

Who is the Lord/Master of Education ?

Before creating this world, Lord MahAvishNu first created a lotus from His naval upon which He created BrahmA. As padmam(lotus) emerged from His navel(nAbhi), that Lord is known as **PadmanAbhA**.

Two drops of water fell on the lotus leaf. One drop looked like honey and immediately turned into a demon named Madhu. Another drop which looked hard turned into a demon called Kaitabha. VEdAs are considered as the breath of Lord Vishnu and the Lord preached them to BrahmA to impart knowledge to Him. BrahmA learnt all the four vEdAs and these four vEdAs were in the form of four children and He held them on the lotus itself.

The rules and procedures to create the world are mentioned in the vEdAs and that is why Lord VishNu preached vEdAs to BrahmA.

The two demons Madhu and Kaitabha stole the vEdAs and took them to pAtAla lOk and kept confined. As there are no vEdAs, BrahmA felt as if He lost all the knowledge and turned blind too. He was so helpless and incapable that BrahmA praised Lord VishNu again and Lord appeared before Him. He said to Lord, 'I am in great distress after loosing the vEdAs and don't know how to create the world without them'.

Being so merciful, Lord immediately goes to pAtAla lOk to bring back the vEdAs. While going to pAtAla lOk, Lord takes the form of Hayavadana meaning the one who is horse faced(haya means horse and vadana means face). From pAtAla lOk, Lord recovers the vEdAs and gives them back to BrahmA. The two demons Madhu and Kaitabha came in search of the Lord. Seeing Lord in yOga nidrA(acting as though He is sleeping), two demons with frightening laugh woke Him and started fighting but Lord kills them both very playfully. As HE destroyed the demon called Madhu, Lord is also known by the name **MadhusUdanA** and the avatAr is known as **HayagrIva** avatAr.

VedAs are the reason behind all the knowledge and education. “वेदोद्दत्को धर्म मूलम्” meaning vEdAas are the roots of dharmA. BrahmA creates the entire world and all the living beings according to what is mentioned in the vEdAs. Through BrahmA, vEdAs spread to the world and vEdAs preached by Lord HayagrIva are of such devine nature and the sole reason for all the knowledge. So, Lord HayagrIvA alone is the master of education.

Swami DEshikan has composed 32 shLOkAs in HayagrIva stOtram and the first one says,

jñānānanda-mayaṁ devam
nirmala-sphatika-kṛtim ।
ādhāraṁ sarva-vidyānām
hayagrīvaṁ upāśmahe ॥

Here, sarva vidyAnAm refers to 64 traditional skills or disciplines and Lord HayagrIvA is the foundation of all the skills and that is why this deity is found in almost all our temples and in temple towers too. SwAmi says that the Lord is pure like flawless crystal. So, if we meditate on this Lord , our mind will be as pure and clear as crystal. In the 8th shloka(**mandObhaviṣyan niyataṁ viriṇco**) Swami deals with the purpose of HayagrIva avatAr.

Lord being the embodiment of knowledge and bliss, first preaches BrahmA the vedAs. They were stolen by two demons Madhu and KaitabhA due to which BrahmA was helpless and incapable of performing his duty of creation. Hence Lord takes HayagrIva avatAr, goes to pAtAla lOk, destroy the demons, recover the vEdAs, gives them back to BrahmA and with great mercy once again preaches Him. Such is the incarnation of the Lord for the purpose of teaching the vEdAs to BrahmA for the second time.

It is not BrahmA alone who received Lord HayagrIvA's blessings, others also received His divine grace. Swami DEshikan tells about this in the 7th shLOkA(**dākṣiṇya rāmyā giriśasya mūrtiḥ**).

ShivA as DakshiNAmUrthi sitting under the banyan tree teaches the meanings of fundamental truth to four rishis, Agasthyar, Pulasthyar, Dakshar and MarkaNdEyar, BrahmA's wife Saraswathi known as 'Goddess of learning' blesses Her devotees with knowledge and great sages like VyAsA, ParAsarA and VAlmIki wrote famous books like MahAbhAratA, VishNu PurAnA and RamAyaNA. All these tasks could be accomplished only due to the fraction of power They received from Lord HayagrIvA. The only reason behind Their power to bless all the people in the world is Lord HayagrIvA who is the Master of education.

To be continued.....

Transcription by Smt Vasanthi Sampath