



OUR TEMPLES



Part-2

The deity makes the temple sacred and sanctifying. Scriptures known as A:GAMA:S scientifically tell us the right process of constructing the temple, making the deity, worshipping the deity, invoking the deity and installing the deity. There are different kinds of temples. They are differentiated by the nature of the presiding deity of the temple and the nature of the worship and ceremonies performed in the temple. Different *A:GAMAS* describe the process of worshipping different deities. *SRI PA:NCHARA:THRA:GAMA* and *VAIKHA:NASA A:GAMA* clearly describe the nature of the Supreme Lord Vishnu and specify the process of worshipping Him.

According to the above mentioned texts the Supreme Lord Vishnu is present in five forms they are: -

- 1) *PARA:* - In the 6th verse of the 15th chapter of Bhagavad-Gita Lord Krishna mentions about His Supreme abode. That eternal realm of the Lord is self-luminous and free from all sorts of miseries. Every sound is music, every step is dance, every building is built with precious stones, every tree is a wish-yielding tree and every cow can grant all the desired objects in that heaven. That divine abode of the Lord is called as *Vaikuntta*. After reaching that
- transcendental realm which is beyond this material universe, one need not return to this material world of miseries. That paradise is the final resort of all the liberated souls. There the Supreme Lord abides in a form known as *Para* or as *PARA VA:SUDEVA*. There He sports with the eternal beings and the liberated souls and thereby exhilarates them. Only the Supreme Lord is the object of concentration of every being in that sphere. Every being is blessed with some or the other service to the Supreme Lord in that paradise.
- 2) *VYUHA:* - The Lord, out of His causeless mercy, comes down from *Vaikuntta* to create and sustain this material universe, for the redemption of all the beings that are entangled in material bondage. The form in which the Lord comes down to create this material universe is known *VYU:HA VA:SUDEVA*. He expands into three forms known *SANKARSHANA*, *PRADYUMNA* and *ANIRUDDHA*, to execute the functions of creation, protection and destruction. All the above mentioned forms of the Lord are called as *Vyuha* forms.
- 3) *VIBHAVA:* - In the seventh verse of the fourth chapter of Bhagavad Githa Lord Krishna says "O descendant

of *Bha:ratha*, whenever and wherever there is decline in the religious practices and unrighteousness predominates (then and there) I manifest myself.” In the very next verse, He says the purpose of such manifestations. Lord Krishna says that He incarnates eon after eon for the protection of the pious and for the destruction of the wicked. He has incarnated innumerable times to save His devotees from the oppressions of the wicked. *NARASIMHA*, *RAMA*, *KRISHNA* etc, are few such incarnations. The form in which the Lord descends to this material world during his incarnations is known as *Vibhava*.

4) *ARCHA*:- The fourth and the most important form of the Lord is known as *Archa*:. The deity form of the Lord is called *Archa*. The Supreme Lord comes down in a deity form to each and every household in which He is adored. If one makes the deity in any prescribed material and form and starts to worship Him with love as prescribed, He comes down to that form. The Supreme Lord who is the source of the entire creation and the cause of all the causes, out of His causeless grace and compassion, comes down in a deity form only to be accessible to each and everyone. The deity form is in no-way inferior to the other forms of the Lord. In fact He is equally potent in all the forms. The deity form

is considered to be much greater than the other forms by the great sages because He is very easily accessible and most merciful in that form.

5) *ANTHARYA:MI*- In the 4th verse of the 9th chapter Lord Krishna says that all the beings abide in Him as He pervades the entire universe in His unmanifested form. Again in the 42nd verse of the 10th chapter He says that He supports the entire universe by pervading all over the universe with a small fragment of Himself. Again in the 15th verse of the 15th chapter and in the 61st verse of the 18th chapter He says that He is seated in the hearts of all the beings. To be precise the Lord has the entire universe including the sentient beings and insentient things as His body. The Supreme Lord is all pervading, hence, He is called as Omni-present. This all pervading form of the Lord is called as *Antharya:mi*. The term *Antharya:mi* is split as ‘*Anthaha*’ and ‘*Ya:mi*.’ ‘*Anthaha*’ means ‘one who resides within’ and ‘*Ya:mi*’ means ‘one who controls’. The Lord abides within everything and within the heart of every being and controls everything, hence, He is called as *Antharya:mi*

Let us know more about the deity, deity worship and our temples in the coming issues.

