



*Author of More than Half Century Books,  
Indu Virtue Principal Donor,  
Sensational Writer, Thraitha Theorem Originator*

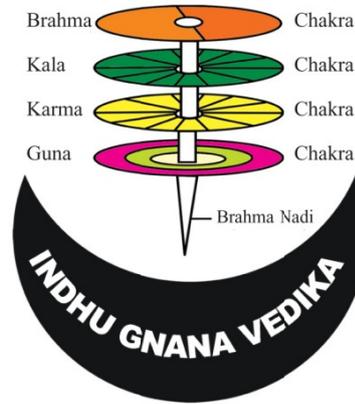
***Sri Acharya Prabhodhananda Yogeeswarlu***

# Temple Traditions

*(Hidden-Truths)*

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IMP Note : To know the true and complete meaning of this Grandha (book) it must be read in Telugu Language.

# GLOSSARY

**Aadhara** : A nerve-centre at the anal region in the spine; there are six such nerve centres in the spine viz; swadistana Manipooraka, Anahata, Visudda and Agenya. Brain is the 7th nerve-centre called Sahasraasara.

**Aadhyatmika-mu** : The study of Atma (soul) or the learning about the Self.

**Aagama shastra** : This is one of the pseudosciences like Vaastu wherein some information was said to be written about the temples.

**Asthika or Asthikulu** : Believers; one who believes the existence of God.

**Achelamu** : Opposite of *chelamu*, means without cloth, cloth is compared with physical body for the soul-I (*Jeevatma*)

**Adharma-mu** : Opposite of *Dharma*.

**Agneya** : A nerve-centre at the junction of the eye brows in the brain.

**Anahata** : A nerve-centre at the place of heart in the spine.

**Anda** : Egg; Born from eggs.

**Anjaneya** : A deity commonly worshipped by many people, devotee of Rama.

**Arishadvargamu** : The six character group or the six *Gunas* viz; *Kama* (Desire), *Krodha* (Anger), *Lobha* (Miser), *Moha* (Infatuation), *Mada* (Proudness) and *Matsara* (Jealous)

**Atman** : Soul-II; the soul that gives vital energy to the body in the living beings. It is not only the source of *Chaitanya* (life-energy). It controls the functioning of the 7 important Glands present in the body; at the time of death it leaves the body alongwith *Jeeva*(Soul-I); one can know the *Atman*(soul-II) present in the body by the process of *Yoga*; experiences the joys and sorrows of life by *Jeevatma*(Soul-I) in the body in accordance with the '*Karma*', whereas Atma (Soul-II) provides the necessary life-energy for all the actions of the body.

**Atma shakthi** : The power obtained by the practice of *Yoga* which can destroy *karma*.

**Avadhuta** : Omnipresent God who has no boundaries takes the form of *human* and come as messenger to impart the knowledge relating to Him.

**Ayyappa** : An idol by name *Ayyappa* located in Kerala state.

**Batta bayalu :** *Batta* means cloth, '*bayalu*' means sky; this word pair gives the meaning of omnipresent *Paramatma*; Bodyless (clothless) *Jeevatma* will attain Salvation (*Bayalu*).

**Bhagawaan :** One who borns out of *Bhagam* (Vagina) with life. God will only born out of woumb with life whereas we the common beings are not born from the womb without life because we get life just after delivery of foetus. Hence our bodies are only born from the wounb, we came from some where by leaving other bodies. Refer the book "*Janana Marana Siddantam*".

**Boddu-rayi :** *Boddu* means navel and *rayi* means stone. A round boulder stone half burried in the Middle of the village, (town) representing formless *Paramatma*; also called *Pothulaiah*.

**Brahma-anda :** Entire universe(universe is compared as an egg of God).

**Brahma-naadi (Cerebral nerve) :** *Brahma* means God, *Naadi* means nerve.The spinal-nerve along with the brain; very important nerves system; the origin of vital force or *chaitanya* to all over the body; it has got six nerve centres or nerve ganglia. Brain is also called as the last and 7th nerve centre or origin of the soul (Atma).

**Brahmavettalu :** Those who possess the knowledge of *Atma*.

**Braham Vidya :** *Brahma* means *Paramatma*, different from four headed *Brahma* in *Puranas*. *Vidya* means science or science about God. This is the sixth science taught by the Lord *SriKrishna* through *Bhagavadhgeeta*; also called science of *Yoga*. There are five other sciences viz., 1) Mathematics 2) Material science (Physics and natural sciences) 3) Chemistry 4) Astral science or Astronomy 5) Astrological science or Astrology.

**Brahmayoga :** Sitting in isolation without any traces of Senses; without any thoughts in Mind, Zero state of Mind; which can be acheived in two ways, one by control and stopping of breathing ; or by keeping the mind in Zero state because Mind(*Mano*) and Air(*Marutha*) are interrelated. Here in the process of *Yoga*, *Jeeva* can taste or experience *Atma* in the body with the help of the Mind. This is also called the union(*Yoga*) of *Jeevatma* with *Atman*.

**Chandana :** Sandalwood paste usually used to mark at forehead at the presence of the soul ; this is also pasted at the middle line among three parallel lines

adorned on the forehead and also on *Siva linga* (three lines indicate *Jeevatma*, *Atma* and *Paramatma*).

**Chandra-naadi** : One among the three important nerves *surya*, *chandra* and *Brahmanaadi*'s (nerves). *Surya* and *Chandranadi*'s are the two peripheral or sympathetic nerves present on both sides of the middle spinal nerve (*Brahmanaadi*) *Chandranadi* is present at the left side of the spinal nerve.

**Chelamu** : Clothing; this word is used to denote one physical body (Body is like a garment to the *Jeevatma*).

**Daiva Shakthi** : The invisible power of *Atma*.

**Dhaara paatra** : The vessel with water placed above *Eswara Linga*.

**Dharma Or Dharma-mu** : Very important word used in the science of *Yoga*. *Dharma* is different from *Daana* (Donate). *Dharmas* are inherent and in-born qualities of living or non living things; for eg: salt is saltish, neem has bitter taste etc; like all other living and non-living have specific characteristics Soul has also got special invisible features which are called *Dharmas*. This word should not be misunderstood with the word Justice (*Nyaya*). *Dharmas* are eternal and cannot be changed.

**Dharma Prathista** : Establishing *Dharma* (no one except God can establish *Dharma*).

**Eswara** : Supreme over nature; *Paramatma* is other-wise called "*Eswara*"; the omnipresent God.

**Eswara Linga** : Round boulder stone which represents the omnipotent God.

**Garbha-gudi** : The sanctum-sanctorum in the temple; *Garbha* means womb of the mother; God incarnation or *Bhagawaan* is born from out of the womb; can we not be born from mother's womb?. No. Our bodies are only born from the womb, refer the book *Janana Marana Siddanta*.

**Gnanam** : Knowledge of the Supreme.

**Gopuramu** : The vertical structure with figures in different postures around the seven gateways in front of the temple.

**Govinda** : The hymn or the word chanted in different occasions especially in

temples before the Deity, at the death ceremony and also at the moment of loss of everything.

**Graha :** The body has two parts visible and invisible. The invisible part is called *Graha*; *Vi-graha* is slightly different from *graha*, *vighraha* present in idol.

**Graha Aaradhana :** The worshipping of invisible part of the body.

**Grandhi Rajamu :** The pituitary gland present in the head; this gland controls all the other glands and therefore it is named as "King Gland" or Master gland (*Grandhi Rajamu*). This gland is said to emanate certain powerful emissions which stimulate all the other glands; this gland is said to be the seat of "*Atma*"(God).

**Gunas :** The characteristics viz; Desire, Anger, Miser Infatuation, Proud, Jealous are called six group of *Gunas*, there are other six opposite *Gunas* present.

**Haarathi :** A wave - offering of camphor, representing the process of sublimation.

**Indu-vu :** Moon; moon represents or symbolises the supreme knowledge; one who possess this knowledge is called Induvu; Indu is different from Hindu.

**Jeevatma :** Soul-I present in every living being; it's function is to experience the joys and sorrows; it leaves the body along with *Atma*(Soul-II) after death and enters another new one; it has different experiences in different bodies. Each *Jeevatma* has different experiences in different bodies in accordance with the *Karma*; it unites with *Paramatma*(Soul-III) through *Atma*(Soul-II) present in that body at the time of salvation(*Moksha*).

**Jyothi-shyam :** *Jyothi* means light. *Jyothi-shyam* means science of predicting the future of the beings with the help of the Planetary movement.

**Karmayoga :** Body has no posture in this *Yoga*; *Karmayogi* is working and doing all the things as usual like an ordinary man; (the feeling of *I* or *Aham* is the cause to attach *Karma*) *karmayogi* verywell know the presence of 'I' (*Jeeva*) in the body. He knows *Jeevatma* has no concern over the actions in the body. He knows the *karma* is the cause for all the actions and different parts of the body perform actions. *Atma* is the source to give *sat* or energy. Hence 'I'(*Jeeva*) in the body has no connection with the activities except experiencing the results of actions viz., sorrow and joys. Therefore *Karmayogi* is unattached to the sin or virtue. He accrues no *Karma* during all his actions. Lord *SriKrishna* and King *Janaka* are the best examples for "*Karmayogi*".

**KritaYuga :** There are four *Yugas*(time measures) as per the *Indian calculation*.  
1) *Kaliyuga* 2) *Dwapara yuga* 3) *Threthayuga* 4) *Kritayuga*. *Kaliyuga* runs to 4,32,000years, *Dwaparayuga* 8,64,000 years, *Threthayuga* 12,96,000 years and *Kritayuga* 17,28,000 years. The total time for all the four *yugas* is 43,20,000 years. Such onethousand *yugas* or 250 cycles of *yugas* will come to 108,00,00,000 years or 108 crores of years which is called as a day for *Brahma* and another 108 crore years as night for *Brahma*. During *Brahma day*(*Kalpa*) universe appears and *Brahma night*(*Rathiri*) the universe will disappear or the universe will become extinct.

**Moksha-mu :** Liberation from birth and death or salvation; the abode of God; Supreme destination; Kingdom of God(Bible); reaching *Paramatma* the ultimate; reaching the ultimate source of entire universe.

**Paramatma :** Soul-III; the ultimate destination and source of every living and non-living; omnipresent, omnipotent God,it is spelt as the Kingdom of God as stated in Bible-"*ParalokaRajya*"; *Parandhama* (omnipresent) otherwise called as *Moksha* or Salvation; the state of liberation from the body and its experiences; it is the Supreme abode of God; it has no equal in the Universe; unimaginably it takes Human form to enlighten about Him and is called Bhagvaan; He lives among people but nobody can distinguish Him as God because all his actions are verycommon.

**Pinda :** Born from woumb.

**Suryanaadi :** The nerve present at the the rightside of the Spinalnerve (*Brahmanaadi*); the nerve on the left is called *Chandranaadi*; all the activities are conducted in the body through these nerves; when the body is active Mind has control over it at the seat of these two nerves; at the time of sleep mind is absent in these nerves and it enters the Spinalchord(*Brahmanaadi*) to take rest position.

**Yoga :** Union; union of two Souls viz., *Jeevatma*(Soul-I) and *Atma*(Soul-II); in this process mind comes to a still position. *Jeevatma* experiences the *Atma* and this state of the body is called *Yoga* or *Bramhayoga*; different from *Karmayoga* where all actions of the body and mind are performed.

**Shaiva or Shaivaites :** A sect in *Hindu* religion who adore three white patches on their forehead; worshippers of *Siva* or *Eswara*; they believe *Siva* or *Sankara* are one and the same. In accordance with the *INDU* religion *Paramatma* is known

as *Siva* and *Eswara*. But *Sankara* is one among the Trinity of Gods. In ancient times there were no *Shaiva* and *Vaishnava* sects.

**Vaishnava or Vaishnavaites :** Originally there was no difference between *Shaiva* and *Vaishnava*. The only difference between *Shaiva* and *Vaishnava* is due to the construction of two types of temples by the elders as one for Formless and another for Human form of only one God. Some temples were constructed to represent a formless and omnipresent God viz., *Eswara* or *Siva* and some to represent human form of God viz., *SRIRANGA*(*Bhagawaan*). *SriRanga* is adorned with *Shanku*, *Chakra* and *Naamamu* and *Hasthamu*(Palm). Out of ignorance and on account of the influence of *Satan*(*Maya*) two different sects (*Shaiva* and *Vaishnava*) were formed in the *Hindu* religion. The original *INDU* religion explains the oneness of God as well as religion.

**Pancheekarana :** A Scientific process to explain the formation of the bodies of the beings by the culmination of five classical elements viz., Sky,Air,Fire,Water and Earth. The *Chaitanya* or Soul is also a main constituent in the formation of the body and without its presence the body cannot move. Twentyfive (25) parts of the body each comprising 5 groups viz., *The Organs of Action-Karmendriyas* (5), *Sensuary Organs-Gnanendriyas* (5), *Subtle Particles-Tanmatras*(5), *FiveAirs* (*Panchavayuvulu*) and *Four Inward Senses-Antahkaranas*(5) are important parts of the body and are formed like a chemical composition with the help of God in the process of "*PANCHEEKARANA*".



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# TEMPLE TRADITIONS

## [HIDDEN-TRUTHS]

### **FOREWORD**

A temple is an abode of God. We might have heard "God is only one", thus the wise speak. Though God is one, we find several temples representing several Gods. Hence, a doubt persists as to who the said "God" is and who is the one who resemble the original *Deity*. Above all, the important aspect is, who is the God? Further, an answer has to emerge out as to who the God is and also the significance for representing a particular temple. This big question cannot be answered in short. If we intend to know more about God, we should at first be aware of several aspects. Our elders have established the temples with an aim to enlighten this truth. God is one, similarly the Temple too, but two methods exist to know the facts. One, to visualize the God in a form, and the other, visualizing a formless God. The temple built for the formless God is the Eshwara *Linga* Temple, devoid of any facial features. And the structural temple tradition has originated with the Shiva *Linga* itself. If this temple is the one meant for a formless God, the other one had originated with the form of God, i.e. a *Deity*, adorned by *Shanku*, *Chakra* with a mark of *Namamu* on the forehead viz., *SriRanga*. In the ancient days, only two structural patterns of temples existed in the world. In the millions of years that followed, countless temples have come-up.

To pave way for a distinct identification of a temple possessing a formless God and a temple where a *Deity* (God in a form) existed, the wise among our ancestors have come-up with these two temple structures. But as time rolled on, various kinds of temples sprang up in thousands in number. The temples built in the ancient era bore the significance of real meanings and those which came later on have lost similar significance. In those days some traditional principles were strictly adhered to for building a temple, but those principles are non-existing in the present times. Even a small room is tuned into a temple by placing a stone plank with Godly features and since these type of temples are fast coming up, one can easily measure the depths of devotion in the present generation, when compared to the past.

If the total temples on the earth relate to one league, the devotees who throng such temples form another league. As stated in the Geetha, in accordance with devotional aptitude, devotees can be bifurcated into four groups viz.,

(1) *Aarthulu* (Afflicted Men) (2) *Artharthulu* (Begging for Wealth) (3) *Gignasulu* and (4) *Gnanulu*. However, in the present era we frequently come across *Aarthulu* and *Artharthulu*, rather than *Gignasulu* (Curious) and *Gnanulu* (Spiritually wise) who are very rare. *Aarthulu* means people who seek the shelter of God only when they face difficulties, whereas *Artharthulu* are those who pray for God with the sole intention of acquiring riches. In the ongoing period we find people frequenting temples only for fulfillment of desires, which is purely a selfish motto. And now-a-days people are visiting temples with a belief that it's not only a dwelling place of God but also an appropriate place to fulfill human desires. Hence, the need to visit a temple arises only if one intends to fulfill own desires, and if not, no need is foreseen to visit a temple, isn't it? With similar objective, the employed are praying for promotions, the unemployed for employment, students for better ranks, youth for life-partners, corrupt personnel for procuring high income and a thief for committing effortless and rewarding thefts. There are several people who presume that God fulfills their wishes if an oath is undertaken to give something in return in the form of an offering (*Dakshina*). This tendency reflects a bribing attitude towards the God in abiding by the promises of offerings. By a way, these devotees are making the God's to be thought in a corrupt sense and are even encouraging their children to offer something in the form of Gifts (*Dakshina*) as and when their desires are fulfilled. Now a days, this form of devotion towards God is enormously visible at the temples. Hence, to curtail this unhealthy trend, this edition is brought out with a sole aim to enlighten the people not only on the divine aspects and sanctity of God but as well to explore the traditional prominence of temples. This book is further intended to provide an insight into the primary importance of the *Eswara Linga* and the credibility of the images, which later followed in the form of *Shanku*, *Chakra*, and *Namamu viz*; reflecting the *SRI RANGA*.

The rituals to be followed to offer prayers at the temples, their eminence and meanings have been clearly elaborated for better understanding by one and all. A few of our elders may not deem our concept as a befitting one, since the formalities adopted in between the changing times, perhaps attracted and motivated people to keep faith in changed concepts. Under such influence and basing on references from similar books, these so called rituals are pursued with by the people in general. To quote an example, there's a saying that it is quite appropriate to light a wick doused in a clarified cow's butter and offer a wave (*Haarathi*), which is a sacred act for appeasing the God. Since the meaning of

*Haarathi* is a "wave-offering", it purposefully suits an offer of an evaporating object, viz., it suits our contention to the item "Camphor" and not to the cotton wick doused in a clarified cow's butter. Without viewing this aspect as a *dharma* or *adharma*; is it feasible to assume that all the content matter in the books is based on *Shastras* and the same theory prevailed thereto. Let the so-called sayings be any in number, but duty bound we should think and act in real perspective, ignoring such myths. Hence, we have come out with the condemnation of such theories and prevailed upon the realities. Yes, the cow gives birth to a calf but not the bull. Thus we have openly denied those who say that what they know is genuine, while at the same time enabling you all to know the facts in principle. Some tricksters in the guise of *Gurus* (masters) are rampantly misleading the people and despite facing these unpleasant circumstances, we are able to impart the fact that, people under the influence of such *Gurus* are following unfair practices while following the rituals of worshipping the God.

If anything is not made public it becomes a secret and since the facts on the traditional importance of temples are unfamiliar, we proposed to bring them out through this book, titled "Temple Traditions – Hidden Truths". We made our best and sincere efforts to elaborate on such theories of secrecy, through this book. But, there may be some who argue that what was prescribed in the book is not explained in the *Agama Shashtra* and hence it lacks credibility. But, we are not forcing anyone to believe this. Yet, please try to know the truth and believe in the truth. We are duty bound to provide the unexplored facts and it is up to you to decide.

**-Sri Acharya Prabodhananda Yogeeswarulu**

# 1. THE SECRETS OF TEMPLES

It is well understood that a temple is the dwelling place for God and a *Deity* exists in the temple. With total belief, irrespective of colour or size, we worship the God. As per the sayings inscribed in the *Brahmavidya Shastra*, God is present in everyone and everywhere and He is the one who provides us the energy and power. The God is present in every body, giving vital energy (*chaitanya*) to the body and since God himself is present in everyone, does the *Deity* in between the four walls represent the God? This doubt is bound to rise again and again. Even the *Sastras* had explained the God as formless and invisible to the naked eye and even then, how come one cannot raise a finger on the visible form of God.

If the temples are built in the pre-historic era, why did the *Brahmavettalu* (those who are aware of God) of those days built them? Though aware that the God is formless, why did they build the temples and carved some or the other form to the God. The omnipresent and the Supreme of all living beings on earth is the God, and despite the existing reality, why did they differentiated between the imposed lines of *Vibhoothi* as one God and that the one with *Naamamulu* as another God? If the God is formless and *Nirguna* (without *Gunas*), what's the need to create imaginary idols? Why should we attribute the characteristics to God and why the *Sagunopasana* (possessing a characteristic worth worshipping) be performed? If similar questions haunt the peoples' wit, suitable response to clarify them is not forthcoming. Under these circumstances, there's every possibility for the people to turn towards atheism. And under a state of confusion, most of the people are blindly following the adopted procedures and thereby they are unable to differentiate between the formless and the distinct God. Hence, concluding that what they are practicing is a pure form of worshipping the God, people are merely on the look-out for fulfillment of their vows. It is up to the God to fulfill their wishes and thus the temples are meant for this sole objective. Assuming that some temples fulfill people's vows promptly, people are flocking such temples represented by a particular God with a spirit of deep worship and high offerings as reward. Let anybody think anyway, the prevailing truth in the *Shastras* cannot be altered. *Shastra* is a subject based upon certain facts and principles projecting them, in addition to the experiences forming a core base for such *Shastras*. However, as per the *Shastras*, God is invisible. But does it mean that all the existing temples are insignificant? Why did the-then *Brahmavettas*

got involved in such priceless toil and spent unaccountable riches for construction of temples? Is there no credence to those ancient temples? ... Yes, they do have? Yes, they possess definite significance, which is not familiar with the present masses. In the ancient days, only those who are well acquainted with the Godly affairs, possessing the required wisdom have undertaken the construction of temple structures. Yet, after a considerable lapse of time the importance of the temple structures had slowly diminished. This is definitely the handiwork of *Satan* (Maya), which are quoted in the *Gnana Yoga* Chapter of *Bhagwadgeetha*, as...

Sloka :1) *Emam vivaswathe yogam prokthavanaha mavayam vivaswaam manave praha manuriksvakave braveeth*

Sloka :2) *Evam parampraa praptha mimam Rajarshayoviduhu sakaaleneha mahatha yoganastaha paranthapa.*

“The *Bhagawan* at first had imparted to the Sun God on this eternal educative enlightenment, who in turn had revealed it to *Manuvu*, and *Manuvu* in turn repeated the same to the King *Ikshvaka*. Thus this knowledge was passed on by one another to one another, and as time eclipsed it was also gradually forgotten”. It is in a normal course of time that people will forget the past, is the saying of God. Hence, the *Dharmas* are turning into *Adharmas* and the meaningful into meaningless. But, one is duty bound to re-set them and explain the meaningful in the right perspective. If it is the God who set rights the *Adharma* at an appropriate time, it is we humans who should take the lead to restore and set-right the misguided and meaningless concepts into the meaningful ones. The 10<sup>th</sup> Sloka of ***Bhakti Yoga*** in *Bhagwadhgeetha* Viz.,

*Abhyasepyasamarthopi mathkarma paramobhava  
Madarithamapi karmani kurvan siddi mavapyasi*

says, work for me, I, the *Bhagwan* shall bestow *Moksha* (salvation) upon you. The all pervading and the Supreme in the guise of a human form, duty bound, shall set right the erroneous scenario. And, as a *Bhagwan*, preaching the Supreme Knowledge of Soul or *Atma* is His ultimate aim and explaining the structural importance of temples is a part and parcel of my discourses.

Who is the God? Yes, it is the toughest and unchallenged question of all times. Why because, the word "God (*Devudu*)" itself denotes something associated with a "search", rather than relating to any "attainment". *Bhagwan* himself is familiar of own self and hence He justifies in explaining the aspect of His presence on the earth at an appropriate time. That explanation is called the "knowledge of God". Here is a small example; if a person intends to reach the city of Hyderabad, there's a certain way to reach the place. The distance between the destination points, the curves present on the way, the rivers and lakes that come across, the area where the hilly road exists and accident-prone places are all earmarked. Unless all the barriers are crossed, the city of Hyderabad cannot be reached. Similarly, to reach the God and to attain *Mukthi* (salvation), there are several knowledgeable and enlightening instructions to be followed. Like the several indications highlighted on the paths of destination to reach the God, temples are a place where similar suggestions are indicated by the God, Who by taking the form of *Bhagawaan* had not only come down to the earth but also lent His support in shaping the structures of temples. But we are unaware as to which form and in whose form the *Bhagwan* had come in the *Krita Yuga*. Hence, we can claim that the ancient temples are the ones built by the scholarly and elder people only.

Indeed, temples are places where the information concerning the God is provided and every structural form possesses its own prominence. If the temples are places meant to educate the masses about God, the process of worship and the opinion towards the God also prevails there. The confidence to be instilled and the opinion prevailing are merely aimed at executing the devotional spirit in humans. The imperceptible facts of God in the perceptible forms bridge the gaps between the humans and the God. Our ancestors in the *Krita Yuga* have adopted certain procedures to know the features of the God. It can therefore be said that the God Himself in the guise of *Bhagawaan* had prescribed certain rites which are to be followed for worship in symbolic forms only, just to acknowledge the features of God.

The ancient temples and the significance with which they were built and the procedures adopted for worship during the course at that time are not familiar to anyone now. The procedures which were followed during the *Krita Yuga* have now become secrets. However, some people with selfish motives wrote scripts, which are devoid of scientific values and called them as *Shastras*, saying that the content matter was extracted from the *Vedas*, which possess the saintly blessings.

Likewise, some amongst us have created the fake *Shastras* keeping aside the original ones by highlighting the unscientific aspects. This is quite contradictory to what the *Bhagwan* had highlighted in the *Krita Yuga*. Thus, these *Shastras* are purely created with a narrow intent of mind by the influence of Satan (*Maya*).

Let whatever is heard-of now, the humans with their foolish knowledge have created a rift between the *Shaivas* and the *Vaishnavas*. Though the ancient facts became secrets as acknowledged by the God Himself, it is imminent that those *Dharmas* are bound to bounce back one or the other day. Those facts of secrecy are on the verge of seeing the light, through this "Temple Rituals – Hidden Truths" book and it would stand a challenge to the *Agama Shastras*. This book enlightens the prominence of temples, spiritual wisdom, ritual aspects and prospects of human confidence in God. The temples, which fail to light-up the elemental wisdom of God in a human and which cannot explain the ritual relevance of worship and devoid of devotion are indeed an existence in futile. These unscientific and insignificant issues are widely exposed in this book. With an aspiration to stop the unhealthy ritual practices of offering worship to the God and to stand as an obstacle for such procedures, we have come-up with this book. Yes, temples are not meant for seeking fulfillment of human desires and this book invites to seek positive reaction in this aspect. Many people are merely assuming that the path chosen is a wise one though it's a foolish. This book not only aims to desist such humans from treading the foolish paths but also inspires to choose the right paths of wisdom.

In the earlier era, temple structures have been built to enlighten such sections of humanity who are unaware of the aspects relating to the *Atma* and for those under the darkness of ignorance on the aspects of *Paramatma*. With supreme knowledge imbibed in every atom of the structure, the temples have been built at that time. The external features of temples are not important, but reflection of self-enlightenment in their appearance was given importance. By presenting a particular form, a temple prevails upon inviting a person to understand the formless God. By placing an idol in between the four walls and proposing to impart the essence of spiritual knowledge; no doubt is called a dwelling place of God viz., temple. Yogis with abundant knowledge have constructed these permanent temple structures, only after rightful immersion in thoughts.

People in the earlier era possessed the power of self-wisdom. But as time advanced, the power of wisdom had slowly eroded and foolish instinct replaced its roots. At this juncture "*Brahmarshulu*" viz., those who possessed the power and insight of wisdom have apprehended the fact that slowly the power of wisdom is going to fade. Hence, after prolonged assessment of the circumstances, they had decided to undertake the construction of temples. By using total wit and wisdom, the "*Brahmarshulu*" came out with a concept to build temple structures, which are not only self-explanatory but also wisdom oriented. The first such temple was constructed by following these principles and it possesses the privilege of installing a "*Linga*".



## 2. THE INSTALLATION OF A 'LINGA' (ESWARALINGA)

When the universe did not exist, the only one who existed at that time is the *Paramatma* (Omnipresent God). From that state, after a considerable lapse of time this Universe was brought into existence and the power that aided the cause is the element of *Paramatma*. Thus, the universe had originated by the influence of *Paramatma* only. The universe itself means a confluence of five physical matters, viz., (1) Sky (2) Air (3) Fire (4) Water and (5) Earth, which in other terms is called as Nature (*Prakruti*). The nature or the universe is similar one and from these five physical matters of nature, all living beings emerge. The system of life and death in living beings evolve out from the nature itself. The uniqueness of nature is absorbed in every body and character of living beings present on the earth. Hence, all the living beings are born, grown and extinguished in the nature and are made to re-emerge from the nature itself.

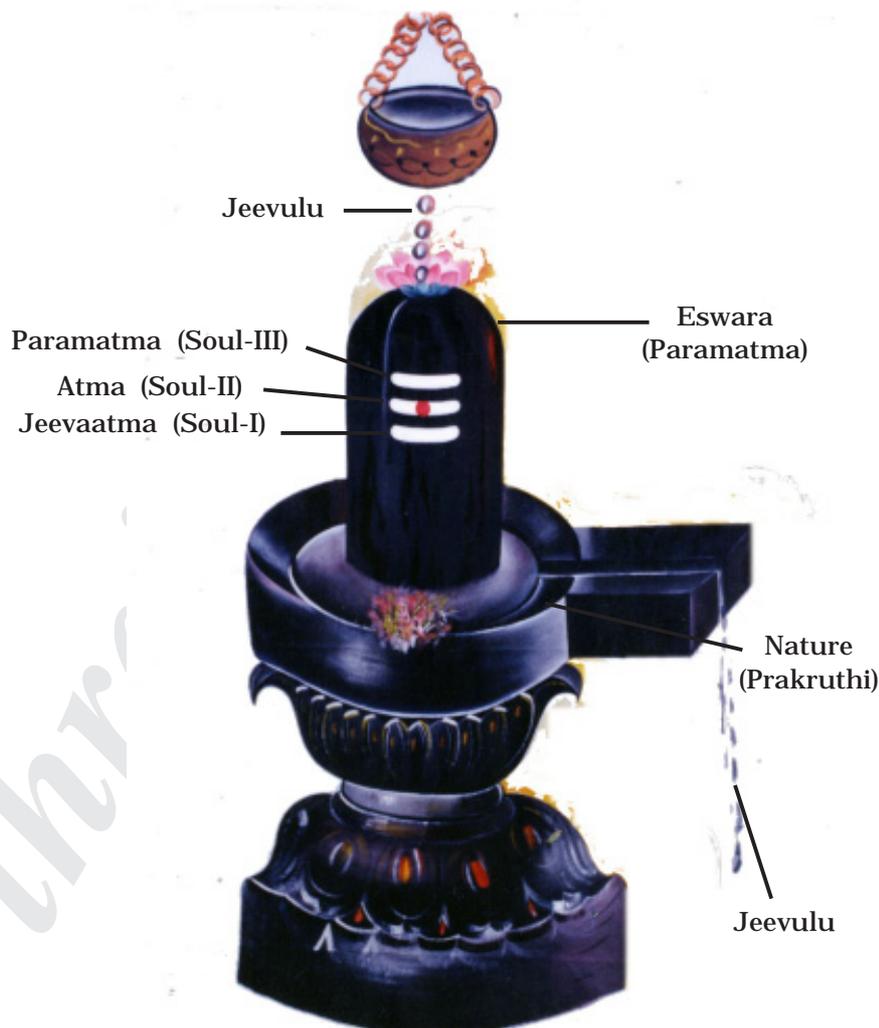
Does the nature possess any inherent power (*swayam shakthi*) to influence the process of birth and death of living beings on the earth? If we think in that course, we can conclude that the Nature does not possess any such power. But, some power is essential for the process and it is the invisible power of the *Paramatma* that is executing the course of action. In the *Rajavidya Rajaguhya Yoga* Chapter of the *Bhagavadhgeetha*, it's mentioned:

10<sup>th</sup> sloka :

*Mayaadhykshena prakrithisuyate sacharaacharam  
Hethunanena kaunteya Jagadwiparivarthatha*

“Nature with my able support is able to carry out the cycle of births and deaths of all living beings on earth”. I, therefore is the hub and fulcrum, on which the whole universe revolves around my axis, thus told the *Paramatma*.

At the advent of *Brahmavidya*, who are we? What is the birth and death? Who is the cause for all these? With whose power is all this process materializing? If this aspect is explained, of course *Nature* is the cause for producing our body and the required essence by *Atma* (soul) which provides the vital energy (*chaitanya*) and movements to the body. Unhesitantly it can be considered that *Nature* is playing the vital role in forming and shaping the living beings and hence it can be called as the mother of all living beings. By producing the vital energy for movements in the motionless body structures and by giving life and shape,



(ESWARA LINGA)

*Paramatma* can be termed as the Father of all living beings. It should at first be made known that *Nature* is the mother of universe, whereas *Paramatma* is the father, the aspect of which is the primary highlight in the *Brahmavidya*. One should at first be aware of the factual knowledge that the human form, its birth and death have all originated from the vital energy of the *Paramatma*..

To strengthen the fact, *Yogi Vemana* had said, "what's the use of a son, if he's alive or dead, who has no respect for parents; merely reflecting a worthless termite which exists and perishes in an ant hill itself." It means that a human who does not identify the significance of the *Nature* and *Paramatma* (God), that human is as equivalent to a non-existing living being and that the persons life itself is devoid of any prominence. Hence, all the living beings should know their parents viz., *Nature* and *Paramathma*. In the *Gunathraya Vibhaga Yoga of the Bhagwadhgeetha*, the mother and father are described as under

**3rd sloka :**

*Mamayonirmahadbrahma thasmin garbham dadaamyaham  
Sambavassarva bhuthanam thatho bhavathi Bharatha*

**4th sloka :**

*Sarvayonisu kauntheya moorthahyaha sambhavanthi yaah  
Thaasaam brahma mahadyanih Ahama beejapradhah pitha.*

**The Gist:** "The whole *Nature* (*Prakruti*) is like a woman and I am the donor for its fertility. Hence all the living beings are born to us. One should know that whichever is born from whatever womb, *Nature* is the mother of all such life-forms, and being the donor of fertility, I am the Father". In tune with the ancient scriptures; to let everyone know the eternal truth as to the representing factor of a mother and father, i.e., *Nature* (*Prakruthi*) and the Omnipresent God (*Paramatma*); the "*Linga*" was installed. Since the God is formless, a stone without any features was carved out initially and denoted it to be the "God". To endorse the Omnipresent God (*Paramatma*) as a masculine entity, the *Linga* was shaped and installed in the form of a male gender and in representation of the female features of *Nature* (*Prakruti*), the base of the *Linga* was shaped as a female genital organ (*Paanimattamu*). Thus these descriptive features are made to correspondingly reflect the similarities of the male and female origins. By placing the *Linga* in the middle of the base representing the features of *Nature* (*Prakruti*), it's a thought-

provoking disclosure that the Omnipresent God (*Paramatma*) exists not only in the internal sphere of the *Nature* but as well in the external too. Our elders depicted this theory merely with an inclination to expose this secrecy and not with any romantic motive.

The confluence of the Nature (*Prakruti*) and the Omnipresent God (*Paramatma*) is the primary source for the origin of this universe and this aspect is the aim of our propagation. The installation of the "*Linga*" was done merely to endorse the fact that the Nature (*Prakruti*) is the mother and Omnipresent God (*Paramatma*) is the father of all beings. All the living beings by virtue of the vital energy provided by the Omnipresent God (*Paramatma*) are born through the Nature (*Prakruti*) which instills a provocative thought in our minds. A vessel of water is placed above the *Linga* so that drop-after-drop of water is made to tickle from the vessel on to the *Linga*. Each such drop slowly slides over the *Linga*, reach the base of Nature (*Prakruti*) and slowly flow out. Thus, every living being emerge out from the source of Nature and Supreme. In anticipation of enlightening this aspect, a water-filled vessel facilitating to tickle drop by drop of water is placed above the *Linga*. It is to symbolize that only with the assistance of the Soul (*Linga*) and Nature (*Prakruthi/Paanimattamu*) all living beings can take their form and thus in comparison with the process, each drop of water is assumed as possessing the essence of life when it tickle down the *Linga*, later on to its basement (*Panimattamu*) to assume the qualities of nature and to slide out. This process signifies as to how the vessel of water is appropriately filled in with water, from a river, well or a stream, to keep the constant process of tickling drop by drop of water to fall over the *Linga*. It thus paves way to imagine that the element of life is a continuous process of births and deaths. The drop by drop of water continuously tickling over the *Linga* (*Paramatma*) and its base (*Panimattamu*) is the inner-secret of the creation of the living beings. This is the actual concept of our elders.

Now an important aspect on the hidden essence of all living beings is to be explored. The image of the Omnipresent God (*Paramatma*) consists of three divisions. To let everyone know the factual realities, the *Paramatma* representing the three supreme elements, having distinct features than that of the Nature (*Prakruthi*) is represented by the three white stripes of *Viboothi*, earmarked on the Eshwara *Linga*. In the *Purushottama Prapthiyoga* of *Bhagwadh-geetha*, it was described that, (1) *Kshara* (mortal soul) (2) *Akshara* (immortal soul) and

(3) *Purushottama* (absolute soul) are the three supreme elements with three distinct features. The line below (among the three lines) is called as *Jeevatma* (existing soul in the body), the middle one as the *Atma* (the soul giving vital energy to the body), which exists in all beings and the top one as the *Paramatma* (the cosmic soul). But the one line, viz., middle one is given prominence by adoring it with *red coloured vermilion-Kunkuma/Chandanam-Sandle wood paste*. The reason for its prominence is...

The (*Jeevatma*) soul which exists in every living body is different in nature, whereas the Soul (*Atma*), which provides the vital energy to the body, is common, though it exists individually. The *Jeevatma* and *Atma* can only exist in living beings, but the one, "*Paramatma*", the omnipresent God, is spread in every body and every atom of the universe. This element exists not only in every living being but even in the lifeless also. However, *Atma* exists along with *Jeevatma* in all the beings. Therefore, the *Atma* is also called as "*Kootasthudu*" (co-exist) and thus reads the 16<sup>th</sup> sloka in the *Purushottama Prapthiyoga of Bhagwadhgeetha*...

**Sloka :**

Dwavimav purushow loke ksharaschakshara Evacha  
*Kshara sarvaani boothani kootastho kshara Uchyathe*

There are two supreme elements in the universe viz., *Kshara* (mortal soul) and *Akshara* (immortal soul); the perishable and non-perishable. *Kshara* (mortal soul) is present in everybody, whereas *Akshara* (immortal soul) co-exists with *Kshara* (mortal soul). But quite different and superior from the above two, also a third Supreme One called the *Paramatma* exists, which fact was highlighted in the seventeenth sloka. The supreme element is separate (*para*) from the *Atma*, hence, there's some justification in calling this third, a Supreme Being viz., the "*Paramatma*". To acknowledge the prominence of these three, a three-line *Viboothi* mark is put on the *Linga*. When the *Jeevatma* make its way to reach the *Paramatma*, it halts the process of re-birth and paves way for salvation. In the process, the *Jeevatma* by unifying with the *Paramatma*, which has spread in every atom, also gets self-perished. Thus, if the *Jeevatma* intends to reach the *Paramatma*, it should be well aware of the *Atma*, the secondary element. Only after knowing the *Atma*(soul) and its characteristic of generating vital energy, the *Jeevatma* can reach the *Paramatma* after undergoing penance for the *Karmas* it had committed. If the existing (*Jeevatma*) soul gains knowledge of the soul providing the vital energy (*Atma*) to the body, only after shedding the body can

it chance upon viewing the *Paramatma*. Hence, it can be concluded that *Paramatma* can be viewed only when the body is extinct. Any living being should at first learn about the *Atma* before embarking on meditation process, since *Paramatma* (the cosmic soul) cannot be meditated or worshipped. Thus the middle horizontal line symbolising *Atma* among the three lines drawn on the *Linga* is exclusively earmarked with *Chandana* and *Kunkum*. Hence *Atma* is only one among the three which can be worshipped or meditated.

The Soul (*Atma*), which gives the vital energy to the body, possesses purity and is free from characteristics and hence white color is opted to represent it. The pedestal of the *Linga* is not given credence, whereas the *Linga* was chosen as an object of worship. Thus, the Supreme Being (*Purusha*) is given due eminence rather than the *Nature* (*Prakruti*). However, different opinions prevail in the minds of the people regarding the three lines of *Vibhooti* drawn on the *Linga*. The misguided and misleading opinions does not represent wisdom, while the facts, which withstand all criticisms, possess the essence of real wisdom.

Some describe the three white lines as symbolic features marked to represent *Lord Shankara* who had the credit of conquering the three desires viz., greed for money, desire for wife and seeking for sons, which are compared with the three-short *Vibhooti* lines present on the *Linga*. Most of us are not aware that it's not true. What's true and what's untrue will emerge out from criticisms and hence, criticism is inevitable now. Every living being possess the characteristics of (1) Greed (2) Anger (3) Miser (4) Lust (5) Egoism and (6) Jealous. The first one is Greed, which exist in several forms, viz., Greed for food, Greed for clothes, Greed for assets etc. It was thus said that with greed for acquiring money, greed for life-partner and greed for children, *Lord Shankara* had reduced these three elements of greed to ashes and as a mark of his victory, He had adored *Vibhooti* (ashes) on his forehead. Several people believe that *Lord Shankara* by suppressing the three vital elements of greed and by reducing them to ashes had adored them on forehead as a three-line mark, demonst-rating triumph over Greed. This adversely gives scope to suspect that *Lord Shankara* had some other desires. However, it is appropriate to mention here that it's necessary to succeed all the elements of greed in order to succeed the path of wisdom; but how far is it reasonable if only three desires are conquered. *Lord Shankara* might not aspire for money but he may seek gold or land, apart from other desires. How then can he be called the destroyer of greed (*kamadahana*). No reply is forthcoming to these points in question. Hence, this contention of *Dhaneshana*, *Dhareshana*

& *Putreshana* does not fit the concept of the three lines of *Vibhooti*. But actually there's no reliable contest between the origin, *Linga* and Lord Shankara, since.....

In the ancient days to influence the people and to make them easily imagine the *Paramatma*, the "*Linga*" was consecrated. But unfortunately deviating from this real aspect, the *Linga* is compared with *Lord Shankara*. Though both have distinct features, *Eshwara* became *Shankara* and vice-versa. A *koti-eshwara* is a person possessing millions of riches, a *lakshadikari* is a person possessing lakhs of riches, a *Bhoge-eswarudu* is a person habituated to all carnal pleasures, *Yoge-eswarudu* is a person with supreme saintly characters and lastly *Eswarudu* is the one and only who is the ultimate head of this universe, as portrayed in the *Brahmavidya*. The *Paramatma* is the Supreme of even the Nature (*Prakruthi*) and with that particular concept the *Linga* was installed as *Eswara*. Hence, comparing the *Linga* with Shankara, who adorn a snake around his neck, is indeed meaningless.

The priceless wisdom of ancient days has now become topsy-turvy, paving way for feelings on communal lines and provoking selfishness among the masses. In the ancient days there existed only one religion, but as time rolled on several religions have evolved. The religion that first existed is the Indu religion, which had later become a Hindu religion. A section from the Indu religion had turned into a sect and with the sole intent to be superiors; they called themselves as *Shaivas*, the worshippers of *Lord Shiva*. They further asserted that the *Linga* itself is a replica of *Shiva* and that those worshipping it are all *Shaivas* and in tune to this contention, requisite changes are accordingly incorporated. In this process of changed scenario, *Nandi* is placed opposite to the *Eshwara Linga*, while *Goddess Parvathi* is positioned next to the *Linga*.

*Lord Shiva's* wife is *Goddess Parvathi* and their source for undertaking a ride is *Nandi* (the bull on which Lord Shiva rides). Since *Shiva & Parvathi* are co-related as husband and wife, *Paravathi* is positioned beside the *Linga*, whereas the *Nandi* is positioned facing the *Eswara Linga*. And, since the *Linga* was perpetuated in the ancient era itself, there was no possibility to place *Parvathi* within the pedestal of the *Linga* and as such *Parvathi* was placed besides the *Linga*. Thus it can be noticed that except for *Shiva-Parvathi*, the rest of the Gods along with their wives are placed on the same pedestal. But, merely due to non-existing circumstances, *Parvathi* and *Nandi* are placed separately. Despite this drawback, it's unfortunate that some *Puranas* have been intently created to support

this theory. In placing the Nandi at some distance, quite opposite to the *Linga*, stories have been fabricated to cover-up such drawbacks. To recognize the formless God, a stone without features of a nose or face was depicted as *Shankara* and to support this claim, a story was cooked-up, relating it to an event of a curse, under which impact *Shankara* had turned into a round rock.

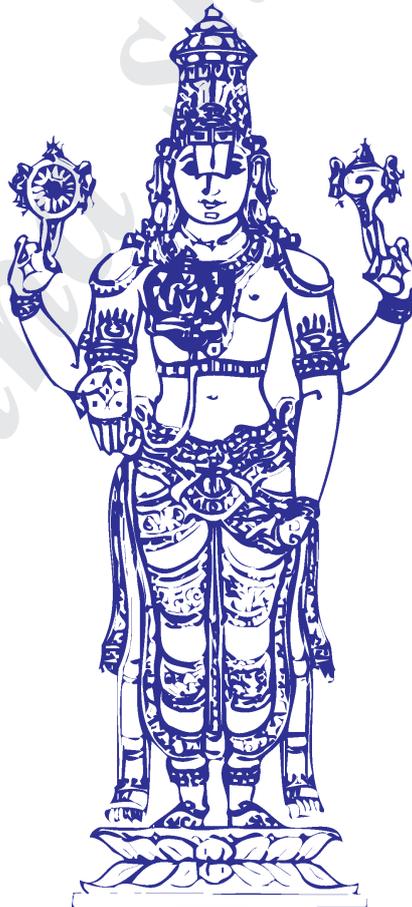
Let whatever be the matter, we feel that the average intellectual can easily conclude that there's no relation between the *Linga* and *Parvathi* and similarly to the *Nandi*. Even in some of the present day *Eswara temples*, except for the *Nandi* standing opposite to the *Linga*, we do not find the presence of *Parvathi*. It may perhaps be felt that the process of constructing an exclusive temple for installing *Goddess Parvathi* is quite expensive, hence, only *Nandi* is placed in *Eshwara temples*.

The flame of wisdom cannot be doused and hence we are under a strong assumption that the flame is on the verge of being viewed. Our ancestors took all the pains to impart the element of spirituality through the *Eswara Temples*. Unfortunately, now these Temples are not only called as temples of *Lord Shiva* but also as *Shankara Temples*. It's important that one should at first know that both these temples are different. *Eshwara* means *Paramatma*, the omnipresent and omnipotent God, which fact was earlier elaborated. *Shiva* is one among the divine trinity and even for them too the *Paramatma* is one only. And the one is none other than the *Eshwara viz., Paramatma*, the omnipresent.



### 3. CONSECRATION OF THE GOD IN HUMAN FORM (AKARA PRATHISTA)

It is now clear that the consecration of *Eswara Linga* took place in the very beginning of the human era and the same is the formless reflection of God. People are still unaware of the fact that the formless God (*Paramatma*) is spread all over the universe. Since the concept of God is a self-explanatory matter by the God Himself, it is not possible for humans to understand the *Paramatma* by own means. A human on his own cannot establish the aspect of God, and by taking some Human form God Himself should explain the principles of truth and *Dharma*. Though invisibly present all over the universe, the God disguised Himself by taking a human form to propagate the knowledge of *Dharma*. The one who takes such a form is called "*Bhagwan*" (the human form of God). The one who is born out of a womb (*Bhagamu*) is called as *Bhagwan*. The *Paramatma* (God Supreme) is the one and only Who is spread not only in every atom of the universe but also present in all living creatures and all substances. He is thus called the *Paramatma* since He's present in every matter and material, but, on having taken a human form, He's called the *Bhagwan*.



Human form of God (Sri Ranga)

To enlighten about God, the formless and the omnipresent *Paramatma* was depicted and installed as a *Linga*. Similarly, whenever the situation demanded, God takes birth in the form of a human to explain about Himself. To denote this significant aspect, our elders have constructed temples to accommodate the *Deity* having some human features. Initially, "*EswaraLinga*" temples were only built, but when the fact became clear that God will also take a human form as *Bhagwan*, our ancestors have ventured upon constructing temples with *Deity* reflecting the form of *Bhagwan*. In those days, apart from the temple of "*Linga*", the only temple to come up is the temple of *Lord Sri Ranga*. The *Paramatma*, who emerged out in a human form out of a womb was depicted as *Sri Ranga* in the Temple, and as such, *Lord Sri Ranga* is devoid of any history. Though, many a temple depicting various Gods, having certain historic origins and prominences have come up later on, surprisingly *Lord Sri Ranga* had no such background or any kind of history. The formless *Supreme Being* who descended on this earth is considered to be a befitting comparison with *Lord Sri Ranga*. People who have depicted the formless and omnipresent *Paramatma* in the form of a *Linga* with the line-marks of *Vibhooti* and arranging a tray-like provision (*panimattamu*) as an outlet, with a water filled vessel hung at the top to facilitate water tickle in drops over the *Linga*, is definitely meant to denote many a symbolic meaning. The very form of *Lord Sri Ranga* also holds spiritual enlightenment of greater depths and possesses symbolic meanings as well.

The ancient religious texts (*puranas*) had created an impression leading to a propaganda interpretation that the temples representing the *Linga* and *Lord Sri Ranga*, respectively belong to the *Shaivites* (Temple of Lord Shiva) and the *Vyshnavites* (Temple of Lord Sri Ranga). While propagating, the *Shaivites* on one side took credit for themselves about the greatness of *Lord Shiva* as being the one among the Holy Trinity; whereas on the other, viz., *Vaishnavites* proclaimed *Lord Vishnu* to possess greater significance than *Lord Shiva* and that the temple of *Sri Ranga* is indeed the temple relating to the Chief of the Holy Trinity. Thereby, the *Shaivites* and *Vyshnavites* have highlighted the greatness of *Lord Shiva* and *Lord Vishnu* in their respective religious texts viz., the *Shivapurana* and the *Vishnupurana*. Considering the *Linga* as their religion, the mark of *Vibhooti* (sacred ash) is applied as a custom on their forehead, whereas the *Vyshnavites* applied the *Namamu* (Vertical lines) in relation to *Lord Sri Ranga* on their forehead, thus both distancing themselves from each other. This is how the division began in the Indu religion with different perspectives, resulting in the origin of two opposed

sects' viz., the *Shaivites* and the *Vyshnavites*. Thus, the *Namadhari's* (*Vaishnavites*) started to influence people to follow a particular style to mark their difference with the other. Our ancestors with a deep thought, solely aimed at imparting the spiritual knowledge had created (1) a formless and (2) a distinct Human form of God. But the rival element of deceit, viz., *satan (maya)* misled the people by giving a wrong impression about the formless and distinct Human form of God, thereby paving way for creation of different sects among people. Although the temple of *Linga* existed since times immemorial, during the course of time that followed, several temples with different forms and names of Gods have come up. The *Vaishnavites* produced several Gods', providing a scope to propogate their traditional mark of *Namamu*. The earliest temple of *Lord Sri Ranga* was built by following a specific style. However, the temples which came later on under different names and different styles have undoubtedly come up by the resultant ill effects of *satan (maya)*. Way back in the *Krita Yuga*, our elders with an aspiration to impart the spiritual knowledge to the people, have felt the need to depict the formless God through the temples of *Linga* and as well through the temples of *Bhagwan* (the human form of God) i.e., *Sri Ranga*. In the initial phase of *Krita yuga* itself the temples of *EswaraLinga* and *Lord Sri Ranga* were built. But, it is regrettable to mention that the location of these temples still remain a mystery. The *Linga* denotes a masculine character. In order to broaden the message that there exist only one supreme masculine companion (*Purusha*) for the entire universe; the *Eswara Linga* was depicted, over which three horizontal stripe-marks are shown to represent the *Jeevatma, Atma & Paramatma*. Likewise, if the God intends to take birth in the universe, it would definitely be in a male form, hence, the structure relating to the masculine gender, viz., of *Sri Ranga* was erected. The word "*Sri*" indicates "an auspicious emancipation", whereas "*Rhum*" indicates "a mystic chanting syllable" forming a word, denoting a mantra. "*Rhum*" indicates "the destroyer" and "*Ga*" indicates "the brith and rebrith of a *Jeeva*". Altogether, the word "*Sri Ranga*" denotes that, He is the one who is capable of defying the cycle of birth-death and who can destroy the elements of *Karma* and who can lead you towards attaining liberation (*Moksha*). In order to make it a point of realization that *Lord Sri Ranga* had emerged from the invisible but omnipresent God (Supreme Being), unlike the one who is born to perish on the earth, leaving his traces in the history. Devoid of any trace or history of birth and death, yet, He was portrayed in the *Deity* form of *Lord SriRanga*. By projecting so, it's like making a declaration that the God Supreme is devoid of any history or

any form or any trace of previous birth and is spread across the entire world. The planets and *Deities* (*vigrahas*) can influence a person born in ordinary terms, whereas *Bhagawaan* cannot be influenced either by the planets or the *Deities*. Hence, the structure of *Sri Ranga* does not come under the category of a *Vigraha*, whereas all other idols certainly denote *Vigrahas*. Likewise, in the olden days the formless *Paramatma* was given a form and proclaimed Him to be the *Bhagwan*. However, during the course of time, the spiritual feelings and the concept of spiritual enlightenment have gradually lost their significance. All the contemporary temples still have possession of the *Deities* which have a certain background and history corresponding in some way with the *Puranas*. But the temple of *Lord SriRanga* has neither historical nor *Puranic* reference anywhere in any scripture. At present almost all the temple *Deities* have some relevant history with their relative forms and names and we scarcely come across the temples of Sri Ranga. For that matter, the statues of even those persons who died a century ago were also installed in the temples for worship. This can be taken for granted to have occurred under the influence of satan (*maya*) only. To keep the people away from knowing the *Paramatma* and to deter a person from obtaining supreme wisdom is itself the game plan of satan (*maya*). It further seems that only under the influence of satan (*maya*) people are following the satan-influenced spiritual (*Bhakti*) path, but the real element of spiritual illumination (*Bhakti*) is far from reality.

Its better late than never, let us respect our culture and follow the message of our elders. Let us follow the path which ultimately leads to spiritual illumination (*Bhakti*) and provide freedom (liberation) from the cycle of birth and death. Instead of idol-worship, it's better to pray God in a true sense and it will be wise if we try to understand the fact that all the idols placed in temples does not resemble the actual God. Confining ourselves to those few selected temples having true sanctity and culture, we should try to unearth the truth. And, one should try to understand the hidden-wisdom displayed through various symbols in the temples. One should also realize that the Indu religion contains well-established and eternal principles, which do not oppose any other religious beliefs. When we do not understand our own religion in true spirit and simply imagining something extraordinary hidden in other religions, such tendency is bound to invite possibilities for religious conversions.

## 4. MOOLAPU AMMA–PEDDAMMA

Spread over the entire universe, *Paramatma*, the formless and unnamed God, as a feature of comparison with the form of *Linga* was installed at different places, aimed at enlightening the people about the particular viewpoint. The same God, from out of a fraction of own self had assumed the form of a *Bhagwan* in order to awaken the mankind about His own self. In this process the temples of *Eswara Linga* appeared initially, followed by the idol form of *Bhagwan* installed at other temples. Now a dilemma prevails in askance as to how many a goddess are accountable for and when were their temples built. The answer is descriptively furnished hereunder.

Who is that who is devoid of any birth (initial phase), any growth (middle phase) and any death (last phase) ? This theory simply points to the one who has neither birth nor death ? Here, it does mean that the initial, the middle phase and the end do not specify Him "*Adimadyantha Rahita*" viz., which is not a name but the glory and position of God. In the word *Prabhu*, *Pra* denotes the importance, the essence and the greatness, while *Bhu* means that which is born out. The one which is distinct from other living beings, important and great in comparison to the Nature and possessing a meaning of essence, the word "*Prabhu*" is not a name but a meaningful ingredient.

Contrary to the *Kshara* (mortal) and the *Akshara* (immortal), the one who is beyond and above and also very important is *Paramatma* and to reflect His characteristics, He is also called *Purushottama* (the absolute soul). One should be aware here that *Purushottama* is not a name but a feature highlighting the status. The *Paramatma* is not a native of any village or possess a dwelling place, but the one who is all pervading. Therefore, he is also called "*Parandhama*", the one who neither have a house to dwell nor a place to stay. Here too, the word "*Parandhama*" represents glory but not any name. Like wise the representing words, the Soul that gives vital energy viz., *Atma*, the Soul that exists in the body to experience joys & sorrows of life viz *Jeevatma* and the omnipresent and omnipotent God *Paramatma*. The *Atma* is superior to the *Jeevatma* and a different entity to the *Atma* is the *Paramatma*. The word *Para* means separate, the element, which is quite distinct from the *Atma*. One should know here too that even the word *Paramatma* is just an adjective and does not represent any exact name.

The *Vidhi* or the *Karma* is the element in whose hands the entire humanity is a playful thing. No one can either make a decision or propose to do anything on own. Under the influence and commands of *Karma* only, a person is compelled to act. However, *Paramatma* is the only one who is not under the grip-hold of *Karma*, whereas the *Karma* itself is within the grip-hold of *Paramatma*. If something has to be done, *Paramatma* himself should decide and act accordingly. He (*Paramatma*) is the only one who executes anything on His own (*Khud*) and hence he is also acknowledged as the *Khuda*. Hence, here too the word "Khuda" does not mean an individual name, but denotes the "self-decisive power".

*Paramatma* is not a person who is either visible or heard and no sense of feeling can approach his being. In possession of a body form, no person by any means can get acquainted with the *Paramatma*. Un-disclosed to even great *yogis*, still present all over the universe .... before us, within us and outside too; *Paramatma* is still the invisible. Hence He is also called 'the undiscoverable' "Avyaktha". Even this word does not bear any certain name, but prevails on some features of the *Paramatma*.

A person who possesses superior qualities in all fields and who holds considerable authority over all the people is naturally called a King and a great personality. Having control over his kingdom and capable of implementing his plans and having the power to rule the kingdom, is no doubt a King. Similarly, the universe itself is the Kingdom of the *Paramatma* who is spread all over and who holds control of all existing beings. He, the *Paramatma*, through the source of Nature (*Prakruthi*); possess total control over every human and every living being. Thus the *Paramatma* is the one who is instrumental in running this puppet show, and all living beings are like puppets in His hands. Since no one can defy his commands and no one is superior to him, *Paramatma* is indeed the King of one and all. Here too, the word "King" reflect his status, but does not represent any name.

The supreme among all is the *Paramatma*, hence, no one and nothing can be further superior. As such, the eldest of all., viz., *Paramatma* is also called as "Pedda" (eldest) and "moola" (source). With that sense of meaning, the source and womb of nature is called "Moolapu Peddamma". The Nature was created by the *Paramatma* with three vital characteristics or *Gun*as and hence the *Paramatma* is called the Supreme, who gave life to the three characteristic features, which are vital and universal-dependent. The gender of the Supreme/*Pedda Paramatma*

is unknown and hence He is addressed as "He" at some places and "She" at some other places. Being credited for bringing every living being into existence, the instinct of motherhood was interpreted in this context by the people and thus the word "Pedda" Supreme, provoked them to address the *Paramatma* as "She"(Amma). But at the same time, not to mistake the *Paramatma* as "She", *Peddamma* was specified with the masculine feature viz., a moustache to represent "He". Though representing "*Peddamma*" as a Goddess even now the traditional *Deity* of *Peddamma* is shown with a moustache. Thus, a dilemma had crept about the gender of *Paramatma*, but to dispel such doubts, our ancestors imposed both the fangs and a moustache. As the male animals possess fangs characterizing their gender, hence the fangs and moustache were incorporated to the image of *Peddamma*. This has compelled to suspect whether the *Paramatma* is gender-free or possessing both. The wise among our ancestors while imparting their wisdom to others with an objective to inculcate the importance; of a mother and father had used the term "*Peddamma*" denoting with fangs and moustache (eldest). Not only that significance is lost now, but a story was also laced-up, propagating that the *Peddamma* has six sisters, apart from a brother, thereby placing and comparing with other ethnic *Deities*. Since the eldest sister "*Peddamma*" is depicted with a moustache at some places, her sisterly goddesses viz., Sunkulamma, Maremma, Poleramma, Machamma, Pochamma, Maisamma are also portrayed with a moustache. However, keeping "*Peddamma*" as one among all these local goddesses is not justified. The existence of seven sisters is indeed true, but "*Peddamma*" is not one among them. If another Goddess "Yellamma" is included; Sunkulamma, Maremma, Yellamma, Poleramma, Machamma, Pochamma, Maisamma will be their actual names. It should be noted here that the word "*Peddamma*" is not a name by nature but in order to demonstrate identical stature of supremacy, *Paramatma* is similarly called so. Since the form of *Paramatma* can either be with a male or female features, fangs and moustache are improvised to the *Peddamma*'s (she) image. By all means the word "*Peddamma*" fits exactly; since from the word "*Purushottama*" (absolute soul), a part of that word, i.e., "*Uttama*" denotes "something extraordinary". Hence, it can be construed that *Paramatma* is the mother and father of the Universe and in support of this theory, the word "Amma" is suffixed to "Pedda", making it "*Peddamma*". Thereby it signifies a "Motherly feature" in one context without Fangs and moustache, and a "Fatherly feature" in other context when depicted with fangs and moustache. Hence, *Peddamma* can only be shown with a moustache

but not the other ethnic/local goddesses viz., *Sunkulamma* and others. The names of other goddesses are subject to change in accordance with the place and location. Since "*Peddamma*" does not imply a name, it remained static at all places. But in the present day scenario, temples have come-up depicting "*Peddamma*" without a moustache, which is meaningless and much against the traditional values.

In accordance to the above, temples existed in the name of a Goddess, but as time dragged on, many a Goddess have originated through man-made creativity. The three important temples possessing meaningful significance which came up initially are (1) *Eswara* (2) *Sri Rangam* and (3) *Peddamma* temples. The hundreds of other temples which sprang-up later are devoid of any prominence. To give credibility to these vast numbers of temples, some "*Puranas*" (old texts) have been written to suit some selfish motives; thereby quoting some befitting fabricated stories and appending them to one or the other chapters of such *Puranas*. If for selfish reasons stories are included in the *Puranas* by some, others have indulged in authoring books to mis-represent and highlight them as "*Shastras*". This unfair and selfish tendency has wiped off the true ideology and objective of temples. Even the devotees are of the opinion that "God" is not meant for salvation and peace, but for fulfillment of human wishes. Thus, the people were unable to know the truth that the temple is a place for bridging the gaps of semi-wise. The temple of *Rama*, which had its origin during the "*Treta Yuga*", was followed by *Hanuman* temple, *Narasimhaswamy* temple, *Vigneswara* temple, apart from the recent *Ayyappa* and *Saibaba* temples. How many are we going to witness in the future....?

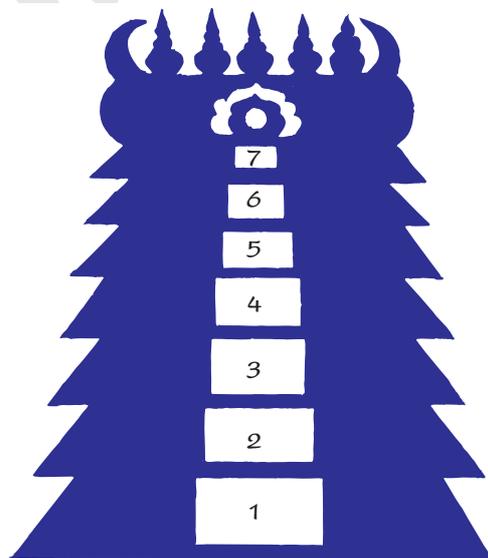
Temples in the ancient days existed only at some particular places and those places were called as pilgrim centers. In the "*Treta Yuga*", under the influence of *Aryans*, the temples of *Lord Rama* were built in all villages. Prior to it, during the "*Kritayuga*" the temples of *Eswara*, *Ranga* and *Peddamma* are scarcely present. In those days, right from the *Himalayas* upto *Kanyakumari*, only five or six *Eswara* and *Peddamma* temples existed. But wherever existed, they existed outside the town, on a hillock, in a forest vicinity, by the seashore or by the river side. Except for a central-stone (*Boddurayi*) no temples existed in the middle of a town/village. People in those days are aware of the fact, but the masses of today are unaware of those prominent aspects. So, let us involve ourselves to know of it. It was an age-old practice to keep a central-stone

(*Boddurayi* – which denotes the central point), whenever a town/village is planned for human settlements. It actually does mean to prevail upon the concept that “*Paramatma*” is the hub & fulcrum of this universe and only with His patronage; the Nature (*Prakruti*) is motivated to perform its acts. Thus, considering the village as the Universe and treating the central-stone (*Boddurayi*) as “*Paramatma*”, a town/village is established around it. The navel is the central point of a human being and only with its support, the child within the womb of a mother is able to transform into a human being. Thus, it should be known that the sole basis for the formation of the Universe is indeed the “*Paramatma*”. As such, the stone installed in the middle of a town/village is named as the central-stone (*Boddurayi*). *Boddu* means naval or central and this central-stone (*Boddurayi*) is buried with half of its portion inside and half outside the earth’s surface and thus it resembled an *Eswara Linga*. However, the *Eswara Linga* installed in a temple is visible with its pedestal, whereas since buried, the central-stone (*Boddurayi*) in a town/village is without any pedestal, but visibly seen only as a small boulder. Since the central-stone (*Boddurayi*) is the cause of origin for this universe, to show its masculine feature, it was also called “*Pothulaiah*”, which incidentally means “*Purushottama*” i.e., the absolute soul. *Pothu* means having a *male* nature. Since the central-stone (*Boddurayi*) reflects the universal supremacy and prominence, it was also positioned outside the village so that one has to come across it before entering the vicinity of the village. Being the center-stage and a source of origin for the village, it is therefore called the central-stone (*Boddurayi*). Further, under the assumption that the town/village being compared with the Universe and the central-stone to be as equivalent to the *Purushottama* viz., the absolute soul, it is thus also called as “*Pothulaiah*”. Hence, it can be contended that the essence of *Paramatma*, is as well reflected in the central-stone’s (*Boddurayi*) “*Pothulaiah*”.



## 5. THE SEVEN GATEWAYS (GOPURA DWARAMULU)

The seven gateways of a temple possess invaluable significance. At the entrance of a temple itself we find a high tower (*gopuramu*); from the base of which to its peak, seven (7) gateways are visible. Likewise, to reach the *Deity* viz., the Sanctum-sanctorum, one has to cross over the seven gateways. Here, one should think-over as to why our ancestors adopted the procedure of passing through the seven gateways in particular to reach the *Deity* and evolving the 7-Gateway replica in the tower over the gate of the temple. Out of three-and-half lakh nerves in our body, seventy-two bear some prominence and among them the 10 nerves in the head (*siro-nadulu*) are very important and the most important are the three-nerves viz., *Eda*, *Pingala* & *Sushamna*. They are also called as the *Surya* (Sun), *Chandra* (Moon) and *Brahmanaadi* (cerebral nerve). The 10 nerves of the head (*siro-naadulu*) are linked with these three nerves. The entire nerve (Naadi) system is dependent upon the *Surya* (Sun), *Chandra* (Moon) and *Brahmanaadi* (cerebral nerve) only. Most prominent among the three is the *Brahmanaadi*, wherein the soul (*Atma*) of a human body dwells. Thus, the Cerebral Nerve through the source of *Atma* spreads into the entire body utilizing the network structure of the nerves. The *Atma*, which dwells in the *Brahmanadi* (cerebral nerve) spreads the vital body energy, enabling to make the required bodily moments. It is therefore evident that the co-related *Atmas* viz., *Jeevatma* and *Atma* are also stationed in the cerebral nerve. (*Brahmanaadi*).



SEVENGATE-WAYS

"The body itself is a temple, *Atma* (the soul that gives vital energy) is the God", is what our elders said which communicates that the *Atma* itself is the God dwelling in the body's *Brahmanaadi* (cerebral nerve). You are the *Jeevatma* (*soul1*) in your body, but the *Atma* (*soul 2*) within, is the God. "*Jeevodevo Sanathanah*"... the Soul 1 *Jeevatma* and the God (*Atma* or *soul 2*) eternally co-exist in the human body... is an ancient saying. *Paramatma*, the omnipresent God (*Soul 3*) also exist within the body, but dwells separately from the *Atma* and can be attained only after getting liberation from all bonds. Favouring a vision of Soul (*Atma Darshanamu*), in other words is called as *Daiva Darshanamu*. Hence, temple is a place where spiritual knowledge relating to Vision of God can be visualized on paying a visit. Hence the seven doorways in a temple have been erected to acknowledge the message of the knowledge of soul (*Atma*) about the vision of God. Even the *Bhagavan* had acknowledged in the *Geetha* that by dwelling in the *Brahmanaadi*, *Atma* is spreading the vital energy to the entire body; as similar to the Sun spreading its light to the entire universe. Thus, it can be deemed that the *Atma* in possession of the God is dwelling in the *Brahmanaadi*. As can be ascertained as to in which planetary position the Sun is stationed, the same evaluation can be made about the position of *Atma* in the *Brahmanaadi*. The planetary position of the Sun, no doubt is positioned among the twelve planets and in a similar perspective, we have to exactly evaluate the location of the *Atma* in the *Brahmanaadi*. To evaluate this aspect in particular, one has to acquire total knowledge about the *Brahmanadi*. The *Brahmanaadi* in the body, with its base (brain) in the head; from it a nerve has spread through the spine, quite parallel to the anus. Since the nerve pass through the spine, the spine is also called as "*Vennupamu*". The *Vennupamu / Brahmanaadi* is divided into seven constituents of nerves called *Ganglia* and each nerve evolves from a cluster of nerves junction (*Naadi kendramu*). This denotes that though the *Brahmanaadi* is single, it contains seven centers, which are also called as seven lotus centers, representing seven distinct Gods. In fact there exist seven centers of nerves in the *Brahmanaadi*, but as presumed there's neither a lotus nor any co-related God. The *Atma* in the *Brahmanaadi* dwells in the 7th nerve centre in the skull, from where it not only provides the vital energy to the other six nerve centers but also stimulates the bodily moments along with the other six nerve centers. The vital element of life, i.e., the function of respiration is done by these seven nerve centers only. From the moment of birth to the final moments of death, the process of respiration is done in rotation by these seven nerve centers, thereby

choosing the span of life (*Ayushu*). If life has to remain in the body, the process of respiration should go on, and if this should go on, the nerve centers in the *Brahmanaadi* should actively function all through the Twentyfour(24) hours. Hence every living being is able to undertake the respiratory process, merely by the presence of God (*Atma*) in the body.

In a single day, twentyonethousand and sixhundred(21,600) breathings (inhalations and exhalations) should take place and the process of execution of this act is undertaken by the seven nerve centers. Among the seven, stationing itself in the *Brahmanaadi*, one such nerve centre is positioned at the bottom of the spinal cord, (tail bone) parallel to the anal region. This centre is named as (1) *Aadharamu* (support) and through this support centre (*Aadhara Naadi*) 600 respirations are facilitated to take place. From this support centre (*Aadhara Naadi*), a cluster of nerves extend upto the lungs, thereby enforcing the inhalation and exhalation movements by the vital energy produced by the Soul (*Atma*). Similarly there is another nerve centre in the sensual region (*Linga Sthanamu*) and it's called as (2) *Swadistana* Nerve Centre through which 6000 respirations are facilitated to take place. The next nerve centre is parallel to the navel and called as (3) *Manipoorakamu*, through which 6000 respirations are facilitated to take place. The next nerve centre is stationed parallel to the heart and called as (4) *Anahatham*, through which centre also 6000 respirations are facilitated to take place. The 5th centre is parallel to the throat and called as (5) *Vishuddamu*, through which 1000 respirations are facilitated to take place. The sixth nerve centre is called as (6) *Aagneyam*, through which also 1000 respirations are facilitated to take place. The last and the most important is the 7th nerve centre, which is the dwelling place for soul (*Atma*) and is called (7) *Sahasraramu*, through which 1000 respirations are facilitated to take place. This 7th nerve centre is the brain, a part in the skull. Thus, one should be aware that the Soul (*Atma*) is the main source for providing the vital energy to the body for executing all actions even during sleep and during the day too; apart from facilitating the function of 21600 respirations. Since these seven vital nerve centers are providing the source of life and performing actions in all humans, to disclose this significant feature only, the seven gateways are displayed on the tower at the entrance of the temple. Unless concentration (*Dhyasa*) is kept aloof from the body form and in turn if the concentration is stationed upon the seventh nerve centre, only then the Soul (*Atma*) can be perceived. To reveal this noteworthy concept, the 7th gateway is displayed at the top.

If the body itself is a temple, haven't we called the Soul (Atma) a God. The Godly soul is not only providing the vital energy to the body, but also yields in providing good and ill health. Though it's rendering several functions internally, the external strength and health aspects are being performed under compulsions, as per ones consequences of good and evil actions performed in the earlier cycle of births (Karma). The strength and weakness are procured from the seven nerve centers, whereas health and disease are instigated by the seven glands (grandhulu) of the body. The soul (Atma) dwelling in the seventh nerve center, viz., Brahmanadi, apart from providing the vital energy, also co-exists in the seven glands (grandhulu). Among these seven glands, six are located in various parts of the body, while the seventh one exists in the head, located just above the mid-part of eyebrows i.e., in the forehead. This seventh gland is called "Grandhiraja" (master gland) within which also dwell the soul (Atma), from where it releases the vital rays of energy to enable other glands to perform their respective functions. By provoking to release liquids, the seventh gland is facilitating other glands to provide health viz., good and bad. The familiarity in work and the compulsions of health are experienced as per ones consequences of good and evil actions performed in earlier cycle of births (Karma). Hence, the vital energy for facilitating completion of works on a fruitful note evolve from the nerve centers through the Spine or Brahmanadi; and similarly the Atmashakti (daivashakti) through the glands and Grandhiraja (MasterGland) is enabling things to surge ahead. Thus within the body, the God (daivamu) is performing duties in two different modes. *Hence, to remind this theoretical aspect, the seven gateways from the entrance to the sanctum sanctorum inside of the temple and seven gateways in the tower at the entrance of the temple in upward direction have been adopted.* Further, these two modes have been espoused in order to caution that God will be unveiled only when the six nerve centers (Nadikendras) are made static and concentration diverted onto the seventh nerve center and similarly making the six glands static and diverting concentration onto the seventh gland. This can be achieved only through the above two modes of deep meditation. For procuring vital energy and for maintaining sound health, the God within you is the root-cause. The God (Atma) is the one who dwells within you and perform in two ways, In support of this dual theory symbolically two modes of gateways, viz., one inside and the one above the tower have been set-up. This phenomenon of seven gateways can be observed at the entrance tower (gopuram) and the other seven gateways can be noticed from the entrance to the sanctum sanctorum at the Tirumala Temple, Tirupathi.

## 6. THE ENTRANCE TOWER AT THE TEMPLE

### [GOPURAMU]

We have learnt about the entrance tower of the temple (gopurumu) and its seven gateways from its bottom to the top, with similarities of a seven-storied structure. Besides these seven gateways, one can also notice depiction of several images all along the seven-storied structure. These statues illustrate many aspects viz., from sexual delights to piousness, friendship to hostility, marriage to possession of children, playing of musical instruments, dancing postures, riding a horse, indulging in a war, faithful husband and wife, different figures in romantic postures etc., representing events and instances of a human life. What our ancestors have analyzed by depicting these images will only be known if we go deep into the factors and the backdrop.

The statues/images, which have been carved on the (*gopuramu*) tower at the entrance of the temple are co-relating to a human life. From the moment of birth to the final phase of death, by the presence of the soul (*Atma*) itself, all the



**THE ENTRANCE TOWER**

events are compelled to occur through the nerve centers of the *Brahmanadi* (cerebral nerve). The cerebral Nerve (*Brahmanadi*), which is spread from the head to the foot in a human body is the root-cause for inviting the events to take place in ones life. The soul (*Atma*) which is spread all through the *Brahmanadi* is giving the vital energy to the human body, thereby engaging itself in transpiring all acts to happen. To strike a similar chord in a viewer's heart, images have been carved from top to bottom on the tower at the entrance of the temple (*gopuramu*) to narrate events relating to life. Whenever a question arises that instead of placing Godly images on the temples, why were they represented with dances, war-combats, man-woman relationship etc ? In search of an answer, it was concluded that for every event and every movement the soul (*Atma*) is the performing cause in accordance to ones consequences of good and evil actions (*Karma*) performed in their earlier cycle of births and to admit this aspect, several images are depicted all around the seven-gateway structure. It is indeed the opinion of our ancestors that all incidents take place only with the dependence of the soul (*Atma*) and hence the depiction of images around the seven gateways. The intention of the ancestors behind the depiction of images on the structure of entrance tower is to know the responsibility of god in our body.

There may be a doubt that why is that the tower (*gopuramu*) that depicting several images is placed quite opposite to the Sanctum-sanctorum at the entrance of the temple? and also several questions will arise that if the aspect resembles a soul (*Atma*), and also the responsibilities shouldered upon it, then why should not the tower be built beside or at rear side of the temple? Let us have a view on this aspect. If the images on the tower (*gopuramu*) solely highlight the course of action of soul (*Atma*), then a temple can possibly be built beside the tower (*gopuramu*). But since the tower is built exactly at the entrance of the temple, there's definitely some reasoning. Assuming that the tower is built beside a temple, then there's no necessity to pass through the tower and its significance is ignored. But if the tower exists at the entrance, there's every necessity to look at it before making way to the inner temple precincts. Further, if the tower (*gopuramu*) is located beside the temple, people will have no chance to look at it, instead they directly view the temple, which prevents them from knowing some realities of life before entering the temple. Hence, the structure of *gopuram* reveals the presence and position of soul(*Atma*) in the physical body.

Several of the images depicted on the tower (*gopuramu*) are meant to stir the mind, provoking every one to recollect the past deeds thereby tempting any individual with ease. To attract the characteristic features which suit a person, viz., a romantic person with sexual postures, a fighter with war postures, a music lover with musical instruments etc., the images are depicted on the tower (*gopuramu*). So, all those who intend to visit a temple, have to pass through the entrance tower at first, before which they can have a view of these images. Since these images depict several characteristics of humans, each individual will get immersed in related thoughts, which in turn stoke-up the mind. Thus, this aspect in fact is the reason for erecting a tower at the entrance of a temple. Though thinking is a part and parcel of human life, the main objective of the whole aspect is to inculcate the spirit of devotion while at his doorstep of God. At the very moment of reaching the entrance tower and by viewing the images, one is forced to recollect the forgotten past. Such suppressed feelings having been drawn out and weeding them out totally is the main responsibility of every individual. Only then, can a person be able to station his mind with the spirit of devotion on God. To stress on this basic importance, our ancestors have given credence to erect the tower (*gopuramu*) over the entrance of a temple.

On reaching the entrance of the temple and on seeing the images engraved on the tower depicting the greatness of soul's imaginations, it's common for some people to deeply get engrossed. But the very moment such feelings enter the mind, some people make their will strong enough to keep such feelings at bay while entering the temple premises. By suppressing the feelings for some time at least, one can attain concentration on God and this significant factor was exploited by our ancestors.

The mind, if fails to revert back into its normal course after viewing the images on the tower, however will reach its normal state after crossing over the tower and viewing the Flag Pillar (*Dwaja Sthambamu*). The change in mood which originated on viewing the tower over the entrance of the temple, should atleast become normal on viewing the Flag Pillar (*Dwaja Sthambamu*). Even if similar mood still persists, at least at the point of striking the bell (*Ghanta*) at the Sanctum-Sanctorum, it should become normal. The Flag Pillar (*Dwaja Sthambamu*) possess such features that it not only keeps the essence of characteristics static but as well inculcate similar implications to the sound that echoes from a temple bell. The normal characteristics enforce normal thoughts,

but they get excited on viewing the images on the temple tower. By engaging a person in deep thoughts and simultaneously provoking to suppress such thoughts, indeed would pave way to know the God better. As such, to impart this message at the temples, our ancestors have decided to erect the entrance tower at the forefront, followed by the Flag Pillar (*Dwaja Sthambamu*) and after which the placing of temple bell for ringing in front of the Sanctum Sanctorum. The tower at the entrance of the temple is a source to instill the spirit of devotion; without which worship becomes null and void. *In the form of Soul (Atma), God is within us, who, through the seven nerve centers is causing the moments of life. To reflect these vital features, the tower (gopuramu) was proposed for erection at the entrance of the temple.*



## 7. DEMONLY OUTLOOK (RAKSHASAKARAMU)

The tower at the entrance of the temple is displayed with different shapes of images. Over the top of the tower, five pots (*Kalagamulu*) are displayed, while beneath the five pots a disfigured image is visibly seen. This disfigured demonly image can be noticed from all the four directions. This feature is said to be prevalent only at the temples built in customary tradition. The disfigured image displayed on the entrance tower of temples can even now be noticed at *Rayavellore* in *Tamilnadu State* as also at some ancient temples in *Andhra Pradesh* too. But, what's the reason behind the display of such disfigured images? We have already learnt that the other images displayed on the tower at the entrance of a temple bear the incidents connected with our lives. Of course, these incidents occur in accordance with the consequences of good and evil actions performed in ones earlier cycle of births. Hence, the displayed images are the events occurred under the influence of Satan (*Maya*) only. Only after overcoming the *Satan* and crossing over to the other side, the aspect of God is visibly seen. To impart this message to one and all, God is placed well inside the temple sanctuary, visible only after crossing over the tower at the entrance of the temple. The images displayed are well within the Satan's (*maya's*) hold and in resemblance of this

fact, the disfigured demonly image is placed in such a position above, that it's visible from all the four directions.

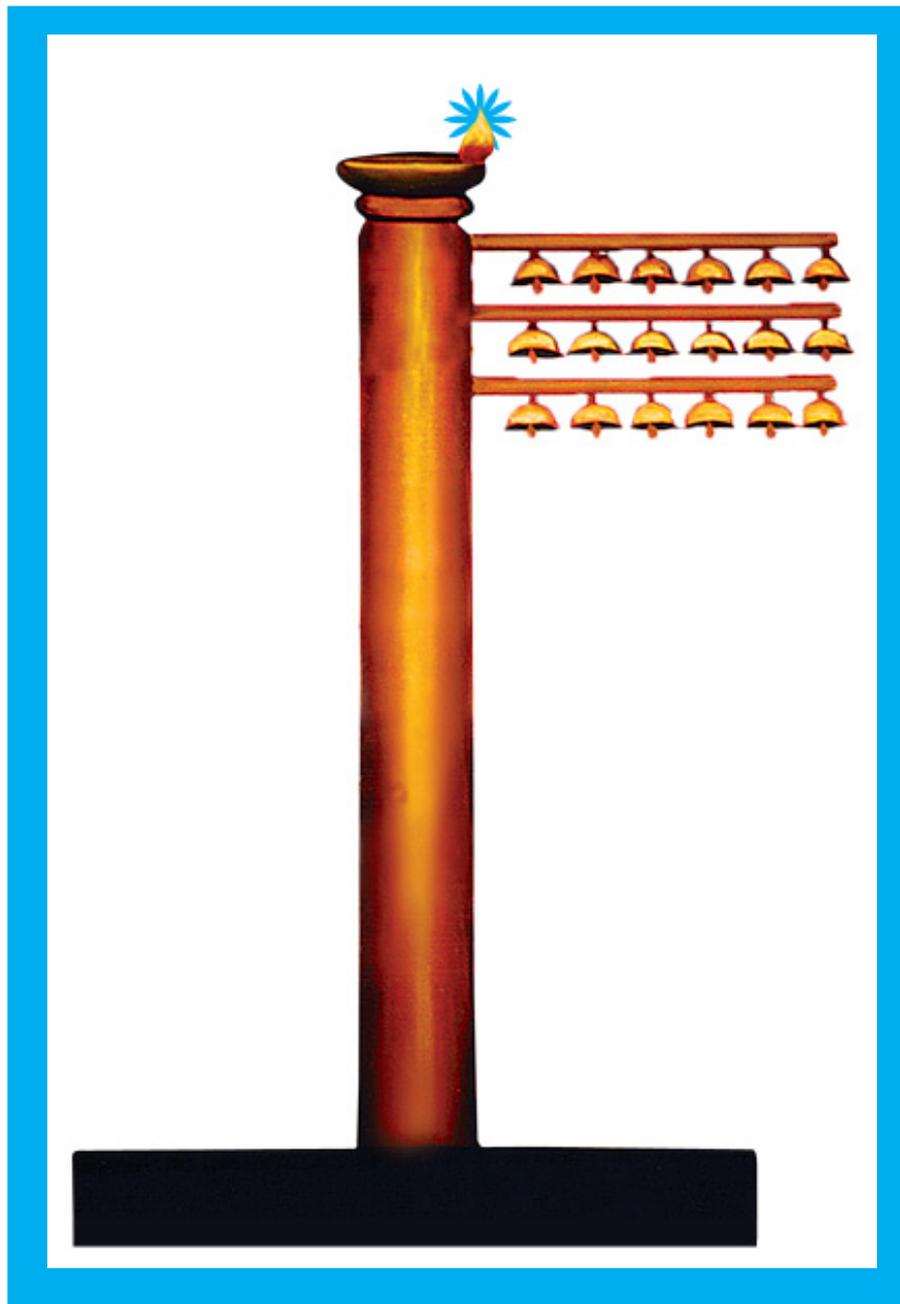
The disfigured image on the tower at the entrance of a temple is the symbol of Satan (*maya*), while the symbol of Gentle Nature is the God inside the temple. As a token of significance in the temple, God is shown in comparison with the Gentle Nature, while as an indication of Satan (*maya*), the disfigured image is represented on the tower outside the temple. The disfigured image of Satan (*maya*) displayed in the upper portion of the tower indicates that what's displayed below to it, also co-relate to it. This disfigured demonly image is shown with fearful looks, having sharp fangs with mouth wide open, almost resembling a ferocious lion. Hence, the *Satan* is also called as "lion-headed demon" (*Simhatalaatamu*). The images varying in different forms are indeed part and parcel of Satan (*maya*) itself. "*Gunamayee Mama Maaya Durathyaya*" is a saying quoted by the "*Bhagwan*" himself; which means that triumph over the Satan (*maya*) is not possible since it possess enormous lion's strength given by God. In reality, it is not an easy task to know the God and one has to absolutely overpower the Satan (*maya*) to know the God. But there's nothing to fear of Satan (*maya*) and those seeking God's shelter can easily emerge victorious over the Satan (*maya*). Thus it is said that "*Maameva Yeh Prapadyanthe Mayaa Methaam Tharanthithe*". Thus, as discoursed in the *Bhagwadhgeetha*, if you do not seek the shelter of God, it's like making a futile bid to escape a hungry lion in the forest, as similar to getting surrounded by problems created by the Satan (*maya*) in several forms viz., relations, wife and opposition from unexpected quarters etc. If you possess an AK-47 rifle, you can easily challenge a strong and ferocious lion without fear. Similarly, if you possess the Godly power of wisdom and seek his refuge, you can easily gun down the lion of Satan (*maya*) with the Godly power of wisdom viz., the rifle. Hence, to keep the Satan (*maya*) at bay, the spiritual power of wisdom should appropriately be made the right weapon.



## 8. THE FLAG PILLAR (DWAJA STHAMBAMU)

After crossing the tower at the entrance of the temple, a Flag Pillar is viewed, which is called as *Dwaja Sthambamu*. A Flag denotes a kingdom or represents a person who rules over it. But, why should the Flag Pillar be positioned in a temple and whose headship does it denotes. These questions are bound to rise. To proclaim that the temple is indeed a kingdom of God, the flag has been posted. The Tower at the entrance of the temple followed by the Flag Pillar bear the testimony of *Atma* or God, by signifying the seven doorways. Yet, surrounding them are the depicted images of Satan (*maya*). Further at the top of the tower, one can view a weird image. This aspect discloses that, though God dwells within us, the Satan (*maya*) like a web engulf the body. As such, the visible images so displayed relate to the Satan (*maya*) and hence, one is enticed within a fraction on viewing the images. Thereby it should be assumed that from the entrance Tower to the Flag Pillar, the kingdom of Satan (*maya*) is spread, whereas from the Flag Pillar to the inner temple the kingdom of God prevails. Thus, a Flag Pillar is placed to denote this. The Satan (*maya*) is embossed on the Gopuram (Entrance Tower), but over-riding the Satan (*maya*), the symbol of God is illustrated. But, let's examine how ?

In a temple, there's a Tower at the entrance, followed by the Flag Pillar, before the sanctum sanctorum. There's no specification regarding the height of the Flag Pillar and hence a variation in size can be noticed at the temples. But, irrespective of height variation, gongs (Gantalu) are fixed at the top. Each row consists of six small gongs (Gantalu), left dangling in the air. Since the three rows are suspended at the top of the pillar in a horizontal direction, they resemble a Flag to an eye-view. Over the top of the Pillar and above the three rows of gongs (Gantalu); a provision exists to lit a oil-doused wick. In the olden days, by the help of a ladder, the wick was lit every evening. But as time dragged on, by the negligent and ignorant attitude of the priests, this ritual has become a monthly event. And, after a lapse of considerable time, it has become an annual ritual and now it became a non-existing event. But, to remind that this ritual existed long long ago, even now it is observed at some places, once a year; that too on the auspicious *Kartheeka Pournami* (full-moon during the *Kartheeka Masamu* (Month)) day. Since the ritual is being observed once in 365 days i.e., once in a year; 365 wicks are bundled into one wick and even now the ritual of lighting the



THE FLAG PILLAR

oil-doused bundled wick is observed here and there. Though the Flag Pillar is erected at some temples, it lacks the traditional features of three(3)-rows of six small gongs (Gantalu). One can notice a Flag Pillar with a single row, or with a single or even without a gong, or without provision for lighting the wick etc. But, by the fast changing times, Temples are coming-up without any entrance Towers and without Flag Pillars. And at some temples, it just remained a Flag Pillar devoid of any endearing features. By slowly losing the traditional glitter and significance, the \*Indu religion has turned into a diverse Hindu religion. Those who are under the illusion of the existence of *Aagama Shastra* for construction of temples and those boasting them-selves of having proficiency in the *Vedas* are

simply ignoring to salvage the traditional significance. The transformed *Hindu* religion has lost its glory and glitter of traditional values, which originated from the *Indu* religion of ancient times. As such, the universally established *Indu* religion, after becoming the *Hindu* religion was reduced to subsist in India only. Even then, we are duty bound to restore the pride of our traditions. As such, let us go in detail to get acquainted with the ancient glory and traditions of Temples.

( **Note :** \* *Indu* is different from "Hindu". *Indu* means the Moon representing the knowledge of the Supreme.)

In the olden days, all the temples had the significance of being called as spiritual centers. Accordingly, even the Flag Pillar had the significance of possessing enormous and sacred wisdom. The mind with its imaginative sense keeps on hunting our moods without interruption. These thoughts usually spin around the aspects of Love and Hate or Greed and Donation or Misery and Magnanimity or Passion and *Vairagyamu* (indifference) or Pride and Humility or Anger and Calm. Whatever thoughts and whatever subject matter evolves, they are part and parcel of the three characteristics, viz., *Sattvika* (divine) *Rajasa* (passionate) *Thamasa* (indiscriminate). *Bhagwan Lord Krishna*, in the *Bhagwadgheetha* had compared the three characteristics (*Gunas*) with the Satan (*maya*), thus saying "*Guna Mayee Mama Maayaa*". The Satan (*maya*) persists in the form of three divisions of characteristics (*Gunas*) and each one is further sub-divided into six sects. And each of these six sects again have a dual and opposite characteristic. For example, affection and hatred come under one group. Since six each of these characteristic groups are prevalent in *Sattvika* (divine) *Rajasa* (passionate) and *Thamasa* (indiscriminate), the three rows of gongs (*gantalu*) are demonstrated on the Flag Pillar. To disclose the aspects of the group of six characteristics (*Gunas*), each of the three rows is signified with six small gongs (*gantalu*). As and when the wind blows, due to the impact of air stream the gongs will make ringing sounds. Even before the ringing sound of a gong is vanished, gong after gong will keep the tempo of continuous vibrant ringing. Likewise, the mind in our body keeps on recollecting and recalling events relating to the six *Gunas* (characteristics) uninterruptedly. Thus, to signal this observable fact, the gongs have been placed in rows. If the course of action of Satan (*maya*) is compared with that of the continuous ringing sound of gongs; to suppress the actions of Satan (*maya*) there is wisdom and above it prevails the sense of godly wisdom. To communicate this logic, a big Lamp is placed at the top of the Flag Pillar. In the ancient days

it was called as the "Flame of wisdom" (*Gnana jyothi*). But, since this wisdom possesses superior character than that of the sensual organs (*Indriyas*), the flame is placed at the top. This fire of wisdom (*Gnana agni*) is an element that burns out the accumulations of *Karma* and as such comparing the characteristics (*Gunas*) with the Gongs and in depiction of this theory, a light (*Deepamu*) is lit at the top of the Flag Pillar. The very moment the images at the entrance tower (*gopuramu*) of the temple are viewed, the stirring thoughts from that instant to the present moment, draws every one into the dark precincts of Satan (*maya*). From that particular spot, as you further move into the temple premises; to instill a feeling that you are moving into the zone of "Light of wisdom" (*Gnana velugu*), a light (*Deepamu*) is lit at the top of the Flag Pillar. In the ancient days, those who knew the concept of the entrance tower, used to make an effort of freeing their mind at the Flag Pillar itself. Motivated by the meaningfulness of the Flag Pillar, some could successfully suppress their feelings with their wisdom, while some could not succeed in doing so. Thus, they could at least be able to suppress the feelings at the Gong before the Sanctum-sanctorum. Though some thoughts still persisted under the influence of Satan (*maya*), to pave way for disappearance of such rigid paced thoughts; a Gong was placed before the Sanctum Sanctorum so that one can concentrate on God with a gentle frame of mind. The reverberation of the ringing temple bell will definitely impress upon the mind to remain static.



## 9. THE BELL / GONG (GHANTA)

In every temple a gong (bell) is hung in front of the primary *Deity*. It is customary for the devotees (theist) to ring the gong at first, whenever they visit the temple. Unless the bell is knocked at first, a devotee would not offer a prayer to the God. This practice became so relevant that even a short person makes an all out effort to ring the hanging bell. When the reasons for ringing the bell are questioned, people were merely pointing towards the age-old practice, but none were able to give valid reasons. Without knowing the purpose, similar to a herd of sheep, the devotees are blindly following the rituals in a routine course, as observed by others. Even the people performing rituals in the temple may have no good reason to offer, but since they believe that God is in a sleeping state, the ringing of bell is meant to wake Him up. Perhaps if God really wakes-up with the ringing of the bell by a disciple, then what's the need for other disciples to ring the bell one after the other. Does it mean that after paying attention to a disciple's plea, God goes back to sleep disregarding the next disciple? With neither an answer nor an explanation to this sensitive question, there are people who feel that such questions are inappropriate.



**THE BELL/GONG**

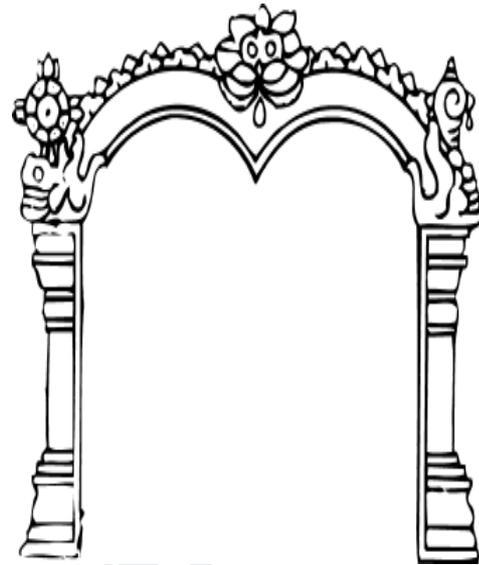
The saints who have enlightened several astonishing spiritual aspects through the temple structures have already explained the significance of the sound of bell at the point of *Dwaja Sthambamu* (Flag Pillar) itself. The sound of bell is supposed to denote a wave of explanations. Before a person enters a temple, many spiritual aspects are visible present within the temple precincts itself. The bell is arranged in every temple with an aim to shun all thoughts at least for a while and to bind every devotee with "concentration" at the time of standing before the *Deity* of God to offer prayers. Once if a bell is struck, the effect of its sound extends to an uniform revibration in a manner *Tung..gg..gg...gg..g*, which slowly fades out into nothingness. Disciples in those days' used to ring the temple bell to acquire devotional concentration of their thoughts as similar to the sound of the bell. By doing so, the mind engaged with several other thoughts get unified with the sound of the bell. And, as the reverberating sound of the bell zeroes on into a mere silence, likewise, the thoughts engrossed in the mind too shall get stationed in silence with the sound of the bell. As such, the saints believed it as one of the salient features for attaining concentration on the god, at least for a while.

Whereas, it had become a meaningless habit these days to sound the temple bell many a time, merely to display the so-called routine-characteristic feature. By blindly following the other disciples who have sounded the bell unaware of the meaning, other disciples are enacting the same. They are unable to understand the fact that the echo-sound of the temple bell is meant to draw a devotee's concentration onto the God, whereas worship without serenity and balance of mind is indeed meaningless. Hence, strike the temple bell once to strike a balance in the thoughtful mind with the significance of the temple bell sound. If you still fail to drive away the thoughts creeping again and again into your mind, strike the bell once again to acquire concentration on the significance of echo-sound of the temple bell in order to drive away the thoughts blocking your mind and a prayer after which only shall have a fruitful bearing. But, visiting a temple for sheer pleasure and casually sounding the bell for sheer pleasure, the prayer so offered also becomes a casual affair and serves no purpose. This significant aspect should be grasped by one and all.

## 10. LION FACED ARCH AROUND THE DEITY (SIMHATALAATAMU)

After the entrance tower (*Gopuramu*), the flag pillar (*Dwajasthambamu*), and after knowing the significance and meaning of the Flag Pillar, the Gong (*Ganta*) before the Sanctum-Sanctorum (*Garbha Gudi*) and a little ahead inside the seventh doorway exists the primary *Deity* of the temple. Let the *Deity* be in any shape, the place itself is called the Sanctum-Sanctorum. The formless God, being carved into a *Deity*-form and placing it in the Sanctum-Sanctorum invites a volley of doubts in other religious minded persons. The answer is...! The *Paramatma* is the one, who in every atom of the universe is prevailing. The all-pervading *Paramatma* is called as "Purushottama" (the absolute soul) in the *Indu* Religion, as "Allah" in the *Islam* Religion, as "Yehova" in the *Christian* religion. Let anyone denote *Paramatma* in whatever procedure they deem fit, but, He is the one and only. To enlighten such a character, a course of action has to be adopted and construction of temples is one such resultant action. Since depicting a formless God, devoid of nose, eyes and face is not possible, a formless stone boulder was exposed for a mere comparison. If formless *Lingas* were placed in some temples, others have displayed *Deities* having a form. Let us for example take the *Lord Venkateswara* Temple at Tirupati, where the *Deity* having a form is located. To denote the formless God, *Linga* was exemplified, whereas the *Deity* having a form is shown to indicate, now-and-then God (the *Bhagwan*) will take birth in a human form. Though formless, to impart and establish universal values and religious merit (*Dharma*), *Paramatma*, as His own delegate or envoy, He Himself is taking the human form of God (*Bhagwan*); the fact of which was also cited in the *Bhagwadgita*. The person who is capable of imparting spiritually enlightenment about the One who is devoid of any limitations (*avadhulu*) viz., the universal *Paramatma*; such competent person who can renounce all worldly attachments, is thereby called as *Avadhuta* (a messenger between the God and Mankind). The same aspect was also highlighted

in *Islam* religion, where the word "Paigambar or Khalifa" , denoting "A God's Messenger", was compared with. To depict the formless *Paramatma*, a *Linga* was established in the temple and to depict a distinct form, a *Deity* was established, representing the *Bhagwan* (*Sri Ranga*). The *Deity* of Lord *Venkateswara* at Tirumala Tirupati was decorated with a crown, while the side and upper portions



Lion Faced Arch Around the Deity

are covered with an arch embossed with a hollow face of lion at the overhead center.

The reason for placing the arch likewise is .... to concede the fact that *Bhagwan* (human form of God) is in the centre and the outer arch is indeed the *satan (maya)*. To be familiar with *Bhagwan*, one should discover at first the ways and means to overcome the obstacles of *satan (maya)*, to unveil and discover the *Bhagwan*. The person who fails to crossover the barrier of *satan (maya)* would just resemble an ordinary person. Only if he is able to crossover the barrier of *satan (maya)*, then only he's an able Saint. Unable to identify Human form of God's stature, several times were we trapped in the vortex of *satan (maya)*. That's why *Paramatma* told that "earlier when I was present before you, you could not recognize me and in the future too whenever I happen to reappear again, you cannot recognize me".

Beasts possess more strength than a human and when a person is in a pathetic and helpless state facing a strong person, the strength of the opponent is compared with a beastly power. The most powerful and the king among the beasts is the Lion. Since, *satan (maya)* is most powerful, it is compared with the lord of the beasts' viz., the Lion. Those who are drawn towards the God are denied the benefit of spiritual wisdom by the actions of the powerful *satan (maya)*. Overthrowing *satan (maya)* is indeed a very difficult task, the fact of which was also cited in the *Bhagwadgheeta*. To enlighten this aspect, the Godly-equated

Lord *Venkateswara's Deity* is shown with an arch embossed with a hollow face of lion at the overhead center (*Simhatalaatamu*). The beastly-empowered satan (*maya*) can influence you in the guise of thoughts in your head, externally through a husband-wife relationship or in any other form to disturb and distract the mind. Though the chance of emerging victorious over the satan (*maya*) as displayed in the *Simhatalaatamu* is a difficult task, one should not leave any stone unturned to succeed it. Face to face, one cannot overpower the lion with the mere human strength. But, using own wit with the available resources of strength, not only one, but many a lion can be tamed to the extent of abiding our own instructions. Likewise, the satanic lion can be successfully tamed, once you attain the essential element of spiritual wisdom with a strong determination. Unless the satan (*maya*) is succeeded forthwith, knowing the God is not a possible task. As such, the *Simhatalaatamu* is placed in the temples to highlight the aforesaid significant feature.



## 11. THE SANCTUM-SANCTORUM

### [Garbha Gudi]

The place at which the primary idol is installed in a temple is called as the Sanctum-Sanctorum (*Garbha Gudi*). The one who emerges out with life intact from the womb of a mother is the "*Bhagwan*" (the human form of God). No one in the world, except the *Bhagwan* come out with life from the womb of a mother. The *Paramatma* who is present all over the universe (omnipresent) is the one who comes out with life from the womb of a mother. But the *Jeevatma* has a particular place and entity to reach the new body that takes birth. Though the *Bhagwan* and the Human possess features alike, there's substantial variation right from the process of taking birth itself. Unlike a human, He (*Bhagwan*) is untouched by the elements of *Karma* and is spread in every atom of the mother's body through whose womb (*Bhagamu*) he takes birth with life intact and hence, He's called the "*Bhagwan*". As such, the place at which the primary idol of *Bhagwan*

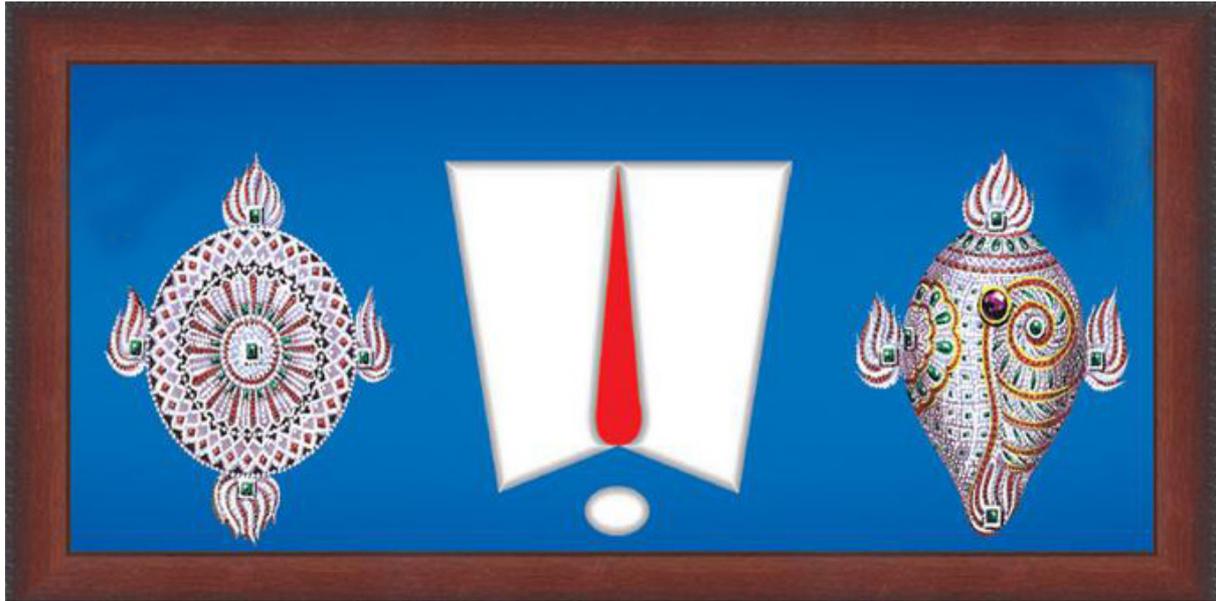
is installed in a temple housing the God, that particular place is called as the "Sanctum-Sanctorum" (*Garbha Gudi*). *Garbha* means womb of the mother and *gudi* means house. Hence, the Sanctum-Sanctorum is a place meant to mean as an exclusive abode of the *Bhagwan*. Any Sanctum-Sanctorum should house a *Deity*-form only. Devoid of nose or face, the place where a formless *Linga* is installed, it cannot be called a Sanctum-Sanctorum because, the *Paramatma* is invisible and takes no form or does have any source of birth. The *Linga* denotes a formless figure and calling its place a Sanctum-Sanctorum is a big blunder and it should be deemed contrary to our traditional values. Placing a *Simhatalatamu* (an arch with a hollow face of lion embossed at the overhead center) should even be avoided to the *Linga*. Likewise, a place devoid of a shapeless *Deity* should not be called a Sanctum-Sanctorum and the place at which the primary idol in a temple is installed is the only place entitled to be called a Sanctum-Sanctorum. And, every *Deity* should compulsorily be decorated with a *Simhatalaatamu*, (an arch with a hollow face of lion embossed at the overhead center). Even though a mere component (*Amsa*) of *Paramatma* (Supreme Being) had gathered on the earth, He is spread in every atom, at every nook and corner of the Universe the *Bhagwan* with a human form has the origin of birth through a mother's a womb. Whereas, the formless *Paramatma*, neither possess a mother's womb nor any process of birth. As such, the *Deity* in a *Ranga* temple can evenly be compared with the *Bhagwan* (having a form) and hence the place in particular can be called a Sanctum-Sanctorum. However, the place of the formless *Linga*, evenly compared with the omnipresent and formless *Paramatma*, cannot be called a Sanctum-Sanctorum. The *Bhagwan*, since having a form is lured by the influence of Satan (*maya*), hence, the evenly balanced *Simhatalaatamu*, (an arch with a hollow face of lion embossed at the overhead center) should be decoratively placed in the form of arch around the *Deity*-form. But, since the formless *Paramatma* cannot stand any chance to play into the hands of Satan (*maya*), the *Simhatalaatamu* should not be decorated over it. Only the *Bhagwan*, having a form require weapons, whereas, the formless God (*Paramatma*) does not require any weapons, since, He Himself is all-pervading, even in weapons as such. Hence, no weapon is displayed with the *Linga*, but at the same time no weapon should be kept alongside. Only the *Deities* having a form are entitled to keep or hold weapons.

## 12. THE SYMBOL OF CONCH SHELL - WHEEL (SHANKU CHAKRAMULU)

At a place like Tirumala temple, the consecration of *Shanku-Chakra* is a fact of pride, viz., denoting the symbols of conch shell, wheel and the upright mark (worn on the forehead by *Vaishnavites*). The denoting of these symbols can also be viewed at some other temple courtyards in the State of Tamil Nadu. And similarly like the photo frames of Gods displayed at various temples, the photo frames depicting these three symbols are also placed at some temples. Overall, these symbols are highly projected and exhibited at *Tirumala Temple* at *Tirupathi*. Apart from this, the Gods depicted with *Namamu* viz., the upright mark on the forehead; are shown holding the *Shanku-Chakra* in hands. As each and every feature displayed at a temple in one or the other way relate to spiritual wisdom, the *Shanku-Chakra*, no doubt comprise some significance; that is ...!

Guess, if a war is likely to take place soon, at first there would be high pitch voices, shouts, followed by conch shell sounds, drum beat sounds reaching to a high hysterical commotion, finally leading to mass destruction. Similarly, to destroy the elements of *Karma*, the *Yoga* (self-devotion) has to be widely practiced (*Yogasadhana*) to acquire devotional powers. But, this war cannot begin with, unless a sound is made. The sound of spiritual discourse of a master (*guru*) should at first take the lead to create an impact. Once this sound touches the chords of a heart, the war of acquired devotional powers would commence thereafter. A small fight or a big war cannot take place without the element of sound. Similarly, the war with our sworn enemy, *Karma*, cannot take place unless the acquired devotional power is provoked by the sound of spiritual wisdom. As such, to stay away from the cycle of recurring births and deaths and to seek unification with the soul (*Atma*), the initial requirement is spiritual illumination, only after which the role of *Yogamu* (means to attain complete union of the soul) is necessitated. Unless spiritual enlightenment is acquired, *Yoga* (*Jeevatma* experiencing the *Atma*) cannot justify its role. The fact was also revealed in the *Bhagwadh Geeta* as "*Sreyohi Gnanamabyasaath, Gnanaddhyaana visishyathe*"

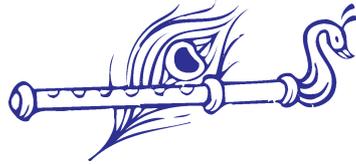
The conch-shell is the origin of sound, while the spiritual wisdom is linked with sound. Hence, everyone must possess some spiritual knowledge. To denote this aspect, the conch-shell is placed to the left of *Namamu*. By virtue of spiritual knowledge, if *Yogasadhana* is widely practiced to acquire devotional powers (*Yoga*



*Shakti*), a person can acquire *Yogamu* and thereby ably destroy the element of *Karma*. Hence to proclaim as the competent destroyer of *Karma*, the wheel is shown. Initially, once the provocation by the sound of spiritual wisdom begins, later engaging in a war with *Yogasadhana* and with the help of self-devotional power conserved in the wheel (*Chakramu*), the enemy, viz., *Karma*, is bound to get destroyed. To demonstrate this feature, the symbolic wheel (*chakramu*) is placed on the right side. One should be aware that in the absence of spiritual wisdom, no spiritual power exists. Hence, without the symbolic conch-shell (*Shanku*) there cannot be the wheel (*Chakramu*). As such, everywhere, the symbols of *Shanku & Chakra* are shown together, displaying the mark of *Namamu* in the center, between them. If not, the *Deity* of a *Vaisnavait* God is seen in place of *Namamu*. The reason for showing either the sketch of a *Vaishnavite* God or a *Namamu* in between the symbols of *Shanku & Chakra* is...!

With spiritual wisdom, whoever practices the means to attain complete union of the soul with the Supreme Being (*Yogamu*); does possess the power of *Yoga* (*Jeevatma* experiencing the *Atma*), capable enough to destroy the elements of *Karma*. Such a person can attain liberation (*moksha*). Therefore, the red mark of *Namamu*, which is reckoned to denote the *Brahma Nadi* is meant to display such qualities. The sharp tip of the *Namamu* is aimed at space (the sky). Thereby, the temple *Deities* exhibiting *Shanku-Chakra* and *Namam* symbolize the state of attained liberation (*moksha*). Those in possession of spiritual wisdom

and yogic power, in order to signify their state of liberation (*mokshamu*) have opted for these symbols. *Shanku* to denote spiritual wisdom, the symbol of *Namamu* to denote liberation (*Moksha*) and the symbol of *Chakra* to denote the ability to destroy the elements of *Karma*. But, these suggestive symbols incorporated by our ancestors have however lost their descriptive and spiritual significance now. Hence, after thoroughly going through the facts, one should make an effort to practice them accordingly.

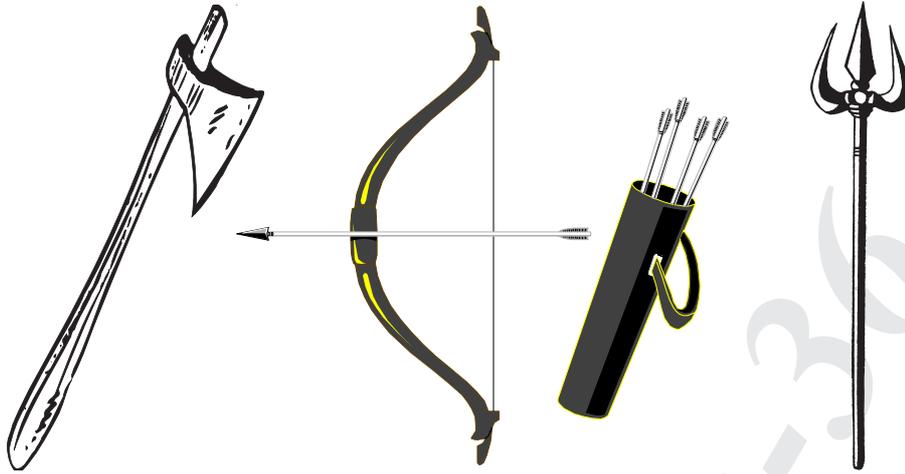


## 13. WEAPONS

### (AAYUDHAMULU)

Except for the *Linga* at the Shiva Temple, one might recollect viewing various *Deities* holding one or the other weapon in their hands. These weapons are displayed as being held by *Deities* in one, two or upto seven, eight in number. Here, a need arises to know the reasons for display of weaponry by *Deities*. Further, wind means air and the element of respiratory process undergone through the nostrils of our nose is also air. Our predecessors, with the numerical tradition of respiratory process only, the span of life was counted there upon. Since a human survives on the process of respiration, the measurement of respiration (wind) was hence counted as life's measurement. As such, in the preceding ages, as per astrological calculations, a person's span of life was denoted in terms of years, co-relating it with the measurement of number of breathings (*Vayuvu*). But, with the changing times, the word *Vayuvu* (wind) had slowly changed to *Aayuvu* (duration of life); the aspect of which was also discussed earlier. In accordance with the changed word, a weapon (*aayu-dham*) has the power to snap the duration of life (*aayuvu*). By following the word *Aayuvu* (duration of life), the word *Aayudhamu* (weapon) had generate, here 'dham' means snapping the life span.

Such weaponry displayed by *Deities* of God, definitely possess some significant meaning. Earlier when we had gone through the topic of *Shanku* & *Chakra*, (Conch Shell-Wheel) the symbol of wheel was represented as the



WEAPONS

destroyer of *Karmas* (Good or evil deeds out of which consequences arise for the doer). Here too, the display of several weapons, encompassing spiritual wisdom, indicates the destructive power of weapons to get rid off several *Karmas* of smaller degree. Whenever the elements of *Karma* get totally destroyed, the very moment a *Jeevatma* attains the state of liberation. In tune with realities, one should seek to direct the spiritual weapons held by God on ones own *Karmas*, by utilizing the source of wisdom. If this should really happen, one should keep total faith in God, who shall enlighten us with the spiritual wisdom and shall cleanse us from all *Karmas*.



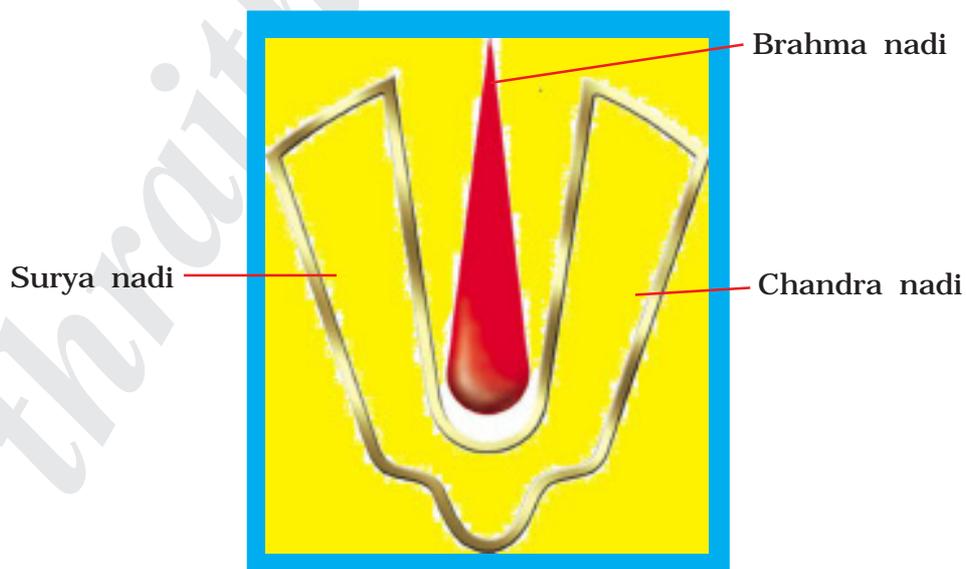
## 14. THE THREE UPRIGHT MARKS worn on the forehead

### (NAAMAMU)

As the horizontal three-lined mark on the Eswara *Linga* transmit the meaning of *Kshara* (mortal/perishable), *Akshara* (immortal/imperishable) & *Purushottama* (absolute soul), the "*Thrinamamu*" viz., the upright 3-lined mark worn on the forehead by *Vaishnavites*, also transmit the meaning of Spiritual enlightenment (*Atma Gnanamu*). That is, in every living body there are 3 lakh and 50 thousand nerves, out of which 72 thousand are important. The very important are only 10,

whereas the most vital are the three nerves which are called as "Surya (Sun) Nadi", "Chandra (Moon) nadi" and "Brahma (Cerebral) Nadi". Based in the head, these three nerves pass through the body along the path of spine, quite parallel up to the anus region. The "Brahma (Cerebral) Nadi" is stationed in the centre of spine and on its both sides; the "Surya (Sun) Nadi" and the "Chandra (Moon) Nadi" are spread like garland of beads (*Poosalu*). The most prominent among the three *Nadies*(nerves) is the "Brahma (Cerebral) Nadi", while on the right is the "Surya (Sun) Nadi" and to its left is stationed the "Chandra (Moon) Nadi". In the "Surya (Sun) Nadi" dwells our mind. But in the centrally located "Brahma (Cerebral) Nadi", the one that resides in every living being is the *Atma* (the existing soul in the body). The mind, which dwells in the "Surya (Sun) Nadi" and the "Chandra (Moon) Nadi", if successfully reach the "Brahma (Cerebral) Nadi", that state is called as "*Yogamu*", the unification. If the mind could reach the "Brahma (Cerebral) Nadi", the *Jeevatma* within it experiences the *Atma* (Soul), which specifies the fusion of *Jeevatma* and *Atma* (soul). Thus, it should be known that to display this feature of *Jeevatma* and *Atma*'s fusion, the upright mark on the forehead (*naamamu*) is placed as an indication.

Our elders have identified the three vital nerves (*Naadis*) as, viz., the "Brahma (Cerebral) Naadi", on the right of it as the "Surya (Sun) Naadi", and to its left is the "Chandra (Moon) Naadi". The dwelling place of *Atma* i.e., "Brahma (Cerebral) Naadi", is more important than that of the "Surya (Sun) Chandra (Moon) Nadis", where the mind is totally centered. Hence, both the "Surya (Sun)



THREE UP-RIGHT MARKS

*Chandra (Moon) Naadis*", on the right and left are denoted in white color, while the seat of *Atma* i.e., the "*Brahma (Cerebral) Naadi*" in the middle is denoted with red color. These combination of colors of *Namamu* clearly draw the attention on to the uniqueness of the middle line. To denote its greatness, the middle line is drawn a bit lengthy than that of the two. Thus, any *Jeevatma* if successfully amalgamates with *Atma*, the path to liberation (moksha) is wide open to be attained. With this attitude, the central line of the *Naamamu* at the top was given a sharpened tip, while its base is kept relatively wide. This tip of this mid-line is directed towards the sky, which itself is an evidence that those who mingle with the *Atma* will subsequently rejoin the inexplicable vacuum of *Paramatma*. With similar denotation, a big *Naamamu* on the forehead of Lord Sri Venkateswara at Tirumala is marked. To instill a feeling of curiosity in the devotees and to know its significance, a big sized *Naamamu* on the forehead of Lord Sri Venkateswara at Tirumala is put on view. But, without aspiring to know the secret of the *Naamamu*, people are ignoring it in a routine way. Though we also adorn the *Naamamu*, (the upright mark worn on the forehead), no one is able to explain its prominence.

Our ancestors are no more with us and we are not in a position to acquire the secrets of spiritual wisdom. Hence, we are only able to assume that those who place the three (vertical) lined *Naamamu* on foreheads are *Vaishnavites* and those we place three (horizontal) rows of *Vibuthi* on the forehead are *Shivaite*s. In fact these lines indicate the great wisdom in the knowledge of *Atma (Atma Gnanamu)*, but unaware of the significance people are merely treating them as symbols representing different sects among a religion. With this tendency, the temples representing *Paramatma* with the form of a *Linga*, and the temples representing the *Deity* of *Sri Ranga* have also been differentiated into the *Shiva* and *Vaishnava* temples, which act and deed is much against the principles of *Dharma* (the knowledge of the Self).

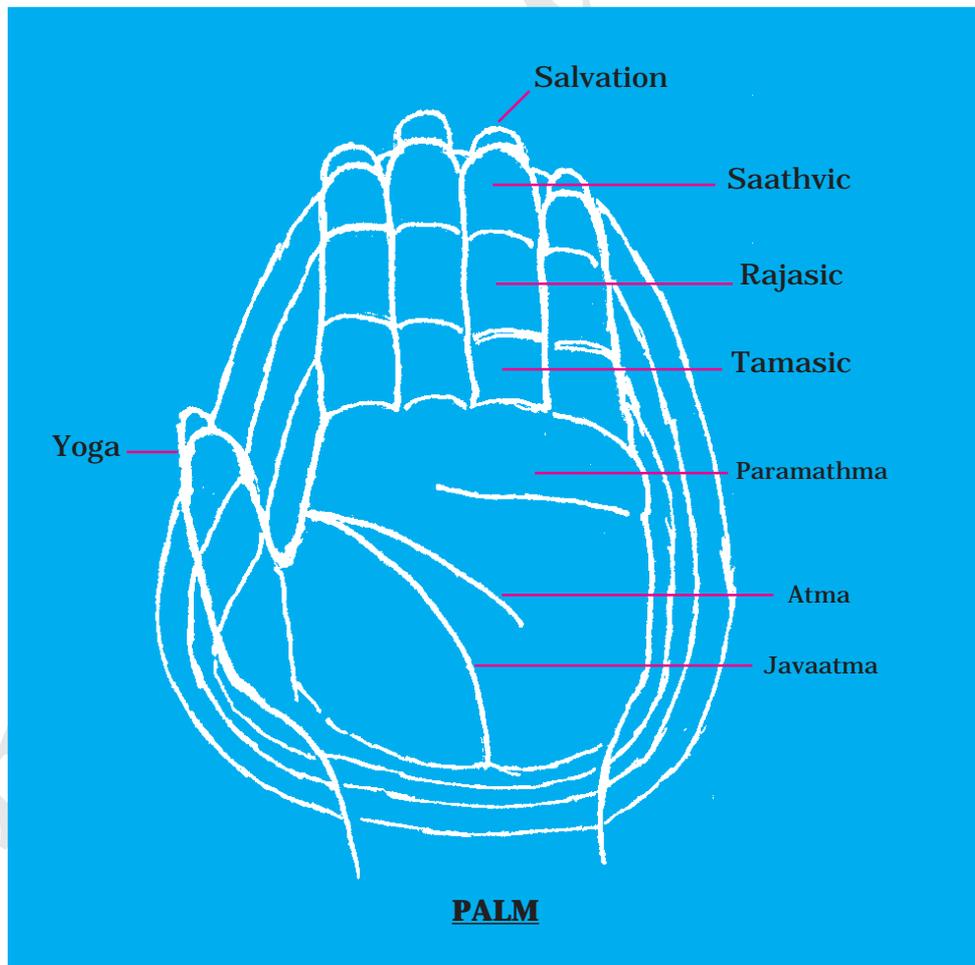


## 15.THE PALM

### (HASTHAMU)

The *Deity* in a Sanctum-Sanctorum possesses distinct eminence, but something more distinct prevails in its palm (*hasthamu*). Even every human possess the same sort of palm. If the prominence of a *Deity's* palm is grasped, one can conclude that similar prominence also exit in our own palm also. So, let us first know the prominence that subsists in the palm of a *Deity*. A picture form of the palm may also be viewed in the figure above.

There are three lines in the middle of the Palm and the edges of two lines among them have merged with one another at a particular point. Whereas, the third line is positioned separately above the two lines. What exactly they specify is explained in the sixteenth(16)sloka in the "*Purushottama Prapthi Yoga*" chapter of the *Bhagwadgeeta*, as:



**Sloka :**     *Dwavimav purushow loke ksharachaskshara Evacha*  
                  *Khara sarvaani boothani kootastho kshara Uchyathe*

There exit two *Purushas* or Souls in this universe. One is the *Kshara* (soul-perishable) and the other is *Akshara* (soul non-perishable). The *Kshara* (perishable) dwells in every living being, while the *Akshara* (non-perishable) in unison is present in every living body. According to the saying of Lord Krishna, though the two lines in the middle of the palm seem separated at one end, they have amalgamated at the other. Here, these two lines signify the two constituents viz., the *Kshara* (perishable) that is present in every body as the *Jeevatma* (the exiting soul in the body) and the other constituent viz., the *Atma* (the soul that's giving vital energy to the body); both of which are shown in a dual-line sign in the Palm.

As per the line quoted in the 17<sup>th</sup> sloka and as per another quoted line in the 18<sup>th</sup> sloka, there is yet another superior form than these two *Purushas* or Souls and is identified as the *Paramatma* (*the Supreme self*). He is far more distinct than *kshara* (perishable) and far more superior to *Akshara* (non-perishable) and is therefore called the *Purushottama* (absolute soul). Since he is distinct from the *Atma*, He's the *Paramatma* and since superior to the *Jeevatma* and *Atma*, He's called the *Purushottama*. *Paramatma* and *Purushottama* are indeed not any names, but words which denote His supreme position. Since the *Paramatma* (the Supreme self) possess distinct identity with that of the two *Purushas* or Souls, the third line is hence positioned separately above the two. The source and basis for the origin of the universe, the primary and principal male elements (*Moola Purushulu*) viz., the *Kshara* (perishable), *Akshara* (non-perishable) and *Purushottama* (absolute soul) are denoted as signs representing the three main line-marks in the palm. Since the three primary universal features are present in the Palm, our elders used to say that everything, the Paradise (*Vaikuntamu*) is even visible in the palm. Hence, let us examine further more into the other hidden aspects of the palm.

There are five fingers to the hand, which represent the five primoedial elements, viz., five senses of touch, and five winds (*vayuvulu*). These should be understood in accordance with the circumstances. Here, it should also be assumed that the five fingers of hand are compared with the five essential elements of life (*pancha bhutamulu*) viz., the Sky, Air, Fire, Water and the Earth. The three lines in the mid-palm denoted the three *purusha* features and the five fingers as five components of Nature. Thus, the palm itself bear impressions which totally

resemble the basic featured lines denoting the origin of the whole universe, viz., the *Paramatma*, *Atma* and *Jeevatma*. The *Prakruti* (nature) with its five essential elements of the body (*pancha bhutamulu*) and *Paramatma* in the form of lines are both present in the Palm. So, with intent to exploit the fact that both these vital factors are present in everyone, the posture of a *Deity* showing the Palm is exposed to denote this particular purpose.

A human body not only comprise of *Jeevatma* and *Atma* but also *Paramatma* and *Prakruti* (nature), which in turn pave way to unfold another secret. Yes, it relates to the aspect of differentiation as to how a human would be while within the grip-hold of *Prakruti* and while within the grasp of *Paramatma* (supreme self). While grappling with the bodily nature, a human is influenced by the three characteristic features (*Gunas*) on one part, while on the other, an apprehension of facing the likely outcome, if the three *Gunas* are succeeded. Let's examine as to how these facts are elaborated in the Palm. The fingers of a palm have three characteristics (*Gunas*) and hence each finger is divided into three parts by lines. It is believed that the five fingers, which denote the five essential elements of life (*Pancha bhutamulu*) are also known as *Prakruti* (nature), through which the three *Gunas* have originated. Since these three *Gunas* were formulated by the five essential elements of life (the basis of nature), each of the five fingers is divided into three parts. As such, the palm of a *Deity* in a temple specifies that every living being born by virtue of *Prakruti* get tapped within the cycle. The palm is in the middle, whereas below it on the wrist, three wrinkles are viewed. If these wrinkled lines are further drawn and attached with the lines of fingers, a circular shape would form around the palm. As shown in the figure, the three lines in the middle of a palm are a view of the three *Atmas*, whereas, the three parts of each finger must be ascertained as indicators of three *Gunas* viz., *Thamasic* (upper), *Rajasic* (middle) and *Sattvic* (bottom). As visible in the palm, the essence of life exists in these three characteristic features (*Gunas*). These acknowledged circle of *Gunas*, if identified in good sense (*Sattvic*), the circle impressions of *Shanku-Chakra* are viewed in the fingertips. The impressions of *Shanku* indicate the essence of imparting spiritual knowledge (*Gnana Bodha*) and the *Chakra* in turn denote possessing the power to perish one's own sins viz., *Karma*. We had learnt these aspects in the previous chapter. Only after attainin of spiritual knowledge (*Gnana Bodha*) one can acquire the power to destroy the accumulated sins viz., *Karma* and the presence of *Shanku-Chakra* in the fingertips, is to emphasize this reality. After acknowledging the presence of *Shanku-Chakra* in

the finger tips, this relative characteristic featured *Sathva Guna* is represented at its back along with a white coloured nails. In order to achieve victory over the resultant factors of *Karma*; the *Shanku-Chakra* have been sketched on the fingertips of a Palm by the divine force (God), indicating them as armoured symbols of war to be waged against the three collective factors of *Gunas* viz., *Karma*. While many shapes have been formed by way of line marks in the palm, it's absolutely wrong to compare them with the factors of palmistry and astrology. The last and the top part of fingers feature the *Sattvika* (the highest of the three elemental) *Guna*, behind which the nails are visible. The nail if examined would look thrice strong and thick than the texture of skin, quite different from the colour of fingers and look white in colour. This aspect specifies that apart from dwelling in the three *Gunas*, the Soul I (*Jeevatma*) also dwell in a fourth place viz., *Atma* (Soul II). This fourth place is represented by the Nails of the fingers. As narrated in the *Bhagavadgeeta* about the "Chaturvarnam" i.e., *Sattvic, Rajasic, Thamasic* with three specific characteristic features and *Yogis* devoid of any characteristic are the four *varnas* of living beings.

The Nail is a point that denotes the position of the *Yogis* in the *Prakruti* (nature). Being white in colour, the Nail indicates the purity and free from *Gunas* in comparison with the *Yogis*. By virtue of the power of knowledge one can acquire the state of a *Yogi*. The moon, which is white in appearance is an icon of wisdom and thus the shape of a crescent moon appears as the basic border of a nail in a more appealing white colour. Thus, above the top of the three divisions of *Gunas* in the finger, there prevail another place viz., the Nail, which denotes the position of *Yogis*. Thereby the 'rising moon on the Nail' does indicate the features of wisdom of the *Yogis*.

Midst the three *Gunas*, one would experience joys and sorrows. But, even those who overcome the three *Gunas* in *Brahma Yoga*, also experience joys and sorrows after getting out of the *Yogic* trance. It is inevitable for every human to experience the hassles of life and joys and sorrows. To get rid of these hassles, one should not only succeed the three *Gunas* but surpass the phase of *Yogamu* also, upon which only one can attain liberation (*Moksha*). Those who attain liberation (*moksha*) have no attachment with any experiences, neither joys nor sorrows. Hence, the three divisions of fingers, which symbolise the three elements of *Gunas*, feel the pinch of pain made by the slightest pressure of a knife's tip. The Nail which denotes *Yogamu*, also feel the pain, but in a bit low variance. But

those who have attained liberation (*moksha*) do not experience an iota of pain. Hence, at the edge of the white nail and the fingertip, a distinctive nail is present in bluish colour. The blue and distinctly coloured nail demonstrates the feature of liberation (*moksha*). The one who attain liberation (*moksha*) do not experience either the ups and downs or joys and sorrows of life. To relatively admit this fact and the feature of liberation (*moksha*), the blue and distinctly coloured nail does not feel any pain or joy even if it's sliced with a blade of knife. So, any human who attains liberation (*moksha*) cannot experience the feelings as similar to the the distinctly colored nail. Hence, the posture of the *Deity's* palm indicates the ways and means to attain liberation (*moksha*) through the three *Atmalu* (souls) and also represents the three *Gunamulu* (Characteristics). It also imparts a message that we can attain the state of *yoga* after acquiring the knowledge of Self. The Palm that's depicted by the *Deity* indicates the unfathomable depths of hidden wisdom and to assume it as a mere blessing posture is indeed unfortunate. The significance hidden in the Palm of a *Deity* is quite similar in your palm also. Thus, one should accept the fact that the importance of showing the palm of a *Deity* in a temple is to let all of us know the element of significance that dwells in our own palm.

The *Paramatma* (Supreme self) in the form of *Bhagawan* (the human form of God) had enlightened in Bhagavadgheetha that " knowledge of the Self is to be acquired at first before attaining Yoga " viz., "*Shreyohi Gnana Mabhyasaath*". The white nails of the fingers of a palm indicate the factors of Yoga, while the crescent moon shaped base of nail indicates 'Self knowledge'. This in symbolism conveys that Self-knowledge or the knowledge of the *Atma* is the basis for attainment of Yoga. Yoga itself is not simply a physical phenomenon. Some people under the influence of Satan (*maya*) are ignoring the importance of wisdom (self-knowledge) and thereby misguiding people to observe breathing exercises by concentrating on the mouth, throat, and nose etc., so as to get a hold on Yoga. Is it not an act contrary to the saying of the God in the Geeta ? Is it not an act of deliberately disregarding the importance attached to the Palm of a *Deity* in a temple? Is it not the act of *Maya* (satan) to compare the precious wisdom with the worthless garbage? If indeed that's true, what's the need for *Bhagawan* to speak about the subject of wisdom in the *Geeta*? And, there will be no value to the quote of "*Shreyohi Gnana Mabhyasaath*". Let whatever opinion prevail, every one should know that the significance of the message entrenched in the Palm of a *Deity* has universal appeal, highlighting the significance of Liberation (*moksha*)

from bondage of circumstances viz., characteristic features (*Gun*as). There is a saying in Telugu “The total essence of life is firmly fixed in own palm” or “Heaven itself is visible in ones own hand”. As such, in the ancient days there prevailed a custom to look at ones own palm in the early dawn, as soon as people awake from sleep. This trend prevails even now, though the tradition slipped to as low as one percent among the Indus. But, by such gesture the secrets of the palm strike the mind at once, which in turn motivate a person to befittingly perform the daylong works with a motive for attaining liberation (*Moksha*). With such strong objective, people used to view the impression of line corresponding *Paramatma* in the Palm with a sanctimonious feeling and in expression of the significance; they wilfully touch the palm to eyes. As such, to uphold our ancestors’ theology we should signify the magnitude and importance of the palm to one and all. Further, we should also impart the fact that temples are sacred and spiritual centers and worship is a meaningful practice; so that reality will surface one or the other day and even those who oppose idol worship may desist from indulging in such actions.



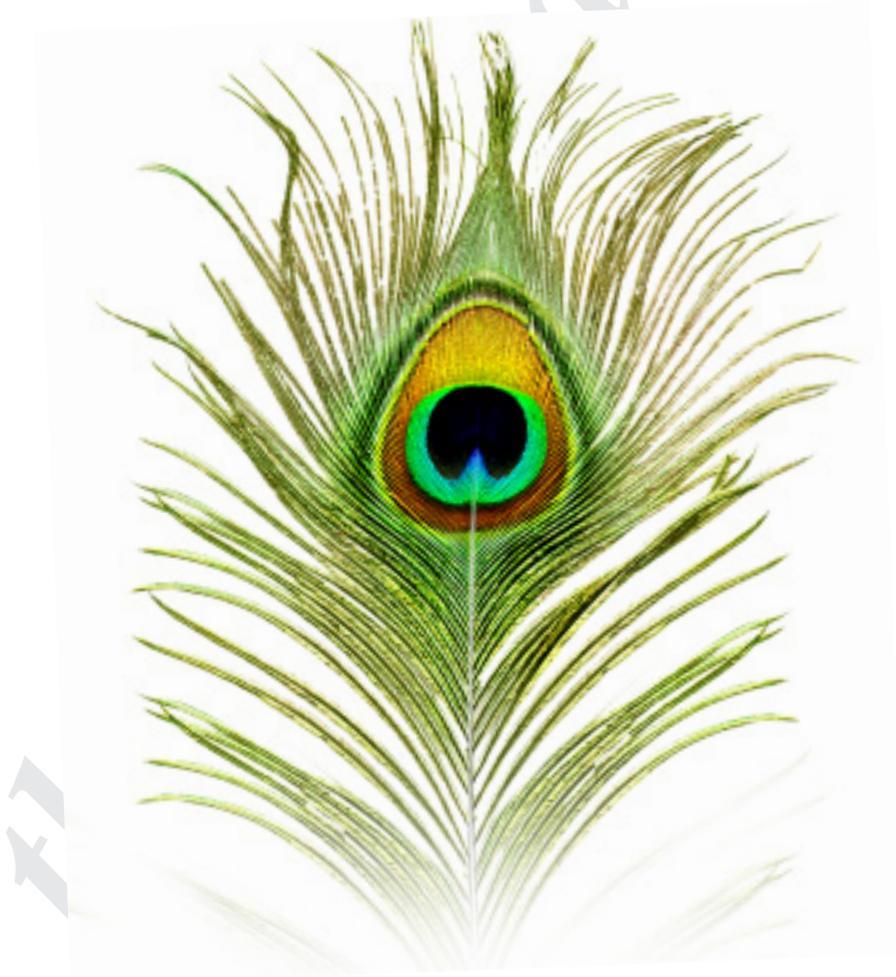
## **16. PEACOCK FEATHER**

### **(NEMALI PINCHAMU)**

Let us now look and know about Lord Krishna’s temple. There is enormous knowledge concealed in the *Deity of Lord Krishna*. A peacock feather is adorned on the head of Lord Krishna. It’s not an object of adoration to add charm, but to demonstrate certain significant features, thereby calling upon the human being to seek comparison with Him, viz., Lord Krishna. A significant factor to note is that, the central portion of the peacock feather is blue in colour and slightly round in shape and this particular portion is highlighted by its visibly distinct colour. Surrounding it is the shining green colour, followed by a light wheatish and shining coloured border. And adjoining the border, another light color exists, almost beyond recognition. In all, there are four circular portions in a peacock’s

feather. It's better, you acquire one such peacock feather and have a keen observance. The main and distinct central portion is in a black and blue coloured combination. The second circle is in a shining green colour, the third in light wheatish colour and the fourth in a beyond grasp position, separated by a slightly shining border by the third circle. As such, the fourth portion can also be easily recognized. With three circular shaped portions and its center resembling an eye, the peacock feather adorned by no less than the one who imparted *Geeta*, i.e., *Lord Krishna*; no doubt possess great significance and meaning.

The head in our body contain the central point of Characteristics (*Gunas*) and they are arranged in a systematic way and as well stored in a circular form. We all know that the Characteristics (*Gunas*) are divided into three parts viz., containing the *Sattvic*, *Rajasic* and *Thamasic* agents. The circular portion in the middle is called the *Brahmanadi*, where dwells the soul (*Atma*). Forming this particular *Brahmanadi* circle as an axis, there is another invisible characteristic



PEACOCK FEATHER

circle (*guna chakra*). The whole mankind is caught in this vicious characteristic circle (*guna chakra*) which in turn divided into three parts. The particular circular portion that holds the maximum content of characteristic beings is given a particular name by our elders, viz., those subsisting in the *Thamasic* circular portion as *Thamasics*, those in *Rajasic* circular portion as *Rajasics* and likewise those in *Sattvica* as *Sattvics*. Though the beings subsist in any of the three circular portions, yet, every being is under the soul's (*Atma*) pursuit. Hence, the soul is a witness to one and all and there's no one beyond the knowledgable purview of the soul (*Atma*). Despite being surrounded by the three, and though un-related with any of the *Gunas*, the soul (*Atma*) stands as a witness yet.

Every living being acts and performs deeds in accordance with the influence of *Gunas*, thereby acquiring certain extent of sins and virtues. Therefore, the virtues and sins acquired by acts and deeds are a part and parcel of *Karma* (virtues and sins summed up in the earlier birth) and this particular aspect of *Karma* solely relate to *Jeeva* but in no way linked with the soul (*Atma*). Though the soul (*Atma*) is providing the vital energy to the human body, the moments and acts are performed solely by the influence of characteristic features (*Gunas*). As such, the soul is accountable only for providing the vital energy to the body but not accountable to *Karmas* accumulated by any one. Thus, though a witness of all human acts and deeds, the soul (*Atma*) as a separate entity is in no way related to one's own acts and deeds (*Karma*).

The first circle in the central portion of a peacock's feather is as prominent as the dwelling place of the soul (*Atma*), amongst the three characteristic circles (*Guna charkas*). The second circular portion from the centre is the *Sattvic* in character (*Guna*), the third surrounding it is *Rajasic* in character and the fourth and last is *Tamasic* in character. As such these similarities are fairly evident in a peacock's feather. *Lord Krishna* did adorn this feather to acknowledge the fact that despite His acts and deeds, the resultant outcome of *Gunas* can in no way influence or torture Him as consequential outcome of *Karma* and that He's (*Lord Krishna*) simply a soul (*Atma*) dwelling midst the characteristic features (*Gunas*). Further, to impart the aspect that the soul (*Atma*) itself is a witness to the three *Gunas* in every individual, *Lord Krishna* had adorned the peacock's feather.

The soul (*Atma*) is dwelling in the *Brahmanaadi* (spinal chord) in every human body. This particular *Naadi* (nerve) is spread from the head to the tail portion of the spine. The *Brahmaanadi*, which passes through the interior

center of spine, spreads the vital energy to the entire body with the soul (*Atma*) and to accomplish this process, small nerve branches are lined up on both sides of the spine. Thus, the *Brahmanaadi* is the base for vital energy, which source is also utilized by the characteristics (*Gunas*). Thus, the orders, which come from above-stationed network of *guna* circles shall have to pass only through the nerve center of *Brahmanadi*. Likewise, the messages, which emanate from the sense organs, after due process through the circle of *Gunas* reach the *Brahmanadi* via some smaller nerves and pass-on for ultimate action. If closely observed, the arrangement of small nerves, the *Brahmanaadi* and the *guna chakras* are found to similarly resemble the peacock's feather. The stem of the peacock feather is strong, white in colour and lengthy as well. Understandably this component should be compared with the *Brahmanaadi*. On both sides of the stem, small feathers are spread like small leaves, which can be compared with the small nerve branches of *Brahmanaadi*. The top portion of this stem, viz., the four-coloured feathers should therefore be deemed as component of the characteristic circle (*Gunachakra*).

Hence, it should be concluded that *Lord Krishna* adorned the peacock's feather to enlighten the following:

- (1) That there are three characteristic features (*Gunas*) viz; *Sattva, Raja, Tamas* in a human, which similarly resemble the outer three colours of a peacock's feather.
- (2) That the soul (*Atma*) in every individual i.e., the central deep blue itself is a witness of acts and deeds committed under the provocative influence of three *Gunas*.
- (3) The soul (*Atma*) surrounded by the *Gunas* is neither touched nor influenced by any of the three *Gunas*, even though the *Gunas* can influence every act and deed in the living body. *Lord Krishna* also gave a message, "Though I perform normal acts and deeds, I am untouched by the influence of *Gunas* as I am the soul midst the *Gunas*".
- (4) That the *Gunas* and the soul are located in the head of every human being and hence the peacock feather is adorned on the head.
- (5) That the four-coloured peacock feather, viz., the border portion being very light is almost evasive to nakedeye, representing the *Thamas*, the second (*Rajas*)

is a bit more colourful and easily visible than the border colour and the Third(*sattvic*). is attractive and instinct than the rest; fourth and middle round is the clear and distinct blue colour represents the soul *Atma* thereby

(6) those familiar with the secrets of characteristic circles (*Guna chakra*), resemble me (Lord Krishna) in comparison and are similar to me.

(7) The 28<sup>th</sup> sloka in the "*Karma yoga Chapter*" of the Geeta states that "*Tatva Vittu Maha Baho GunaKarma Vibhagaya, Gunaa Guneshu Varthana Ithi Mathva na sajjathe*" viz., a person who can distinguish the true nature of *Gunas* does not get attached, for he knows that the actions of *Gunas* are influenced by the senses and that the soul is a separate entity though it stands as the central axis of the three *Gunas*.

It is indeed unfortunate that most of the people are still unaware of the enormous soul-conscious knowledge hidden in a peacock's feather adorned by *Lord Krishna*.



## 17. THE FLUTE (MURALI)

Every human body consists of nine apertures, viz., two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, anus and the private part. Hence, some of our ancestors used to denote this fact by comparing a human body as a nine-holed anthill and within the holes dwell the being like a snake. The snake inside the anthill is out of view. Hence, the comment, "which snake is hid in which hole and which body contains whose presence" was so quoted by our ancestors.

The flute also consist nine holes and it can therefore be compared with a human body. Similar to the nine holes present in a human body, the flute also consist the same number of openings. To admit the truth that all living beings are within his grip, *Lord Krishna* always held a flute in his hand. It should therefore be known that all human beings are devoid of freedom and that they are mere



### THE FLUTE

tools in the hands of God. The human bodies are made out of five (sky, air, fire, water & earth viz., *prakruti*) physical elements of matter and the entire *Prakruti* elements act under the commands of God.

To drive out foolishness and to impart the essentials of wisdom to mankind was the aim of *Lord Krishna's* birth. Thus, by displaying the flute in comparison with a human body and playing music by the gulp of air with the nine-holed instrument, *Lord Krishna* was able to create pleasing sounds, audible to some distance. By creating musical notes on a flute, that too with a gulp of air should be viewed as an act of spiritual wisdom. Some may doubt as to what type of spiritual insight it comprises. The answer is !

Somehow or the other, everyone has to get rid of ignorance to acquire wisdom and as such a Master (*guru*) is necessary to acquire spiritual wisdom. The spiritual enlightenment attained with total consent of a Master (*guru*) only shall enlighten the unwise. Those who gain spiritual wisdom, adapt themselves into a *Yogi* and later move forthwith to unify with the *Paramatma*. One should know that the nine-holed Flute is indeed a comparison with the nine apertures of a human body. The one who plays the Flute is *Lord Krishna*, whereas the one who imparts a human with the tunes of enlightenment is a Master (*guru*). If, what was played on the flute is music, a life possessing the bodily features devoid

of spiritual wisdom needs a Master, at whose behest only one can possibly acquire spiritual enlightenment. To indicate this significant aspect, *Lord Krishna* plays the flute. The sound, which emerge out from the playing flute should be assumed as that of the *Karmas* coming out on acquiring spiritual wisdom from a Master. As similar to sound of flute which travels upto some distance and vanish into the invisible air, after exhaustion of the deeds of *Karma*, a human shall also vanish and mingle with the invisible *Paramatma*. As such, Lord Krishna had played the flute with an objective to communicate this aspect of unification.

Just like music being played in accordance with the tunes, spiritual wisdom is also bound by the subject of *Shastra (science)*. The flute cannot be played without a person who plays it. Likewise, wisdom cannot be attained without a spiritual Master (*guru*). Only when the sound emerges in the form of a tune, the sound is prone to vanish into the thin air. Similarly those who attain wisdom and *Yogic* command can only pave way to unify with the *Paramatma*. To demonstrate this salient feature, Lord Krishna is always shown playing a flute.



## 18. THE LORD'S FEET

(PAADAMULU)

Lord Krishna is always seen in a standing posture with one foot totally touching the ground and the other slightly touching the surface of the ground with toe. This denotes that the major weight of *Lord Krishna's* body is borne by one foot and very less by the other one. The two feet of *Lord Krishna* should be compared with that of two breathing holes of a human nose. Amongst the two nostrils we all possess, the process of breathing is heavy in one and comparatively less in the other nostril. While the right nostril involves in heavy breathing process, the left nostril breathes with a lesser degree. When the breathing process is heavy in the left nostril, similarly it will be less in the right. However, this variation occurs whenever there's any disparity of mind's influence on the *Surya & Chandra Nadis*. Whenever the mind is stationed on the *Suryanadi*, the pressure of breathing will be more on the right nostril and whenever the mind is stationed on the *Chandranadi*, the pressure of breathing will similarly be more on the left nostril. Whenever a human mind is kept static on the *Surya & Chandra Nadis*, alluring



thoughts will fly across all corners of the world. However, when the mind is kept aloof from the *Surya & Chandra Nadis* it will de-link the being from the rest of world, either leading to a deep sleep or into a *Yogic* trance.

In every human body, breathing is undertaken in two ways, the process of which is heavy in one and comparatively less in the other nostril. As an indication of the fluctuations of mind, *Lord Krishna* had put his one foot totally touching the surface of ground and the other foot slightly touching the ground surface with a toe. Thus, the standing posture illustrates *Lord Krishna's* vigilant position. It should be known, in these circumstances only the mind is prone to vary in between the right to left *Nadis*. To signify this particular positioning of mind, *Lord Krishna*, through his standing posture revealed the vigilant fact by showing the position of feet. In a vigilant position if a person is competent enough to identify the mind's path, he would try to unravel the position while in an incautious state of sleep. This status of exploration by own mind while in sleep, is a phenomenon of knocking the door of wisdom. In an active state, the mind flings in between the *Surya & Chandra Nadis* and from there on it reaches the *Brahmanadi* (cerebral nerve) during the phase of sleep. A person who experiences this reality, can undoubtedly achieve the supremacy of wisdom.

## 19. BODY WITH A BLUE COMPLEXION (SHAREERAMU NEELIRANGU)

The *Paramatma* (the omnipresent and omnipotent God) is universally spread, unidentifiable by the five senses of touch (*Indriyas*) and in possession of immeasurable energy. To compare this mammoth feature of invisible force, the only suitable object, which fits in the universe, is the "Sky". Though not a *Paramatma*, the sky is a part of Nature (*Prakruti*), yet, the sky's vastness and nothingness are drawn forthwith during the course of comparison with *Paramatma*. Despite being nothingness, this vacuum has a colour, which is descriptive as blue. A colour would be a part of some matter or an item. But a sky blue colour cannot be traced out at a particular spot in the sky. Yet, if searched, it's found filled in the entire vacuum but in no way anyone can reach closer to it. Since the vacuum filled sky is blue in colour, *Lord Krishna* to disclose his omnipresent feature had compared himself with the sky and similarly denoted this aspect by donning a sky-blue colored body. Just as the sky is limitless, to acknowledge this particular viewpoint of infinite presence, the *Paramatma* had displayed his body in a sky-blue colour.



## 20. ADORATION/WORSHIP (AARADHANA)

Till now we have learnt some important aspects about temples. Let us now look at the ways and means of worship and the subject matter involving the rituals to be followed in the process. In the present generation, the element of spirituality has become scarce in humans. Very few people are accustomed with the spiritual chores but they are also not followed in the right perspective. There are various types of devotees who are staunch believers in the existence of God. But, they follow a particular ritual with which they are accustomed to, merely presuming that they are following the widely accepted religious principles. Yet, with true devotion some people are following the right procedure and making determined efforts to unfold the identities of the *Atma* and *Paramatma*. Whereas

some people are demonstrating their devotional instinct even while coming across a temple by paying obeisance; presuming, they are the most sought-for devotional cadres. Further, some people visit the temple once a year, break a coconut as an annual ritual and confidently claim that they are indeed a significant section among the devotees. Some people, who offer daily prayers to a *Deity* at home, satisfy themselves with a feeling that they are the right people with right earnest towards God. Some people go on a pilgrimage, visit temples such as Tirupathi, drop some offerings and seek further fulfillment of new desires, thereby feeling that their adopted procedure of worship is indeed correct. While some others believe it as a right procedure to perform the Ritual of Anointing the *Linga* to get rid off the evil castings of death [*Mruthyu doshamulu*]. Some others indulge in paying salutations to each and every hillock and tree they come cross. If every procedure adopted as above is indeed worship, then there's no meaning in worship itself. What we are walking may be a path, which ultimately may lead to a grave, a forest, a stream or a village. Likewise, the demonstration of different modes of devotion is also a sort of worship, though it's devoid of hope to reach the *Paramatma*. Like the unknown paths we tread, which tend to lead to an unknown destination, perhaps a forest, similarly the unknown modes of worship with wish-filled devotion, would once again lead to stumble upon the cycle of birth and re-birth.

It is unfortunate that the temples, which were built with an aim to create spiritual awareness of *Paramatma* among the masses, have now become a refuge for offering something in token of fulfillment of typical wishes and desires. If wishes are not fulfilled, abuse of God is also taking place. Is there any source or message from the God in any of the temples demanding the masses to seek wishes for fulfillment? Knotted and encircling by the rope of desires and seeking fulfillment of wishes is not at all a right mode of worship. Paying rupees hundred towards performing the Ritual of Anointing and seeking a reward of rupees one lakh is not an act of devotion towards the God. The diseases which occur in accordance with the implementing factors of *Karma*, if cured, being paid back by some offerings to God, does not show devotion towards the God. The temple, a place meant for self-introspection, having become a place for commercial fulfillment of human wants, is indeed very distressing.

From among the types of eighty-four lakh living beings in the universe, taking the utmost prominent form of a human being is indeed a boon. Yet, unable to differentiate between the sin and virtue, unable to assess reasons for

experiences and believing that everything is gained by own wit and will, thereby exhibit the egoistic attitude of humans. Birth and death, and the phase later are not at all thought of by the humans and passing off time as it goes on, is no doubt a meaningless life. The *Paramatma*, who is without a name and form, can be recognized through some ways and means and putting no effort in that direction to know the truth is unwise. After waking-up in the morning, getting engrossed in work and not curious to seek enlightenment of life is by all means as equivalent and meaningless, comparable to life similar to an ordinary bird or animal. Having a belief that God exists, some people frequent the temples and offer prayers. On noticing this act, some people comment that belief itself is a disease and as such people with "belief-disease" get adapted to often visit the temples. Those who are ignorant of the fact that there's some notable reason in every act of worship, presume that God does not exist at all, judging against the belief of those who blindly believe in God and frequent the temples. Unable to differentiate between a Tamarind and **Jammi** tree from a distant view, with a similar frame of mind, some atheists are comparing the Saints and Spiritually enlightened with those of others (belief-diseased) who tread similar paths with partial knowledge. Most of the people do not know that both the believers and non-believers of God do not co-relate in any way with the *Yogis*. The believers in God (*aasthikulu*) and the non-believers (*naasthikulu*) are tied to the word "belief". But, a Yogi is a person who does not rely on mere "belief", but merely aims to know the truth and struggles until the ultimate is achieved and experienced. The believer of God is the one who accepts the theory of relics (*puranas*) and the atheist (non-believer) is the one who argues that the *Puranas* cannot be proved. *Puranas* should not become the limitations. By knowing the *Shastras*, apart from *Puranas* and those following the ideologies in accordance with the *Shastras* are termed as *Yogis*. An atheist who does not differentiate between a believer in God and a *Yogi* and thereby comparing both of them as believers in God; is like the telugu proverbial saying of — **yeddu eenindante ghatiki kattiveyu-**, While belief is the element of life for a believer in God, exploring the God and finding out the truth is the quality of a *Yogi*. As such, *Yogis* take the lead in showing a right path for enlightening the believers in God; which fact is however not known to the atheists. Looking at the unwise who worship for fulfillment of wishes and visit temples, merely treating the temples as centers for fulfillment of wishes, the atheists finding fault with the procedures of worship as futile exercises, have commented that the temples are built by the god-fearing lot and hence they do not hold either significance or meaning.

However, a temple possesses significance and meaning in its every structural feature. We have earlier concluded that the importance of a temple structure is aimed at illustrating the existence of the formless, unidentified and invisible force (God). Neither the believers nor the non-believers, but only the yogis who built the temples are certainly know to explain the importance of temple structures and the rituals followed thereat. The paths which lead to the disclosure of soul (*Atma*) ultimately rest with the temples and yet the believers who cannot understand this aspect are far better than the non-believers, viz., by comparing a squint eyed as the better choice than a blind person. We anticipate that the believers in God should be more curious in understanding the true concept and try to follow the paths tread by the *Yogis*. To completely invalidate atheism and to leave behind the mere elemental factor of belief in God; we, with an ultimate aim to mould you in unfolding the God realism as explored by the *Yogis*, now intend to explain you the adoptable procedures of worship and their meaningful essence.

## 21. THE LAMP (DEEPAMU)

Among the traditions of worship, the initial act is to pour oil in the lamp, place two wicks and to lit them. Not only brightness, but the lighted lamp has a spiritual prominence too. Every being has a body, which also consist of *Karmas'*,



THE LAMP

as well, it's a dwelling place for *Atma* and *Jeevatma*. By spiritual illumination if the *Jeevatma* is motivated with *Yogic* trance of concentration, it unifies with the *Atma* and thereby attains the vital *Yogic* power. This *Yogic* power is strong enough to destroy the elements of *Karma*. Unless supreme enlightenment is acquired, the elements of *Karma* cannot be destroyed. Until and unless this particular state is achieved, the cycle of birth and death keeps on recurring. Those desirous to abandon this cycle of birth and death, as a feature of external comparison, propose to light the lamp.

By comparing the earthen oil saucer with the body, the two wicks with that of the *Jeevatma* and *Atma*, if the act of devotion is undertaken with spiritual illumination and lighting the two wicks by joined together; its a denotation that the time is ripe for the *Jeevatma* and *Atma* for unification. The single flame emerging out from the combined wicks is termed as *Gnanagni*(*Power of spiritual knowledge*).

A body exists only if the elements of *Karma* persist. Hence, oil is filled in as immediately as the oil saucer is placed and lighting the wicks is done at a later stage. Since spiritual illumination is obtained from the source of a Master (*Guruvu*) only, lighting the wicks is also undertaken from the source of another flame. The two wicks (*Jeevatma & Atma*) burn in unanimity by the flame of spiritual wisdom, upon which the oil of *Karma* gets exhausted. Like burning out the elements of bodily *Karma* with the power of spiritual wisdom, a comparison is made as such with the exhaustion of oil in the saucer. Once the content of oil in the saucer gets exhausted, the flame of the combined wick is bound to extinguish. Similarly, as and when the elements of *Karma* in the body gets destroyed, the *Atma* and *Jeevatma* depart from the body, paving way for unification with the *Paramatma*. Devoid of *Atma* and *Jeevatma*, only the lifeless body remains and likewise only the oil saucer remain after the flame of the wick is burnt out. Like a dead body having no worth, the exhausted oil saucer has no value and in the olden days such earthen oil saucers are thrown out after use. Since a lifeless body has the characteristic of getting destroyed, earthen oil saucers were used, which have the characteristics of breaking. As per procedural tradition, no wick should be lit in a metal saucer. If at all metal saucers were put to use, they have to be kept tidy after every use. At some temples, even now the tradition of lighting lamps is carried out in small saucers and cup shaped objects (*Mookatlu*), which are made out of clay.

A person, with the flame of spiritual enlightenment acquired from a master, after further enlightenment in association with the *Atma*, ultimately shall leave everything before unifying with the *Paramatma*. As such, the ritual of lighting a lamp in particular during the process of worship is done to resemble this noteworthy aspect. Though, many a lamp are lit in a temple, they are all lit with wicks doused in oil and hence they bear this particular meaning. Since big religious events are out of routine limits, our elders have chosen to instruct that every household should abide by the prescribed procedure of offering the spiritually significant light to a God. In some houses, even now the procedure of offering the traditional oil lamps to the God is practiced and followed every morning and evening, but, merely for a customary sake, devoid of significance and meaning. Some people offer the light with only one wick, which is contrary, not advisable and much against the traditions. Now a days the ritual has been so changed in some temples that instead of using the traditional oil lamps during worship, they are replaced with electric bulbs and paid obeisance. The practice of following a tradition is better than practicing a meaningless act. But if practice itself ceases, it's indeed foolishness. As such, let any number of electric bulbs burn, but in a meaningful way if a single lamp is lit as an offering of light to the God, it itself is a traditional significance.

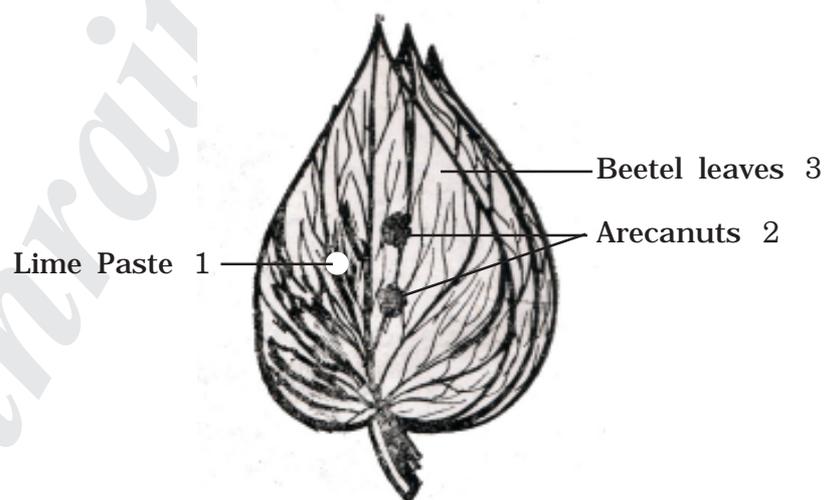


## **22. A COMBINATION OF BETEL LEAVES, ARECA NUTS & LIME PASTE** **(THAMBULAM)**

One of the important rituals and a part and parcel among the items of worship, indeed is placing of Betel leaves with areca nuts and *Chunam* (lime paste), the combination of which is called as "*Thambulam*". The Betel leaf is large in size, with Areca nut and *Chunam* (lime paste) are respectively less in dimension. If these three items are collectively taken, they have a characteristic feature of turning into a red colour. The Betel leaf has a fast reactive feature, whereas the areca nut possesses an astringent taste and the lime paste has a strong odorous characteristic. These three ingredients have three special features. Likewise, even in the "*Guna Chakra*" of a human, there exist three characteristic features, viz., "*Thamasic*" (*gunabhaga*), "*Rajasic*" (*gunabhaga*) and "*Sattvik*" (*gunabhaga*), which in comparison decrease by size, respectively. Now let us

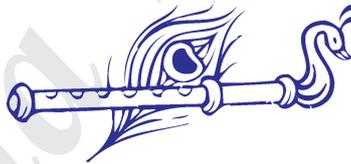
look at the "Thamasic" feature which is the largest in comparison with the Betel leaf's size, similarly followed by the "Rajasic" with areca nut and finally the "Sattvik" with lime paste. Our elders made a comparison of "Guna chakras" with the third one which is called as "Thamasic", second one as "Rajasic" and first one as "Sattvik". Hence the combination of "Thambulam" is made-up of three Betel leaves, two areca nuts and a pinch of lime paste. The "Thambulam" is a blend of three different tastes, similar to the three *Gunas* possessing three different characteristic features within them. The three ingredients in the "Thambulam" hold the character of turning red in colour when chewed and similarly with these specifically different characteristics (*Gunas*) in the *Guna chakra*, the element of "Redness of Karma", (*consequences which arise out of good or evil deeds of the doer*) emerge out. Hence, myself (the existing soul in the body) in a state of "Jeevatma" is leaving before You (God) the three *Gunas* accountable for all *Karmas*. The unique meaning to be grasped for placing the Betel leaves along with the areca nuts and *Chunam* (Lime Paste) is to let know that; "myself devoid of any *Gunas* (characteristics) is absolutely hoping to get mingled in you". But, now a days while performing the rituals of worship, one can notice that only the Betel leaves and the areca nuts are placed without the *Chunam* (lime paste). By dislodging the ingredients of original "Thambulam", devoid of *Chunam* (lime paste) is bound to drive away the element of significance of the entire ritual of worship.

It is a common feature to place different varieties of sweets along with the "Thambulam" as offerings to the *Deities* of God. Sweetened milk (*payasamu*), milk, plantains, sugar, curd rice, laddus etc, are some of the common offerings,



A COMBINATION OF BETEL LEAVES,  
ARECA NUTS & LIME PASTE

which ofcourse are all consumption items. Though all these items are eatables, they spread no colour in the mouth, except for the "Thambulam", which spreads red colour all over the tongue and mouth. Thus, it has the characteristic of overriding the smell and colour of other eatables. Similarly, our body consists of many issues relating closely with the consumption items. To give a relative hint of the aspect that though there dwell several issues within, all of them are offered to You (God), like the several varieties of sweets placed as offerings. All these elements in the body are indeed part and parcel of the three(*gunas*) characteristic features. As an indication of overcoming them, the "Thambulam" possessing special characteristics is thereby placed as an offering. As part of offering to Gods *Deity*, any item can be placed even non-vegetarian items are offered by some during the rituals of worship. But, let the offerings be either vegetarian or non-vegetarian, placing the item of "Thambulam" is no doubt an item of compulsion. With this feature, it has become evident that every aspect is correlated with the three characteristic features. Even, now there are several people who follow the traditional offering of "Thambulam", but very rarely someone places the *Chunam* (Lime Paste) along with the Betel leaves and areca nuts. One can hear of having come across this persistent and unique combination of Betel leaves, areca nuts and *Chunam* (Lime Paste) being offered at the *Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams*, Tirupathi and at the *Brindavan Temple*, Mathura.



## 23. GARLAND

### (POOLAMALA)

Elders in the ancient days, having a vision of wisdom were accustomed to offer flower garlands to the *Deities* of God during the process of worship. Even the Masters in spiritualism (*Gurus*) were respected with garlands, since they were treated on par with the Gods. But, now a days it has become a custom to offer garlands to the political leaders. Thousands of years earlier, the garlands of flowers were offered only to the *Deities* of Gods or to the masters of spiritualism. If garlands are scarce during the process of worship, at least flowers were offered to the *Deities*. Worship (*Pooja*) is a word originated from the blossoming of a

flower (*Poovu*) and hence, only the respectable masters (*guruvulu*) and the adorable dieties of God in the temples were entitled to this significant offering. Only *Deities* having a shape and form were preferred for garlanding. However, *Linga* at the *Eswara temple* was neither offered garlands or flowers. But some may seek to know the reason as to why a *Deity* is garlanded and why not the relatively significant *Linga*. The reason is that since the body is having a form, it also comprises the soul (*Atma*), where, within it dwell the God. The God, by dwelling in the bodily spread *Brahmanadi* has totally spread across the body in the form of vital energy (*chitanya*). The soul (*Atma*) is present in the *Brahmanadi*, which in turn is vertically spread in the body from the head to bottom; that too covering the seven nerve centers. With a feeling of offering the flower garland to the God, the *Deity* is garlanded covering the seven nerve centers in all, from the portion of head. In accordance with the importance attached, the tradition of garlanding of the *Deity* from over the head of the Lord Venkateswara can even now be noticed at Tirumala. In fact, this procedure of garlanding a *Deity* should be adopted, but instead we see garlands hanging from over to the neck of deities. By practicing such procedure of garlanding from over the neck of *Deities*, instead of covering all the seven nerve centers, only five nerve centers are covered by the garland. Like-wise, if a *Deity* is adorned with a small garland from the neck to the chest portion, only two nerve centers are covered, leaving the other nerve centers. This is not at all a traditional procedure. Hence, if feasible, a full-length garland covering the seven nerve centers should be placed. If not, placing some flowers or at least one flower over the head of the *Deity* is a relative matter of good gesture. By adoring with a flower at the top, it's similar to placing the flower over the soul (*Atma*) in total, in particular. But, it will be of no use if a *Deity* is garlanded covering only the five nerve centers.

Others who are given similar preference on par with the *Deity* in a temple are the masters (*guruvulu*). A *guru* is garlanded with a feeling that the image of *Atma* is spread in him too across the seven nerve centers. The so adorned garland from over the head of *Guru* (master) with a pious and worshipful feeling, covering the seven nerve centers was either removed in total or drawn over to the neck. Since the *Deity* in a temple is stationed object, it was garlanded from over the head, but since the Master is a person who moves, there is every scope for the garland to slip down from over the head. To evade this unpleasant situation, the garland is either drawn down on to the neck to avert its fall or the garland is totally removed and kept aside. Despite these factors, the main intention was to

cover the seven-nerve centers. Dwelling in the seven-nerve centers and provoking the body to act as per whims and fancies, the *Deity* is garlanded with the feeling of possessing divine powers. With similar assumption, a Spiritual Master is also garlanded. Though the Soul (*Atma*) dwells in all human bodies independently, only the Masters and the *Deities* of Gods are garlanded to assert their revered stature. However, in the present course of time, garlanding is done lacking such a reverence, but in turn is aimed at gaining favoritism, respect, appreciation, recognition etc. As such, people in a confused state are desirous to know as to who's the actual revered person and who's not. Therefore, to acknowledge the true significance of garlanding, the *Deities* in temples and the Masters who impart the essence of wisdom are weighed for garlanding.

We had earlier questioned the aspect of garlanding the *ShivaLinga* and some may ask, is it not a revered object of worship? But, in fact the *ShivaLinga* does not possess features of a human form or shape. It is to mention here that the Soul (*Atma*) dwells only in a human form and as such; the *Deity* with features of human form is garlanded over its head. Hence, the *Linga* is devoid of either the *Atma* or *Jeevatma*, but however reflect the un-imaginative image of the omnipresent *Paramatma*. Hence, the infinite presence of *Paramatma*, which is reflected in the *Linga*, cannot be adored. As prevalent in other temples, there's wide disparity in worship and anointing procedures. The *Linga*, a symbol of liberation from all constraints and bondage of circumstances prevails in a state of Supreme Being (*Purushottama*), as such there's no scope for adoration, except to understand its infinite meaning. Thus, we are duty bound to tread the paths which our elders have shown. Instead of performing acts at will and convenience, if we properly understand and rightly follow the temple traditions, we will definitely offer garlands to the *Deities* with total awareness, expressively covering the seven-nerve centers.



## 24. THE RITUAL OF ANOINTING

### (ABISHEKAMU)

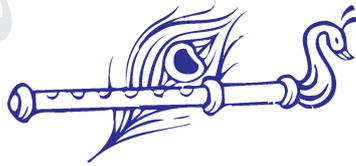
It is a custom to perform the ritual of Anointing of *Deities* at all temples, as it's a part and procedure of worship rituals. In the ancient times, every temple structure and every feature inside it were meant to preach something specific, to enlighten some traditional prominence. But their descriptive and symbolic prominence had slowly slipped into the annals of history and whatever little is left, is devoid of relative importance. As such, instead of following the traditions in the right perspective, some are adopting their self-imposed procedures and combining them with the prevailing traditions. One such general aspect is the ritual of anointing (*Abhishekamu*), which in fact is a bathing ritual performed to the deity. Our ancestors used to perform this ritual only with three varieties of liquefied items, viz., Honey, Milk and Water. The event of bathing ritual was performed only to the *Deities* having a form and the *ShivaLinga* was exempted from performing such traditional ritual due to its non-form features. Yet, now-a-days, even the *ShivaLinga* is included in this ritual and many people deem it to be an important privilege to perform this ritual. This is indeed contrary and much against the old traditions. And, describing the ritual of anointing (*Abhishekamu*) the *Linga* as most revered event is indeed unfortunate and unnatural. These words may irritate and create a feeling of grudge in some. Accepted or not, but those who intend to know the truth should know it at least now.

We have earlier dealt with the differing issue of not comparing the *Linga* with the Gods and the place where the *Linga* is installed should not be called a Sanctum-Sanctorum. Further, the *Linga* should be assumed as the formless *Paramatma* and adoring it with a lion-embossed arch (*Simhatalaatam*) is also not an established action. The reason is that, the one Who is called as *Purushottma* (absolute soul) and Who is distinct from the *Jeevatma* and *Atma* is indeed called as the *Paramatma*. With an intent to demonstrate this aspect, the structure of *Linga* was installed in the temples. Therefore, the *Linga* should be looked at in an entirely different angle, visualizing it as the formless God (*Paramatma*), while all others are *Deities* representing various forms of God. The *Linga* should be looked as a reflection of *Paramatma* and the *Deities* having a form should be imagined as God. Since the *Linga* cannot be lured by the elements of Maya (*Satan*), it does not come under the same frame of rituals performed to the *Deities*. But, since

the *Deities* possessing a distinct form are presumed as symbols of God, our elders framed some special customs to be followed by one and all. The *Bhagawan* (the human form of God) having evolved from the *Bhagamu* (womb) is as much visible on the earth like any other ordinary human. As such, the *Bhagawan* not only possesses characteristic features resembling a human, but as well walk like an ordinary human being. It is however impossible to identify the *Bhagawan*, who is as similar as a human, except for possessing the distinction of imparting spiritual awareness, ultimately aimed at establishing Dharma. Hence, on many occasion whenever *paramatma* comes as *Bhagawan* there was a failure on our part in discovering that *Bhagwan*. The *Bhagwan* used to move in ordinary human form with the usual three characteristics (*Gunas*), viz., *Sattvic*, *Rajasic* and *Tamasic* agents. These three *Gunas* are based in the head and its agents are the prime cause for provoking and indulging in performing all manly acts. Like us, the *Bhagwan* is neither bounded nor influenced by the elements of *Karma*. Though a drop of water is stationed on a lotus (*thamara*) leaf, devoid of any impression of touch and trace it remains. Likewise, the *Gunas*, though retain the God, the God is devoid of any touch or trace of the resultant *Karmas*. Though always in possession of *Gunas*, the actions and results cannot touch the *Bhagwan*. To acknowledge this particular viewpoint while performing the act of anointing (*abhishekamu*), the *Deities* of *Bhagawan* are first bathed in Honey, followed by Milk and Water, after which the *Deities* are wiped with a soft cotton cloth to mop-up the left out traces of any moisture.

The *Thamasic* characteristic (*guna*) contain features of delusion and disaster. Whoever is caught in its vicious circle, it will provoke and force to execute uncultured and indecisive acts and deeds. Going by it, Honey is a sweet and sticky (jelly) substance and whatever insect aspires to taste its sweetness, ultimately will get caught and loses its life in the sticky substance. Like the tempting honey substance, the *Thamasic* character (*guna*) with its six characteristic agents attracts the human like the Honey substance. Whoever is caught, it defies them from moving towards the God, thereby compelling the cycle of birth and death to occur again and again. By comparing the *Thamasic* character (*guna*) with that of Honey and since the characteristic features originate from the Head, to wash this impure element, Honey is made the primary bathing item, poured from over the head of a *Deity* enabling the honey to slide down. Afterwards, Milk, which is distinct from Honey in colour and taste is compared with the *Rajasic Guna* and similarly poured down the head of a *Deity*. After the Honey and Milk, the *Guna* of

*Sattvic* is compared with Water and is similarly poured down the head of a *Deity*, followed by wiping off any left over traces of water drops. This process thereby denotes that though *Bhagawan* possess the three *Gunas*, only with the same *Gunas* could the *Bhagwan* purify Own self. With this assumption only, the act of anointing (*abhishekamu*) was performed in the olden days. But this act of performance has become meaningless now. Presently in addition to Honey, Milk and Water even Ghee and Curd are used as part of the ritual, which is quite contrary. Since in no way the agents of *Gunas* can influence the *Paramatma*, the anointing (*abhishekamu*) ritual is performed only to the *Deities* having a form and which are influenced by the elements of *Gunas*. However, the *Paramatma* who is devoid of birth, devoid of any form and de-linked from all *Gunas* is installed in a composition of *Linga*. Hence, there's no meaning in performing the anointing (*abhishekamu*) ritual to the *Linga* as it will create a sense of insignificance for its installation as well. As such, the act of performing anointing (*abhishekamu*) ritual to the *Linga* is not at all suggested. Even the *Deities* on whom this ritual is performed should strictly adhere to perform the event with Honey, Milk and Water only. Then only can it be validated as a ritual performed in accordance with the *Indu* traditions. If not, the performance of the event is much against the well-established *Indu* traditions and much against the wishes of God who wants to witness an established, well-entrenched rule of (the knowledge of the *Atma*) *Dharma*. As such, at least from now onwards the ritual of anointing (*abhishekamu*) may be observed in accordance with the well-established *Indu* tradition.



## 25. COCONUT

### (KOBBARIKAYA)

At a temple or even at home, the ritual of worship cannot conclude without breaking a coconut. This sentimental feeling is present in the minds of many people. But, why should be a coconut broken before a *Deity*? Some have quoted the importance that the coconut is an important item of offering to the God and that it is customary to eat the *Prasadamu* (remnants of the coconut broken in front of the *Deity*). Yet, why is the coconut so prominent and why not some other similar item be broken as similar offering ? The most likely reply would be ... "Let us follow what our elders had adopted without passing any comments". To another question as to why the fibrous layer of a coconut is peeled off leaving a small portion and why not the coconut peeled off in total ? To this also, the reply was ... "we should follow the old traditions instead of searching reasons to find faults". In fact, unaware of vast realities and prominence attached to the coconut, replies of such nature are forthcoming. For this reason perhaps, the coconut has become an item of stake merely meant to seek rewards through worship, or fulfillment of desires. If the significance of coconut is known in true sense, the spirit of worship would have been more effective. Having failed to reckon this factor, some people are breaking coconuts, some two and the rich are breaking more and more coconuts. Does it mean that breaking more number of coconuts adversely demonstrate more depth of devotion towards the God, and if not, no ? Then, if a poor person cannot afford to break even a single coconut, does it mean that the God is not regarded in high esteem and that the God do not hear the poor man's prayers ? Here, the element of importance is the presence of mind. But "bereft of anything, if presence of mind exists one is dearer to God" thus quoted the *Bhagwan* in the *Bhagwadhgeeta*. Let that be. But, how come the coconut found a place in worship rituals and what's the prominence ? Since the coconut holds an unique guiding factor useful enough to identify the *Paramatma*, our ancestors had compelled its use at the temples with a clear intent that it will help in transforming the unwise into wise. But in tune with the changed times, its meaning was lost as also those who speak of its prominence have disappeared. In these changed situations, the coconut has become an item of commercial contention between the God and humans.

If the fibrous layer of the coconut is peeled-off, three portions are visibly



COCONUT

seen, apportioned by three vertical stripes. Each portion of these three contains an eye shaped impression at the top. Hence, the coconut is also called as a three-eyed (*mukkanti*) object. Attached like a cone at the top of the three portions of a coconut, a fibrous portion is left unpeeled like a tuft of hair. This unpeeled portion by the edge of a coconut holds some reasonable significance. If this unpeeled portion is held upright, with a bulged large portion in between, there visibly exist two portions, one each on both sides and the eye-like impressions are seen at the top. One should be aware that the portion on to the right side is called *Suryanaadi*, and the impression of the eye positioned at its top lies its *Naadikendramu* (Nerve rigin or centre) the portion to the left is *Chandranaadi* and the impression of eye positioned at its top is the *Nadikendramu*. The large and bulgy portion in between the two is called the *Brahmanaadi* and the impression of eye at the top is its *Nadikendramu*. Only when these three *Nadis*, viz., *Surya*, *Chandra* and *Brahma Nadi* are befittingly tamed to converge, wisdom surges in full flow. After which, a human would turn into a God, thereby positively distancing from the cycle of birth and death. The person who can tame and transform the three nerve centers into a single entity can become a *Yogi*. To disclose this unique phenomenon, a single portion of fibrous layer is left in a cone shape atop the three portions of the coconut. If a person could absolve the three nerve centers into one, he would be drawn away from the cycle of birth and death and

thereby gets an opportunity to mingle with the soul (*Atma*). To denote this aspect, the fibrous tip of a coconut is pointed towards the sky. As such, it should be learnt that a person will get absorbed into the shapeless form, the significance of which is reminded by the coconut's fibrous tip visibly pointed towards the shapeless sky. The one who succeeds in assembling the three *Nadis* into a single component, would finally succeed in reaching the extremes of wisdom. As such, the fibrous portion of a coconut is named as "*Gnana Shikha*" viz., the ultimate of wisdom, which is also termed as the edge of wisdom. The wise among the *Brahmin* sect merely leave a tuft of hair on their head to support the factual theory that, head is the only portion in the entire body which possess "*Gnana Shakti*", i.e., the power of wisdom. Hence, to unfold this secret, the wise among the *Brahmin* cult shave their heads, only leaving a tuft of dangling hair. Of course, head is a unique part of a human body, where from originate thoughtful actions. The supreme among the wise are those who can succeed thoughts and desires. Thus, to denote this feature and to disclose this aspect, the wise among the *Brahmin* sect remove the hair on their heads. Likewise, to denote this aspect, the fibrous layer of a coconut is also peeled off. The possibility exists for all human beings to ascend to the cosmic infinite (*Brahma*) only through the seventh center of the *Brahma Nadi* (cerebral nerve) positioned in the head. The *Brahma Nadi* is stationed in the central part of a body and as well positioned in the midpoint of head. Hence, those acquainted with the "*Gnana Shakti*", i.e., the power of wisdom, purposefully leave a tuft of hair on their head "*Gnana Shikha*" to indicate their prominence. Thereby, a particular portion of a coconut is also left un-peeled. This was observed in the ancient days. But as time lapsed on, confusion prevailed and people were unable to assess where to exactly locate the tuft, who should keep it and why should it be kept? *Shiva*, the God who acquired total wisdom and perfection had not kept his hair in common order, but instead knotted it in a peak form on the center of His head denoting his supremacy of wisdom "*Gnana Sikha*". This knot of tufts is on the middle of *Shankara's* head. Similarly several saints (*Maharshis*) have adopted this procedure. Likewise, several persons who could succeed in unifying the *Surya, Chandra & Brahma Nadis*; in order to disclose their attainment of supreme wisdom, adopted the same method of knotting the tufts. The position of *Brahmanadi* can visible seen on the head of a child. And, the *Brahmanadi* can also be felt by a gentle touch on the mid-portion of a child's head who is below one year. At the same spot, the power of supreme wisdom "*Gnana Shakti*" is visible to the supremely wise. Now a days,

this particular knot of tufts is not in the middle of the head, but seen a bit backwards. But, let it be spotted anywhere, its enough if one possess the required element of spiritual knowledge. See, how much meaning is forthcoming on the examination of a coconut. Hence, the coconut should be deemed as a form of spiritual enlightenment.

Like sparks which fly-off from the huge fire, Beings (*Jeevas*) evolve out from the *Paramatma* like the sparks. Though evolving from a single entity, they are alienated as God(*Atma*)and *Jeevatma*. To compare similarities, a coconut if struck will break into two parts. While one of the two broken shells is left attached with the "*Gnana Sikha*", the other is left without any attachment. The shell-part having the "*Gnana Sikha*" feature is considered as *Atma* (soul) and the other, which is left with three marks, is considered as *Jeevatma*. The coconut broken into two parts before the *Deity* is meant to externally make out a point that the God(*Atma*) and *Jeevatma* are separated from a similar nativity (**amsa**). Our ancestors used to perform the act of breaking coconuts with such attitude. But presently people are breaking as many coconuts as possible in tune with demanding circumstances, merely for fulfillment of desires, but not with true enlightenment. It's therefore justified if the objective of breaking a coconut is well known before accomplishing the act.

On breaking a coconut, it's severing into two shell-parts; the inside matter of which is totally white in colour without any scars or distraction. Thus this speaks ... "You are the God, I am a human and devoid of any *Gun*as, You (god) are totally pure. Myself too, without any desires and thoughts had changed like You and to convey this message, both the broken shells of a coconut appear totally white". This is how the spiritual-intellectuals have revealed the insight of the process. As also to get unified from the existing two individualities (Yourself viz., God and me) into one, both the hands are drawn together (*namaskaramu*) as an act of paying obeisance. It should be known that the left palm denotes *Atma*, the right *Jeevatma* and on drawing both palms together, it's exposing an expectancy of unifying both the *Atma* and *Jeevatma*. In the earlier days those who were aware of facts, instead of speaking, used to openly convey by indulging in acts of breaking a coconut and by paying obeisance to the God. But with unending quest to fulfill desires, people now a days are disregarding those ways and means, thereby putting a scar on the holiness of a coconut. By standing in front and saluting with both the hands to the *Deity*, instead of knowing it as an

act of unifying both the *Atma* and *Jeevatma*, people are seeking fulfillment of acceptable and unacceptable wishes.

Among the three impressions similar to an eye impression on the coconut, only one can be penetrated to make a hole. But, why is it not possible to make a hole in the other two? And why is the coconut water taken as a holy offering? What could be the resultant factor? These questions are bound to stir one's mind. In reply to these, if a *Jeeva* (being) aspires to reach the *Paramatma*, this is possible only if the *Jeeva* unifies with the *Brahmanadi* (cerebral nerve) located within own-self. Thus, the eye impression on the larger portion of a coconut is the only eye that can be penetrated to be made a hole, because it's compared with the *Brahmanadi* (cerebral nerve). When existing in other *Nadis*, viz., *surya* and *chandra naadis*, a *Jeeva*(soul I), after its exit cannot get into the fold of *Atma* (soul-II). As such, the two other eye impressions on a coconut are strong and impene-trable. After the break of coconut it was known that the outcome of worship ritual gets mingled with the coconut water and hence the water is taken as sacred waters. With whatever intensity and feelings a worship ritual is performed, in turn the same essence of strength gets absorbed in the coconut water. Hence, worship without an element of devotion is a futile act. It should therefore be known that the sacred water (*theerthamu*) contains some vital power. Unaware of procedures to be followed during the process of worship and devoid of devotion, there's no chance for providing vital power to the sacred waters (*theerthamu*) of a coconut.

While breaking a coconut, most of the people hold the unpeeled part directing it downwards, which is not at all a right procedure to be adopted for breaking a coconut. The unpeeled part should be directed and shown upwards before breaking. Doing likewise, the lower half shell of the coconut remains in right hand, while the other upper shell-part (of unpeeled end) remains in the left hand. By drawing both the hands together as salutation, is indeed a communication of feelings to unify you with God. If the procedure of worship is carried out with perfection, it will enlighten the spirit of wisdom. This in turn will facilitate treading the right paths and also provide an opportunity to acquire wisdom and its related divine powers; there upon paving way for unification of a mortal with God. But, if the right procedure is not adopted, all worship rituals are futile exercises and whatever expenditure is incurred for acquiring coconut/s is a sheer waste. Hence, one should know that the significance and enormous meaning rests in all acts,

viz., in breaking a coconut, in striking a gong and in the act of paying salutations. Merely following the acts by looking at others, is indeed a fruitless effort.

We have learnt about the prominence attached to the breaking of a coconut, but some people try to explain the prominence and theory of breaking a coconut in a different way. They have equated the three parts of a coconut with the three divergent *Gun*as of a human. Unable to succeed the three *Gun*as and still reeling under some influence, such people are leaving a part of fibrous layer on the coconut and as well leaving a tuft of hair on their heads. And, those who could successfully tame the three *Gun*as are keeping their heads totally bare without trace of any hair. They even peel-off the entire coconut before breaking it. But, if we go further deep into these aspects, several doubts are bound to enclose us and all our efforts would prove futile in finding answers. So, whatever material was provided by my enlightened soul (*Atma*) was rightly retransmitted to the mind, with which I had putforth the same before you all. If you follow this path, not even a single doubt can challenge you. If at all any doubt confronts you, an instant reply can be found.



## **26. THE RITUAL OF HAIR OFFERING AT THE TEMPLES**

### **(THALA VENTRUKALU SAMARPINCHUTA)**

Intended with a devotional motive of spiritual offering to the God, one of the unique ritual performed at a temple is shaving off the hair on the head,. Our ancestors who were well attached with spiritual knowledge, used to offer hair by shaving off their heads. In the service of God and under the influence of devotion, the belief that's dwelling in the mind is thereby complied-with by way of this hair-offering. While the practical reality has lost its significance with our ancestors itself, this practice is more predominant when compared with the past. Like, what was quoted...*"Of what use if Lord Shiva is prayed without an iota of will and devotion, similarly, of what use if unknown practices are blindly followed, which are but futile exercises"*. Though the devotional instinct in people is more visible

now a days, the procedures adopted in the process of worship have become meaningless. If anyone who shaves his head at a temple is asked reasons for doing so, the reply would be that since a wish has been fulfilled and binding by such fulfillment, the offering of hair by shaving the head was complied with as a token of reward. But, it is you who had benefited from the fulfillment of vows and how in turn do you expect the God to benefit from your offering of hair? However, you may donate in cash or kind, but why in particular the head is shaved and the hair offered in token of fulfillment of wishes. For this inquiry too, the reply would be that, since everyone is following the procedure, the same is followed. Thus, no body seems to be aware as to why such practice was adopted and why it is followed silently by one and all, without determining the reasons thereof. To be frank, no one is familiar with this subject matter. The one who is following the procedure is unaware of reasons for own actions, while the other onlooker; similarly unaware of the reasons is vying to adopt the same. As such, the devotional offering of hair at temples has now become a meaningless action.

In the olden days, there were devout people with authentic spiritual feelings and whatever was practiced, they were merely aimed at spiritual illumination and each of their practices possessed invaluable meaning too. In those days they used to demonstrate their spiritual shrewdness at the temples. People were not habituated to seek any wishes in the temples and if at all wishes persisted even at the entrance tower of the temple, the wishes were made to disappear at the Flag Pillar (*Dwaja Sthambhamu*). And, if at all an iota of thought about a wish is still left, the desire was soothed by the sound of temple gong and thereby concentration on God was achieved atlast. Even though wishes persisted, people used to visit temples not only to drive away the wishes, but simultaneously enhance their spiritual knowledge. And, those who are spiritually wise, to confirm that they do not hold any wishes, used to acknowledge the fact through some practical actions. As such, offering of hair by shaving the head is one such practice adopted to appease the God.

Once upon a time, a spiritually enlightened devotee on a pilgrimage had gone to the *Lord Venkateswara Temple* at Tirupati. Whereupon, he, having felt that since the head is the origin of all human desires and the countless thoughts are as equal to the countless hair on the head, reacted by shaving his head to demonstrate that his mind is now set afree from all wish-filled thoughts. To externally mean and to confirm that his desire-filled thoughts are completely

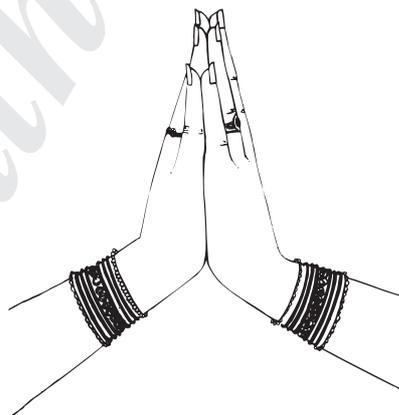
erased, the devotee stood before the *Deity* to exhibit the cause for his shaven head. Though unaware of actuality, an onlooker thought otherwise about the disciple's action and felt that there's some hidden valuable benefit behind the act of shaving the head, and if a valued benefit in token of fulfillment of wishes is rewarded, he felt like vowing to offer his hair too. Thereby it has become a common belief that God is meant for seeking wishes and fulfillment of human wishes is done at His mercy. This selfish phenomenon has slowly crept into the minds of people and the offering of hair to God has become a time-honored feature, solely aimed for performing the act on fulfillment of wishes only. Since the ancient wisdom has become hazy, the offering of hair in lieu of fulfillment of wishes is standing in between a human and the God as part of a corrupt deal. In order to disclose that the thought-filled desires are totally wiped out, in the ancient day's people used to signify this feature by shaving their heads. But, devoid of any importance, people are now offering their hair by shaving their head. Hence, Poet *Vemana* had quoted in a verse as, "*heads are shaved of course, but does it endorse a clean shave of ones desire-filled thoughts*".

In those days, people used to shave their head at the temples with a mind-set to show that there do not exist any desires or wishes. But now, with desires aplenty and vowing to abide by similar offer that too on fulfillment of wishes is not only contrary but an invalid wrong-doing. Not only the people perpetrate a wrong deed but they are as well seeking fulfillment of undeserving wishes. Thereby, seeking to foresee the death of own brothers to enable acquiring total property rights, anticipating the death of mother-in-law's only son to acquire huge property, seeking to pass the examination without putting any effort of studies; are some examples of undeserving wishes, which, on fulfillment are vowed with the shaving of hair on the head. While our ancestors had made known the feeling of wiped out desires in resemblance of their shaven heads, the people of the present generation are vowing the same in lieu of fulfillment of undeserving wishes. All these circumstances enforced against the principles of *Dharma* have now changed into the principles of *Adharma*. So, let us contribute our might to change this *Adharma* trend into a Dharmic course of action.



## 27. PAYING AN OBEISANCE (NAMASKARAMU)

In the process of worship, the procedure of paying an obeisance bears utmost prominence. Showing both the palms together is called "Namaskaramu". Some others call it an action of treating someone with high regard or worth reverence, when coming across face to face. As of now, it may be a truth, but our forefathers had meant something else. The hands, which are both separate are shown to the idols of God at the temples, indicating that until now both the God and I (the individual) are indeed separate. With a desire to show the suggestive intention of unifying with God, both the hands are drawn, thereby joining both the palms. Thus, the obeisance in those days was done with a feeling of freeing the life from the recurring bondage of birth and death and with a feeling to unify with God. In the ancient days, the wise people had a feeling that the temple-bound God Himself dwell as Atma in those who possess the spiritual powers. Hence, whenever a spiritually wise or a spiritual master who possess Spiritual power, they are saluted as and when they come across. Though the tradition of paying an obeisance prevails as yet, the feeling of Godliness is not present now. Only to turn others in own favour and to seek some recommendations, most of the people are utilizing this mode of paying an obeisance.



PAYING AN OBEISANCE

In the ancient days, those who possessed spiritual wisdom had the power as well to access the feature of Godliness in other persons. Presently people are not looking into this particular aspect, but instead assessing the status of the other person. If the devotional prominence of others was looked at in those days, this has clearly changed now and people are looking at a person's status and giving the required amount of respect. In fact, when a person's leg is brushed by oversight, with a feeling that such person's body possess Atman and Godly features, an obeisance is made thereat. Even now this tradition persists. Whatever feeling thereby prevails, the tradition of paying an obeisance at the temple, if made in conformity with the factual meaning and the desire to unify with God is however justified by all counts. If not, the obeisances' (*Namaskaramulu*) so paid will be as equivalent to the salutations made to a hooligan, politician or a policeman. As such, it should therefore be known that the obeisance paid to God at the temple has a marked significance and an unmatched difference.



## 28. THE CROWN-SHAPED HOLY OBJECT (SHATA GOPAMU)

During the process of worship at Temples, it's a habitual action for the priests to place the *Shata Gopamu* (the crown-shaped holy object) with a mere touch on the devotees' heads. The hat shaped *Shata Gopamu* on being placed on a devotees' head is indeed a feeling of a satisfactory act for the devotees. But, what's the consequence? Why is the act performed? This ofcourse is neither thought of by the priest nor the devotee. And at some temples, the *Shata Gopamu* itself does not exist. Only at *Tirumala* and a few other renowned temples, the ritual of placing the *Shata Gopamu* on a devotees' heads still prevails. As such, let us discuss something about the eminence of *Shata Gopamu*.

Hiding something from the rest is termed as upholding a secret. Keeping an existing thing or fact in hiding, without any possibility to disclose is thereby



### **THE CROWN-SHAPED HOLY OBJECT (SHATA GOPAMU)**

called as "hiding from disclosure". A secret may perhaps relate to either an object or a fact. In fact, some people possess the capability to keep in utmost secrecy some of their related facts or things. Though the word and meaning of "gopyamu" (Secrecy) is still in use, the same word was altered at the temples, to become *gopamu*. As such, the ancient word spelt as "*Shata Gopyamu*", was now enforced into use as "*Shata Gopamu*" (the crown-shaped holy object).

Priests at some eminent temples still practice the tradition of placing the "*Shata Gopamu*" on the heads, before allowing the devotees to leave. Either the blessings of elders or the grace of God indicated by placing the "*Shata Gopamu*", the similarities in expression of both the blessings are directed on the head only; because, the head is the origin of all human characteristics, through which the consequences of *Karma* do arise. As such, after completion of worship at the temple, placing the "*Shata Gopamu*" (the crown-shaped holy object) only on the head of a devotee by the priest, thus consist an indepth meaning. The head, which is the top-most part of a human body is itself sheltering the related characteristics(gunas) through which the consequences of *Karma* arise. These characteristics are divided into two groups, viz., the good and the bad ones. With mixed features of six each, the good and the bad characteristics exist in two

groups. This means that both the good and the bad characteristics equally consist of six (*shatt*) good and six bad characteristic groups. The bad characteristic group comprises of six (*shatt*) elements, viz., Want (*Kama*), Anger (*Krodha*), Miserliness (*Lobha*), Infatuation (*Moha*), Arrogance (*Madha*) & Jealous (Mathsara); whereas, the other group of good characteristics comprise the other six (*shatt*) elements, viz., Donating (*Daana*), Mercy (*Daya*), Liberal (*Oudarya*), Asceticism (*Vairagya*), Modesty (*Vinaya*) and Love (*Prema*). One should be aware that the words, "*shatt*" mean 'six in number', whereas "*vargamu*" means 'a group'. Hence the truth that sin is acquired through the bad group of six elements, while virtue is acquired through the good group of the other six elements, should as well be known here. If the desire to unify with the *Paramatma* has to be accomplished, the resultant factors of both the sin and virtue should however be conquered. As such, a devotee in a temple, upon his head is touched twice with the crown-shaped object (*Shatt Gopyamu*) by the priest, thereby implying to drive away the twin-groups of *Karma*; thereby denoting the need to keep away or (gopyam) chase away the six (*shatt*) each of the two concealed groups of characteristics. In the ancient days, the practice of placing *Shatt Gopyamu* (the crown-shaped holy object) on the head of each devotee was done twice, whereas in the present days, this practice is observed only once; which is an un-established tradition. However, there's some denotation in following the practice twice. When the crown-shaped object is touched once on the head of a devotee, the word (*Shatt-gopyamu*) is uttered, similarly, the same is repeated the second time too. By stroking the object twice on the head; uttering the word *shatt gopyamu* on the first occasion denotes to drive beyond existence the bad group of characteristics (comprising six dreadful elements), while the second occasion denotes to drive away the other group of good characteristics (comprising six commendable elements) from the head. This particular crown-shaped object, which is aimed to denote this significant aspect and which has to be considered to stay forever, is named as "*Shatt Gopyamu*" (the crown-shaped holy object). But, after lapse of some time it had changed to "*Shata Gopyamu*" and presently it's called and known as "*Shata Gopamu*". Having changed from being called as "*Shatt Gopyamu*" to "*Shata Gopamu*", the tradition of placing it twice on a devotee's head has also changed to once, that too devoid of proper meaning. Likewise, the *Indu* traditions have been pushed to bear colossal loss, the remains of which are merely left for names sake only. If the glory has to be revived, the "*Shata Gopamu*" should be re-named as "*Shatt Gopyamu*" (the crown-shaped holy object) and the tradition

of placing it twice on the head of a devotee should also be definitely observed. Further, the voice expression denoting to drive away the two groups of characteristics (good & bad) should also be observed twice. The inner meaning of rituals followed during the process of worship at the temples, finally point towards the ultimate unification with the God. Similarly, when the temple priest places the "Shata Gopamu" (the crown-shaped object) twice on the head of a devotee, it specifies that once the good and bad characteristics (*Gunas*) are successfully tamed, the gates for unification with the God will ultimately open. But, as a matter of fact, it is indeed very distressing to see that the spiritual traditions imparted by our predecessors; instead of showing curiosity to know the in-depth essence are widely ignored by the present generation.



## **29. CIRCUMBULATIONS OR A RITUAL OF WALKING ROUND THE DEITY IN A CLOCK-WISE DIRECTION (PRADAKSHINALU)**

In the different modes of worship rituals, performing the act of Circumbulation is a prominent one. Our predecessors used to perform the ritual of circumbulation (walking round the *Deity* in a clock-wise direction) only five times in number. But, now a days the particular number of five times has gone beyond limitations. The power of God Supreme is widespread across the universe. As propounded in Geetha "*Maayadyakshena Prakruti Sooyathe Sacharacharam*", the *Prakruti* (the physical matter relating to the five classical elements, viz., Sky, Air, Fire, Water & Earth) is under the sole control of *Paramatma* Himself. And, only with the supportive hold of *Paramatma*, the *Prakruti* continues to exist. The universal wheel is rotating on the supportive axis of *Paramatma* only. Within the five classical element divisions of *Prakruti*, viz., Sky, Air, Fire, Water & Earth, the humanity is trapped amongst these crucial elements. As such, since Yourself (*Paramatma*) is present as the central axis and myself (human) being caught in the rotating cycle of *Prakruti*; the tradition of making circumbulations were

complied with to seek liberation from the captivity of the five classical elements of *Prakruti*. Likewise, in those days, starting from the facing-front of the *Deity*, the first round (circum-bulation) is commenced by turning to the right of the *Deity*. After completion of the first round, people used to plead God to free from the Sky, the first of the five classical elements of *Prakruti* to bestow with liberation. Similarly after completion of the second round, similar pleading was made to free from the element of Air. After completion of the third round, similar pleading was made to free from the element of Fire. After completion of the fourth round, similar pleading was made to free from the element of Water and finally after completion of the fifth round, a similar pleading was made to free from the element of Earth. Seeking liberation from the *Pancha Bhootalu*, viz., the five classical elements of *Prakruti* and performing the act of circling-walk of five rounds around the *Deity* is termed as an act of circumbulation (*Pradakshanalu*). Though this ritual is still prevalent, the number of circumbulations (*Pradakshanalu*) has increased manifold, with many people unaware of the authenticity of the spiritual procedure are making the rounds at will and even conversating with others on worldly affairs in the process. Just counting the rounds completed during the course of circling-walk, people are unable to know reasons for performing this particular act. While some are ensuring to complete three rounds, others are making more than five rounds. Making more or less than five rounds is indeed meaningless. But observance of five meaningful rounds of circling-walk, viz., circumbulations (*Pradakshanalu*) is spiritually significant. If the people who are unaware of the significance are enlightened about the salient features and are made to pursue the same, the ritual procedures and paths of devotion shall more effectively be fruitful.

## 30. CAMPHOR WAVE-OFFERING

### (KARPOORA HARATHI)

Devotees in the ancient days, after entering the temple, used to ring the bell, break the coconut and after saluting with folded hands; camphor was lit as a wave offering and placed before the *Deity*. This wave offering was done to plead the God that, "let myself having a form, colour and characteristic features be ignited by the fire of wisdom so as to mingle with You (God)". To represent this aspect, Camphor, which possess a form, colour and characteristic smell or taste is placed before the God to represent the wave offering. Before our own view itself, the piece of Camphor is burnt out without any trace or remnant and disappeared into the invisible emptiness. Once burnt, nobody can either trace it or speak of its presence; though it (Camphor) possess a form, colour and smell (character). Likewise, if a person can successfully destroy his own *karma* the good and evil consequences of his own past with the fire of wisdom, the person would reach the invisible emptiness. Later, we cannot say the person is here or there. Like the sublimation of camphor without any traces unaware of the significance of a wave offering (*haarathi*), people with traditional determination, offer this wave offering with the cotton wicks after the course of worship. However, this cannot be ascertained as the right process. To propagate the element of wisdom, the spiritually-wise opt to lit the Camphor which burns out without trace and thereby gets mingled into the empty space. But instead of Camphor if an oil-daubed wick is lit, it can neither disappear nor get mingled into the empty space. Thus, this process is not justified. Hence, if Camphor is not readily available, one can conclude the prayers by merely paying an obeisance. Earlier, people used to offer prayers only after knowing the procedural importance and thereby they were able to benefit by strictly adhering to the prescribed norms. Presently, though unaware of actual methodology, people are paying a deaf ear to even those intending to rectify the wrong procedures.



CAMPBOR WAVE-OFFERING

In the olden days, the wave offering of Camphor was performed in absolute calmness, with a feeling that, like camphor, one should mingle into the fold of void atoms by burning their accumulated consequences of good & evil actions (*Karma*), by the fire of wisdom. Since this act is performed with an auspicious intent, it is also called as an "auspicious wave offering" (*Mangala Haarathi*). During the process of this "auspicious wave offering", some people pay obeisances, while some keep their palms on the flame as an act of paying reverence with eyes and simultaneously ring the bell. In fact, these actions were not observed in those days.

People who stood afar used to watch the "auspicious wave offering" in complete silence. Those having the supreme knowledge and standing close to the wave offering would keep their right palm on the flame; take an oath seeking an opportunity to burn like camphor, so as to mingle into the invisible voidness. (*Paramatma*) This authentic process got slowly transformed into different actions, culminating into false notions of acquiring unknown benefits. Instead of placing a single palm over the wave offering, the trend of keeping both the palms has now become a common feature. The fact of keeping the palm on the wave offering was merely meant to denote the act of taking an oath, which however has lost its acceptable significance now. People should desist from performing this "auspicious wave offering" with oil daubed wicks and should perform this act only with Camphor, which rightly suits the spiritual concept of mingling into the voidness. Further, people should follow the procedure of taking an oath by placing their right palm over the "auspicious wave offering", thereby pleading the God to provide an opportunity to reach the *Paramatma*, like Camphor; which sublimes without leaving any traces by virtue of the fire of supreme knowledge.

## 31. THE FINAL ACT

### (GOVINDA)

In the Vaishnavite temples, we hear people shouting the word "Govinda"; which especially is more heard at the *Tirumala* temple at Tirupati. Even at other temples, after singing a hymn, we hear the shouts of "Govinda". Likewise, we also see people in a funeral procession shouting "Govinda". And even when a person loses heavily in gambling without a pie in hand, his status is compared with the word "Govinda". Thus, the word "Govinda", is indirectly denoting a final phase, viz., by uttering at the end of singing a hymn, at the death of a person, at a state of losing everything; thereby indicating that everything is finished. In the olden days when a hymn is completed, when a life is finished, when all the money is lost, the word "Govinda" was uttered. Even now, the usage of the word "Govinda" is prevailing, even inside the temple. But, it is felt that the term "Govinda" is associated with the name of a God, but at last came into light that it denotes the "Final Phase". During the-then days, after completion of worship rituals, devotees used to shout "Govinda". The spiritually illumined people used to chant the word "Govinda" with a feeling to let their whole *Karmas* get destroyed so as to lead them onto the verge of attaining salvation. It should be made aware that the word "Govinda" means a state at which there remains only nothingness. It should further be known that the element of *Karma* is totally destroyed, thereby providing a lead to attain the state of liberation (*moksha*). And hence it should be acknowledged that the word "Govinda" does not relate to any name or any God.

Further more, the word "Govinda" is uttered twice. The utterance of the word twice has little variance in pronunciation viz., the first time just as *Govinda...* and the second time stretching as *Go...Vinda*. Though both the words of "Govinda" mean the same, why was the word pronounced twice, is the question. Apart from this, perhaps there may be some difference between the stretched and short pronunciation of the word "Go...Vinda". This also is a point to ponder. In search of an answer, way back in the "*Krita Yuga*" itself and as evident from History, the word "Govinda" was familiar and the saints during the era also spoke of that word in particular. By adding a similar word to the already prevailing "Govinda", during that period only the other repetitive word "Govinda" was incorporated for a second time, with a slight variation in pronun-ciation. But,

whatever was complined at that time, it was merely done as an eye-opener for the future generations and as well aimed at creating some spiritual awareness. Yet, let us explore views from those who used to impart perpetual spiritual essence at those times.

The meaning of the word "Govinda" was so arranged that it means, "nothing is there or everything got exhausted". Aware or unaware, those in a funeral procession utter the word "Govinda" with a similar meaning. Though blindly uttering the word "Govinda", some people with modest presence of mind were able to grasp the meaning as befitting to the occasion. Likewise, if a person loses his entire wealth in gambling, then also the word "Govinda" is uttered. Here too, the meaning points at "everything is lost". Even though the word "Govinda" is uttered in many contexts these days, only in the presence of God was it uttered in the ancient days. Further, in the presence of God, i.e., before the *Deity* in a temple, by once uttering "Govinda" specifies that, ... *I have nothing to acquire in this world*; and, likewise for a second time uttering "Go...vinda" specifying that, ... *there's no attachment of any Karmas to this body*. Apart from own self, neither any of the *Gunas* nor any wish is necessary for acquiring external favours and as well there's no trace of any attachment of *Karma* with the body. As thus, the two words, viz., "Govindaa" & "Go...vinda" are incorporated with slight variation in pronunciation. To be more easily understood, the utterance of word "Govinda" on one occasion denotes the possession of *Brahmayogamu*, viz., indicating a state devoid of all *Gunas* and the utterance of "Go...vinda" on the second occasion denotes the possession of *Karmayogamu*, viz., a state devoid of all attachments.

Both of them *Brahmayoga* and *karmayoga* by nature, though some difference exists in between them, and as such our elders felt it fit to maintain some variance. Since both "yogamulu" indicate that the element of *Karma* does not exist anymore, to point out that they differ with each other, a slight pronounce-variation was infused in between the two words of "Govinda". By uttering one word with a stretched pronunciation and another without stretched pronunciation is indeed a fact well acquainted with all. But as of now, both the words have lost their meaning. And those uttering the words are unaware of the actual meaning and thereby failing to impart and illumine the spiritual significance. The doctrine of "Govinda" which was an important feature in the *Indu* religion in those days has lost its glitter now. Though unaware of the meaning of "Govinda" and merely

leaving it as a word of implementation; those who boast of having learnt everything from their Masters are still unable to give meaningful reasons for uttering the words "Govindaa" & "Go...vinda"; which indicates that people have not yet acquired spiritual enlightenment in the right earnest. Indeed, this is a shameful remark. Hence, it's better to keep aloof from performing spiritual acts, but it would be rather beneficial if one aspires to seek spiritual enlightenment. Yes, it would be virtuous to utter the words "Govinda" & "Go...vinda", at least once, knowing the factual meaning.



## 32. A SQUARE POND WITH STEPS ALL AROUND (KONERU)

Usually, most of the temples are built on the shores of a river. Since, some temples are built in other locations, a square Pond with steps all around [*Koneru*] was provided beside such temples. Overall, the temples existed either on a river shore or besides a *Koneru*. During the period of annual ritual (*thirana*), a small sized boat was arranged for ferrying the bedecked *Deity* as part of the festive celebration, to cross-over a stream, Lake or a Pond. It is also called as Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*). The rituals in the temples are followed with true pomp and spiritual zeal. But, let us also know the spiritual fervour of the Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*). However, it should be noted that the *Linga* should not be made a part of this festival and *Deities* having a form should only be entailed for this event. Why because, when *Paramatma* acquired the form of *Bhagwan* (a god in the form of a human), under the influence of *Gunas*, He executed several deeds, good and bad, but was left untouched by the resultant sins or virtues. Thus, the (*Bhagwan*) intends to say... Be as similar of Mine. By executing all the deeds imposed by the resultant *Karmas* of past life, try to remain like Me, untouched by anyother volume of *Karmas*. This aspect prevails in the *Geeta* and the message similarly associates with the celebration of the Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*). Thereby it denotes that the impure sea waters can be crossed-over by a small boat and that the significance of the Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*) enlightens the fact that the sea waters of *Karma* can be crossed-over by a small boat of "Spiritual wisdom".

The one who has complete hold over the *Gun*as is indeed a *Bhagwan*. "HE", by virtue of spiritual wisdom was able to crossover the hassles (sea) of *Karma*, which was accounted for by the resultant *Gun*as; thereby, this view point is compared with that of the Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*). Similarly in our real lives too, we should know that we can very well cross-over the hassles of *Karma* with spiritual enlightenment and therefore we should keep searching for ways and means to acquire the source for enlightenment. This being the significance of a Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*); some find some temples without the square ponds, while some other temples are far away from the river banks. And, the Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*) is not observed in some temples even though there exist a Pond or a stream. Moreover, it is meaningless and much against our traditions to build a temple without a Pond or locating the temples much away from a river bank. The non-observance of the Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*) where situation demands, is also much against the traditions. Even though the festivity is observed with much pomp and fan-fare at *Tirupati* and *Vijayawada* towns in Andhra Pradesh, lack of enthusiasm to know the significance of a Square Pond (*Koneru*) and the related Boat Festival (*Theppa Utsavamu*) is indeed a factor worth surprising.



### 33. CEREMONIAL ENLIGHTENMENT (OOREGIMPU)

Once in a year, the idol resembling a temple *Deity* is taken out in a ceremonial procession. Since every individual cannot get an opportunity to view the *Deity* or some one un-accustomed to visit the temple, for the benefit of such people, an idol resembling the *Deity* of the one installed in the temple is taken around the streets of a village/town in a procession. In the olden days, taking out a procession of this sort is intended to offer the resembling view of a temple *Deity* to one and all in the village, which, thereby is called as "Village Awakening" viz., "*Ooru Yerigimpu*". The process of spiritual awakening of the minds in a village, viz., the word "*Ooru Yerigimpu*" has slowly transformed into "*Ooregimpu*" viz., a ceremonial religious procession aimed at enlightenment of all. This event of religious procession, carrying the Idol around the streets is undertaken on a slow moving carriage. This event is aimed to propagate that the God has some or the other

mode of conveyance. The mode of conveyance can vary from the form of human to an animal carriage. It should therefore be known, the God Supreme has total supremacy over all the living beings and He is the universal charioteer and His chariot is our body. Apart from this, it should be known that the idol in a religious procession is displayed with weapons to signify the aspect that the dwelling place of God viz., the soul (*Atma*); if righteously explored, sharpens the spiritual wit and to demonstrate this aspect, the Idol is displayed with weapons. God dwells in every human, He's the *Atma* within, Who is providing the vital energy for every movement. Every body is a mode of conveyance for the soul within and this body carriage/vehicle is driven by the God. To signify this, the weapons displayed in the hands of God's Deity are indeed weapons of spiritual enlightenment, which are capable enough to destroy the deeds of *Karma*. To denote this particular prominence, our ancestors have embarked on initiating the annual religious event, where all the children and elders of a village shall gather to witness the mega event with concentration, thereby aspiring to know the least of something. People were made to grasp something from such annual events at least, which were imparted by our elders who regard spirituality in high esteem. Though we come across such events even today, they lack proper perfection and meaning. Hence, it would be better if people yearn to know the significance attached to a religious procession and the reasons for display of weaponry and the mode of conveyance of the Idol during the religious processions.



## **34.ANNUAL FESTIVE CELEBRATION (THIRANALA)**

As an annual feature, once a year, a major festive occasion is celebrated, which is termed as "*Thirunama*". In accordance with times, the so called "*Thirunama*" festival has slowly transformed into "*Thirunala*". The "*Thirunama*" is the central line of the *Namamu* viz., the upright mark displayed on the forehead by *Vaishnavites*. The marks of *Namamu* on the forehead of *Lord Venkateswara* consist of three upright lines. Among the three, the two lines to the right and left are white in colour, whereas the central line is red in colour, a bit lengthy than the other two lines. This central line in particular, which is lengthy and different in

colour bears a vital significance. It possesses both existing and non-existing meanings. As an existing feature, from among the three-and-half lakh nerves in a human, the most important are three, viz., *Ida*, *Pingala* & *Sushumna*, which are also called as the *Surya*, *Chandra* & *Brahma Nadis*'. These three nerves are the ones, which are displayed in the form of a *Namamu* over the forehead. This salient feature displayed on the face is therefore called as *Namamu*. The *Ida* and *Pingala* nerves are displayed as two upright marks in white colour while the line in between the two viz., *Sushumna* is a bit lengthy and marked in red colour. The central mark of red line should be known as the most important element of a body, viz., the soul (*Atma*). The other two nerves viz., *Surya* & *Chandra Nadis*' are stationed as a base for mind, while the *Brahmanadi* is the dwelling place for soul (*Atma*) in the body. Those who have acknowledged the fact that the *Brahmanadi* is the dwelling place of soul (*Atma*), accept that by further exploration they can unveil the true substance of life. The dwelling place of soul (*Atma*) in a body, viz., the *Brahmanadi* is itself called as "*Thirunamamu*". To enlighten this reality i.e., knowing the soul (*Atma*) within, an annual celebration was introduced, whereat people from all walks of life are made to assemble at the temple to get imparted with enlightenment on the significance of the soul within. Likewise, people were gathered to create spiritual awareness. This annual event of religious gathering is called as "*Thirunala*", where the spiritual illumination of soul (*Atma*) is meant to be highlighted. Though this religious event persists even now, the aspect of spiritual illumination has totally lost its essence. This "*Thirunama*" or "*Thirunala*" not only has lost its spiritual significance but got altered and diverted with new procedures. Let some changes take place, but one should know the spiritual secrets of the soul hidden within through the "*Thirunama*" event. If this happens to be the external essence, the internal essence is something different.

The total number of souls dwelling in a human body is three. But the one which is spread across the body is soul (*Atma*), while the other one which is present in the head is *Jeevatma* and the third one i.e., *Paramatma* is not only spread all over the body but also spread all across the universe. The so called visible and invisible souls (*kshara* & *akshara*) viz., *Jeevatma* and *Atma* always stay in togetherness. The one which is distinct from the two is the *Paramatma* and hence it is denoted with a distinct red colour in the middle of a *Namamu*. Since the *Paramatma* is distinct and powerful than the *Jeevatma* and *Atma*, the line midst the mark of *Namamu* is slightly outsized. *Paramatma* being the destination point of *Jeevatma* and *Atma*, its depicted as the central point. Unless

the *Jeevatma* and *Atma* unify, they cannot transform into *Paramatma* and hence the central line denoting the *Paramatma* is placed in the center of *Namamu*. As such, the invisible *Jeevatma*, *Atma* and *Paramatma* are made detectable by the mark of "Namamu" and as well to denote the *Surya*, *Chandra* & *Brahmanadi*. This being the prominence, the mark of *Namamu* was thereby given due importance for display on the forehead. The central line of the *Namamu*, viz., "*Thirunama*" therefore denotes the soul present in the *Brahmanadi* and as well points towards the *Paramatma*, i.e., after departure of the soul from the body. It is unfortunate that the acknowledged word of "*Thirunama*" by our ancestors has now changed into "*Thirunala*" and it's even more regretful that people are still unable to lay emphasis on the significance of *Namamu*, which is meant to signify the visible *Brahmanadi* and the invisible *Paramatma*.



## 35.UNFOLDING THE REALITY (BATTA BAYALU)

Among the many temples sprang-up during the *Kaliyuga*, there exist a *Sri Ranga* temple in Sri Ranga Town, whereat the "*Chidambara Rahasyamu*" (Chidambara secret) prevails. Whoever visit the temple, unless the *Chidambara* Secret is viewed first, offering of prayers to *Sri Ranga* is termed wrong. Elders at the place hold the secret in such a high esteem that the secret should not be unfolded and it should be known only on viewing. A secret is a fact of secrecy either shown or expressed in the open. But what's the secret if its merely shown and not expressed in the open. In all probability there should definitely be some decisive matter relating to an object and hence it termed a secret. Thus, even if actually viewed, this "*Chidambara Secret*" cannot be understood if told, since it is beyond the imaginative grasp of a mind's limitations. However, most of us are unaware of the meaning of "*Chidambara*". In fact, "*Chida*" means a clothing, while "*Ambara*" means the sky. As such, the word "*Chidambaramu*" means, the clothing of the sky. There's also a sentence as "*Chidambara Rahasyamu Batta Bayalu*" viz., "*Unfolding the Realities of Chidambara Secret*". Now, let us know something about "*Chidambara*" which is located in the town of *Sri Ranga*.

The 22nd verse in the "Sankhya Yogamu" (The Yoga of Wisdom) of *Bhagwadhgeeta*, *Bhagwan Krishna* rendered a verse using the word "Vaasamsi" viz., 'Vaasamsi Jeernani Yedha Vihaaya Navaani Grahnathi Naroparani, Thadha Shareerani Vihaaya Jeerna Nanyani Samyaathi Navaani Dehi'; which enlightens the fact that "like leaving an old cloth to replace with a new ones, every human soul shall one or the other day shed the worn out body to wear a new ones". In this context, the body is compared with a clothing. Hence, the meaning of *Vastra* or *Chelamu* or *Bhatta* is similar and same viz., a clothing. Likewise, the sky also similarly denotes, space or emptiness. The secret that's present in the *Sriranga* Temple, if examined closely is a clothing put across the doorway. This cloth is so arranged that nothing is visible behind it. Since the existing object behind the clothing is not visible, it's therefore called a secret. But, if someone is curious to view what's behind the sheet of clothing, permission has to be sought from the concerned temple elders. There are people as such, to satisfy and fulfill this particular demand, duly instructing the curious ones to desist from revealing the viewed secret to anyone.

However, those who had viewed the "*Chidambara Secret*" have later lost the instinct of extreme curiosity, since what was extra-ordinarily imagined under the guise of "secrecy" turned out to be a damp squib. Surprisingly who ever and what ever was imagined for viewing was merely reduced to nothing on removal of the clothing to the doorway. There's a doorway, closed by mere clothing, isn't it? Those who are curious to look beyond the clothing, stand in front of the doorway before the clothing is removed. But, on removing the clothing, except the open sky, neither any object nor any form is viewed, which is quite astonishing. If questioned, the person who removed the clothing would reply, "whatever was viewed and noticed is indeed this (sky) only". The non-existence of anything itself is called the "*Chidambara Secret*". It is further cautioned that since there exist nothing and if the fact is revealed, there's likelihood of no one visiting the place again and hence the fact should at all costs be kept a secret. As such, those who view the secret, anticipating some resultant ill-effects if the secret is revealed, are forced to keep quiet with the fear psychosis. Though the tradition of secrecy prevails, it lacks relevant meaning. Instead of speaking out the spiritual aspect relating to spiritual knowledge, it is indeed wrong to forewarn that the truth has to be kept a secret. Let the fact be revealed by anyone to someone, yet the word "*Chidambaramu*" will always be suffixed with the meaning of "Secret". Revealing this mode of secret is indeed called *Chida* (Clothing) *Ambaramu* (sky).

*Jeevatma*, as long as it dwells in a human body cannot attain the state of liberation. Unless the consequences of *Karma* are rid-off and unless the body form is denounced from its recurrent cycle, the soul (*Atma*) cannot unify with *Paramatma*. The truth is that, a being is entangled in between two destinations, viz., one is the body and the other is liberation. Knowing the God is not possible as long as body exists. Thus, the characteristics of birth and death are standing in between you and God. With birth and death and again re-merging with instant re-birth, the body is unable to detach itself from life. It was so said in the *Bhagwadhgeeta* that "a body is as similar a cloth, which, on being worn out is replaced with a new ones". Hence, to remind the point that unless the clothing is removed you cannot reach the God, a comparison of the body with a clothe and the *Paramatma* with the sky is made. By comparing the body with a cloth and the *Paramatma* with the sky, both have been compared with the *Batta* (clothe) *Bayalu* (sky) viz., *unfolding the reality*. When the cloth is removed, the sky is viewed. Likewise, only when the body is non-existing, the God is possibly known. This feature is known as the secret of "*Chidambara*". Only on the removal of doorway clothing is the sky visible, as such, only after the non-existence of body is the God known. The unfolding of this fact is called "*Chidambara Secret*". Even though this secret is unfolded, through an external example, (viz., by removing the cloth and showing the empty sky); the bodily dependent humans are still unable to reckon the path of *Paramatma*. To disclose this particular aspect which is not being grasped is termed as secret and thereby the word "Secret" to "*Chidambara*" is suffixed. Since the people are unable to grasp the reality, cautioning them to keep away from revealing the secret is absurd and as such clothing is what was equated with the human body. The physical body (cloth) is left at the time of death and at the very next instant of birth another body is attached to *Jeevatma*. Hence, it should be known, the clothing which is compared with a body, stands an obstacle for reaching the *Paramatma* who is compared with the sky and this itself is thus the "*Chidambara Secret*" of the *Srirangam* town. Till the cloth hangs as an obstacle, the sky on the other side can never be viewed. To put forth the fact that since the body (cloth) acts as an obstacle, one cannot look at the sky (God). Indeed, there's a meaning in this significant aspect, which is called a "Secret".

Only if the clothing is removed the sky is viewed, if not, there's no scope for viewing the sky. Likewise, unless the body is shed there's no scope for liberation and as such the state in which the cloth is removed is called as unclothing viz., attaining a state of liberation, devoid of a body form. In the ancient times, those passing on life without acquiring any spiritual knowledge and caught in the recurring cycle of birth and death are compared with "as being clothed" and those taking the form of life, getting spiritually enlightened and attaining liberation from the recurring cycle of birth and death are called "as being unclothed". The underlying meaning is that, a human body is compared with the clothing, while liberation is compared with unclothing. The path of liberation was also called as "unclothed state" and the ignorance as that of "clothing". The word relating to the path of spiritual wisdom "*Ache...lamu*" (without clothing, i.e., without a body) has slowly changed with the times to become "*Achalamu*" (a wrong term for *Ache...lamu*). Those who adopt the path of spiritual wisdom are present amongst us, even now. But comparing themselves with "*Achalamu*" is meaningless. They might very well compare or call themselves with "*Ache...lamu*", but not with "*Achalamu*". To explore a proper meaning, the *chida* (cloth) *Ambaramu* (sky) can as well be called as *Chela-Achelamu* (clothing-unclothing). As shown in the temple, decide yourself as to which party do you belong to viz., cloth party or the sky party. Try acquiring either a state of clothing or unclothing. But, let us exploit the secret of leaving the clothing, so as to reach the sky.



## **36. THE DANCING GIRLS EMPLOYED IN A TEMPLE (DEVADASEELU)**

Till now we have learnt about temple structures and worship rituals. Something more remains to be explored further. That is ... there exist only two genders in human beings viz., the Male and the Female. In the twin-gender domain of humans, differing both, there prevail yet another gender. Though, having come into the stream of existence through a female-gender source, they neither possess the feminine feelings nor the physical nature and they are totally

devoid of sexual instincts and if at all they hold any, they lack enough curiosity or interest. They are therefore called as Eunuch (a woman having a moustache, no breasts and who is never menstrous). Even though they grow-up in age, their bodily features remain static, as in childhood. Similarly, the romantic and sexual feelings remain absent. These women are not fit for a marital life and hence they prefer to stay away from the general public. As such, instead of staying in between the residential localities, they prefer dwelling at temples, which are the vital centers for spiritual wisdom.

By putting a stay at temples, the Eunuch sect render services in one or the other way. They regularly partake in temple activities by sweeping the dirt and involve themselves in other routine worship rituals. Whereas some others who have dancing skills, entertain the devotees to attract and increase the rush of devotees. Others, who are familiar in performing music and singing, lure the devotees with their established activities during the mornings and evenings. In the ancient times, the eunuch sect, which was termed unfit for marital life, used to put-up stay at temples and devoted themselves in rendering services to the God. These attendants in a temple are also called as "*Devadaseelu*". (Servant maids of God)

As time eclipsed past, these "*Devadaseelu*" are branded as whores. The present "*Devadaseelu*" is not a sect of eunuch, but real women by nature. These so called "*Devadaasi*" women are staying in residential localities and eking out their livelihood by indulging in flesh trade. This tendency reminds like setting afire a buffalo in the name of an ethnic goddess, giving it liberty to gaze across any fence; similarly by setting afire a spinster woman in the name of a Goddess is an act of spoiling a chaste woman. Any male person can approach her for fulfillment of carnal pleasures. This system had found a positive place in some sects of the people and any woman from that sect should by all means abide by their elders ruling, irrespective of her will and wish. Thus a *Deavadasee* lose her signification and is made as *Basavi* in the present day culture.

"*Devadaseelu*" in the ancient days were not fit for marital life, but in the present times, those fit for a marital life are desiring to become "*Devadaseelu*". The eunuch sect in those days used to render selfless service to the God at the temples and in recognition of their services they were called as *Deva* (Gods') *Daseelu* (slaves). Contrary to them, now a days the so called "*Devadaseelu*" have chosen the profession of prostitution. The-then "*Devadaseelu*" were looked

at with pious feelings, whereas the present day "Devadaseelu" are looked at with unchaste feelings. The-then "Devadaseelu" had true devotion with widespread spiritual knowledge. But, devoid of an element of all these features, this so-called sect of "Devadaseelu" is now existent; who are also designated as unchaste women (*Basavis*) However, the steady growth of civilization had curbed their numbers, but still there exist some sects, which transform women into professional whores.



## 37. DEVADASULU

As some lesbians prevail among the females, there also exist impotent's among the male community. Despite possessing bodily features of a man and devoid of masculine organs, they are not fit for a married life. In the ancient days this particular sect used to render services by putting-up stay at the temples. Some among them excel in dancing and playing classical music, thereby providing a divine touch to the temples. Working without selfish motives, this impotent sect is called "Devadasulu" (men employed for dancing in a temple). But now a days, nowhere do we find any *Deavdaseelu* or *Devadasulu* at any of the temples. Today's impotent sect, like other similar women had chosen the profession of begging to eke out their livelihood. This manly-featured sect is also called as *Uligammalu*, who apart from involving in dancing and singing folk songs, perform traditional rituals at the Goddess temples in the *Karnataka State* at least once a year, even now.

An important feature to be noted here is that those *Machakammalu* from among the female sect, indulge in rendering services by dwelling at the temples exclusively representing male Gods. And the impotents from among the male sect render services by dwelling at the temples exclusively representing female Gods. Hence, even now these *Devadasulu* involve in acts of dancing and singing at the Goddess temples. Likewise, those in the profession of prostitution, even now engage themselves in performing dances now and then and during festive events at some particular temples represented by the male Gods. Without seeking any remuneration, the tradition of performing rituals and involving in dances and singing folk songs by the impotent sect at the Goddess temples in the *Karnataka*

*State* is even now prevalent. But now a days we come across professional prostitutes performing dances and seeking remuneration even during festivities, which incidentally take place at the temples exclusively representing the male Gods. Hence, it is up to you to assume on own as to how much disparity exists between the ancient and the present day *Devadaseelu and Devadasulu*.



## **38. S T A R (NAKSHATRAMU)**

The universe is bound to stay for some more time and later disappear without trace. Only when the universe exists, the living beings experience the cycle of birth and death, alongwith the joys and sorrows as well. If this universe does not exist, there's no question of any elemental presence of nature and devoid of any living being and this indeed is a state of ceased universe. Wiped out totally, yet remaining with all features is the imperishable *Paramatma* and all the beings which mingle within the *Paramatma* during this state shall also remain eternal. Let the universe remain or not but the one who remains eternal is the *Paramatma*. We humans have one complete day halved with a 12-hour day and 12-hour night duration; whereas for the *Paramatma*, an era of 1000 *Yugas* form the day and 1000 *Yugas* form the night. For the *Paramatma*, in the first half era of 1000 *Yugas* forming the day, living beings exist, while in the remaining half era of 1000 *Yugas*, there neither exist any living being nor the universe. But, irrespective of whether the universe exists or not, *Paramatma* remains unaffected.

The star is visible only during the nights and not in the day time. Despite invisible during the day, the star exists as eternal object both during the day and night. Hence, our ancestors have compared the *Paramatma* with the eternal and imperishable star invisible during the day and twilight hours. As an object of liberation (*moksha*), the Star is compared forthwith. So, it was propagated with the purpose to highlight that a human should unite with the God and as such denoting the star in comparison with the God is prevalent in the ancient *Indu* traditions. But as time moved on, this particular *Indu* tradition became extinct. But even now the Star is given high prominence in the *Christian* and *Islam* religions.



STAR

Indeed, if the star is a symbol of God or salvation, a doubt is bound to rise as how to reach the God. The answer is, to know about the *Paramatma* one has to get acquainted with the knowledge of *Atma* at first. Only through the process of attaining spiritual wisdom through the help of *Atma* one can reach the *Paramatma*.



## 39. THE MOON

As an icon representing the possessing of knowledge about the Supreme Being of the universe (*Brahman Vidya*), a comparison with the Moon is made. "*Chandra masam jyothi ryogi prapya nivarthathe*", a spiritually-wise person (*yogi*) is bound to possess the glow of moon and it is he who would take the course of rebirth with some traces of elements of *Karma* (*Karma seshamu*). Here in this context, the glow of the Moon denotes the "power of wisdom" (*Gnana shakti*). So, the Moon is denoted as a replica of "power of wisdom" (*Gnana shakti*). Since the "power of wisdom" is quite essential to unify with the God, the moon is shown beneath the star.

In place of a full moon, an enlarging crescent moon is exposed. Thus, it indicates that by virtue of the increase in the "power of wisdom" (*Gnana shakti*), liberation can be attained. In the olden days, the Star relating to the "attainment of liberation" and the Moon relating to the "power of wisdom" are respected and given due credence. Now this phenomenon is limited to the *Islam* religion. But, we are not aware of the depths of their insight about the Star.



## 40. THE WINGED HORSE

### (REKKALA GURRAMU)

To come across the element of attaining liberation, we have stressed upon the necessity of obtaining the "power of wisdom". To acquire this vital power, one has to familiarize in performing the *Yoga*. *Yoga* means, stationing the mind with total concentration, devoid of any diversive thoughts. The dynamic mind is as fast as the wind and to curtail its vibrant and fleeting tendency of mood, it is quite essential to bring it to a point of hold so as to succeed in stationing it without thoughts. If this can be achieved in total, attaining liberation is indeed possible. As an indication of this fact, our elders have not only shown the Star and Moon, but have also drawn our attention towards the Winged Horse. It does mean, a horse is a fast paced animal and it is assumable that a winged horse can move far more quicker than the pace of wind? To draw a comparison with the mood of mind, the winged horse is drawn to lure the human attention. As per the process of *Pancheekarana* (five elemental formation of the body) and numerical formulations (*sankhya suthramu*), if the sky as one part and the air as another part; if both amalgamate, they would pave way for the emergence of *Manassu* (mind). The Mind has emerged with the amalgamation of one part of air (fickle) and one part of sky (invisible and abstract) and hence to communicate the characteristics of Mind, a Winged Horse is shown flying in the air. To station the mind without diversion, the matters relating to five sensory organs (*Gnana Indriyas viz., ear, eye, skin, tongue and nose*) in the body have to be put under control. Since the mind gets diverted with these five vital senses, thoughts have to be curtailed to be brought under control. As such, the mind is compared with the Winged Horse and to acquire this stature, of *Yoga* the five special senses of worldly wisdom (*Ganana Indriyas*) in the body have to be brought under control. To impart the importance of these five special senses, a palm (five fingered) is shown on the horse.

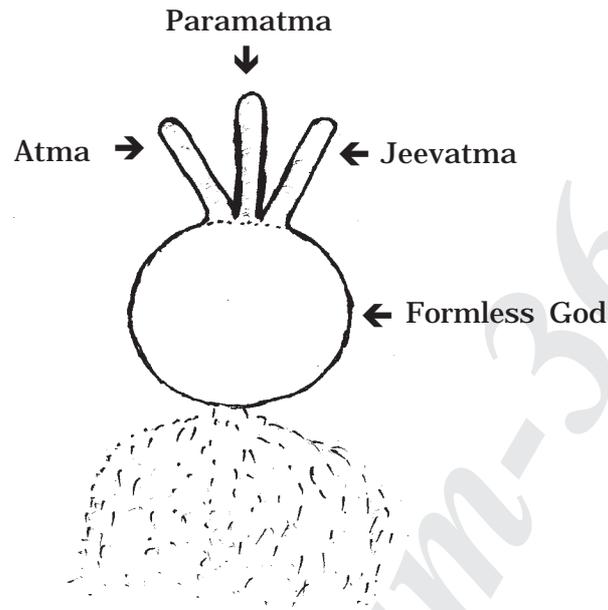
The palm is shown as an indication of warning to halt. Thus, it means to say that the hard-to-pin-down thoughts of mind should be controlled by having a grip-hold on the five special senses of worldly wisdom (*Ganana Indriyas*) and only then the winged horse of thoughts can be got under control. If this can be achieved, the power of self wisdom is bound to grow and in comparison with this viewpoint, the Moon is shown just above the winged horse. And, if the power of



self wisdom is cultivated, liberation can be attained. To compare this prospect, a Star is also shown. Hence all the objects viz., the Star, the Crescent Moon, the Palm and the Winged Horse are visibly seen in a single picture. In some instances, only the Winged Horse and the Palm are shown in the picture, whereas the Crescent Moon and the Palm are shown in a different picture. Though possessing enormous insight and meaningful wisdom, most of the people are unaware of the invaluable importance of these pictures. These symbols owing soul-related wisdom are therefore meant to be revered and acknowledged.

## 41. THE FESTIVAL OF PEERLU (PEERLU)

Among the festivals of *Indus*, the festival of "*Peerlu*" is also one. As the *Indu* Nation is spelt as *Hindu* Nation, some of the practices of Indu worship have slipped into other religions. In fact, without the presence of any other religion, the *Indu* Nation was a prominent place of worshipping for *Paramatma*. But, most of the credible practices are buried under the debris of time and only very few are left now. And, from among these few practices, other religious communities apart from a handful few which are left to traditional mercy have grabbed some remains. The Winged Horse, the Star, the Moon and *Peerulu* are a few, which



### THE FESTIVAL OF PEERLU

can be quoted in this context. But unfortunately or fortunately the *Peerlu* festival is still halfway, caught in between the beliefs of both *Hindu* and *Muslim* communities. Though lacking open evidence, the most important objects, viz., the Winged Horse, the Star and the Moon are associated with *Hindu* community from the beginning and in fact *Peerlu* is still a festival event mainly celebrated by the *Hindu* community. Some may be aware and some may not, but we have learnt about the prominence of the Star, the Moon and the Winged Horse. Now, let us know the prominence of Peerlu.

In the *Indu* community, there exist some narrations in the *Shastras* (sciences) and *Puranas* (scriptures) and on similar lines in the *Muslim* community also some stories are most likely to exist about the Moon, the Star and the Winged Horse and the *Peerlu* (An image of *Mohammedan* saint in the form of a hand). Even then there's no mistake in enlightening them on a right perspective. The *Peer* (An image of *Mohammedan* saint in the form of a hand) is a round object made out of a tin sheet, where over its head three horn shaped tin pieces are adorned with. This round shaped structure without features of nose and mouth is but adorned with a three-line (*Namamu-type*) appearance. The image, which is devoid of nose and mouth, should in fact be understood as the soul (*Atma*). This itself is an indirect indication to show that the God has no form. The formless God has spread universally in three forms i.e., *Jeevatma*, *Atma* and *Paramatma*. To acknowledge the theory of the said three forms, the three vertical

lines have been placed on the top, to denote this concept. Except for the central line among the three vertical lines, one each on both sides is shown short in a slight tilting position, with the middle one in an erect position and a bit lengthier than the other two. This feature can be noticed on any of the *Peer*'s and those viewing them should know that the short tilting lines on the right and left are symbols of *Jeevatma* and *Atma* respectively. Hence, it should be acknowledged that the *Paramatma* is invisibly spread all over and existing as the elemental essence of the entire universe. Being identified as *Paramatma* by the *Indus*, *Yehova* by the Christians and *Allah* by the Muslims; this invisible element had paved way for the origin of Life or *Jeeva* on one part and as *Atma* on the other, thereby creating an amiable environment for the formation of all living beings. Keeping in mind to signify this aspect, the shape of the *Peer* was so created.

To highlight the glory of God, our ancestors had put-in several efforts by several viewpoints and the *Peer* is one such important constituent of one such viewpoint. It has become a custom once a year to decorate, worship and to take-out the object of *Peer* in a procession. But what our ancestors meant had gone to the winds. Devoid of ancient significance, now a days both *Hindus* and *Muslims* are observing the festive event with much fan fare, without any devoutness. Seeking wishes for fulfillment; most of the so-called devotees are indulging in inebriated dancing, with very few actual devotees. In the earlier days, our forefathers treated the *Peer* as equivalent to the replica of God. With an intention to cleanse the accumulated *Karma* and with that intended objective, they used to burn wood in a pool of fire. Thus, it was envisioned that within the pool of body, if the element of wisdom of fire burns the accumulated *Karma* of wood and reduce to ashes, a way will be paved for unification with the God. Though the tradition is still prevalent, there is a dearth amongst us to reckon the fact that the wood is compared to *Karma*, Fire with wisdom, Pool of fire with the body and the *Peer* with the God. The festival of *Peer* has now become an infamous festival meant for meat-feast and consuming liquor. If this tendency is avoided and the old tradition is brought back into practice, the festival of *Peer* will have a distinct prominence and spreads devoutness.

To educate the masses about the wisdom of the soul (*Atma*), our ancestors have adopted several methods, despite which, all their efforts seem to have lost their credibility now. The division of sects and religions among the people had driven out the very essence of wisdom of soul (*Atma*). Thus, the inadequate

knowledge has created an atmosphere tense enough to fight among themselves in the name of sects and religions. Thereby the feeling that "God is One" has lost its trust-worthiness and people have totally ignored the real concept. To awaken and create awareness among the people, an attempt is made to write this book as a source aimed in that direction and meant at unfolding the inner spirit of knowledge in them. It's also our motto to curtail the division of human community into sects and religions. Further, we are bent upon creating awareness about the omnipresent, formless and anonymous God, who is the real source for all the existing religions. Though unaware of anything, mere inspiration of thoughts and provocative instinct within to compose and impart the thoughts through my own self, whatever be the outcome, I owe the entire fame or notoriety acquired by these writings to the *Paramatma* only.

Yours

*Author of More than Half Century Books,*

*Indu Virtue Principal Donor,*

*Sensational Writer, Thraitha Theorem Originator*

***Sri Acharya Prabhodhananda Yogeeswarlu***

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***How Shastra is necessary for defending a matter,***

***Similarly Shastra is necessary for condemning a matter.***