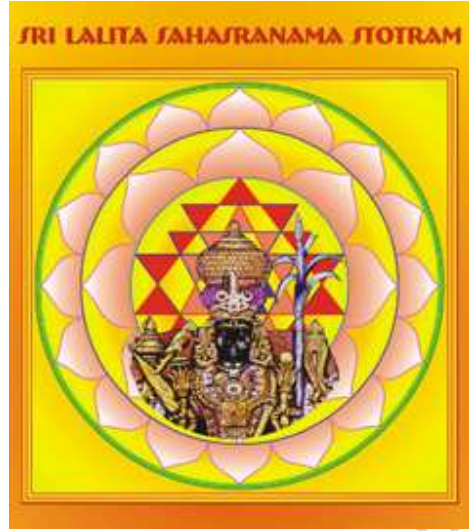


Explanation and significance

The great significances of Sri Lalitha Sahasranama



An Introduction to the one thousand epithets for the Divine Mother

Once the Great Universal Mother Sri Lalithambika at her abode of Sripura in a delighted mood with all compassion and grace of motherly love called Vasini and other Vag devis and ordered them to compose one thousand hymens propitiating the powers and secret philosophy of Sri Vidya and concerned to bless the souls who recite the same. The Vag Devis accepted the divine order of the mother and composed Sri Lalitha Sahasranama which contains one thousand sacred names of Sri Lalitha.

The text was presented at a wonderful moment in the august presence of thirty corers devas, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheswara and Sadhasiva while Sri Lalithambika appeared dynamically over her throne supported on carved figures of lions. The divine mother was delighted to listen in the hymens and said, "Oh! Vag Devi... you have perfectly completed the divine order assigned to you and I am very much pleased. Let this holy text be initiated to my devotees and I assure to sanction all boons who chant these one thousand names." Sri Lalitha Sahasra Nama is available at the middle segment of Brahmanda Purana. It shines like a diamond preset on a crown in the stothra kanda of Sri Lalitha Upakyana.

Vedanta the complete essence of Veda finally declares the Realization of

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Brahman as Brahmagnana as the ultimate Reality. Sri Vidya guides practically to reach the objective intended by Vedanta. The philosophy of Sri Vidya encompasses all branches of Sanathana Dharma and removes discriminations. It remains as an ocean where all the rivers of wisdoms merge. The six dharsanas of Indian Philosophy, Advaita, Dvaita, Visishtadvaita, Nyaya, Vaiseshika and Mimamsa along with six branches of Sanathana Dharma Ganapathya, Koumara, Saiva, Saktha, Vaishnava and Sowra are realized harmoniously through Sri Vidya. The mighty path of realization, Sri Vidya was well explained by Sri Bhaskararaya (1690-1785) with exponent treatise like Varivasya Rahasya and Sethubandha. He wrote Sri Lalitha Saharanama Bhashyam that elucidates the meanings of one thousand hymens.

The first part of Sri Lalitha Saharanama is a dialogue between Sage Agasthya and Lord Hayagreeva as the lord initiates the sage with the auspicious wisdom.

Sri Hayagreeva says "Sri Lalitha sahasranama is the best one of all such texts and it should be chanted always to please the divine mother. If anyone chants with Vilva leaves, thulasi or the petals of lotus over a Sri Yantra will be blessed by the mother instantly."

Sri Lalitha Sahasranam Stotram consists of sixteen parts. The first three slokas describe the grand incarnation of the mother. Lord Shiva once involves into continuous penance and in turn all the activities of the worlds stand still. The worried devas lead by Indra request Manmatha the God of love to wake up Lord Shiva. Hesitatingly Manmatha throws an arrow of five flowers of desire on the Lord. Siva wakes up from his deep meditation and burns Manmatha into ashes by opening fire from his third eye. Because of the absence of Manmatha the worlds suffer without restoration. Rathi, wife of Manmatha begs Parvathy the consort of lord Shiva to bring her husband alive. Due to the pressure raised by Parvathy, Siva sprinkles the sacred water from his holy container over the ashes of Manmatha and he appears back. But there happens a tragedy that from the smoke emerged from the ashes there arrives a demon called Bandasura. He appears to be the form of arrogance and ignorance who tries to destroy the three worlds. As per the guidance of Siva, a sacred fire ritual is performed by Indra for invoking the divine mother Sri Lalithambika. The holy maid marries Siva incarnated as Sri

Kameswara and begins her regime at the top of the mountain Maha Meru named as Sri Pura.

The second part from 4 to 21 slokas describes the physical beauty of Sri Thiripura Sundari praising from the crown to feet.

The third part consisting slokas 23 to 24 details about the Sri Nagaram the abode of mother. Sri Nagaram means the city of auspiciousness and it resembles the Sri Chakra. It has nine enclosures called "avarana" means stages of concealment. At topmost centre of the altar Sri Lalithambika sits over her throne supported by lions. The seat of mother is known as "pancha brahmasana" and her state is great blissfulness.

The fourth part of Slokas 25 to 34 explains about the war lead by the mother against Bandasura. The Universal mother Sri Lalithambika destroyed the demon Bandasura and his forces using her powerful weapon "Mahapasupathasthra" and demolished the fort of the demon at Sonithapura using another weapon "Kameswarasthra". The righteousness of the Universe is re-established and the devas are rescued and regained their power.

The fifth part of Slokas 35 to 36 describes about the subtle form of Mother to be meditated as the Mantra form. The sacred mantra of Sri Vidya cult is known as Pancha dhasakshari consisting of 15 syllables and three parts. The first part, Vagbavakuta that has 5 syllables is considered as the face of the mother, the second part Kamarajakuta of 6 syllables is considered as the body of the mother and the third part Sakthikuta consisting of 4 syllables is assumed as the parts below the hip of the mother.

The secrets of Kundalini yoga is explained in the sixth part, slokas from 37 to 40. The Bramham has manifested by its own wish and created all worlds. The subtle cosmic energy is within our body at the Mooladhara chakra and dwells as a coiled snake. The devotee who involves in prayer, meditation and practice of Sri Vidya ignites the coiled force and takes the same to through the other chakras named as swathishtana, manipuraka, anahatha, vishudhi, agna, guru peeta, gayathri peeta and sahasrara-Sri Vidya peeta sailing via the centre canal called Sukshmna nadi.

Simultaneously the practitioner breaks the knots called Brahma Granthi,

Vishnu Granthi and Rudra Granthi. The enlightened kundalini shakthi meets Shiva at the sahasrara and merge with him in unity. This yogic practice leads one to the highest realization and blissful state.

The seventh part of 41 to 43 slokas defines the grace of mother towards her devotees. The earthly life is like a forest with full of thorns. It gives severe sorrows to one who enters into it without guidance. The mother removes all sorrows to the devotees who surrender themselves at the lotus feet of hers. She wipes out all ignorance and gives eternal auspicious wisdom. She mops the fear from the heart of the devotee and leads to enlightenment. Once if we understand the divine energy in the form of mother and surrender she takes care of all our sorrows and clears all travails of our life. Sri Lalithambika worship and Sri Vidya meditation is beyond all discriminations like caste, creed and religion. For her devotees there is only blissfulness and no sorrows forever.

The eighth part consisting slokas from 43 to 45 describes about the mediation of the mother in formless stage without any attributes. This is known as Nirguna Upasana. The path of Sri Vidya has four lines like carya- the bhakthi path of worship, kriya – chanting of mantras and performing rituals, yoga-meditation and yoga and gnana- self-realization and sacrifice. One can choose the line of his or her choice. The ninth part consisting slokas 43 to 46 explains about the benefits attained by the aspirant who walks through the formless stage. One who praises the mother who has no form in "Nirguna Upasana" as "Niradhara, niranjana, nirlepa, nirmala, nithya, nirakara, nirakula, nirguna, nishkala, shantha" attains liberation from the imprints created by the mind, intellect, sole and ego with stain of desire, anger, avarice, discrimination and jealousy.

The tenth part of Sri Lalitha Sahasranama, slokas continuing from 46 and elapse in 51 details about the benefits achieved through the formless worship. The divine mother is free from all desires and afflictions. She is beyond the sphere of multiplicity. She is not dependent on anything or anyone. She is eternally free. She dwells in ever-awake consciousness.

There is no cause for her, but she is the first cause. The eleventh part leading from sloka 51 and ends with 60 elucidates the worship of the divine mother in form as " Saguna upasana". In this form of worship the devotee

sees the mother in a tangible existence. The path of sakthy worship recommends both styles of worship with figure or without outward appearance. One can attain the liberation through deep meditation or the external methods like puja, japa or yagna. Siva and sakthy are like the word and its meaning. The mother is the consort of Siva, the Supreme ruler of Universe. She is all auspiciousness and the transcendent consciousness. She is the essence of all mantras (mystical sounds), soul of all yantras (mystical diagrams) and embodiment of all tantras (scriptures dealing with worship).

The eleventh part slokas 61 to 75 deals with the divine manifestation of mother in five primordial forces. She is in the form of exquisite with charming smile. She is the form of supreme bliss. She manifests in the five fold forms of pacha buthas (five elements –earth, water, fire, air and ether), Pancha tanmatra (touch, taste, vision, smell and hearing) and Pancha prana (prana, apana, udhana, vyana and samana). Brahmas or highest deities are namely: Brahma - earth, Vishnu - water, Rudra - fire, Iswara - Air and Sadasiva - ether. The epithet 249 of Sri Lalithasaharanama says that the mother Goddess sits on a seat formed from the five dead deities referred above. "Om pancha pretha sana seenayei namaha" (249) The word 'dead' is referring here to the inactive nature of the five elements. She is the source of creation, protection, destruction, disappearance and appearance. "Salutations to her who is playful (Lalitha) – Her play being creation, sustentation and dissolution of the Universe."

The twelfth part, composed of slokas 76 to 80 describes the body and soul concept as "kshetra and kshetragna rupa". The physical body is the composition of five elements with mind, intellect, action and ego. Body is the seat and the soul is the reflection of the divine mother sits over it.

The thirteenth part slokas from 81 to 97 speaks about the deities and their abode. The divine mother dwells both in the inner and external worlds.

The ten subtle chakras from mooladhara to Sri Vidya peeta are the inner abodes. There are 50 external abodes are there as Sri Lalitha Sahasranama praises "Panchshad rupini". The sacred pilgrims like Kailash, Nepal, Varanasi, Kethar, Omkar, Haridwar, Ujjaini, Hasthinapur, Kanyakumari, Madurai, Trichy and Kanchipuram are some of them.

Universal Mother Sri Lalithambika has emerged in South India, Tamilnadu, Coimbatore, Periya Thadakam, at Sri Lalithambikai Peetam. She is praised as "Shad anga devatayuktha" as she appears along with six physical deities like hridaya devi, siro devi, shika devi, netra devi, kavacha devi, and asthra devi.

The following slokas from 98 to 110 is about Yogini nyasa. This part of the epic explains the secrets of meditating the divine mother in the six chakras from mooladhara to agna along with deities named as Dakini, Rakini, Lakini, Sakini, Halini, and Yakini.

The fifteenth part slokas 111 to 180 describes about the supreme powers of the divine mother and the conciliation among various paths of attainment. The divine mother exists as the fire in mooladhara, as Moon in agna and as Sun in the Sahasrara. She is the subtle power in the sound of the mantra, she dwells in the heart of the master-guru, and she emerges as the consorts of Brahma, Siva and Vishnu. The Universe is the expression of her compassion and play.

The 994th epithet says "abalagopa vidhitha" meaning such a great Goddess can be realized by young boys who care cows and people with innocence like children. She is beyond all discriminations. She is simple to the innocent and mystical for the skeptic.

The sixteenth part 180 to 182.1/2 that is the conclusion of the epic explains about the unification and equanimity of Siva and Sakthy as "Sivasathi ikya rupini". The whole world's sorrow is due to ignorance and illusion. The path of liberation is Sri Vidya. It removes all darkness and leads to realization.

Once we come to understand the great mother, it means that we have crossed millions of births and deaths and the time has come now for liberation. Everything we experience is her play. If we understand this we are liberated from all dualities. We become as like as a born child in the laps of the mother.