
kandukastutiH

కందుకస్తుతీ

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Author : madAnandatIrtha-bhagavatpAdAchArya

Transliterated by : N.Balasubramanian bbalu at sify.com

Proofread by : N.Balasubramanian bbalu at sify.com

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శ్రీమదానందతీర్థ-భగవత్పాదాచార్య వినిర్మితా ॥

కస్తుకః = a ball. This hymn - in praise of Lord Vishnu - is worded cleverly so that one can find a rhythm while reading it. It sounds like a ball is being tapped on the ground. It bounces back, only to be hit again. It bounces back and this is repeated.

అంబరగంగా-చుంబిత-పాదః పదతల-విదలిత-గురుతర-శకటః ।
కాలియానాగ-క్షేపల-నిహంతా సరసిజ-నవదల-వికసిత-నయనః ॥ ౧ ॥

అంబరగంగా-చుంబిత-పాదః ।

అంబరం = sky. So, అంబరగంగా will mean the river Ganga flowing in the sky or heavens.

చుంబిత = kissed or gently touched or caressed.

పదః = foot.

The Lord's feet are caressed by the waters of the river Ganges that flows in the heavens. The Ganges took its birth from the feet of the Lord.

It is this association with His feet that makes its waters sacred.

పదతల-విదలిత-గురుతర-శకటః ।

పదతల = surface of the foot or sole of the foot;

విదలిత = split into pieces, గురుతర = very large, violent,

శకటః = the demon Shakata.

The demon Shakata was sent by Kamsa to kill Krishna who was then a child.

The demon hid himself in the wheel of a cart waiting for an opportunity

to kill Krishna. But, the child Krishna went near the cart and kicked

the wheel of the cart. Shakata was killed. The incident is described

in Bhagavata - Book No.10 (part 1).

కాలియానాగ-క్షేపల-నిహంతా

కాలియనాగ = the serpent Kaliya, (who was staying with his family in a meadow near Gokulam and was a terror to the residents.)

క్షేల = playfully నిహన్తా = one who subdued.

This refers to the incident (again to be seen in Bhagavata - Book No.10 (part 1).

సరసిజ-నవదల-వికసిత-నయనః ।

సరసిజ = lotus, నవదల = fresh petal, వికసిత = opened or blown, నయనః= having eyes.

Krishna's eyes are like the petal of a lotus that has just opened up.

Thus they are very beautiful. Not only they are beautiful to look at, they are very auspicious and can fulfill all the desires of a devotee (including mokSha or liberation from the cycle of birth and death.)

One of His names (No:393 in Vishnusahasranama) is శుభేక్షణః ।

one with auspicious looks. Sri Sankaracharya in his commentary explains in detail the significance of the name as follows.

ఈక్షణం దర్శనం యస్య శుభం శుభకరం, ముముక్షూణాం మోక్షదం,

భోగార్థీనాం భోగదం, సర్వసన్దేహావిచ్ఛేదకారణం, పాపినాం

పావనం, హృదగ్రన్దేర్విచ్ఛేదకరం, సర్వకర్మాణాం క్షపణం,

అవిద్యాయాశ్చ నివర్తకం స శుభేక్షణః । భిద్యతే

హృదయగ్రన్దిః ఇత్యాది శ్రుతేః ॥ His auspicious looks grant

liberation (mokSha) to those who seek liberation, grant pleasures to those who seek pleasures, destroy the sins of the sinners, remove all doubts, remove the knot of ignorance that ties up the mind and destroy all remnants of karma and also ignorance.

The first line describes the glory of Lord's feet. Even Ganges that was born of His feet is reputed to be holy and capable of wiping out the sins of those who take bath in it. Then, what to say about the sins of the devotees who worship His feet? The feet also offer total protection from all enemies. The proof is lies in the fact that they could playfully destroy a fearful demon like Shakata . An additional proof is seen in the episode of Kaliya that says that Krishna subdued the terrible

serpant Kaliya and ensured total security to His followers. Thus the Lord is the source of complete and most superior protection. A devotee need not seek any other protector. Any other source will be fragile and inferior only. The great Vaishnavite acharya Shri Vedanta Desika says this

త్వయి రక్షతి రక్షకైః కిమన్యైః

త్వయి చారక్షతి రక్షకైః కిమన్యైః ।

ఇతి నిశ్చిత ధీః శ్రయామి నిత్యం

స్వహరే వేగవతీ తటాశ్రయం త్వామ్ ॥

Sri Leelasukha says the same thing in his Krishnakarnamritam.

మయి ప్రసాదం మధురైః కటాక్షైః

వంశీనినాదానుచరై-ర్విదేహి ।

త్వయి ప్రసన్నే కిమిహాపరై-ర్నః

త్వయ్యప్రసన్నే కిమిహాపరై-ర్నః ॥

కాలఘనాశీ-కర్పూర-కాయః శరశత-శకలిత-రిపుశత-నివహః ।

సంతత-మస్మాన్ పాతు మురారిః సతతగ-సమజవ-ఖగపతి-నిరతః ॥ ౨ ॥

కాలఘనాశీ-కర్పూర-కాయః ।

కాల = of black or dark blue colour, ఘన = cloud, అలిః = a black

bee, కర్పూర = of colour of pigeon, grey or of vareigated colour, కాయః = body.

Krishna's body has the colour of a bee or cloud or gray like that of a pigeon.

సతతగ-సమజవ-ఖగపతి-నిరతః ।

సతతగః = wind, సమజవ = equal in speed,

ఖగపతిః = the king of birds or Garuda,

నిరతః = fond of or rested. The Lord is always resting on

Garuda, who is fast as the wind.

The poets say that wind and the mind are the fastest things. Thus, Hanuman is also described to be as fast as these two. మనోజవం మారుతతుల్య-వేగమ్ ।

The Lord rests on Garuda so that He can respond to the calls from His devotee, either to bless him or rescue him from trouble without any delay.

He came on Garuda to bless the child Dhruva .

సహస్రశీర్షాపి తతో గరుత్మతా మధోర్వనం భృత్యదిదృక్షయా గతః ।

(Bhagavatam 4-9-1).

He also flew on Garuda to save Gajendra who was fighting for his life.

ఛన్దోమయేన గరుడేన సముహ్యమానశ్చక్రాయుధోఽభ్యగమ-దాశు యతో గజేన్ద్రః ।
(Bhagavatam 8-3-31).

Incidentally we may note from this line that Garuda is not a bird but he represents the vedas. The vedas are divided into two chapters.

The first part is called the Karma Kanda and tells us how we should conduct ourselves, what to do and what to avoid. It also describes the rituals to be performed to get various material benefits. By diligently following the injunctions in this chapter one's mind gets purified and calm. He, thus, becomes qualified for the study of the second part known as Jnana Kanda or Vedanta. This part consists of upanishads and are meant to be studied under a qualified guru because the teachings contained in them are very subtle and difficult to grasp without the guidance of a teacher. The study points the way to liberation.

Garuda's two wings represent the two chapters of the vedas.

శరశత-శకలిత-రిపుశత-నివహః ।

శరశత = hundred(s) of arrows, శకలిత = reduced to pieces,

రిపుశత నివహః = multitudes of enemies.

This refers to His incarnation as Rama when He reduced a great armies of enemies to nothing with His arrows. One of His names to be seen in the Sahasranama is

ధన్వర్ధరః - శ్రీమాన్ రామో మహద్ధన్వర్ధారయామాసేతి ధన్వర్ధరః ॥

సంతత-మస్మాన్ పాతు మురారిః ।

మురారిః = Lord , the enemy of the demon Mura, అస్మాన్ = us,

సంతతం = always, పాతు = let Him protect.

Let such a Lord Vishnu, who rides Garuda, the king of birds and who is as fast as the wind and the vanquisher of the demon Mura protect us.

॥ ఇతి శ్రీమదానన్దతీర్థభగవత్పాదాచార్య విరచితా కన్దకస్తతిః సంపూర్ణా ॥

Encoded and proofread by N.Balasubramanian bbalu@satyam.net.in



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