

ಗಂಗಾಷ್ಟಕಮ್ ೨

{|| ಗಂಗಾಷ್ಟಕಮ್ ೨ ||}

GANGASHTAKAM by Shri Shridharavenkatesa of

Tiruvisanallur respectfully called as Ayyaval.

|| ಶ್ರೀ ಅಯ್ಯಾವಾಲ್ ಇತಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧೈಃ ಶ್ರೀಧರವೇಂಕಟೇಶಾಭಿಧೈಃ ವಿರಚಿತಮ್ ||

Introduction:- Once, the author Shridhara had to perform the shrAddha ceremony wherein his ancestors are propitiated. In this ceremony three pious brahmins who are well versed in the vedas and are of exemplary character are invited. The Manusmriti gives details about the qualifications of the brahmins to be invited on this occasion. The forefathers are invoked in them. Then these brahmins are honoured, as one would do his ancestors with food, clothes and dakShina. In Shridhara's case the ceremony fell on an Amavasya day in the month of Kartika (8th month of the solar calendar). He had made all arrangements to conduct the ceremony as ordained in the shastras, including inviting the three brahmins. The food items to be served to the brahmins (who represent his ancestors) were being cooked. As the preparations were in progress, he heard the plaintive cry of a beggar. The beggar was an outcaste. He said he had not eaten for hours, and so is famished and distressed. Shridhara, who was a very pious person, saw in this outcaste the image of Lord Siva and was immensely moved. He immediately gave the food items prepared for the shrAddha ceremony to the beggar and ensured his hunger was appeased. He beggar ate heartily and went away after invoking Lord's blessings on Shridhara and his family

members. Shridhara came to himself some time after the beggar went away and realised his "folly". One is not expected to serve the food prepared specifically for serving to the ancestors (invoked in the brahmins) to anyone else till the ceremony was over. He was very upset and asked the brahmins as to how he should expiate for his act. They said that the only way to atone is to take a bath in the sacred Ganges. But Shridhara felt that this was impossible to be done as the trip to Ganges will take many weeks. This implied that he will not be able to perform the shrAddha ceremony on that day. So it will be an act of ommission and will invite serious sin. Shridhara felt that the only thing to do in such a predicament is to surrender to the Lord. So, in the following verses he explained his predicament to Lord Siva and prayed to Him to release Ganga from His matted locks as He did on an earlier occasion in response to the prayers of sage Bhagirata. The kindly Lord could not bear to see His devotee upset. So He released Ganga from His locks. The well in Shridhara's house started to overflow. Many animals like fish, tortoises came out along with the gushing waters. The villagers were astounded at the sight and were wonderstuck at the intensity of Shridhara's piety. They realised his greatness. They requested him to control the flow of the water which was threatening to flood the village. Shridhara prayed and the flow from Ganges subsided. All, including the brahmins who had been invited specially for the ceremony were only too willing to accept that if Shridhara took bath in the waters of the well it will be equal to a bath in the Ganges. Shridhara was very happy at the decision of the brahmins. He

took bath in the water drawn from the well and completed the shrAddha ceremony.

This incident is celebrated every year on the Amavasya day in the month of Krittika at the village. The faithful throng in large number at the house in Tiruvisanallur village where Shridhara lived on that day every year and take bath in the water drawn from the well. They believe that the bath gives the same benefit as a bath in the Ganges.

COMMENTS. The scriptures

assure that a true devotee will not encounter misfortune or problems

in life. ನ ವಾಸುದೇವಭಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಅಶುಭಂ ವಿದ್ಯತೇ ಕ್ವಚಿತ್ | says

Vishnusahasranama in the phalashruti. Lord Krishna gives an assurance

to this effect in Gita (9-31). ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಪ್ರತಿಜಾನೀಹಿ ನ ಮೇ ಭಕ್ತಃ

ಪ್ರಣಶ್ಯತಿ | The question, then, is why should devotees like

Shridhara and many others like Prahladha face problems? The answer

is that the problems they face may be attributed to prArabdham or

deeds they might have committed in their past births. But, though the

problem appears to be of serious nature to us, it does not appear to

be so to the devotees themselves. They do not lose their serenity in

the face of adversity, nor is there least change in their devotion.

ಘೃಷ್ಟಂ ಘೃಷ್ಟಂ ಪುನರಪಿ ಪುನಶ್ಚಂದನಂ ಚಾರು ಗಂಧಂ

ಛಿನ್ನಂ ಛಿನ್ನಂ ಪುನರಪಿ ಪುನಃ ಸ್ವಾದು ಚೈವೇಕ್ಷುಖಾಣ್ಡಮ್ |

ದಗ್ಧಂ ದಗ್ಧಂ ಪುನರಪಿ ಪುನಃ ಕಾಞ್ಚನಂ ಕಾಂತವರ್ಣಂ

ನ ಪ್ರಾಣಾಂತೇ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿವಿಕೃತಿಃ ಜಾಯತೇ ಸಜ್ಜನಾನಾಮ್ ||

This says that a piece of sandal wood, when repeatedly rubbed against a

stone emits only a pleasant flavour. Even when the sugarcane is cut into many pieces it will continue to taste sweet only. A chunk of gold when heated in the fire again and again will give out its natural shine only. So also, the qualities of the great people will not undergo the least change even at the end of their lives. To repeat, a devotee of the Lord will certainly encounter problems. They are designed by the Lord to bring out the devotee's unshakeable faith in the Lord so that others may understand his greatness. The devotee himself never complains that he is undergoing immense suffering. But he thinks of the Lord as usual for help. He gets it and is happy that his problem is solved. In fact, Kunti—the mother of Pandavas, cleverly converted the problems into advantage. She found from experience that she thought of the Lord whenever she faced a problem. Krishna promptly appeared on the scene and helped her. So, she prayed to Krishna that she should face problems every now and then so that she can have His darshan often. She said:

ವಿಪದಃ ಸಂತು ನಃ ಶಶ್ವತ್ತತ್ರ ತತ್ರ ಜಗದ್ಗುರೋ |

ಭವತೋ ದರ್ಶನಂ ಯಸ್ಮಾದಪುನರ್ಭವ-ದರ್ಶನಮ್ || Shri Bhagavatam (1-8-25).

The verses of Gangashtakam are given below. The translations of the verses given here are not exact.

ಶಂಭೋ ಭವನ್ನಾಮ ನಿರಂತರಾನುಸಂಧಾನ ಭಾಗ್ಯೇನ ಭವಂತಮೇವ |

ಯದ್ಯೇವ ಸರ್ವತ್ರ ತಥಾಽನ್ತಃ ಜೇಽದ್ಯ ಪಶ್ಯತ್ಯಹೋ ಕೋಽತ್ರ ಕೃತೋಽಪರಾಧಃ || ೧ ||

O Lord Shambhu! I am used to repeating Your name all the time. As a result I am blessed to see You only every where. So, today I

saw You only in this outcaste also. Is there anything wrong in
this?

ಅಸ್ತೇಷ ಮನ್ತುಃ ಪಿತೃಯಜ್ಞ ನಿಷ್ಠೇ ಗಜಾಪ್ಲವೋ ಯೋ ವಿಹಿತೋಽಪಚಿತ್ಯೈ |
ದೂರಾತ್ಮು ತನ್ನಾಮಜಪೇನ ಶುದ್ಧಿಃ ನ ಸ್ಯಾತ್ ಕಥಂ ಮೇ ಸ್ಮೃತಿರರ್ಥವಾದಃ || ೨ ||

Let me agree that a bath
in the Ganges is the proper atonement for my transgression of the
rules pertaining to the shrAddha ceremony. But the Smriti texts
say that even if one just repeats the name "Ganga" few times he
becomes pure. Can not I take recourse to this expediency in this
situation?

ತ್ವನ್ನಾಮನಿಷ್ಠಾ ನ ಹಿ ತಾವತೋ ಮೇ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾ ಯತಃ ಕರ್ಮಸು ನ ಪ್ರದಗ್ಧಾ |
ತ್ವೈ ಶಿಷ್ಯವಂ ಮೇ ಪಸುಪಾಂತರಾಯಃ ಮುಚ್ಯೇಯ ತಸ್ಮಾತ್ಕಥಂ ಆರ್ತಬನ್ನೋ || ೩ ||

O Lord, I accept that I have not
got that intense faith in Your name that I can give up performance
of duties like shrAddha. Thus I am in an awkward situation, like
king Trishanku. How do I get relieved from this situation?

ಯದ್ಯದ್ಯ ತೇ ಶ್ರಾದ್ಧವಿನಷ್ಟಿರಿಷ್ಟಾ ಕೋಽಹಂ ತತೋಽನ್ಯಚ್ಛರಿತುಂ ಸಮರ್ಥಃ |
ಶ್ರಾದ್ಧೇ ವೃತಾಃ ಪೂರ್ವದಿನೋಪವಾಸಾಃ ನಾನ್ಯತ್ರ ಭುಂಜ್ಜೀಯುಃ ಇದಂ ತು ವಿದ್ಯೇ || ೪ ||

If it is Your wish that the shrAddha
should be missed let it be lost. I cannot go against Your will.
But, what about the brahmins who have been specially invited for the
occasion? They have been fasting since yesterday and will not take
food at any other place.

ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಲವಃ ಶ್ರಾದ್ಧವಿಘಾತಭೀತ್ಯಾ ಸ್ವಾತ್ಮೋಪರೋಧಂ ವಿಘ್ನಯ್ಯ ಧೀರಾಃ |
ಯತ್ಪ್ರೋಚುರತ್ರಾಪಚಿತಿಂ ಮಹಾಂತಃ ತತ್ರೋಚಿತಂ ಯದ್ಧಯಯಾ ವಿಧೇಹಿ || ೫ ||

These brahmins

are noble souls. They have prescribed the expiation, not with any
selfish motive but only to make sure that the shrAddha should not
become deficient in any manner. They have not taken into account
the inconvenience that they will face in the process.

ಗಜ್ಞಾಧರಃ! ತ್ವದ್ಭಜನಾಂತರಾಯ ಭೀತ್ಯಾ ಗೃಹೇ ಕೂಪಕೃತಾವಗಾಹಃ |
ಜಾನೇ ನ ತೀರ್ಥಾಂತರಂ ಅದ್ಯ ಗಜ್ಞಾಂ ಆಸಾದಯೇಯಂ ಕಥಮಾರ್ತಬನ್ಧೋ! || ೬ ||

On account of the

fear that the chanting of Your name should not be interrupted
even for a moment, I have been taking bath only in the well in
the house itself. I do not know any other holy river or waters.

This being the case, how will I go in search of Ganga?

ನಾಹಂ ತಪಸ್ವೀ ಸಗರನ್ವವಾಯಃ ಜಾನೇ ನ ಜಹಹ್ನುಃ ಚರತಿ ಕ್ಷವೇತಿ |
ಶಂಭೋ! ಜಟಾಜೂಟಮಪಾವೃಣುಷ್ಟೇತ್ಯಭ್ಯರ್ಥನೇ ನಾಲಮಯಂ ವರಾಕಃ || ೭ ||

I am not an ascetic like Bhagiratha nor do

I know the whereabouts of the sage Jahnu. I am not qualified
even to pray to You to release Ganga from Your locks.

ಗಜ್ಞಾಧರಾಖ್ಯಾ ಗತಿರತ್ರ ನಾನ್ಯಾ ತಾಮಾಶ್ರಯೇ ಸಂಜ್ಞುಟ-ಮೋಚನಾಯ |
ಹಂತಃ ಪ್ರವಾಹಃ ಕಥಮತ್ರ ಕೂಪೇ ವಿಸ್ಪೂರ್ಜತೀಶಃ ಖಲು ತೇ ಪ್ರಸನ್ನಃ || ೮ ||

So, Your name Gangadhara is my refuge. I see

no other way out. Oh! What a wonder! Even as i say this, I see
the well overflowing! surely, the Lord has shown mercy.

ಗೆಜ್ಜೇತಿ ಗೆಜ್ಜೇತಿ ಹರತಿ ಗೃಣ್ಣನ್ ಆಪ್ಲಾವಿತೋಹಂ ದಯಯಾ ಪುರಾರೇಃ |

ಕೂಪೋತ್ತಿತೋಯಂ ಕರುಣಾಪ್ರವಾಹಃ ಗಾಙ್ಗಶ್ಚಿರಾಯಾತ್ರ ಜನಾನ್ ಪುನಾತು || ೯ ||

As I repeat the name "Ganga", the very mercy

of the Lord has taken the form of a flood and submerged me. May
this flow of the waters of Ganga purify the people in the days to
come.

CONCLUSION. One may ask as to how it was possible for
Shridhara to have a vision of Siva in a beggar. The answer is that
he was convinced that every thing in this world is the Lord only
and there is no second thing. Krishna says this in the Bhagavad
Gita. He explains that He manifests Himself as the world using the
power of maya. Though He is every thing in the world, people are
deluded by the powerful maya. Their vision is veiled. They see the
objects and overlook the God behind them. As an example, we see that
several ornaments are made of a piece gold. They are given various
names like bangle, chain etc. If we think a bit we will find that
the word "bangle" is not a substance but only a name given to a
particular shape of gold. Gold can exist as gold but bangle cannot
exist without the gold. Similarly, a person can go to sleep and
have a dream. The dream is not substantial and is dependant on the
dreamer; but not the other way round. Such things as the ornament
that have no separate existence but have shape and name are called
unreal objects or ಮಿಥ್ಯಾ ವಸ್ತು . They do not have a permanent

existence. A bangle may be melted and made into another ornament any number of times. They are therefore impermanent or ಅನಿತ್ಯಮ್ |

But the items like gold that lend substance to them are known as real or ಸತ್ಯಮ್ | . They are permanent or ನಿತ್ಯಮ್ . They do not change when the ornament is changed. We may say that gold pervades the bangle as, really speaking, there is no such thing as bangle. Krishna says He pervades the entire universe.

ಮಯಾ ತತಮಿದಂ ಸರ್ವಂ ಜಗದ್ವ್ಯಕ್ತ-ಮೂರ್ತಿನಾ | Gita(9-4). The right

knowledge will, then, be to understand first that the ornament

is gold. Overlooking the very existence of gold will be a major

error and will have serious consequences. Extending this idea, we

should be able to see that every thing in this universe ವಿಶ್ವಮ್

is impermanent and changing. People and animals come and go. So do

the seas and mountains. We learn that even the sun and the stars

are not permanent but have limited life only. Thus, the universe is

ಅನಿತ್ಯಮ್ only. These impermanent, changing objects are many

names and forms of the Lord only. In other words God is the real

thing or ಸತ್ಯಮ್ | . God gives substance to the world and is the

substratum or ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನಮ್ | Krishna explains this to Arjuna and

says the right vision is to see Him every where. But we are taken

by the world and do not see the God hiding behind it. To start with,

we do not see the Lord within us, but identify ourselves with the

bodies. This results in numerous problems. We have to take care

of the body, ensure it is fed and clothed properly. We require so

many things to protect it and keep it happy and secure. To get all

these things we have to work hard. The need for comfort and security

makes us desire many things. We get a family and friends around ourselves. We import their joys and sorrows on to ourselves. This leads to likes and dislikes. We like things and people who add to our joy and comforts and dislike those who do not. This corrupts our minds. As we go on working hard for ourselves and our family and friends, we do many things that are right and many times compromise with values and do wrong things. The results are puNyam and pApam. We have to enjoy the fruits of the puNyam and pApam in our account and to do this we have to take one or many births. Repeated births and deaths is sorrow only. The only way out of this problem is to have the right vision that shows that God is in every thing and every where. Yama tells this to Nachiketha in Kathopanishad. (2-1-10).

ಯದೇವೇಹ ತದಮುತ್ರ ಯದಮುತ್ರ ತದನ್ವಿಹ |
ಮೃತ್ಯೋಃ ಸ ಮೃತ್ಯುಮಾಪ್ನೋತಿ ಯ ಇಹ ನಾನೇವ ಪಶ್ಯತಿ ||

He says that one who sees plurality is condemned to be born and die again and again. Krishna says that by intense devotion one gets an understanding of the Lord's true nature and gets such a right vision. Gita (18-55).

ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಮಾಂ ಅಭಿಜಾನಾತಿ ಯಾವಾನ್ಯಶ್ಚಾಸ್ಮಿ ತತ್ತತ್ |

Thus a true devotee is able to see the Lord in every being.

ವಿದ್ಯಾವಿನಯ-ಸಂಪನ್ನೇ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣೇ ಗವಿ ಹಸ್ತಿನಿ |

ಶುನಿ ಚೈವ ಶ್ವಪಾಕೇ ಚ ಪಣ್ಡಿತಾಃ ಸಮದರ್ಶಿನಃ || Gita (5-18).

He says that a person endowed with wisdom sees the same brahman in a brahmin endowed with wisdom and humility, in a cow, an

elephant as also in a dog, and in an outcaste who eats a dog. Sage

Narada said the same in his advice to Yudishtira. Bhagavatha (7-14-9).

ಮೈಗೋಷ್ಟ್ರ-ಖರ-ಮರ್ಕಾಋ-ಸರೀಸೃಪ್ಪಗಮಕ್ಷಿಕಾಃ |

ಆತ್ಮನಃ ಪುತ್ರವತ್ ಪಶ್ಯೇತ್ ತೈರೇಷಾಮನ್ತರಂ ಕಿಯತ್ ||

One should look upon a deer, camels, donkeys, monkeys, rats, reptiles,

birds and flies as though they were his own children. What is it

that makes them separate from these (own children)?

The vedic seers had this grand vision. The great vedic hymn Shri Rudram has

three hundred salutations to the Lord, not by His names, but as

being available in various beings, both animate and inanimate. He is

saluted as being the one available in the streams, shoals, clouds,

lightnings, trees, grass, animals like horses, vultures and even

in cheats and thieves! Because the hymn contains such a lofty

idea its recitation is very inspiring. But, everyone may not be

expected to study the scriptures like the upanishads, Gita and Shri

Rudram. Understanding this limitation of the people in general our

rishis had incorporated these valuable ideas in the popular hymns.

We see these names encountered above ವಿಶ್ವಮ್ , ಸತ್ಯಃ , and

ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನಮ್ in the Vishnusahasranamam. One of Lalita's names in

Lalitasahasranamam (No. 734) ಮಿಥ್ಯಾಜಗದಧಿಷ್ಠಾನಾ | (i.e.) She is

the substratum of this unreal universe, says this fact explicitly. As

we keep on reading or reciting these prayers, the great vedantic

truths contained in them will gradually enter our mind and change

our concept of God. That is why we have the practice of pArAyaNam or

reciting such stotras daily. By repeated reading we will understand

that God is not a Being residing in remote places like Vaikuntha or Kailasa, but He is very intimately available in any thing we see or hear about – including our bodies. This is said in the Narayana Suktam

ಯಚ್ಚ ಕಿಂಚಿಜ್ಜಗತ್ಸರ್ವಂ ದೃಶ್ಯತೇ ಶ್ರುಯತೇಽಪಿ ವಾ |

ಅನ್ತರ್ಬಹಿಶ್ಚ ತತ್ಸರ್ವಂ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ಯ ನಾರಾಯಣ-ಸ್ಥಿತಃ|

Understanding and accepting the facts stated above will cause a great change in our personality and attitude. We will know that we are surrounded by God resident in all things and beings. So, we are never alone or away from Him. This idea will give us great sense of security, as we can get His help at any time or place.

Krishna says this in Gita(6-30).

ಯೋ ಮಾಂ ಪಶ್ಯತಿ ಸರ್ವತ್ರ ಸರ್ವಂ ಚ ಮಯಿ ಪಶ್ಯತಿ |

ತಸ್ಯಾಹಂ ನ ಪ್ರಣಶ್ಯಾಮಿ ಸ ಚ ಮೇ ನ ಪ್ರಣಶ್ಯತಿ ||

Since He is in all things and beings we will show great respect and love for them. We will enjoy immense peace of mind and confidence. This is how the great men like the sages and saints could be calm and enjoyed happiness. Thus Shridhara's experience teaches us an important lesson to be followed in life.

Written, encoded, and proofread by N.Balasubramanian bbalu at sify.com

Please send corrections to sanskrit@cheerful.com

Last updated ತಿಂಗಳಿಂದು

<http://sanskritdocuments.org>

Ganga Ashtakam 4 Lyrics in Kannada PDF

% File name : gangAShTakam2.itx

% Category : aShTaka

% Location : doc_devii

% Author : Shridharavenkatesa of Tiruvisanallur or Ayyaval with respect

% Language : Sanskrit

% Subject : philosophy/hinduism/religion

% Transliterated by : N.Balasubramanian bbalu at satyam.net.in

% Proofread by : N.Balasubramanian bbalu at satyam.net.in

% Latest update : November 22, 2006

% Send corrections to : Sanskrit@cheerful.com

% Site access : <http://sanskritdocuments.org>

%

% This text is prepared by volunteers and is to be used for personal study

% and research. The file is not to be copied or reposted for promotion of

% any website or individuals or for commercial purpose without permission.

% Please help to maintain respect for volunteer spirit.

%

We acknowledge well-meaning volunteers for Sanskritdocuments.org and other sites to have built the collection of Sanskrit texts.

Please check their sites later for improved versions of the texts.

This file should strictly be kept for personal use.

PDF file is generated [October 13, 2015] at Stotram Website