmas is called the genuine money, but the excess of that money which is left behind one's death is indeed squandered endlessly on the family's playful activities since that part of the amount is sure to be misused! *Ashasvataani gaatraani vibhavo naiva shasvatah, Nityam sannihito mrityuh kartavyo dharma sangraha/* (Sharira is indeed transitory, the money is not permanent either, death is round the

corner and as such one should endeavour to earn as much Dharma as possible. If one ekes life for self sustenance alone, then he or she is considered as an animal only; what is the purpose of that kind of animal life even if lived for long!) *Praananaashastu kartavyo yah kritartho na so mritah, Akrutaardhatu yo mriyupraaptah kara samohi sah/* (Those who leave the life are indeed well deserved and fulfilled once they have the satisfaction of having lived contented and indeed such persons are acclaimed as Amarajeevis or persons everliving! But, those who merely exist without ‘satkarmas, are as bad as donkeys! That kind of daana with the apprehension of having to face inauspiciousness on the part of the donor is of artificial nature, but a ‘Nishkaama Daana’ with no expectation of return desire is stated to be of lasting value, especially when the daana karta would request for ‘Punaraagamana’ or to say, ‘please come again’. *Maataa pitrushu yadyadyaad bhraatrushu shvashureshucha, Jaayaapatyeshu yaddadyaad sonantah swarga samkramah/* (The charity that is provided to parents, brothers and father- in- law, own wife and children would pave the way for heavens) *Pituh shatagunam daanam sahasra, Maaturuchyate, Bhaginyaam shata sahasram sodare dutta -makshayam/*(If the charity that is given to father is hundred folded, that given to mother is thousand folded, to sisters- it is of a lakh times more, and to brothers is countless!) *Vidya vinaya sampanne Brahmane guruhamaagate, Kreedanyo -shadhayah sarvaa yaasyaamah paramaam gatim/*(It is only in the households of Brahmanas that Vidya and Vinaya or knowledge and discipline could thrive and by the entry of oushadhis or anna / food would become playful and lead to total fulfillment) *Indriyaanaam jaye shuro, Dharmacharita panditah, Hitapriyoktibhir vaktaa daataa sammmana daanatah/* (A person who possesses physical and mental control is a truly gallant hero, a meticulous practitioner of Dharma or Vrtue is a genuine Vidwan, a soft spoken convincer in arguments and persuader of proactive actions is a real Orator, and he who donates as per the reciever’s needs and necessities with respect and poltiness without seeking a return is an authentic data!). Grihini Dharmas: In the event of married (or unmarried) women desirous of shortening their hair due to reasons of religion the head hair can be shortened by two inches; for example there is a dutiful binding called ‘Veni Samhara’ at tirtha pradeshas like Gaya, where a husband himself performs the vrata by scissoring the hair likewise. They are forbidden to sleep in the central place of their homes or alone in far off places. They are also restricted to neither accompany their husbands to agricultural fields, nor visit without husbands or unaccompanied with close relatives to cattle sheds, river beds, sea shores and forests. It is preferred that they perform Vratas in their own homes with their husbands. Tirtha yatra, temple visits or religious places or congregations unaccompanied with husbands are a mere waste. Similarly giving away danaas, performing any activity like homas, vratas etc. are futile. Yet, any activity related to Dharma with motives of vengeance, harmful to others or with show off and pride shall indeed recoil in couse of time. At the same time, a prayer or vrata or of spiritual significance performed with physical and mental cleanliness would concentration, faith and dedication would indeed yield contentment and fulfillment. Even a Kamyaa Vrata or Nishkama Karma performed with commitment shall indeed be reciprocated proportionately while of course kamyaa vratas lead to desired results while nishkama vratas add to the accounts of Punya! Referring to the tendencies of contacts with men in general and those males other than husbands in particular, Paraashara Smriti lists out Ashta Vidha Maithuna viz. Smarana or thoughts, keertana or praising, keli or being playful, prekshana or passing looks with desire at the opposite party, Guhya bhashana or whispers, Sankalpa or a kind of resolve, Athyavasaaya or trials for contact from a distance, Kriya nirvritti or intense desire, Vaak prerepana or inciting with conversation, Udreka or infatuation, steady vision, rahasya sambhashana or secret conversation, Ubhaya prerepana or mutual physical contact, Resolve or the decision to mate and finally the copulation. These misdemeanors too would qualify for atonements!

## ANNEXURES

### 1.Ashtottattara Shata Vishnu Kshetras:

*Ashtottara shatastaaneshwaavirbhutam Jagatpatim, Naami Jagataameesham Naraayanamananya dheeh/*

Narayana is as Vaasudeva in Vaikuntha, Sankarshana at Aamoda; Pradyumna at Pramoda, Aniruddha at Sammoda; Vishnu in Satyaloka; Padmaksha at Surya Mandala; Shesha shayi in Ksheera Saagara; Taaraka in Shweta Dwipa; Narayana at Badarikashrama; Avinashi Hari at Naimisharanya; Shalagrama at Harikshetra; Rahavendra Shri Ramabhadra at Ayodhya; Bala Krishna at Mathura; Madhusudana at Mayapuri; Bhogashayana at Kashi; Avaniapat at Avantika; Yadavendra at Dwaraka; Gopijana Vallabha at Vraja Bhumi; Nandanandana at Brindavana; Govinda at Kaliya hrada; Bhava nashaka at Govardhana; Shouri at Gomanta Parvata; Jagatpati at Haridwaara; Veni Madhava at Prayaga; Gadadhara at Gaya; Vishnu at Ganga Sagara Sangama; Raghava at Chitrakuta; Rakshasa hanta at Nuanda grama; Vishwa rupa at Prabhasa; Achala Kurma at Shri Kurma; Purushottama at Neelachala Jagannaatha; Paana Nri-Simha at Simhachala; Gadapani at Tulasivana; Paapahara at Ghrita shaila; Simhaswarupa at Shwetachala; Yogananda at Dharmapuri; Andhra Nayaka at Shri Kaakula; Hiranyantaka at Ahobila; Panduranga Vithala at Pandaripura; Srinivasa Balaji at Tirumala Venkatachala; Narayana at Melkote; Nrisimha at Ghatikachala; Varadaraja Kamala lochana at Kanchipura; Yathokari at Shiva Kaanchi; in Kanchi itself there are as many as eighteen Vishnu Swarupas; Vijaya Raghava at Grudhra Sarovara thata; Veeraraghava at Vikshaaranya; Tangashayi at Totadri; Gajarti nashaka at Gajasthala; Maha Bali at Balipura; Jagatpati at Bhakti saara; Maha Varaha at Shri Mushna; Padmalochana at Mahindra; Ranga natha at Sriranga; Janaki vallabha at Shridhama; Saranatha at Sara Kshetra; Harachapa bhanjaka at Khandana; Purna at Shrinivasa Sthala; Suvarna at Swarna Mandira; Maha Vishnu at Vyaghrapuri; Bhakti daata at Bhakti sthaana; Shanta Murti at Shweta hrada; Bharga at Bhargava Sthala; Madhava at Vaikuntha; Bhakta sakha at Purushottama; Sudarshana at Chakra Tirtha; Chakrapani at Kumbhakona; Sharanghadhara at Bhutapuri; Gajartihara at Kapisthala; Govinda at Chitrakuta; Anuttama at Uttama; Padmalochana at Shwetachala; Parabrahma at Parthasthala; Madhusudana at Krishna koti; Mahananda at Nandapuri, Vrishaashraya at Vriddhapuri; Asanga at Sangamagrama; Shri Sharana at Sharanya; Jagatpati Gopala at Dakshina Dwaraka; Maha Simha at Simha Kshetra; Mallari at Manimandapa; Nibidakara at Nibida; Jagadishwara at Dhanushkoti; Kalamegha at Mouhura; Sundara at Madurai; Parama Swami at Vrishabhachala; Shri Natha at Varagna; Ramapriya at Kuruka; Goshthipati at Goshthipura; Darbha shayi at Darbha shayana; Shouri at Dhanvi Mangala; Baladhya at Bhramara sthala; Purna at Kurangapura; Srikrishna at Vata sthala; Achyuta at Kshudra Nati pranta and Padmanabha at Anantapura. It is firmly believed that among the above Kshetras, Bhagavan's Vighras were self generated at Eight Places viz. Sriranga, Srimusha, Venkatashala, Shalagrama of Hari Kshetra, Naimisha, Thotadri, Pushkara and Badarikashrama.

### 2.Ashtottara Shata Divya / Vishnu Kshetras:

It is likely that quite a few of the following Kshetras are repeats of the above list and hence clarification is given the new and older names are mentioned within brackets: Kshira Sagara (Tiruppalkadal); Shriranga

is near Tiruchirapalli; Koliyur or Oraiyur almost a part of Trichinapalli; Shwetagiri is Tiruvallur near Shrirangam; Dhanvinahpura near Lalgudi/ Trichinapalli with Nambi Sundararaja and Sundaravali Deities; Tiruppera/Shri Ramanagar near Tanjavor where Pupapriya Ranganathag and Ranga nayaki Lakshmi are the Deities; Karambanor or Kadabapur near Sriranga / Tiruvallarai with Purushottama and Purva Devi are the Deities; Tanjaimamani koil (Sharanya Nagar) near Tanjavur with three Temples of Neela megha Bhagavan and Arunakamala Nayaki; Nrisimha and Tadjai nayaki Lakshmi; and Manikundala Perumal and Ambujavali; Tirukkandiyur Khanda Nagar) near Shartanuya Nagar with Harashapa vimochana Narayana and Devi Lakshmi; Cuddalore (Sangama Pura) and Tituvayyar where Vishnu and Kamkala Valli Lakshmi are present; Kapisthala near Cuddalore and River Kaveri from where Gajendra Varada and Lakshmi hastened to rescue Gajendra to Gandaki River near Bihar and thus there is a Gajendra Pushkarini in place here; this is also place where Hanuman had Sakshat kar of Shri Rama as Bhagavan Vishnu himself!; Pullabhadamokudi (Grudhra Tirtha) where Jatayu realised Rama as ‘Sesha shaayi’ Narayana himself; Adanor or Gopuri where Kamadhenu and Alwar Shriparakaal realised Rama as Maha Vishnu; Tirukkandnadai (Kumbakonam); Tiruvinnagaram (Akashnagar); Tirunaaraiyur (Sugandhagiri); Tiruccherai (Saara Kshetra); Nandan Koel; Tiruvelliyankudi (Bhargavapuri); Tirullundur (Rathapaata Shtala); Tiruvandilurn (Indrapura); Shirupuliyur (Vyaghrapura); Tiruvannampuram ( Kanvapura); Tirunnamangai (Krishna Mangalapura); Tirukkannankudi ( Krishna Kuti); Tiruvannagai (Nagapattanam); Kalahasti; Tiruvali Tirunagari (Parirambhapura); Manimadakkoyil (Tirunagur-Nagapuri) ; Vaikunthavinnagaram ( Vaikunthapura); Arimeyavinnagaram (Nabhapura); Vanpurushottamam (Purushottama); Semponseya Koil (Swarna Mandira); Tiruttontriyambalam (Lakshmi Ranganatha); Tirumanikkutam (Manikuta); Tirukkalam padi (Talavana); Tiruddevanaar Tokai ( Keelai –cchalai Devanagara); Tiruvellakkullam ( Shwetahrada or AppanKoil); Parthanpalli( Parthasthala); Talaicchankaamadim-Tallaicchenkadu ( Shankhapura); Tallai Tiruchitra Kutam (Chidambaram); Tirukkundal (Madurai);Tiru mohur (Maahur); Vrishabhadri or Alagar Koil; Tirummeyyam (Satyagiri); Tirukkoshthiyur ( Goshithi pura);Tiruppullani (Darbha shayana); Tiruttankaalore (Sheetodyana pura); Shri Villuputtur; Totadri; Tirukkurunkudi; Tirukkurukur; Tiruvallimangalam; Shri Vaikuntham; Varagunimangai (Varaguna); Tiruppulingkudi (Chimchakuti); Tirukkalandai ( Perunguklam-Brihattadaag); Tirupperai (Shrinampura); Tirukkollur (Mahanidhipura); Tiruvananta puram ( Ananta shayanam/Trivendram); Tiruvattaru (Partashutrama Kshetra); Tiruvanparisaaram ( Ramya shtala); Tirucchankanur (Trichur); Kuttunadu or Tiruppuliyur/ Shardulanagar; Tiruvannavandur; Tiruvallavaal (Keralpura); Tirukkadittanam (Gandha nagar); Tiruvaranbalai Aranmulai (Samruddhisthala); Maruttata; Shri Mulidhama; Vidytpura; Navapura; Ateendrapura; Dehalipura; Vrindaranya Kshetra; Tinnanur; Veeksjharanya;Ghatikachala; Toyadri; Vaaraaha Kshetra; Tirunkkagmalai; Hastigiri; Tiruvekka (Yatthottakari); Ashtabhujam; Tiruttanka (Deepa prakasha); Velukkai (Kaamasiki); Uragam (Trivikrama); Neeraakaara; Kaarakam; Kaarvanam; Tirukkalvanore; Patakam(Pandava doota); Chandra chooda, Pravala varna; Pacchaivarnayurt; Parameshwara vinnagaram; Gruddhra Kshetra; Tiruvenkatam or Tirupati/ Tiruvenkatadri; Singavellukkutram; Dwaraka; Ayodhya; Naimisharanya; Mathura; Tiruvayippadi; Deva Prayaga; Jyotishpeetha; Badarikashrama; and Mukti Narayana.

### 3.Pradhaana Devi Sthalas:

*Kanchipuretu Kamkakshi Malaye Bhramari tathaa, Keraletu Kumari saa Ambaanteshu sankthitaa/ Kara veere Maha Lakshmih Kalika Maalaveshu saa, Prayage Lalita Devi Vindhya Vindhyanivashini/ Vaaranaasyaam Vikshalakshi Gayaayam Mangalaavati,vangeshu Sundari Devi Nepale Guhyakeshwari/ Iti Dwadasha Rupena Samhitha Bharate Shivaa, Etamsaa Darshana Deva Sarva Paapaih pramuchyate/*

*Ashakto darshane nityam smaret pratah samahitah, Tathaapuypasakah sarvyairaparaadhair vimuchyatey/*

(Maha Bhagavati Swarupas are highly popular and worshipped by the Divya namas and the sthalas as follows: Devi Kamakshi at Kanchipura; Devi Bhramaramba at Shrishaila; Devi Kanya Kumari at the Kanyakumari Kshetra; Devi Aanarta Amba at Ambaji in Gujarat; Bhagavati Karaveera Maha Lakshmi at Kolhapuri; Bhagavati Kalika at Ujjain; Devi Lalitamba at Prayaga; and Devi Vindhyaivasini at Vindhya giri ; also renowned are Devi Vishalakshi at Varanasi; Bhagavati Mangalavati at Gaya; Devi Sundari in Bengal; and Devi Guhyeshwari in Nepal. By the darshan of these Devi Vighrahas, the devotees are sure to have their blemishes demolished; in the event of their inability to visit these Kshetras, thier faithful regular prayers in the early mornings should suffice to put them on to the path of realisation of the Devi's Magnificence!)

#### 4. Siddha Kshetras 51:

The Maha Kshetras in Bharat where darshana-pujas become possible are enumerated as follows: Kurukshetra; Badari; Narayana Kshetra or Badarikashrama; Gaya Kshetra; Purushottama / Jagannattha Kshetra; Varanasi; Varaha Kshetra near Ayodhya; Pushkara; Naimisharanya; Prabhasa Kshetra; Shookara Kshetra; Muktinath; Rishiksha; Dwaraka; Mathura; Kedara; Pampa Kshetra at Hospet; Bindusara or Siddhapur; Trina Brindavana; Dashapur/ Mandasor of Madhya Pradesh of Maha Bharata fame as also of Pashupati natha ; Ganga-Sagara Sangama; Tejovana; Vishakha Surya or Vikshapatnam; Ujjaini; Dandaka (Nasik); Manasaovara; Nanda Kshetra or Nanda Devi Parvata; Sithaasrama or Bithur near Kanpur stated to be the birthplace of Luv and Kusha, sons of Shri Rama; Kokamukha; Mandara ( Bhagalpur); Mahendra or Mandsa near Sriakulam , Andhra Pradesh famed for ancient Vasudeva Temple; Rishabha-son of Naabhi and father of Bharata after whom Bharata Desha is named ; Skanda Purana mentions of the King; Shalagrama Kshetra / Damodara Kund near Girnar, Gujarat famed for Shivaratri festival attracting lakhs of devotees to Junagad; also famed for Swami Narayan Temple; Go nishkramana; Sahyadri Mountain Range / western ghats covering the entire paschima and Dakshina seacoast of Bharata; Pandya or the Kingship of Pandyas who fought Kurukshetra of Maha Bharata fame closely connected to Madurai; Chitrauta; Gandhamadana or Rameshwar; Haridrara; Brindavana; Hastinapura; Lohargula; Devashala; Kumara Kshetra (Tamil nadu and Kerala); Devadaruvana /Assam; Lingasphota related to Sage Patanjali And his School of Yoga Practice; Ayodhya; Kundina; Trikuta; and Mahishmati.

#### 5. Some other Tirthas:

Pancha Kedaras: *Kedar nath, Amarnath, Tunganath* on way from Kedarnath to Badarinath, Rudranatha from Tunganath and Kapileshwara on crossing Alaknanda there 2km hence. Sapta Badaris: *Badari Narayana, Adi Badari* in Uragam Village some 2 km hence Kumhara chatti also called Dhanya Badari; *Bhavishya Badari*, some 7km from Jyoshimutt; *Yoga Badari* also called Dhyana Badari at Pandukeshwara; another *Adi Badari* from Kailasa to Thulinga Mutt and *Nrisimha Badari* at Jyoshi mutt itself. Sapta Nathas: *Badari natha, Kedarnatha, Amar natha, Ranga natha, Dwaraka natha, Shri Natha, Govarthana nath.* Sapta Saraswatis: *Suprabha at Pushkar, Kanchanakshi at Naimisha, Manorama in North Koshala, Odhavati at Kurukshetra, Surenu at Haridwar and Vimalodaka on Himalayas;* Sapta Ganga: *Bhagirathi, Vriddha Ganga, Kalindi, Saraswati, Kaveri, Narmada and Veni.* Sapta Punya Nadis: *Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Kaveri, Narmada, and Sindhu.* Sapta Kshetras: *Kurukshetra, Harhara Kshetra at Sonpur, Prabhasa Kshetra at Veraval, Renuka Kshetra near Mathura,*

*Bhrigu Kshetra at Broach, Gujarat; Purushottama Kshetra at Puri Jagannatha and Sookara Kshetra at Sorome. Pancha Sarovara: Bindu Sarovara at Siddhapur, Narayana Sarovara at Kutch, Gujarat, Pampa Sarovara in Karnataka, Pushkara Sarovara in Rajasthan, and Manasa Sarovara in Tibet.*

Nava Aranyaas: *Dandakaranya, Saindhavaranya, Pushkaraaranya, Naimisharanya, Kururaranya, Utpalaavartakaranya, Jambukaranya, Himavadaranya and Arbudaranya. Chaturdasha Prayagas: Prayagaraj, Deva Prayaga:Alaknanda-Bhagirathi; Rudra Prayaga:Alaknanda-Mandakini; Karna Prayaga:Pindara Ganga-Alalnanda;Nada Prayaga:Alaknanda-Nanda; Vishnu Prayaga:Vishnu Ganga-Alaknanda; Surya Prayaga: Alasatarangi-Mandakini; Indra Prayaga:Bhagirathi-Vyasa Ganga;Somaprayaga:Soma Nadi-Mandakini;Bhaskara Prayaga:Bhatavari-Mallahatti; Hari Prayaga: Hariganga-Bhagirathi; Gupta Prayaga: Nila ganga-Bhagirathi; Syama Prayaga: Shyama Ganga-Bhagirathi; and Keshava Prayaga: Alaknanda-Sarasvati/*

#### 6. Pradhana Melas:

Kumbha Melas: *Haridwar:* coinciding with Guru in Kumbha Raashi and Surya in Mesha Raashi; *Prayaga:* with the entry of Guru in Vrisha Raashi, and Surya in Makara Raashi; *Ujjain:* Guru in Simha Raashi, and Surya in Mesha; *Nasika:* Guru in Simha and Surya in Simha. Other Melas: *Amarnath:* Ashwiyuja Purnima; *Haridwar:* Twelve yearly Kumbha, Shiva ratri and Chaitra; *Jwalamukhi:* Chaitra Ashwiyuja Nava Ratras; *Vaidyanath:* Shivaratri; *Kurukshetra:* Every Amavasya and a Solar Eclipses; *Pe hva:* Kartika and Vaishakhi Amavasyas; *Gadha Mukteshwara:* Kartika Purnimas; *Mathura:* Yama dwiteeyan (Kartika Shukla Dwiteeya and Kartika Purnima; *Vraja mandala:* Bhadra Shukla Ekadasi onward; *Nanda gaon, Gokula, Brindavana :* Janmashtami-Bhadrapada Krishnashtami; *Naimisharanya:* Every Amavasya, full Phalguna month, Maagha Amavasya and Purnima; *Prayaga:* Kumbha Mela every twelfth year, every Maagha month and Makara Samkranti; *Chitra kuta, Ayodhya:*Rama Navami and Solar eclipse; *Devi Paatana:* Chaitra Navaratri; *Sonpur:* Kartika Purnima; *Khatmandu, Nepal:* Maha Shivaratri; *Kolkatta and all over in West Bengal:* Ashwiyuja Navaratri; *Kamakhya:* Navaratri in Chaitra and Asviyuja; *Puri:*Ahadha Ratha Yatras, Maha Shiva Ratri; *Bhuvaneshwara:* Vyashakha Month; *Konarak:* Maagha Shukla Paksha; *Ujjain:* Dwadasha Kumbha and Maha Shivaratra; *Nashika:* Besides the twelve yearly Kumbha, Ramanavami, Shravana Month, Navaratri, Makara Sankranti, Maha Shiva Ratra, Grahana timings, and Ahika Maasa; *Bhima shankar:* Maha Shiva Ratri; *Pandari pura:* Ahadha, Kartika and Chaitra Months; *Saalaasara:* Hanumajjyayanti; *Lohargala:* Bhadra Amavasya; *Naata dwaara:* entire Kartika month; *Gokarna:*Maha Shiva ratri; *Shrishaila:*Maha Shiva ratri; *Bhadrachala:* Shri Rama Navami; *Tirupati:* All festivals as also Brahmotsavas; *Kalahasti:* Maha Shiva Ratri; *Kanchi:* Jyeshtha month; *Kumbhakonam:* Maagha month; and Magha Kumbha mela; *Trichi:* Bhadrpada; *Shrirangam:* Pousha and Maagha months; *Rameshwaram:* Maha Shiva Ratri, Shravana, Jyeshtha and Ashadha months; *Dhanushkodi:* Solar and Lunar eclipses, Ashadha Purnima; *Tiruvantapuram:* Padmanabha Ananta Chaturdashi; *Siddhapur:* Saraswati River's Kartika and Vaishakha Purnimas; *Ambaji:* Bhadra Purnima; *Girnar:*Maha Shivaratri; *Shamlaji:*Kartika Purnima; *Dakor:* Ahswiyuja and Kartika Purnimas; also at Parli Vaidyanath, Tulja Bhavani, Kolhapur, Maha Baleshwar, Rajamahendri, Mahabalipuram, Krishna River, Tiruvayur, Pakshi Tirtha, Chidambaram, Nagapattanam, Tanjore, Jambukeshwar, Kanyakumari, Gokarna, Mysore, Dwaraka, Nanded, Shringeri, Kanchi, Srirangapattana and so on.

## Concluding Hymns

### Lakshmi Stuti

*Lakshmeem ksheera samudra raaja tanayaam Shri Ranga Dhaameshwarim, daasi bhuta samasta deva vanitaam lokaika deepaankuraam, Shriman manda kataaksha labdha vibhava Brahmendru gangaa dharaam twaam Trailokya kutumbineen sarasijaam vande Mukunda priyaam/ Siddha Lakshmi Moksha Laxmi Jaya Lakshmi Saraswati, Shrimaan Mukunda vadanaam Shri Lakshmeem upaasmahe/*

### Vishnu Stotra

*Avikaaraaya shuddhhaaya Nityaya Paramatmaney, Sadaika Rupa Rupaaya Vishnaney Sarva Jishnavey/ Namu Hiranyagarbhaaya Haraye Shankaraayacha, Vaasudevaaya Taaraaya Sargasthinyanta kaariney/ Ekaaneka Swarupaaya Sthula Sukshmaatmaney Namah, Avyakta Vyakta Swarupaaya Vishnavey Muktihetavey/ Sargasthiti vinaashanam Jagato yo Jagan-mayah, Mulabhuto Namastasmai Vishnavey Paramatmaney/ Aadhaarabhutam Vishyasyaapyaneeyasaamaniyaasaam, Pranamy Sarvabhutaastha-machyutam Purushottamam/ Jnaanaswarupamatyantanimalam Paramaarthatah, Tamevaartha swarupena bhraanti darshanah sthitam/ Vishnum Graasishnum Viswasya Sthitou Sargey tathaa Prabhum, Pranamy Jagataameesha majamakshayamavyayam/*

(My salutations to Bhagavan Vaasudeva who was responsible for Brahma-Vishnu-and Shankara to create-preserve and terminate as also support all the Beings to swim across the ‘Samsara Sagara’; he is also the Vikara Rahita or Featureless, Shuddha or Transparently Pure, Avinaashi or Indistructible, Paramatma or the Unique -Souled, the Singular Super-Entity, Sarva Vijayi or the Ever- Victorious Bhagavan; He is always of Singular Form yet present in Infinite Forms; he is of the Minutest yet the Grossest Virat Swarupa; Vyakta or Tangible and Avyakta or Imperceptible; and the Kaarana or the Supreme Cause and the Kaarya / the Causation or Action; Mukti Swarupa or the Facilitator of Salvation; Vishwa Rupa; Srishti-Sthiti-Samhaar Kaaraka; Vishnu; Sarvaadhara; Sarva Vyapi; Sukshmaati Sukshma, Akshaya; Achyuta; Avyaya; Purushottama, Jnaana Swarupaand Jagedeshvara).



