

Churning of the Ocean

Narasimha Gayatri

Om vajranagaya vidhmahe dheekskna dhamstryaya dheemahi

thanno narasimha prachodayaat

Narrator

Deepavali means attaining light. Deep means light and avail is to attain or arrange. The essence of vedic teaching is to seek the inner light. Our real nature is Brahman, Consciousness, symbolized by light. It is an irony that we do not know about real Self because of ignorance. We disrespect wisdom and intellect and so we undergo various sufferings in life after life. We are on visiting visa with short moments of pleasures and instead of enjoying we undergo sufferings and pain life. To get green card or citizenship and have permanent bliss, we have to get out of the groping darkness of ignorance. The Indian Rishis through various disciplines have shown the way to realize our true Self. The theme of vedic literature and Puranas is about this journey towards Self realization. Generally Puranas are dismissed as mythical stories or time stories. Seldom do we know that the aspects of our mind are depicted as Gods and Asuras and their eternal war.

The mind that creates everything is Lord Brahma the God of creation. Always creation is accompanied by wisdom and so his Wife goddess Saraswathi is depicted as the Goddess of Wisdom and Knowledge. Their son Narad maharishi represent the devotion towards the Self and that can be achieved only by strengthening the intellect. This intellect is represented by Lord Vishnu, which finally leads to awareness called Shiva and his wife Sakthi represents the energy aspect of the universe.

The Devas represent the pleasure of the senses whose name comes from the word indriya or senses. The asuras represent the indulgence of the pleasures and finally undergoing pain. These concepts have to be realized and practiced in day to day life and that is the purpose of festivals.

Among them is the deepavali festival, which means bringing back the inner light, lakshmi into our hearts. Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, peace and prosperity and married Vishnu on deepavali day who appeared during the churning of ocean. Now you will enjoy a small skit describing the events leading to the churning of the ocean. You will be glad to see the Seeking amrita or self realization is symbolically represented by churning of the ocean. All this happened when Indra disrespected Wisdom. Then to end suffering, the intellect or Knowledge of the Self represented by Vishnu can only help. You will see this aspect in the churning of ocean. Lord Vishnu took his second avatar as tortoise in this incident. I welcome you to enjoy this play now.

Scene - One

Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom is seated in Brahmaloaka. Lord narada maharishi the son of Lord Brahma, the creator and Goddesses Saraswathi meets after after meeting Lord Vishnu in

Vaikunda. Maharishi Narad represents Bhakthi or devotional mind that seeks the pure-consciousness ,Vishnu. Narad chants the glories of the 1000 namesof Vishnu, the Vishnu sahasranama.

Narad Maharishi chants Narayana Narayana

After the visit of Narada Mahrishi, urvashi the celestial dancer visits Goddess saraswathi. Urvashi now dances before Saraswathi.

Saraswati: I am very pleased with your dance, Urvashi and Apsara. Here is my token of appreciation, Urvashi. This garland represents the blissful wisdom attained through inner perfection.

Urvashi takes the garland and does Namaste.

Urvashi: Dhanyavaad, Saraswati. It is a great honor for me.

Saraswati and Apsara leave the scene.

Urvashi: (Talking to Apsara): Saraswati said this garland is special, it represents wisdom –gnana and so this is worth sharing with others. Wisdom should be shared with others. To whom shall I give this first?

Apsara: It should be given to some one who is great and selfless and only then can he pass it on to others.

Urvashi: Oh! Here comes the great sage Durvaasa. He is known for his anger, but he has used his anger to initiate good actions.

Urvashi: (to sage Durvaasa) Pranaam! Maharshi Durvaasa. This garland of wisdom is a momento from Goddess Saraswati. I thought of giving this to you, O! Great Soul.

Durvaasa: Mangalam, putri.

Urvashi moves away.

Durvaasa: (to himself). This great gift of wisdom from Saraswati should be given to some one who is only busy in seeking pleasures of the senses. What is the use of external pleasures if he is ignorant of the bliss he has within himself.

Indra comes with his wife Sachi, both of them laughing with each other, not noticing the sage.

Durvaasa calls: Indra, Sachi, Indra, Sachi!

Indra and Sachi turn and say: O! Sage, Pranams to you.(Show Namaste gesture)

Durvaasa: Ayushmaan bhava! This is a great gift of wisdom from Saraswati. I thought it will befit

you.

Indra :Dhanyavaad! Maharishi.

Durvaasa walks away.

Sachi to Indra: How can you accept this worthless garland? We are used to wearing costly and precious jewels, gold and gems. It is a prestige issue. What will the other Gods think of us if we wear this garland of flowers?

She snatches the garland from Indra and throws it on the floor and stamps it.

Durvaasa sees that and comes angrily to them.

Durvaasa: Indra, you have forgotten and dishonored Saraswati, the seat of Intellect. Having lost intellect, may you and your companions lose the power of health, beauty, wealth, courage, knowledge. You will become mortal and die.

Indra panics and cries: O! sage, please forgive my ignorance and my action. Please take back your curse.

Sachi: Sage Durvaasa, please help us!

Durvaasa: No, I cannot take back the curse. You have to suffer for your mistakes.

Scene Two.

Indra disrespects wisdom, and so attain mortality. He repents for his mistake and so seeks for immortality. He approaches again saraswathi, the Goddess of knowledge and Brahma dev, the mind or the lord of creation. Indra is accompanied by Lord varuna crying for help.

Indra and other Gods : Oh Brahma Dev, please save us. We are in deep trouble. We have been cursed by sage Durvaasa.

Brahma: I know all that is happening. Any one who has disrespected Wisdom and Intellect has to suffer its consequences. O! Saraswati, the Goddess of Wisdom, please suggest to Indra the steps to overcome all these losses.

Saraswati: Indra, for you to enjoy a heavenly life, you should have Wisdom. Without it you may still be in heaven but all your happiness will only be for a short time. Having made a mistake, to get heaven back, churn the ocean called Ksheer Sagar.

Indra and Gods: Please guide us in this task!

Brahma: To do this, take the help of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva to provide the snake Vasuki and the Mandhara mountain to churn the ocean. You will get Amrita and become Immortal.

Saraswati: But Indra you cannot accomplish this task alone. So take the help of the Asuras' strength in this churning action.

Varun: Indra , let us go to Bali, the king of Asuras and get his help.

Bali: Varun, are you ready to fight?

Varun: No, Bali, I have come not to fight but get your help.

Bali: My help?

Varun: yes, Bali. Please help us to churn the ocean, Ksheer sagar to get Amrit.

Bali: Will you give us Amrit too?

Varun: yes, Bali. We will share Amrit with you. Let us now go and start the churning.

Scene three:

The devas and asuras started churning the cosmic ocean, Ksheer sagar. . They used the man-dhara mountain as the churning rod and the snake vasuki as the churning rope. All were seeking immortal amrit through this churning. Mrit means death and A-mrit means no death or immortality.

Saraswati: Oh,the asuras are holding the snake's head and Devas are holding the tail and churning the ocean.

Brahma: This churning is going to take some time.

Indra: Meanwhile,,O Vishnu, please explain the significance of Ksheer Saagar to us.

Vishnu: The ocean of milk is the ocean of the mind, which has the never ending waves of thoughts and emotions. Mandhara, the mountain represents concentration.

Brahma: The word Mandhara contains two words "man" (mind) and "dhara" (a single line) which means holding the mind in one pointed focus.

Saraswati: Vasuki, the snake represents the eternal desires we have. We have a long list of desires which is Ananta or eternal like this snake.

Indra: Lord Vishnu, you have assumed the form of a tortoise and held the Mandhara from sinking. What does this mean, O! Padmanabha?

Vishnu: The mind is not stable because it always wanders. This mind has to be pulled inwards like the tortoise which pulls its body into a tough shell. This is why I took the form of a tortoise to give

stability to the mountain Mandhara.

Brahma: Only through discipline in life can we attain the state of the Tortoise. We should have control over the senses like the tortoise which holds the mountain.

Indra: Devi Saraswati, why did you ask Indra to seek the help of Asuras for the churning of this ocean?.

Saraswati: .The Asuras represent negative energies like anger, jealousy and hatred. But this energy can be used for purifying the mind. This is the churning action of the ocean of the mind.

The first thing that appeared in the churning of the ocean was not a pleasant one. A deadly poison called halahal arose. The terrified Asuras and Devas start running here and there, screaming.

Brahma: Devi, why all this commotion?

Indra: Oh Brahma Dev, please help, there is deadly poison coming out of the snake, Vasuki. Please save us from the poison.

Varun &, Bali: Help Help Help!!!!

Brahma: The halahal or poison represents the suffering and pain we undergo at the beginning of spiritual saadhana. Do not be afraid of this strong inner turmoil. The only solution to overcome the pain and suffering is to witness it, be aware of this.

Saraswati: This awareness is Lord Shiva. So let us pray to Lord Shiva.

All chant loudly : Har Har Mahadev! Har har Mahadev! Har Har Mahadev!

[Varun, Indira, Bali: Help us Lord Shiva, help us Shiva and Paarvati.

Shiva appears hearing to the cry of devas and asuras. The compassionate shiva who represents awareness, swallowed the poison. The blue colored poison that he drank remained his neck. So he is called neela kanta, the blue necked one.

All chant “ Jaya Jaya Mahadev, Jaya Jaya Mahadev! Jai Shiv Shakti!

When we do spiritual practice we attain peace of mind. Chandra who represents the peaceful mind appeared from the ocean. This was followed by other precious gifts.

Brahma: Once we have patience in our saadhana, we will get the fruits of the action. Look! Here comes Kaamadhenu (the wish fulfilling cow), the Uchchaisrava (the white horse), Airavata (the white elephant), Kaustubhamani (a rare diamond), Kalpavriksha (the wish fulfilling tree), and now comes Lakshmi, the goddess of all wealth.

Lakshmi, walking to Vishnu: , Peace and prosperity to the one who has complete control over his

mind and senses. Oh Vishnu, you are that Purushothama. Please accept me, O! Lord.

Vishnu: Lakshmi, you are the light of my heart. Your coming to me will be celebrated by all as Deepavali on Earth symbolized with lights. The darkness in the hearts will be filled with your light, Lakshmi.

Shakti (Paarvati): Those who clean their hearts from all evil tendencies and do Lakshmi Pooja will get ashta-aishwarya from you.

All Chant “ Shri Lakshmi-pati ki Jay, Maha Lakshmi ki Jay”

Brahma: When Lakshmi enters as light into our hearts, there will be happiness and prosperity everywhere and we will also attain Amrit. Look Lord Dhanvantari is coming with Amrit.

Dhanvantari brings the bowl of Amrit.

All chant” Om Namo Narayana, Dhavanrijiki jay!”

Varun: What does Dhanvantari signify, O! Shiva?

Shiva: Dhanvantari stands for health. The vessel containing the Amrit was brought before the gods and the demons by Dhanvantari, the Divine Physician. This signifies that immortality can be achieved only when the body and mind are in a perfect state of health.

Vishnu: Spiritual success is not possible in the case of a person who is mentally or physically sick. So take care of health.

Indra: Devi Saraswati, please explain why Lord Vishnu, took the form, of Mohini and gave immortality only to the Gods with Amrit.

Saraswati: Lord Vishnu in the form of Mohini stands for delusion of the mind in the form of pride. It is the pride of achievement to which the asuras or the demons succumbed and thus lost their right to enter the world of immortality.

Vishnu: Pride and egoism are the last hurdles one has to overcome in spiritual life before experiencing self-realization.

Lakshmi : Having attained Amrit, now let us all go to Fairfield and enjoy the Diwali celebrations and bless them all!!!

All: Namaste

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