

Venkatesha Ekamoorthy Bhaavana - 2

Sai Venkatesh Balasubramanian

Sree Sai VidhyaMandhir, Mallasandra, Bengaluru-560109, Karnataka, India.

savvenkateshbala@gmail.com

Abstract

This article, a continuation of the previous article under same title, elaborates further upon the form of Venkatesha, and details how one can visualize forms of divinity corresponding to Abrahamic faiths in the Lord, who is the Universal Mother Bala Ambika Herself as the salvation for the present age of the Kali Yuga.

Introduction

“Venkataadri Samam Sthaanam Brahmaande Naasti Kinchana; Venkatesha Samo Devo Na Bhootu Na Bhavishyati”. In the earlier article, the glory of the Lord Venkatesha was explored, where one could visualize various forms of the divinity within the magnificent form of the Lord. Covered in that context were the Shanmata deities, Jyotirlingas, Dashavatars, Vedic Deities, Navagrahas, Akshara Maatrakas and Sri Yantra Devatas.

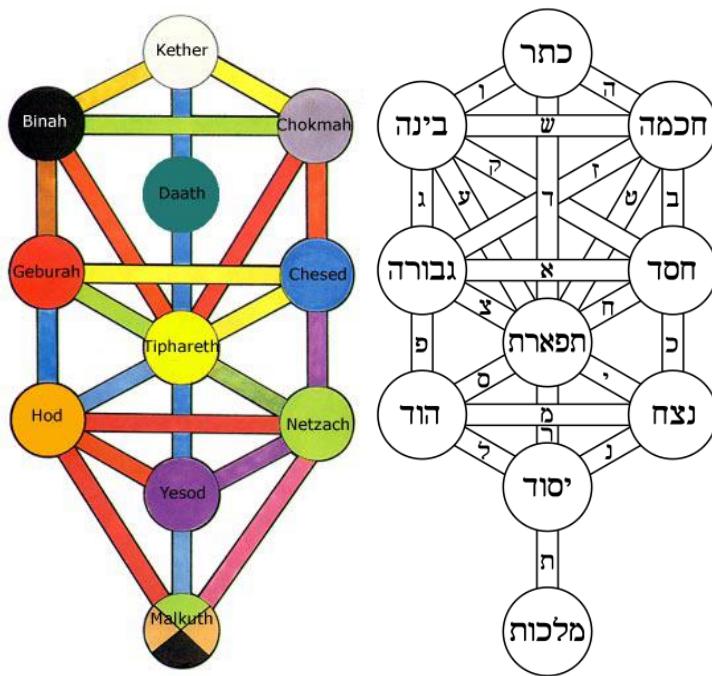
This article continues on the same lines, turning the focus towards divinities of Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and how one can visualize them in the form of the Lord.

17.Kalpavriksha Bhaavana

In the Jewish faith, the mystical religious interpretation of the Word of God, as in various Biblical sections such as Genesis, focusing on the dualist relation between the infinite God ('Ein Sof') and His mortal and finite creation, gives rise to an esoteric tradition termed the 'Kabbalah'. At the heart of this school of thought is the manifestation termed the 'Sephiroth', which is a 'divine plan' detailing 10 different attributes or emanations through which Ein Sof reveals Himself and creates the physical and metaphysical realms. The Kabbalah also details as to how one can internalize the 10 emanations into various parts of the human body.

While conceptually, the revealing of Ein Sof in multiple stages of Sephiroth parallels the enclosures (Avaranas) of the Sri Yantra, structurally, the Sephiroth is characterized as a 'tree of life', and for this reason, this visualization of the Sephiroth in the form of Venkatesha is termed the 'Kalpavriksha Bhaavana', after the Kalpavriksha, which is the all-yielding 'Tree of Life' in Hindu literature.

The structure of the tree of life with the 10 Sephiroths is shown below. In the structure, Kether and Daath are understood to represent conscious and unconscious representations of the same emanation, and are hence taken as one single emanation, usually listed as just Kether.



The first Sephirah (emanation) is Kether, translating to crown. This is the infinite will of the creator, corresponding to the Hebrew name of God, ‘Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh’, and corresponds to the Parabrahman manifest as the One beyond Shiva and Shakti (Shiva-Shakti-Aikya Roopini). Kether is visualized in the crown of Venkatesha, in the site of Aananda Thaandava Nataraja.

The second and third emanations, Chokmah ('Wisdom') and Binah ('Understanding'), correspond to the first revelation of the divine idea (Prakaasha), and understanding of its depth and reason (Vimarsha). These Sephirah represent Shiva and Shakti respectively, and are seen in the right and left eyes of Venkatesha as Shiva and Uma of the Somaskanda. Chokmah and Binah constitute the 'Divine Intellect' of the Sephiroth.

The fourth emanation is Chesed ('Kindness'), representing the loving grace of Lord, inspiring vision. This is precisely the Iccha Shakti described in the form of a noose in Lalitha Sahasranamam ('Raaga Swaroopa Paashaadya'), and is visualized as the Shankha of Venkatesha. The fifth emanation is Gevurah ('Severity'), which is the strength, judgment and withholding of God. Described as the Kriya Shakti in the form of a goad ('Krodhaakaara Ankushojvala'), this Sephirah is visualized as the Chakra of Venkatesha.

The sixth emanation is Tiphareth ('Beauty'), which is the manifestation of the balance between Chesed and Gevurah as compassion. This Sephirah is visualized as the Divine Mother Lakshmi in the heart of Venkatesha, as is the epitome of beauty, wealth, fortune and compassion.

The seventh and eighth emanations are Netzach ('Eternity, Victory') and Hod ('Splendor'). These Sephirah represent the eternal glory and divine vibration that emanates from the Lord (Pranava), and the glory of the Lord in creation and protection of devotees. These Sephirah are seen as the Varada and Katyavilambita Hasta of Venkatesha respectively, the seats of Vinaayaka and Subrahmanyam.

The ninth Sephiroth is Yesod ('Foundation'), representing connection, accomplishment and coherent

knowledge. This Sephiroth is visualized in Venkatesha's navel, as the seat of power and of Padmanabha, from whose navel arises Brahma, the God of Creation.

The tenth and last Sephiroth is Malchut ('Kingship'), and represents the nurturing of the above nine Sephiroth into action, thus finally realizing and bringing into action the Divine plan of Creation. This is visualized in the procreative organ of Venkatesha, which is the seat of Aadya Shakti Kaali.



The ten Sephiroth correspond to four 'worlds' or planes of existence, namely Atzilut ('Emanation') dominated by Chokmah, Beriah ('Creation') dominated by Binah, Yetzirah ('Formation') dominated by Chesed to Yesod, and Assiah ('Action'), the physical realm dominated by Malchut.

18. Tridiva Bhaavana

The central belief in the Christian faith is the concept of the Holy Trinity, holding that God is the three consubstantial hypostases of the Father (who generates), the Son Jesus Christ (who is begotten) and the Holy Spirit (who proceeds).

The basis of visualizing the Holy Trinity arises from the Signum Crucis (the sign of the cross), a ritual blessing tracing an upright cross within the body. The stages of this ritual and the associated visualizations in the form of Venkatesha are listed below:

- Three fingers of the right hand – thumb, index and middle fingers are brought together, symbolizing the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The other two fingers are held slightly bent and symbolize the dual nature of Christ as divine and human.
- Touching the forehead, symbolizing Heaven and creation, chanting 'In the name of the Father'. The forehead is the site of Prajaapati the creator in Nakshatra Bhaavana, as well as Akaarini Amruta in Akshara Bhaavana, both symbolizing creation. Thus, the Father who is the Creator is seen in the forehead of Venkatesha.
- Touching the heart, symbolizing Earth, chanting 'and of the Son'. The stomach, which is the site of Padmanabha and Jyotirlingas Bhimashankar and Vaidyanath, represent the manifest world

(physical realm), in contrast to the Heaven in forehead. Jesus the Son is the begotten one, who is God Himself descended to the physical realm as the redeemer, and is thus visualized in the stomach of Venkatesha.

- d. Touching the shoulders, symbolizing power, chanting ‘and of the Holy Spirit’. Representing the power, grace and glory of the Lord, the Holy Spirit is visualized in the two shoulders of Venkatesha, where Sridhara and Rishikesha, corresponding to powers of Bhukti and Mukti respectively reside.
- e. Touching the heart and reciting Amen (Aameen), which translates to ‘truly’. Creation is seen as the divine operation common to the Trinity, and in the heart of Venkatesha, where the centre of creation resides as Lakshmi, the truth of the Trinity (Satyam) is visualized.
- f. It is this Satyam which is visualized as Lakshmi, the essence of Venkatesha, since here resides the unique, omnipotent God Allah. In this visualization, Muhammad, as the last and true Prophet is visualized as the Guru, in the Lord’s feet, in the seat of Guru Sai Baba.

As the symbol of love, Allah in the heart corresponds to pure and complete Bhakti, corresponding to the Sufi concept of divine love ('Ishq'). At this stage, every action performed by the self becomes an extension of the continuous and intense meditation. This is perfectly exemplified in the 27th verse of Saundaryalahari: “Japo Japah Shilpam Sakalamapi Mudra Virachanaa Gati Kramanam Ashanaadyuti Vidhih| Pranaamah Samveshah Sukhamakilam Aatmaarpanadrusha Saparyaa Paryaayas Tava Bhavatu Yanme Vilasitam||” - Let my chantings, with the sacrifice in my soul, become chanting of your name; Let all my movements become thine Mudhras; Let my travel become perambulations around thee; Let the act of eating and drinking become fire sacrifice to thee; Let my act of sleeping becomes salutations to you; And let all actions of pleasure of mine become parts of thine worship.



Conclusion

The above mentioned sections elaborate the visualization of Abrahamic divinities, namely the Jewish Sephirot, the Christian Holy Trinity and Allah in the magnificent form of Venkatesha.