

Sri Kanaka Dasaru

(1508 - 1606)

Madhusudana Rao

One of the most remarkable saints of the period of Purandara was Kanaka Dasa of Kaginele. He was a great disciple of Vyasaraaja, though a shepherd by birth and great critic of caste hierarchy. Kanaka was born to Biregowada and Beechamma, at Bada and grew as a Saiva in the beginning, and later on became a close follower of Vaishnavism and a devoted Bhakta of Tirupati Venkateshwara whom he visited often, in spite of



the hazardous nature of the journey up the hills. By reason of his devotion to Venkatesha and contacts with archakas of the temple, there is a belief that Kanaka was a Vaishnavite of the Ramanuja School and never accepted a Taratamya aspect of Madhva philosophy, as is borne out in the opening of his work "Mohana Tarangini" : "Sattvikollasa Sri Ramanuja Muni Saranu!!!".

But Kanaka Dasa spent his youth and his later years mostly in the company Sri Vyasaraaja, who spoke in admiration of him as he did of Purandara. Kanaka was of the warrior community, perhaps his defeat in the field of battle, directed him to the path of devotion. He was already an author of Narasimha

Stotra, Ramadhyana Mantra, Mohanatarangini before he became a follower of Sri Vyasaraaja and followed most of the tenets of Madhva religion.

He never became a Madhva though he accepted the Taratamya Tattva in the hierarchy of Gods like Brahma, Vayu, Girisha and others. Perhaps, he was already very much influenced by Sri Vyasaraaja and his tenets before he gave to the world Nala Charite and Haribhakti Sara. He was essentially a Madhva mystic seeing the manifestation of Keshava in the meanest creation as well as in the highest, coloured by all the attributes of God and partaking of divine powers. There is a popular story that Kanaka being rejected entrance at the temple at Udupi, went round the Prakaram and burst into tears of song, appealing to the Lord to give darshan when the idol turned round, made a slit in the wall where Kanaka sat and gave darshan to him. He composed hymns in moments of exaltation and when he sang them, he felt himself enveloped with melody and ecstatic lyrical poetry.

Most of the compositions of Kanaka have the Mudrika Kagineleyadi Keshava. There is a class of the compositions called Kanaka Mundige full of abstract imagery, subtlety of metaphysics and inscrutable implications, challenging the finest in the Bhakta. Kanaka in many of his Padas, reveals the unity and universality of spiritual experience and flouts the iniquity of caste distinction and prejudices, born out of race, creed and class divisions. He is perhaps the only great non-Brahmimical saint who by his Aparoksha Jnana and glimpses of the absolute, neutralised the dissidences to Jati, Kula and other distinctions. Vaidika and Avaidika distinctions are invalid and only Bhakti is valid against the Absolute. Moksha Sadhana Samagram Bhaktireva Gariyasi!. There are no separate regions in the empire of Bhakti, no distinctions of caste, class, creed, sex and servitude; Dharma tapas

and Acara are not correlates of the absolute. Bhakti is the only means by which emancipation from Samsara can be realised. Every one born in this world has the fundamental right to attain the Absolute by Bhakti. The bhakta transcends the limitations of Varna and Asrama Dharma. Sri Vyasaraaja who had this intuition, treated Kanaka though of the lower order, on the same footing of equality with the rest. Very often the Guru had to suffer embarrassment and veiled criticism of his followers for the preferences he showed to Kanaka and Purandara, which delighted the bhaktas by their heavenly compositions.

Kanaka was totally absorbed in Hari Keshava and he saw the vision of the Lord in the mountains, in moonlight, in sunset, in living plants, in the flowing stream, in the lovely face of the child and the wrinkles of the old. He was possessed of Hari's invisible transcendental beauty. Kanaka disdained servility and service at others' feet or wandering for the satisfaction of the belly like a street dog without any sense of self-respect. Like Purandara, Kanaka suffered poverty, privation, degradation, distress, acute misery without a wife or any soul to comfort him. He was humbled and mortified in the flesh by the visitations of misfortune. But undaunted, he struggled hard in this dark night to find a sheet anchor at the feet of the Guru and through his ministrations to gain the glimpse of the divine. He pleads for protection against sensuous temptations, sins of the spirit and aberrations of intellect and will. Vyasaraaja nursed the intuitive presentiments in Kanaka and enabled him to blossom out into mystical ecstasies in the same manner as he had done for Purandara.

Kanaka made supreme effort to reform the lower castes, weaning them away from ignorance, superstition and barbaric practices, in order to favour the growth of Bhakthi and devotion in them. His love of his own people compelled him to disregard

his own life and to shed the blood of martyr for the sake of their transformation into a life of ahimsa. God does not ask for blood, what he wants of you in only bhakthi.

The body is sacred, the sense of the sacred is an ultimate category of the human soul. It is of infinite worth and therefore imposes an absolute obligation. Kanaka says "This body is yours; life within it is yours, the power in the ear, the vision in the eye, the pleasure of fellowship, and participating in the fragrance of life and the enjoyment of the senses are all yours. As the body is to be in tune with the holy spirit, Kanaka prepares himself for the journey to meet his Lord. O! Hari, never do I desire the company of the wicked who are unrighteous, quarrelsome, acrimonious, enamoured of the pleasure of samsara and of women and wine and who do not know the importance of the Vedas. Oh! Kaginele Adikeshava, remove these afflictions, arising from the association of the wicked'.

Kanaka is conscious that the senses are inexpungable elements of life and their eradication involves considerable penance and self-denial. It was no easy task to keep away from temptation and with stand their irresistible charm. "What can I do? Just like the moth fascinated by the luminosity of the flame jumps into it, so too, my eyes dart at beautiful and elegantly ornamented women. I fall down to the ground like the bee that has sucked the fragrance of the Champaka, at the fragrance of the flowers worn by women whose steps resemble the 'mandagamana' of an elephant. I die like the fish that has swallowed the worm at the tip of the angler's stick. When I think of the nectar on the lips of young women, Oh! Adikeshava, thou art my guide, help me to fix my mind on your Lotus feet"

Kanaka is deeply conscious of the painful aspects of Samsara and worldly life. The body is like a bubble on the

surface of water and all the actions of the body are an illusion, which has no power, no belonging possessions. It is the intoxication of pride that persuades him to imagine himself to be what he is not in reality, to believe that he is the crown of creation, quite oblivious of the transmigration of his soul through several births, conceived in sin, born in sin, living in sin and ending his life in sin. Man is so engrossed in earning food for his belly, that he steals the property of others, tells lies, seeks ostentation and display and does a hundred things which belie his fundamental nature.

In the context of allurements of the senses, he talks of caste, of several distinctions which are man-made and not God-made. The world talks of caste but what is the caste of righteous? Is not a lotus which grows in the bottom of the pool in mud brought and used in worshipping God? God's bodies are pasted with the musk, obtained from the musk cat. To what caste does Narayana, Lord of the World and Iswara Lord of Parvati belong? What is the caste of the soul, of Siva and of the principal organs of knowledge? When Adikeshavaraya, the indweller is pleased where does the question of caste remain?

When Kanaka was questioned by the Mahant of the Tirupati Temple he replied : What is the caste to me who is intoxicated with the love of Adikeshava? In another place, Kanaka condemns hypocrisy in the name of sanctity and such other deceits, sins and wickedness practised by the people. What is the use of practising meditation and penance without realising the true meaning of the Vedas and the nature of the Primeval Being?

Kanaka pins his faith on the Lord, in all His unity and Absoluteness with the result he repudiates Taratamya and worship of Yellamma, Mari Durga, Chowdi and other goddesses.

'Oh! Paramahamsa! Thou art the ocean of mercy. I am a microscopic creature imbued with hunger and thirst and other miseries envelop me and make me helpless, while thou art a Being, Omniscient and Omnipresent in all the known and unknown worlds'.

Kanaka appeals to the mind to struggle and to forbear for he knows that God will protect without delay. "Who waters the trees that grow on the mountain tops? Who has painted the peacock with variegated colours? Who has painted the parrot green? Who has created food for the frog and for the all sentient creation? When God has created you and has undertaken that responsibility, he will assuredly protect you, why should there be any doubt about this? Oh! Adikeshava thou art the bestower of my life you will protect me, and it is not possible for me to forsake Thy feet". Kanaka was a great mystic and like Purandara, was convinced that every thing moved and had its being at the initiation of Sri Hari; all the animate and inanimate objects of the universe moved according to His law and fulfilled themselves according to His purpose. God is omnipresent and all-mighty and omniscient. Kanaka asks the question, 'Oh God art thou in maya or is it within thee? Is the eye within the mind or mind within the eye, or both within thee. Is the flower within the fragrance or the fragrance within the flower or are both these in the nose?'

Kanaka was an Aparoksha Jnani with the direct cognition of Sri Adikeshava who was his supreme preceptor and he was convinced that Adikeshava saved him from the field of battle and picked him up like a pearl dissociated from water to show the way to join His feet. Kanaka was unrivalled for depth and originality of feeling and for piety and sense of the purest attachment of Sri Hari. For rhythmic flow of verse and gracefulness of style he was a great as Purandara. "Adikeshava is my

refuge and there is no need for any other ceremony or meditation". Like a parrot nourished within the cage and taught sweet speech, you teach me true wisdom, and make me recite your name incessantly. So long as you are not meditating upon the mind wanders forth in search of the neck which is over its own neck. There are the oil, the lamp, the wick and the fire, but not till the lamp is lighted is there light, nor is darkness destroyed!

Kanaka in many of his keertanas, sings the nature of Paravastu the distinction between Paramayogin and aviveki and agnani and like Purandara recognised the supreme manifestation of Hari and repudiated all distinctions of kula, caste and creed as the inevitable corollary of worship of the divine. He lived in Belur for a long time and sang the praises of the Lord Keshava in the temples along with Vaikuntadasa, Haribhakti Sara in Bhamini Shatpadi was written in Belur and Kanaka who travelled widely all over Karnataka alone unattended and without conveyances, spread the light of Vaishnavism and love of Sri Hari and Paramabhakti for Adikeshava among the millions who came in contact with Kanaka. He was strongly denunciatory of caste and class distinctions and in all his compositions, his message was one of hope and love towards fellow human beings and sentient creation. Aesthetic art, compassion, sensitiveness to the beautiful in nature and in the actions of men, marked his outlook on life as one of the corollaries of a life of divine blessedness.

Overview of his Literature :

Sri Kanaka Dasa's compositions reveal a perfect mastery of Sanskrit and Kannada literature and show that he was well-versed in contemporary literature. He styles himself "Kanakadasottama" in his Mohana Tarangini. Kanaka Dasa reveals his compositions in a strong, fighting style that delivers

the message directly. Unlike Purandara Dasa he was a "free-thinker" or "liberal thinker". Caste and creed in his opinion were no barriers to moksha. Bhakthi alone counted. He was persecuted for his extreme views by the orthodox followers of Vyasaraja. This fact is alluded to in one of the songs of Purandaradasa which says that the disciples of Sri Vyasaraja found fault with him for the favour shown to Kanakadasa. But Vyasaraja is said to have stood firm by his disciple and revealed the true worth and greatness of Kanaka to his other followers.

Besides many devotional songs including "Mundiges" (allegories) he wrote the Mohanatarangini, Haribhaktisara, Ramadhayna Carite and Nalacarite. His portrayal of feeling is vivid and penetrating. He can be most homely and sublime as occasions demand and rises to inimitable perfection of art.

LOOK TO THIS DAY

Look to this day!
For it is Life, the very Life of Life.
In its brief course lie all the varieties
And realities of your existence :
The bliss of growth,
The glory of action,
The splendour of beauty.
For yesterday is already a dream,
And tomorrow is only a vision;
But today well-lived, makes every
Yesterday a dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well therefore to this day!
Such is the salvation of the dawn.

- *Sanskrit Verse*

Practice of Self Control*

Dr. V. R. Panchamukhi

PART - II

The device could take various forms. Keep some words which your elders or teachers or some respectable personality told you, as a handy anchor, to change the shape of your thought processes and moods. Your elders- parents, brother, sister, must have told you - *Be careful of such and such pitfalls in life; some things may appear harmless and attractive on the face but they do eternal harm to your personality and self. Hence always keep yourself away from them.* These words should be firmly registered in some corner of the mind (or intellect) with full faith and conviction. Or keep some small divine verse of your favourite deity or guru, handy for quiet utterance. This will enable you to change the course of your mind and the moods.

In all this task, your pure intellect and sense of courage should be helpful. For identifying a suitable device for yourself, you should take interest in such activities as going to the temple, saying prayers to some divine power everyday in the morning, listening to the scholarly discourses, associating yourself with the environment of noble and righteous company etc. Some one may say : *Why should I listen to the elders and the teachers, or do such divine activities; I have a mature mind and I will settle things as my own power of reasoning dictates.* These tendencies indicate that such a person has not given up his sense of false ego

and he is not conscious of his own limitations. You should give him the instance of the experience of disturbed mind of other people around us and persuade him to try out the approach of self-control recommended in *Sri Bhagavad Gita*, just for a few days, just on trial run. You be assured that after some days, he will come and tell you, - I really enjoy it, it gives me lot of peace and composure I am now thinking of giving up... and... and...

To derive the best results from the practice described above, one should also develop the following habits :

- a) Take moderate and right food which does not incite in your wrongful emotions and moods,
- b) Never over-eat,
- c) Spend at least 10-15 minutes of everyday life in quietude, alone in solitude.
- d) Never sleep too long or keep yourself awake for long odd hours.
- e) Never indulge in wrongful activities which are likely to generate in you evil thought processes like desire, lust, craze etc.

Now, developing these habits is normally easier at young age. In our traditional families, in India, these habits are inculcated in the young age as a matter of routine and the discipline of the house. Unfortunately, such a discipline is not available in our modern life. The practices of wrongful food, drinks, late dinner parties, disinterest in divinity, interest in fun and frolics (in the name of relaxation to mind-but actually these tend to weaken the mind), habit of reading fantasy comics, lustful stories, visiting kinos with violent and lustful events, - etc. have tended to make our body, mind and intellect totally unprepared

for the practice of self-control and thereby for enjoying the real bliss and pleasure. Hence, the first step in practising self-control is to gradually eliminate the impediments caused by these wrongful habits. One does not imply puritanic approach to life. However, it is easy to realise the giving up wrongful indulgence does not imply giving up rightful devices of pleasure and enjoyment. What Sri Bhagavadgita recommends is precisely this. Give up wrongful indulgences through the practice of self-control and develop interest in the rightful devices which give you the real bliss and tranquillity.

The word yoga is often given a very limited meaning. It does not refer to only some exercises to give you good health and cheerful moods. Some, even go to the extent of recommending yoga for good bodybuild or for slimming. The real yoga consists of controlling the behaviour of the mind. This is how Patanjali defines yoga in the very first sutra of Yogasastra. If one wants to practise yoga, one must attend to the task of controlling the mind. Sri Bhagavadgita defines yoga also as efficiency in work (योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्). Yet at some other place, yoga is defined as the approach of balance and composure (as between success and failure, happiness and sorrow etc. सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते). What is meant is that one who is able to achieve control over his mind, would be able to achieve highest efficiency in whatever job he undertakes and that he would always present himself as a personality of composure and dignity.

Gist of Sri Bhagavad Gita :

The entire message of Sri Bhagavadgita is very succinctly summarised by Lord Krishna himself, in the following five verses (in the 18th chapter)

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च ।

शब्दादीन् विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युस्य च ॥

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः ।

ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।

विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।

ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥ (भ. गी. 18, 51-55)

The message consists of two parts : (I) What one should do to achieve Real Bliss and Tranquillity and (II) What is the nature of the Real Bliss and Tranquillity that one would achieve ultimately.

What one should do : (i) Keep your intellect, power of reasoning pure and unpolluted; (ii) Develop the approach of courage and conviction by practising self control; (iii) Develop the habit of keeping away from the objects which have a tendency to induce pollutive thought processes in your mind; (iv) Avoid the moods of desire, lust and hatred; (v) Try to spend some time in solitude and quiet environment; (vi) Develop the habit of living with minimum means; you may earn more, but your own wants should be to the minimum (vii) Steer the course of your body, speech and mind in the right directions with efforts and some devices derived by yourself; (viii) Do not allow yourself to be overpowered by the moods of vanity, excessive aggressiveness, pride, lust, anger and possessiveness; (ix) Develop the attitude of composure and balance.

What one would achieve : If one practises the steps stated above, then one would be able to achieve the following results:

(i) One would get abundant peace of mind (ii) one would experience a kind of Bliss which is pure and unpolluted (iii) One would develop an attitude of appropriate love, affection or in general, an attitude, set of moods and emotions which are appropriate to the different objects, beings and events in life; (iv) One would then develop a pure appreciation and love for the best in everything i.e. God and finally (v) One would be able to free oneself from all bondages and constraints which come in the way of achieving the best and thereby achieve the best in everything.

SUCCESS

Success is speaking words of praise
In cheering other people's ways
In doing just the best you can
With every task and every plan
It's silence when your speech would hurt,
Politeness when your neighbour's curt,
It's deafness when the scandal flows,
And sympathy with other's woes,
It's loyalty when duty calls,
It's courage when disaster falls,
It's patience when the hours are long.
It's found in laughter and in song,
It's not what the world gives me
In honour, praise or gold;
It's what I do give the world,
So others do unfold.
If by my work through life I can
Another soul unfold
Then I have done what cannot be
Made good, by praise or gold.
One tiny thought in tiny word
May give a great one birth,
And if that thought was caused by me,
I lived a life of worth.

- *Richard F. Wolfe*



Power of Prayer

Prof. B. M. Hegde

I was thrilled to witness a rare phenomenon happening in the holy city of Varanasi on the Mahashivaratri night. Burkha clad Muslim women were singing bhajans with their brothers and sisters owing allegiance to Lord Shiva. I had tears of joy welling up in my eyes. I still could recall my childhood in our village where people of all religions, Christians and Muslims included, joined us in celebrating, not only the religious festivals but, also the village rituals like the buffalo race, Bhoota kola etc. common to this part of coastal Karnataka. We, on our part, used to share their joy and also partake of their wonderful food on Easter, Christmas, Bakrid and Moharam days. I grew up not knowing that we had any difference whatsoever. The environment now makes me feel nauseated to say the least, but those Mahashivaratri night TV clippings were a great relief. How I wish all of us could take it forward from there!

Coincidentally, the occasion was the right one. Though the rituals were meant to pray to the all-powerful Shiva that night, the connotation was to try and open one's third eye, representing the third eye of Lord Shiva. The third eye is the symbolic representation of one's ability to see the reality. The two eyes, which most of us have, with or without artificial corrections using lenses, could only show us the world of delusion. Very rarely a few of us have evolved to have our third eye function to have an insight

Manjunatha, Pai's Hills, Bejai, Mangalore - 4

into another's sorrow to be able to empathize with him/her. One is supposed to fast that night, sit-up and pray to Lord Shiva to grant us the power of the symbolic third eye (the insight) to be able to see the reality in this world. "Purusha Shreshta Ishwaraha". One could elevate oneself to that level by spiritual efforts.

The reality is that mankind is but one large family and God is only the all pervading universal compassion that gives succour to every living thing on this planet. We might create our own individual Gods and there is no harm in that. We always create God in our own image. But none of our Gods would want us to be at each other's throats using His name. God and conventional religions should strive to bring man and man together and never try to divide man from man. All right thinking people would support this contention that religion is meant to be social shock absorber.

Religion, initially created to bring tranquillity and contentment to the human mind has, unfortunately, over the years, become a powerful tool to have control over the gullible people. When one tries to understand one's religion thoroughly, he/she would automatically love another human being outside his own narrow religious beliefs. With this in view, one should strive to use ritualistic religion to bring people together. Every Indian, nay everyone in this world, has an obligation to see that this world becomes a better place to live in more tranquil, more passionate, more productive and less destructive in the end. Intolerance of any kind is the beginning of terrorism and crime. Tolerance needs more giving than getting.

At a more mundane level this philosophy boils down to using all our religious festivals to bring about inter-religious harmony. Whereas there were bhajans in the temples on the Mahashivaratri day joined by the Muslim women, there could

be prayers in churches during Christmas and large gathering of people in the mosques on Muslim festival days. On each of those occasions there must be more people from the other religions in these group prayers. Scientific studies have shown that intercessory prayers have a very powerful positive effect on the life and health of human beings. If each one of us in the community prays for the welfare of the people of other religious beliefs, we would certainly have a society, which would be more creative and caring but less destructive.

Mankind has been happy in the sustenance economies of the distant past where there was no dependence of any kind coupled with egalitarian sharing and caring for others. Fear of God, greed for money and running after the mirage of power has slowly turned man into a cruel animal. Love of God would undo this cycle for certain. Today man does not even bat an eyelid to destroy another of his species in the name of religion, caste, creed and what have you.

We must try to garner the strength of good people in society to do most good to most people most of the time. In every village, town and city we could organise groups of motivated citizens from all religions to implement the idea that they should live together and let live. One of the cementing factors could be this type of interfaith prayer meetings mentioned earlier in article. On the days of the important festivals in temples, people from other religions could be invited to sing bhajans and take part in the ceremonies. Similarly during Christmas, Easter time other religions segments should be there in the churches for prayers and the mass. Islamic festivities should be co-sponsored by other religious adherents and all should visit mosques with our Muslim brothers in their neighbourhood.

Recently, when I was in Mumbai, I enjoyed the bhajans of a group of people who came from very far off coastal

Karnataka. They sang and danced so well that it was a moving spectacle to watch. How I wish they had invited people of all faiths to share in their joys that day! Majority of people in this world are good but are silent. It is a vocal minority, which creates problems for others. By and large, people are so nice to one another if left to themselves. When politicians and others manipulate them with ulterior motives society gets disturbed. It is always better to debate on contentious issues like this rather than to accept or reject an idea without any debate. Let these thoughts provoke an active debate all over the country. I am sure the powers - that - be would sit up and take note of the happenings. They could try to replicate the same in other parts of the country.

Intellectual intolerance is the worst kind of terrorism. Poverty and illiteracy will breed terrorists. Well meaning citizens should take up the cause of the less fortunate in society to try and assist them to come out of the bottomless pit of poverty. It cannot be done in bits and pieces. This must be a large movement on a large nationwide scale. Misguided youth, with lots of energy and wrong directions from the vested interests, initially try to be destructive for the heck of it. Eventually, it becomes a part of their life style. At that stage punishment need not (usually does not) have long term good effects on society. Prevention is always better.

Poverty has one other flip side to it. The poor pay for their poverty with their lives. Poverty is also the mother of all human ills. How do we expect these people to come to the main stream of society, unless those of us who are above the poverty line come out with a helping hand? In this process we are not doing any favour to the poor people. We are only doing our duty to society. We are helping Gods of all religions to help those in distress.

I hope this will initiate a debate wherein right thinking people join in larger numbers to try and implement the suggestions given here, if need be with modifications and innovations in the housekeeping details. The present set up can not be allowed to go on like this and eventually lead to anarchy. Please think about it with all seriousness. Man has existed here for nearly nine hundred thousand years in fifty thousand generations. The present cruel world might have been there for a maximum of one hundred years. If not corrected soon enough, greedy man with his proclivity for personal comfort and his greed, would rob the world and the less fortunate people of the entire God-given resources. Let us wake up to stop this rot before it takes deeper roots.

IF I CAN STOP ONE HEART FROM BREAKING

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain;
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one lonely person
Into happiness again
I shall not live in vain.

- *Emily Dickinson*

It's in the silent time of prayer
In happiness and in despair,
In all of life and nothing less,
We find the thing we call success.

- *Anonymous*

It is in loving not in being loved
The heart finds its quest;
It is in giving, not in getting
Our lives are blest.

- *Unknown*

VADIRAJA'S SARASA BHARATHI VILASA - 23

(11-1-41)

S. K. Achar

(Srihari keeps the universe within)

Srihari does not perish even during the dissolution of the universe. He remains with Sridevi and Bhudevi during the pralaya. Srihari the father of the god of love Manmatha is free from lust. Moreover during the deluge the god of love does not exist. Srihari created the four faced Brahma, from out of his navel, Indra and Agni from his face, moon from the mind, sun from the eyes, wind god from His breath and earth from His holy feet. Holy Purusha Sukta mention all these facts in details. Srihari creates the entire cosmos; including all the living- beings out of His sheer will and not out of His semen. Mighty Srihari, when He appeared as Matsya, Kurma and Varaha slew several powerful and wicked elements. But Pradyumna and Sambha who were the children of Srikrishna, were far inferior in valour and strength to Srihari. They were born out of Srihari's mere will and not out of His semen. Had they been born out of the semen of Srihari; they too should have been as powerful and mighty as Srihari. The creation of this cosmos is the sole power of Srihari and none else. Revered Vedavyasa has mentioned this in His holy Brahmasutra, to benefit the community. When this was misinterpreted by ordinary thinkers, Acharya Madhwa once again clarifies and composes Anuvyakhyana, so that the devotees are

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not misled. Yathiraja Vadiraja in turn gives us the correct picture in his holy Sarasa Bharathi Vilasa. The English summary of the 11th chapter, shlokas 42-86 of Srihari Vadiraja's Sarasa Bharathi Vilasa in Sanskrit is furnished below :-

Holy Narasimha fulfils all our Desires; He is quite mighty, powerful Valorous and totally blemishless	42
Sri Narasimha is free from lust Rage, greed, pride and fear; He is strong enough to pierce The hearts of all evil elements.	43
Srihari is omniscient and is Deeply attached to His devotees; He exhibits rare oratory powers Emerging as a young lad to humble Vrakasura and emperor Bali	44
Srihari extends ample help Even to the three eyed Shankara And it is indeed too tough to explain The glory of His supreme powers.	45
Srihari is totally blemishless; Even during the cyclic rest and He Remains with Sridevi and Bhudevi totally un-perturbed.	46
The semen of Srihari does Not emerge during pralaya If it did he would have had Several children, even then	47

During the deluge there is no
Cause for lust as Kama with
His five arrows does not exist
To kindle sexual desires in man 48

If not we can as well say
That the lifeless pot has
Capacity to fetch water from a
Tank independently on its own. 49

There cannot be lust during the
Pralaya as there is no one
To inspire any lustful thoughts. 50

Srihari remains fully unperturbed
Since the dissolution to the creation.
And who can think of semen
When and where no child is born? 51

The learned men are expected
To base their arguments on facts
Well-known and understood by them
And not on unknown matters. 52

If the arguments are merely
Imaginary and fictitious
We can as well say that
Men have two horns on their
Heads which do they actually possess? 53

During the cyclic rest Janardhana
Withdraws the entire universe
Within Him and transfers
The same to His other form 54

The said form out of free will
Creates the mighty cosmos
Comprising three types of
Souls as existed in the earlier era 55

According to the Upanishads the
Entire cosmos is created by
Srihari who further produces
Indra and Agni from His face
And moon from His mind 56

Srihari further creates the sun
From His eyes, wind god from the
Breath, earth from His lotus feet
And none from His semen. 57

The four-faced Brahma
Father of the entire universe
Emerges from the holy navel
Of Sheshashayi Padmanabha 58

Even though Srihari is resting
In close company of His consort
Handsome, affluent and blemishless
Srilaxmi he creates the cosmos
Out of His sheer will power. 59

Srihari who is all holy and supreme
Converts the seeds of the universe
Held within and effortlessly transfers
Them to the womb of Mahalaxmi 60

Later on the same powers
Come out of the womb

Of Mahalaxmi as desired By Srihari at the time of creation	61
Like the potter who produces Pots out of mud, Srihari Creates this shining golden Coloured cosmos with no effort	62
This wonderful universe Comprising three types of Souls, infinite range of Movables and immovables is Created as desired by Srihari	63
Twenty three major elements Have gone in to the making of This wonderful universe Which is also known as Brahmanda	64
The cosmography of this Universe is explained as Above in Bhagwatha and Sri Vedavyasa also maintains The same view in His Mahabharatha	65
Lava, Kusha Pradyumna Are born to Srihari out of His Sheer will and not by the semen	66
When this mighty universe is Created by Srihari out of His Sheer will need He beget the children From out of His semen?	67

Sri Krishna begets only ten Children each from out of His sixteen thousand spouses Out of His sheer will and pleasure	68
Adimoola Srihari who is Quite valurous and powerful Is also known as Keshava On account of His black hairs	69
If Pradyumna and Sambha Were born of the blood of Srikrishna How can they be so Weak and dependent?	70
Pradyumna was taken by force And held captive by Shambharasura; But later returned safe Defeating the latter, only through The counsel of his wife Rathi	71
Likewise Sambha was kept In prison by Duryodhana; but He also emerged safely with the help of Balarama and not by his valour	72
Can anyone ever say that Sri Krishna begot such weak Children out of His powerful semen?	73
Semen appears among the boys As they cross the tenth year; But it is too much to think of Romance of Srikrishna with Gopikas	

When He was barely ten years old. 74

Srihari exhibited rare feats by
Slaying the wicked, appearing
on earth as Matsya, Kurma
And created terror among them;
But His children all are inferior 75

It is quite incorrect to say
That Srihari is lustful
Like the eighth rasa (taste)
While there exists only six rasas
Holy Shukacharya amply
Clarifies this in his Bhagavatha 76

The creator of this universe
The four-faced Brahma fell in
Love with His own daughter
Saraswathi who was not lustful 77

Marichi and other children of
Brahma respectfully protest
The unholy action of their
Father who loved his own daughter 78

Is there any man in the entire
Cosmos, who remains unaffected
By the glamour and attraction from the woman? 79

More than ten thousand women
Assist Rama to fetch water to
Worship the lotus feet of Srihari 80

Neither these beautiful ladies
Nor, Sridevi and Bhudevi who

Serve Srihari sincerely were
Ever able to attract Him towards them 81

No woman in the three worlds
Is able to perturb Srihari
Who is the supreme creator of
This wonderful cosmos 82

Revered Vedavyasa strongly
Maintains that Srihari alone
Is the cosmic creator and
None else, in His holy Brahma Sutra 83

But there are a few who have
Wrongly mis-interpreted the
Brahma Sutra of Vedavyasa
Out of Sheer ignorance 84

Thanks to the sincere efforts
Of Acharya Madhva who by
Preparing Anuvyakhya Mala
Guides all devotees properly 85

The eleventh chapter of
Sarasa Bharathi Vilasa
Which is melodious, nice
Liked by the scholars and
Loved by Srihari ends here 86

SOME FAITH AT ANY COST

No vision and you perish; No ideal, and you're lost;
Your heart must ever cherish some faith at any cost.
Some hope, some dream to cling to, some rainbow in the sky,
Some melody to sing to, some service that is high.

- Unknown

DHANWANTARY

V. Ramanathan

OM NAMO BHAGAVATHE VASUDEVAYA
DHANWANTARAYE AMRITA KALASA HASTAAYA
SARVAAMAYA VINASANAAYA TRILOKYA NATHAAYA SRI
MAHAVISHNAVE SWAHA :

Thus goes the Dhanwantary mantra. Offering Samith, Anna, Aajya in the sacred fire chanting the above mantra would relieve not only the participants but also the helpers, visitors too of their ailments. What is the origin of Dhanwantary? During the Manthan (churning) of the Milky ocean many valuable objects appeared. (scientists today are going deep into the oceans to find oil, gas and other needed things for this century - our epics have done this aeons back) Dhanwantary Murthy appeared with the nectar in a golden vessel. Hence AMRITAKALASA HASTAAYA (holding nectar on hand)

Lord came in Mohinirupa enticed the Asuras and distributed the nectar solely to the Devas. While all Asuras kept their eyes closed one of the demons opened his eyes and found the injustice done to his group and joined the celestials' group. The omniscient Lord saw this subterfuge, but used it to teach a lesson for prosperity. Having given the nectar to the wily demon, he cut off his head. From the body portion blood oozed and fell on the ground. Thus was formed the red onion. Being part blood, onion is taboo in satvic food. The head portion spat out nectar from his mouth and it fell down as white garlic. The Devas

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decreed that this spit is also taboo. Dhanwantary then pronounced that since the spit was nectar, it could be used for medicinal purposes. Though one does not follow the taboo on onions, garlic is used even today for medicinal purposes.

In India that is Bharath Brahmin (learned ones) baiting is the order of the day. As leaders of society we condemn this manoeuvring and marginalisation of the group which stood in the forefront of the freedom struggle. (Rajaji, Bharathiyar and others in the South)

When did this marginalisation start? From time immemorial we have been denied our rightful place in society. The original one is the source of all wisdom. Brahma had four heads unlike the other two of trinity. So Rudra plucked out one of his heads in anger, Brahma was projected as a deceiver (with the help of cow and Thazhamboo leaves) when he said that he had seen the head and toe of Lord Shiva. It was decreed that Brahma should have no temples on earth! How unjust!

Brahma's son Sukracharya was the first rebel who took offence to the ignominy on his father and joined the demons as their preceptor. Then came avatharas : the first human form was that of Vaamana : this brahmachaari Brahmin was depicted as a dwarf and he too was projected as capable of cheating to achieve his aim of defeating the honest king Bali. That Vamana did it for the future of the worlds was forgotten.

Then came Parasuraama The Brahmin : he was given a weapon and he took revenge on Kshatriya's. You cannot trust a Brahmin with a weapon!

Viswaamitra (friend to the whole world) born a Kshatriya (he is related to Parasurama) became a Brahmarshi through

penance; world did not want him to achieve that status. The damsel Menaka enticed him to prove that no matter how learned he was a Brahmin cannot control his sensual desires.

This litany of insults on us as a class has been our burden since long; it is only by deep studies of the Vedas, sharing our knowledge with others can we proclaim to the world at large : we are what we are because of our inherent strength!

The mutts and religious leaders are now making a determined bid to get back our rightful place in society. That is a good sign indeed. **

YOU CAN - IF YOU THINK YOU CAN

If you think you are beaten; you are;
If you think that you dare not, you don't;
If you'd like to win, but think you can't
It's almost certain you won't
If you think you'll lose, you've lost,
For out in the world you will find
Success begins with a fellow's will --
It's all in the state of mind.
Full many a race is lost
Ere even a step is run,
And many a coward falls
Ere even his work's begun,
Think big, and your deeds will grow
Think small and you'll fall behind
Think that you can, and you will --
It' all in the state of mind
If you think you're outclassed, you are;
You've got to think high to rise;
You've got to be sure of yourself before
You can ever win a prize
Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man,
But soon or late the man who wins
Is the fellow who thinks he can.

- *Unknown*

“INDU ENAGE GOVINDA”

Kakolu Sarojamma

The beautiful composition of ‘kirtane’ by name “INDU ENAGE GOVINDA” is indeed a divine and great contribution by Shri Raghavendra Swami (hence referred as Raya). For the composition to be beautiful, it is essential that not only the composer should be technically knowledgeable, but also a great singer himself. Then only, within the frame work of the structure of music, the rhythm, the tune and the coverage matching the emotions and other attributes will encompass the ‘kirtane’ making it more beautiful. Shri Raghavendra Swami was a great teacher/speaker also. This is because he was the very embodiment of Shri Hari’s divine grace.

So much so, the knowledge of divine literature, the all encompassing love for the lord, the rich treasure trove of knowledge of music were the birth right of Raya. He incarnated in the family of ‘Veena Vidwans’. What is more important is that Raya is the reincarnation of Prahaladaraj, the disciple of Narada, Narada being medium of divine music flowing through him while he played the ‘Mahati’ veena.

When he incarnated as Vyasaraaja, that is as the architect of the traditions of Karnatic music, he enriched and filled the treasure trove of Haridas Music with ‘Pada’, ‘Suladhi’ and devotional songs embalmed with the seal of Shrikrishna. And through his disciple Shri Purandaradasa and his sons, he was responsible for the great contributions to ‘Haridasa’ literature.

‘Chandrika’ 22, 16th Cross road, 6th Temple Road, Malleshwaram, Bangalore- 03

Raya even before he embraced ‘Sanyasa’, used to revel and lose himself while playing the Veena. He used to sing only the ‘Kirthanas related to the ‘Dwadasha Sthotra’ written by Shri Madhwacharya and the great works by Shripadarajaru, Shri Vyasarajaru, Shri Purandaradasaru and their clan.

It will surely enrich devotion to lord Krishna and bring divine grace from god for the devotees who sing or listen to these ‘Kirtanas, Only such music is the favourite for Shri Hari and his devotees. While the great musician Raya, losing himself totally in devotion to lord, sang devotional song, accompanied by Veena, for the sake of ‘Devatas, it was but natural that Venugopala used to dance to the tune while playing on the flute. The occasion on which Gururaja composed and sang “INDU ENAGE GOVINDA” was when Shri Raghavendra Swamy returned to Udupi “Mahakshetra’ after completing his tour.

‘Shri’ stayed at the ‘Mutt’ founded by Shri Vijayendra Thirtha, his holy teacher. ‘Shri’ had then the ‘Darshan’ of Shri Krishna and became exalted with joy. He sat in ‘Samadhi’ in an enlightened conscious state. Then he indulged himself in exotic dance praising the lord. In the presence of lord ‘Kadagolu’ Krishna, the ‘Mahabisheka’ of ‘Ramanavami’ for the ‘Moola’ idol of Shri Rama was performed in great splendour. ‘He’ offered all the services he had done so far to ‘Kadagolu’ Krishna and prostrated before the lord.

In the name of the son of Nandagopa, with the most divinely beautiful face, he sang “INDU ENAGE GOVINDA” the devotional song, in an appropriate tune and with utmost devotion. The common people who had congregated there, after hearing this divine song, started performing daily recital / reading of

the song while 'Shri' offered this song after naming it to Venugopaldaswamy. When he left Udupi, he sculptured a golden idol of 'Kadagola' Krishna in remembrance of the ever beautiful Krishna and kept it for his everyday worship. There are two things that come to our memory regarding his visit to Udupi, firstly it is the devotional song "INDU ENAGE GOVINDA" and secondly the golden idol of Shri Krishna of Udupi. If one worships the lord in this place, this devotional song will add to the treasure house of 'Haridasa' literature and for ever dwell on the lips of his devotees.

GIVING AND FORGIVING

What makes life worth the living
Is our giving and forgiving;
Giving tiny bits of kindness
That will leave a joy behind us,
And forgiving bitter trifles
That the right word often stifles,
For the little things are bigger
Than we often stop to figure.
What makes life worth the living
Is our giving and forgiving.

- Thomas Grant Springer

MY SYMPHONY

To live content with small means;
To seek elegance rather than luxury and refinement rather than fashion
To be worthy, not respectable, and wealthy, not rich;
To study hard, think quietly, talk gently, act frankly;
To listen to stars and birds, to babes and sages, with open heart;
To bear all cheerfully, do all bravely, await occasions, hurry never.
In a word, to let the spiritual, unhidden and unconscious, grow up
through the common.
This is to be my symphony.

- William, Ellery Channing

Achievements of Dvaita Vedanta and Its Relevance to Modern world

Dr. B. N. K. Sharma

(Note : As the Dvaita and the Advaita systems of Vedanta are diametrically opposed to each other and as the Dvaita system was developed after the Advaita had attained its full stature, some four centuries after Sankara, the achievements of Dvaita Vedanta have necessarily to be adjudged in comparison with those of the Advaita. The readers are therefore requested to keep this historical and philosophical fact in mind while going through the following appraisal of the achievements of Dvaita Vedanta).

Divergences among systems of speculative thought are mostly due to ideological predilections, which are largely subjective. This applies to systems of philosophical thought developed in the West from the days of the early Greeks like Thales, Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle and later by Kant, Hegel and the Neo-Realists and in India, by the Buddhist and the Jain thinkers and the Sankhyas. In contrast to these, the Vedanta systems are based on and bound by a sworn loyalty to a body of revealed texts consisting mostly of the Vedas, principal Upanisads, the Brahmasutras and the Gita, their triple canon. This necessity to philosophise within the four corners of a given textual authority, naturally limits the scope for free and independent exercise of reason and unfettered thinking, in establishing well coordinated self - sufficient systems, except thro' circuitous ways of "interpretation". In the circumstances, the task of developing a full-fledged consistent system of Vedanta, doing full justice to the three primary data of reason and experience, namely the external world of the senses, the existence of other thinking selves

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like our own and the intimations of a power above them which impinge on our minds in the deepest moments of reflection, has not been that easy. Nevertheless, intrepid thinkers have grappled with these problems and have produced well-defined systems of Vedanta with a substantial body of critical and expository material from their respective points of view.

Doctrinally speaking, unlike in the Dvaita system, the theistic element of Saguna-Brahman is not an in-built one in Advaita but an uncomfortable graft on its Nirvisesa - Brahman which has its counterpart in the "Tathata" of Buddhist Idealism. A robust Theistic realism like Dvaita Vedanta cannot be at peace with such an ad hoc version of Upanisadic philosophy, based on two irreconcilable positions of different origin. The language of mysticism in the realisation of Brahman as the ultimate source of the being, becoming and functioning of all finite reality is the key to the combined transcendental and immanent conception of Brahman as the essence of the Upanisadic thought*. It is explained by Jayatirtha, as follows giving a panoptic vision of Upanisadic thought in a nutshell : "all Vedantic texts without exception speak of the glory of Brahman which is the abode of infinite attributes free from all imperfections. Of these, some represent Brahman as endowed with such auspicious attributes as omniscience, lordship, inner rulership, beauty, goodness etc., Others represent It as free from all imperfections such as sin, misery, liability to physical embodiment and so on. Yet others speak of It as beyond the reach of mind and speech to bring home to us its comparative inaccessibility to human reason and understanding, others depict It as the only one that exists or the one without a second, while Others represent It as

* It is in this sense according to Madhva that Brahman is the Nimittakarana alone of the Universe, without being its Upadankarana (material cause) also as in some other systems. For details, see my 'philosophy of Madhvacharya', Motilal B. Dass Delhi, 1986 (Revised Edn.) P. 25

the self of all that it may be taken as the source of all existence, consciousness and activity of all these in the Universe. But the undiscerning miss the basic uniformity of stand points of the Vedic teaching in and thro' the multiplicity of inter - related approaches to Brahman and mar it by introducing artificial distinctions of higher and lower orders of truth in the body of texts and mutilate it. (Nyayasudha I.i.5, Bombay Edn. 1895, P. 124).

The selective genitive used in the Mandukya - verse (II.ab) Advaitah sarvabhavanam devah turyo vibhuh, distinguishes Brahman from all other reals (bhavas). Sankara inherited the legacy left by Gaudapada whose work, the Karikas of the Agamastra, was heavily laden with the Buddhist thought of Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Asanga and Asvaghosa and was replete with Buddhist terminology figures of speech, analogies, epigrammatic diction and negative dialectics. Gaudapada tho' quoting a few Upanisadic texts and basing his work on the Mandukya Upanisad has totally avoided the sutras of Badarayana. It was left to Sankara to align the sutras with the views of his master by applying the technique of "Adhyaropa - apavada". The uncharacterisable "Tathata" of Buddhism was the same as the Nirviesa Cinmatram or Pratyagatman or Nirviesa Brahman of Advaita which was made the subject of investigation and realisation in Vedanta : "Atma ca Brahma". He takes the identity of Atman with Brahman for granted and builds his doctrine on it. This high jump of Sankara from Atman to Brahman as the jijnasya (object of investigation) is not justified. This Atman - Brahman equation is an unproved assumption. Dr. Radhakrishnan makes the same facile assumption when he says, "In the early Upanisads Atman is the principle of individual consciousness and B. the impersonal ground of cosmic consciousness. Soon, the distinction diminishes and the two are identified. (Principal Upanisads P. 77)

Endangered Gender

We have celebrated the International Women's day in an ostentatious manner and have paid lip service to the cause of women. We argued vehemently from public platforms for the emancipation and empowerment of women notwithstanding the fact that we militated against every move to reserve 33 per cent of seats in our legislatures to women. The irony is really hard to miss.

In a manner of speaking, these double standards could be traced to the two diametrically opposite views in the Indian ethos. While one view holds that gods dance in delight wherever women are worshipped, the other view proclaims stridently that no woman deserves freedom.

Status - quoists (male chauvinists in the view of women activists) may argue that they have conferred on the Indian women the right to vote right from the date when our constitution came into force whereas in England which is regarded as the mother of modern democracies women had to wage a long - drawn struggle before they could get this right. But

this is no justification for denying the women the benefits of reservation in legislatures. In a bid to make forays into their vote banks we have gone the whole hog in extending reservation facilities to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward communities in all fields including professional courses and employment. What is more, we have plans to introduce reservation in the private sector as well for the benefit of the downtrodden and weaker cross sections. The reason given for this overwhelming generosity is that these communities have been oppressed down the centuries and have been subjected to gross injustice so much so that they cannot catch up with the mainstream without these props.

Of course, there can be no denying this. But the moot point is this : why can't we go by the same logic and provide reservation for the women who have been grossly ill-treated by man who ensured that they were confined within the four walls of the kitchen. Don't our women deserve a better deal? The reason why men deny the reservation benefits to women is not hard to find. Men are after power and after the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. They fear that once women enjoy the reservation men will be shown the door and can no longer lead a life of fighting cocks. That women have excelled in every field despite the heavy odds

has given the jitters to men folk. They fear that if you give the women an inch they will take the ell. That is why they opposed the reservation bill tooth and nail.

In this respect home minister Shivaraj Patil's latest move has certainly come as a whiff of fresh air. He proposes to increase the number of members in the legislatures so that the proposed 33 per cent reservation will not cause heart burning among men.

Let us not forget that women have had more than their share of trials and tribulations. Dowry deaths and divorces have become routine. Cases of female foeticide are increasing at an alarming rate. Census figures indicate that the number of women in relation to men is dwindling. It this trend continues, women may become an endangered species facing extinction and we may have to import them from other countries.

Let us hope against hope that the proposed legislation will be passed and will prove to be a step in the right direction in the longest journey ahead. Let us not forget that after all it is women who are our mothers, sisters and daughters.

- Editor

Cover page story

Hayasheersho mam pathi Devahelanath

- Chippagiri Nagendracharya

It was in the form of Hayagreeva that the supreme Lord blessed Vadiraja. In fact it was this form he liked most. Again it was in this form that God rewarded Vadiraja with divine wisdom (Sarva Vidyanam)

We eulogise all and sundry; we praise many persons to the skies and grease their palms. We prostrate before them and curry favours. But this will all be in vain. Sri Vadiraja rightly observes.

Kasya kasya priyambroomah stumah kankam pade pade

Kasmai kasmai dishamorthah kasmadwa asmat prayojanam

He tells us that Lord Hayagreeva's grace alone will suffice to enable us to fulfil all our wishes. He exhorts us to follow in his footsteps and take refuge in Hayagreeva for the fulfilment of our myriad wishes. (Hayagreeva Devam upaskaiva Kritinah)

Salutations to Hayamukha Hari who confers infinite wealth on those who worship him with unflinching devotion and who snatches away the wealth from those who turn their backs on Him. Salutations to Hayamukha Hari who creates, sustains and destroys and who stirs incessant memory in the minds of the devout.

Manasi Dhratakathavismri tausmarkaya.

PREPONDERANCE OF GAYATHRI

N. Shankara Acharya

It is said that Gayathri is the **mother of all Vedas**. This statement testifies to the significance of Gayathri with all its dignity. Our people are expected to chant this manthra at least twice daily. But how many do this today is left so the imagination of the individual. What ever may be the opinion of others, I have full faith in Gayathri manthram and I can give an example of my former teacher who used to chant this manthram not less than thousand times a day after his daily bath.

As a result of this he lived even beyond ninety - five years of age when all other teachers of my high school days passed away before his demise. From this it is evident that Gayathri is powerful enough to prolong the longevity of man. The chanter of this manthra is redeemed of all evils. Gayathri has two other names Savithri and Saraswathi. It is presumed that the chanting of this manthra by the dying man in his last breath determines his future in the next birth. Alas! Such a powerful manthra as Gayathri is ridiculed today by our youngsters as mere nonsense and wearing of the sacred thread is lampooned as a sign of barbarism.

Parts of Gayathri

Some times Gayathri is also called 'Panchamukhi', this is because it is considered to have five faces.

They are -

1) OM -

147, S. 7, S. 208, III Main Road, Yelahanka New Town, Bangalore - 560 064

2) Bhurbhuvas Suvaha -

3) Thath Savi thurvarenyam -

4) Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi -

5) Dheeyo yo naha prachodyath -

All these manthras consist of description, meditation and prayer in the adoration of God. Om is considered to be the supreme Brahman and the highest virtue; one who proves the secret of Om gets whatever he desires.

This manthra is regarded as Pranava manthra. So it is recommended that Om should be inscribed on the wall just above the main door of our entrance in our residence. It is presumed that Gayathri protects our body, sharpens our intellect and improves our power of speech.

The first nine words - Om Bhur bhuvah Suvaha Thath Savi thurvarenyam Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi relates to Dhyana (meditation)

Dheeyo yo naha prachodayath is a prayer to God to confer all powers and talents. Gayathri is 'Sarva Roga nivarini'. That is why I have made it a practice of chanting this manthra amidst all the activities of my daily life. सर्वदा सर्वकलिसु हरि चिंतनम् is a good maxim to be followed for the good of the dying man who can't expressly himself by his relatives who can chant manthras near his bed side.

Other aspects of Gayathri

Gayathri is the fulfiller of all desires when chanted most devotionally. When this is done various powers will emerge. The sound of Gayathri is embedded in our respiratory process. When air is inhaled the sound so is reduced. When exhaled the sound is Ham-m-m. With this our breath proclaims 'I am that -

I am divine'. In 'Thath Thvam Asi' (That thou art) all the Vedas declare the same truth. All these attest the fact that Gayathri should never be treated lightly. It is nil - nisi bonum (nothing but good) to have a photo of five - faced Gayathri Devi in our prayer room. तथास्तु ।

A PSALM OF LIFE

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream! -
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.
Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.
Art is long and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave,
In the world's broad field of battle,
Be not like the dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!
Trust no future, however pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act, -- act in the living Present!
Heart within and God o'erhead!
Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints, on the sands of time;
Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.
Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.

- Henry Wordsworth, Longfellow

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I, Prasanna Acharya, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

25th March 2005

Sd/-

Prasanna Acharya

The Agony of a Tree

Krishna Itnal

Today I am turning to 57 years of my existence and I feel like telling my life story. For I don't know how long. I shall live on this beautiful campus. I shiver whenever I see the greed of man. Because man has forgotten that mother earth can satisfy the need of any body, but she is unable to satisfy anybody's greed.

In the above context, I have an inner urge to tell about my life, before I am axed to death into pieces of wood.

People call me Bakul. As I yield forth through my off springs known as flowers, I am popularly known as Bakul flower Tree. I am in village area, so there is no chance for me to get an equivalent name in English, though the educated might be knowing.

Fifty years ago an honourable great man planted me as sapling and the campus people all these years have reared me like their own child. The visitors wonder at my age and others exclaim, that I am just sweet sixteen or seventeen.

So many rested and even slept, enjoying the fragrance, my off springs allow the wind to carry. The greatest advantage is that I am within a well protected campus.

Some times I wonder at the behaviour of the emotional

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ones when they come near me, they remove their sandals and bow their heads reverentially. Whenever I see such situations, I suddenly remember an incident, where a garland on a deity went to the heaven. But the real beneficiary of entering the heaven was the thread who stood like a backbone in garland formation.

I feel God is kind enough to give me such a lengthy well protected life. People who visited the Paunar Ashram of Acharya Vinoba Bhave, say in my presence to others, that there is another of my sister tree planted and protected in the name and memory of Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan. She is also lucky like me to get kind attention. I am proud of her.

I also feel that some teachers with scientific bent of mind, normally visit us with their wards and tell them that we trees have life and we are full of feelings too. They salute the greatest scientist late Jagadish Chandra Bose for his invention and for giving us a valuable status on par with human beings.

One day I was taken aback when a teacher was telling his pupil that my elder sister called pipal always gives pure oxygen and the economic value of the total oxygen given by her works out to Rs. 4,80,000 in her life span.

On another day a saint had come near me and was telling the people gathered there, that a new invention was made the other day whereby the scientists could measure and analyse our feelings through computers.

The simple method used was that a man went near the live tree and the feelings were recorded. After a while an axe

was taken near the same tree and lo, she was trembling with fear of death and it was also measured and recorded in the same computer.

As of now I cannot move out of this place, so it is again for the scientists to tell the truth about our life.

Day before yesterday some people notoriously known as thieves entered our campus in the dead of night and cut to pieces my sister called chandan because of her economic value in the market. Now there is no meaning in informing the death of my sister chandan to law protectors called police, because they are very very busy protecting the life of our prestigious and prosperous politician.

No doubt globalization has come and economics pervades the lives of all human beings. But can they not think that an element of ethics should be there in economics also as enunciated by the father of our nation and again propagated by E. F. Schumaker in his concept called small is beautiful.

I am not alone, on behalf of all trees, I venture to ask you ruthless human beings a few questions.

1) Have you ever valued my life in terms of money for the services I have been rendering? I have protected soil erosion.

2) Are you aware that I am responsible for the percolation of water into the womb of mother earth?

3) Have I not given you shade to relax, sleep and even play under me or my branches?

4) Are you not listening to the music from the nests of birds in my branches.

I know, time is an endless flow but my life is short before a greedy man comes with an axe to cut me to pieces, I should say my real story.

Late honourable president of India Sri Babu Rajendra Prasad planted me as a sapling in this campus of Kasturba Seva Trust in the year 1954 and a palacard hung on me tells the entire history of my existence. Saswadi is the taluka head quarter of Purandar and Pune dists. My campus children are very kind and affectionate to me, so are the elders. So now I pray to you to bestow the same amount of affection and shower the love on all my sister trees in your campus.

GOOD WORK SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

One of the most insistent things in life is that you are ultimately judged by what you actually accomplish. The busy world of workers gives scant attention to assertion, explanation, protest, apology or complaint. What counts most is not promise, but performance. Good work speaks for itself, therefore achieve something first and talk about it afterward if you must. Time spent on promises, regrets, and professions, is usually unavailing. The way to do things is not to dream about them, nor wish for them, but to do them. Distinguished men in all times have been prodigious workers, earnestly intent upon securing actual results. The present age is intensely practical and more than ever the race is to the alert, the energetic, and the industrious.