



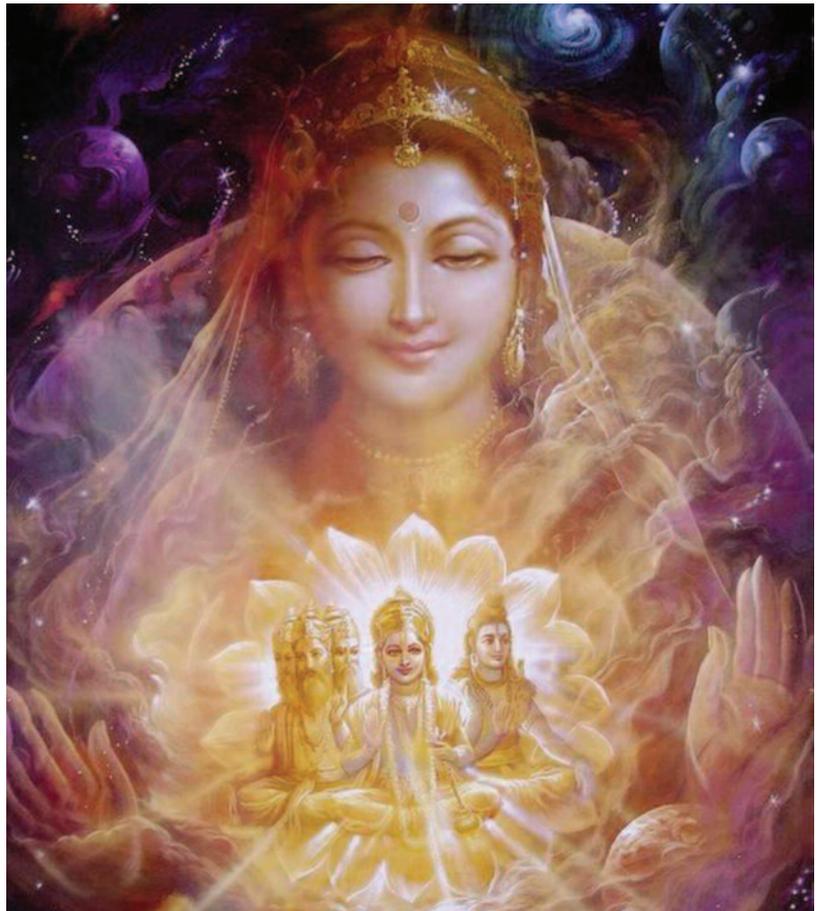
DR SHOBHA RAJU

THE DIVINE MOTHER

...time to pray Her

“Mother! Grace me. I am Your child. Should a child pray it’s mother? When human mother is so committed to her child unconditionally, I know, Divine Mother! Your love should be incomparably superior than that. Please show me a sign of Your unconditional love to me”, I was making this childish request standing in prayer in front of Her. But it was coming right from the bottom of my heart. There was no awareness of any other thing in that moment. It was in Tirumala temple. There is Maha Lakshmi Ammavaru in standing position carved to the wall and is gold-plated. This statue is in between the “Sankeertana Bhandaram” (rock-built cell, where the copper plates containing the compositions of Annamachaya were treasured) and the “Hundi”, (wherein the donations to Lord Venkateswara are offered by devotees).

One woman came and squeezed





my cheek saying, “I am very happy I could meet you here. I am very fond of your songs. Divine Mother’s grace be on you. May your intent be realized”. I asked, “Who are you mother?”. “I am Swami’s devotee. I have come from Kolhapur”, she said (Maha Lakshmi resides in a temple at Kolhapur. It’s an ancient temple with great history of Maha Lakshmi’s grace). I could instantly recognize, She was only The Divine Mother, in that moment! I touched Her Holy Feet.

When we hear such instances, immediately our mind questions, “Is it true?”. As long as we ourselves do not have such experience, it’s mind’s nature to question so. Then we trust in the nature of The divinity to respond. Once we have the experience, then we doubt the person who is sharing the experience. In this money-motivated world, people are going to any length of falsehood to achieve their goals. One should be careful in assessing the spirituality of the people. If the divine grace be on us and if our quest is genuine, we get connected to the genuine and discord the dubious.

My long adherence to the divine subject of Annamacharya philosophy, withstanding all the alluring worldly attractions is the greatest testimony. Annamacharya was the most talented composure, who dedicated His talents totally to Lord Venkateswara, aspiring nothing else except the Divine Grace of The

Lord. At least, he should be trusted. In His life time, he experienced many miracles. His life history is recorded by his own grandson. I could trust him at an young age as I had such experiences from a very early age.

Annamayya feels Alamelumanga (“Alar mel mangai” means woman on the flower...Maha Lakshmi!) as his daughter and gives in marriage to Lord Venkateswara! That’s how Kalyanotsavams (Marriage ceremonies) started at Tirumala.

One of Annamacharya’s Sankeertanas on Maha Lakshmi :

Jaya Lakshmi Vara Lakshmi Sangrama Veera Lakshmi

Priyuralavai Hariki verasitivamma

Paala jalanidhi loni pasanaina meegada

Melimi taamara loni minchu vasana

Neelavarnu nuramu pai nindina nidhaanamai

Elevu lokamulu mammelavamma

Padiyaaru vannelato Bangaaru Pratima

Chedarani vedamula Chigurubodi

Eduta Sree Venkateshu illaalavai neevu

Nidhula niliche Tallee! Nee vaaramamma!

In this song, he says, “Oh Lakshmi of Victory! Lakshmi, Who can shower boons! Lakshmi of valor in battle! You have settled as The Darling of Lord Hari (In spite of You being so powerful, You have femininely accepted to be The Consort of Hari).

You are the rich cream in the ocean of milk! (Maha Lakshmi is seen in the ocean of milk). You are the beautiful fragrance in the qualitative lotus! (Maha Lakshmi is seen standing on a lotus). Being the treasure that’s filled on The Blue-Complexioned Lord (Venkateswara)’s chest (Maha Lakshmi is seen on the chest of Venkateswara, that’s why He is called “Srinivasa”), You reign all the worlds. Kindly take care of us too!

You are the Gold idol with sixteen aesthetic energies. You are very delicate yet firm with the body of unperturbed Vedas. Evidently being the Consort of Sri Venkatesha, You stand firm on all the riches. We are Yours Mother! (Kindly grace us).

May the pure offering of Annamayya’s poetic thoughts invoke Divine Mother’s grace on all of us friends! May you all be blessed by Her with robust health, wealth, peace and long life!

Graceful Vara Lakshmi Vratam!

(Author is a well-known musician, Devotional singer, writer and composer.) 