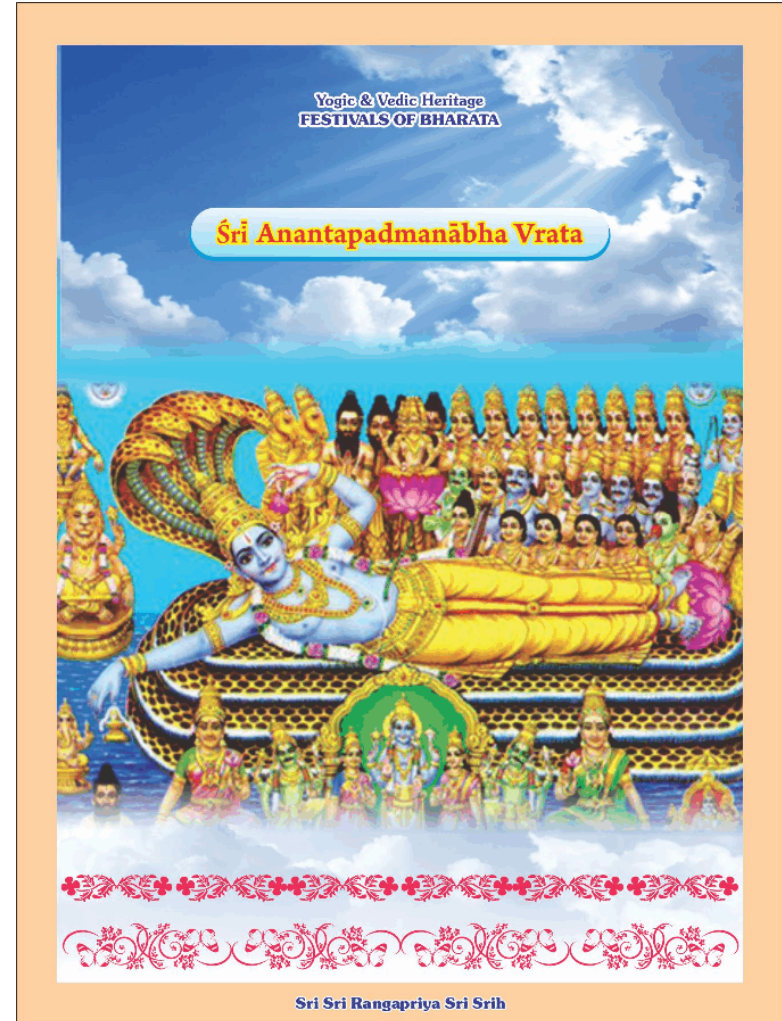




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We Dedicate this Sacred Treasure at the holy lotus feet of

Sriranga Mahaguru and SriMata

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अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	ॡ	ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	अं	अः
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	ṝ	ḷ	ḹ	e	ai	o	au	am	ah
क	ख	ख	ग	ङ											
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa											
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ											
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña											
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण											
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa											
त	थ	द	ध	न											
ta	tha	da	dha	na											
प	फ	ब	भ	म											
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma											
य	र	ल	व	श	ष	स	ह								
ya	ra	la	va	śa	sha	sa	ha								

Example:

क	का	कि	की	कु	कू	कृ	क्लृ	के	कै	को	कौ	कं	कः
ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū	kṛ	klṛ	ke	kai	ko	kau	kam	kah



AnantaPadmanābha Vrata ***(Anantana Caturdaśī) - Anantana Habba)***

The Āradhya Deva of this Anantana Vrata

Ananta Padmanābha Vrata is one of the auspicious *parvas* observed by a vast number of *sanātana Ārya Bhāratīyas*. It is called *AnantanaVrata* as it is a day of austerity of deity worship, and many precepts of *Vratas* have to be followed on that day. The term *Ananta* means ‘king of serpents’, and also *Ādiśesha* the *Śeshanāga*.

“शेषोऽनन्तो नागराजः”

The meaning of the component parts of this term is ‘the one who has no end’. *Ādiśesha* has this name because he is the form of the *prāṇaśakti* (*Kuṇḍalini*) of the Lord, who has infinite power.

This term *Ananta* also refers to the the great Lord *Ādinārāyaṇa* who is a *Śeshī* for this endless

Śeshanāga, whom the Lord has employed (in his service) as a couch, a seat, an adornment, the royal white umbrella, a jewel lamp and *Pādukā* (Sandal)

“नमोऽस्त्वनन्ताय सहस्रमूर्तये” As his (i.e. *Śeshanāga*’s) forms, qualities, powers and glories are all endless, this word (*Ananta*) befits him also.

“अनन्तवीर्यामृतविक्रमस्त्वम्”

"अनन्त" is the name in short of that *Nārāyaṇa* the Lord of Lords, who is called *Anantaśayana* as he has made *Anantanāga* his couch, and is also called *Anantapadmanābha*, as he has the navel which is the origin of *Brahma*.

There are three types among the idols of *Nārāyaṇa* who rests on *Anantanāga*. The first one is *Raṅganātha*. He has only two arms. He has no weapons in his hands. He has neither the lotus projecting out of his navel nor Lord *Brahma* on it. The Lord is in the posture of deep sleep placing one of this arms as a pillow. This idol can be seen in *ŚriRaṅgam*, *Śrirāṅgapattaṇam*. *Śivanasamudra*, *Raṅgasthala* and some other places.

The second one is *Govindarāja*. He has four arms. He has *śankha*, *cakra* and *gadā* in three hands. The other arm is stretched (forward). He is in the posture of having eyes partially opened just after getting up from sleep. *Brahma* is seen sitting on the lotus flower. *Madhu* and *Kaiṭabha* are seen

sitting at his lotus feet with folded hands. One can have the *darśan* of this *Govindarāja* in *Govindarājapattana* which is at the foot of *Tirumala* (*Tirupati*), and in the *Sannidhi* opposite to that of Lord *Naṭarāja* of the *Cidambara* temple of *Cidambaram*, and in *Kalkunṭe* which is near *Chikkatirupati* (which is) near Bangalore.

The third is *AnantaPadmanābhamūrti*. He has two arms. Of them, the left arm is raised holding a downward faced lotus at the level of his neck. In the outstretched right lower arm, he appears to be covering a *śivalinga*. The Lord is shining in the posture of gracing the sages who are wishing him *Suprabhātam* with his broad eyes, just after waking up from *Yoganidrā*.

योगनिद्रान्तविशदैः पावनैरवलोकनैः ।

भृग्वादीननुगृहणन्तं सौख्यशायिनिकानृषीन् ॥

The four faced *Brahma* is beaming in the *Padmāsana* posture in the lotus navel of the Lord. One can see this idol in *Tiruvananantapuram*. The *dhyānaśloka* is as follows:-

श्रीकृष्णं क्षेत्रपालं ध्वजबलिसहितं भूतनाथं नृसिंहम्
व्यासम् शम्भुं गणेशं रघुवरमनुजं जानकीं वायुपुत्रम् ।
विष्वक्सेनं सुपर्णं सुरमुनिकमलाभूमिब्रह्मादिसेव्यम्
वन्दे श्रीपद्मनाभं परमपदमहोपन्नगाभोगसुप्तम् ॥

I salute *Padmanābha* the Lord of the highest abode who is resting on *Anantaśeshanāga*, and who

is being attended by *SrīKṛshṇa*, *Kshetrapālaka*, *Dhvajabali*, *Bhūtanātha*, *Śāstā*, *Yogānṛsimha*, *Vyāsa*, *Śiva*, *Gaṇeśa*, *ŚrīRāmaśītā* *Lakshmaṇa*, *Hanumanta* *Vishvaksena*, *Garuḍa*, *devatās*, sages, *ŚrīDevi*, *Bhūdevi* and *Brahmadeva*, *Sanakādisiddhas*, *Tumburu* *Nāradas*, *Saptarshis*, *Sūrya* and *Candra*, *Dikpālakas*, and *Jaya Vijayas*. As all these three are *Śeshanāga Anantamūrtis*, who among the three should be meditated upon and worshipped during *Anantana Vrata*? It is the third one i.e. *AnantaPadmanābhamūrti*. (*Ananta* is also the short form of *AnantaPadmanābhamūrti*)

When should this *Anantana Vrata* be celebrated?

This *Vrata* should be observed on the *caturdaśī* of *Bhādrapada śuddha*. This *vrata* should be observed even if *caturdaśī* prevails to the extent of just three *muhūrtas* at sunrise.

“उदये त्रिमुहूर्तापि ग्राह्यान्तव्रते विधिः” “मध्याह्ने भोज्यवेलायाम्”

In all the *Vratas*, the *tithi* should extend till the afternoon.

A scholar by name *Divodāsa* says-

“पूजाव्रतेषु मध्याह्नव्यापिनी तिथिः”

If *caturdaśī* prevails atleast for one *muhūrthakāla* on *Bhādrapada pūrṇima*, it should be considered as *pūrṇa tithi* and *ŚrīVishṇu Pūja* should be performed-

“मुहूर्तमपि चेद्भ्रात्रे पूर्णिमायां चतुर्दशी । सम्पूर्णांतां विदुस्तस्यां
पूजयेद्विष्णुमव्ययम्” (*Skānda purāṇa*)

The *Bhavishya Purāṇa* says:

तथा भाद्रपदस्यान्ते चतुर्दश्यां द्विजोत्तम ।

पौर्णमास्याः समायोगे व्रतं चानन्तकं चरेत् ॥

"If *caturdaśī* is there at least for a duration of one *muhūrta*, *Ananta caturdaśī* should be celebrated on that day itself" says a treatise by name *Nirṇayāmṛta*. But, as per the axiom “सन्दिग्धेष्वेकवाक्यत्वात्”, it is mandatory to observe *AnantaVrata* on *Caturdaśī tithi* if it prevails either at the beginning or at the end of the afternoon. This is the conclusion stated in the treatise *Nirṇayasindhu*.

ii) How to celebrate the Vrata?

Sankalpa to perform this *vrata* should be done after bath and *ācamana*. And a *saṅkalpa* should be done for performing *YamunāPūja*, which is a part of the *Anantavrata*. (This *yamunā pūja* should be performed by the side of a river, a lake or a pond or even near a well)

लोकपालस्तुतां देवीम् इन्द्रनीलसमप्रभाम् ।

यमुने त्वामहं ध्याये सर्वकामार्थसिद्धये ॥

क्षीरोदार्यवसम्भूते क्षीरवर्णोपशोभिते ।

प्रसन्ना भव मे देवि यमुने ते नमो नमः ॥

And, as a part of the *Yamunāpūja*, the worship

of (the following viz) *Tunga* who is *Sūryapādābjasambhūtā*, the dark hued *Kṛshṇavenī*, *Nandipādā*, *Bhīmarathī*, *Godāvari* river, deities and *Gaṅgadevī* should be performed. *Yamunādevī* should be worshipped with flowers. After the *Aṅgapūjā*, *nāmapūjā*, and *aṣṭottaranāmapūjās* to *Yamunā* are performed, *uttarārādhana* should be done. All the services such as *Dhūpa*, *dīpa* etc should be offered. And river *Yamunā* should be praised (with the sloka):-

विगाहे यामुनं तीर्थं साधु बृन्दावने स्थितम् ।

निरस्तजिह्वागस्पर्शं यत्र कृष्णः कृतादरः ॥

The worshipped *Kalaśa* which is filled with the water of *Yamunānadī—devī* who is the daughter of the Sun god, and sister of *Yamadharmanārāja*, and who is dearest to *Padmanābha ŚrīKṛshṇa*, should be taken home along with *Maṅgalavādyas*. The *tīrtha* in the *Kalaśa* should to be added to the *Pūjākalaśa* of Lord *Ananta* and, on that (*Kalaśa*) the *darbha* knot, clothes, coconut and flowers should be arranged decoratively. That *darbha* knot should be in the shape of a seven hooded snake.

iii) Worship of AnantaPadmanābha

The number fourteen is a fixed number very dear to *AnantaPadmanābha*. The day of his *pūja* is the fourteenth day of *Śuklapaksha*. The number of knots in the thread in which is he invoked, should

be fourteen etc. After invoking Lord *Ananta* in both the *Kalaśas*, the following should be done viz *saṅkalpa*, *Sarvopacārapūja* *Kalaśapūja*, *Praṇapratishṭhā*, *Dvārapālādiparivārapūjā*, *Dikpālaka pūjā*, *aṅga pūjā*, *pūjā* with leaves and flowers (even red coloured flowers are best), invoking *śeṣha* in fourteen darbha knots, *śeṣhapūja*, *Pūja* of fourteen *doragranthis*. and *āvāhana*. After *āvāhana*, these fourteen *granthi devatās* (deities of knots) viz., *Vishṇu*, *agni*, *Sūrya*, *Indra*, *Brahma*, *Vāyu*, *Śiva*, *Vighneśa*, *Skanda*, *Soma*, *Ākaśa*, *Varuṇa*, *Prṛthvi* and *Vasus* should be worshipped. And then *pūjā* should be done with *nāmāvalis* and *Ashṭtottara Śatanāmāvalis* addressing *Ananta*.

AnantaPadmanābha can be worshipped in a *kumbha* and also in a *maṇḍala*, an idol, or even in a picture. He can also be meditated upon and worshipped in the abovesaid form, as seen in *Tiruvananantapuram*. Or, he can be meditated upon and worshipped in the form, where he is seen resting on the seven hooded *Ādiśeṣha* in *Kshīrasāgara*, Four armed holding a lotus in his right hand and a conch in the lower right hand, a disc in the left hand and the mace in the lower left hand, and attended by *Śrī*, *Bhū* and *Nīlādevīs*, servants like *Garuḍa*, deities, sages like *Sanaka* and the seven sages such as *Bhṛgu* etc. The *dhyānaśloka* (for that worship) is as follows:

कृत्वा दर्भमयं देवं वारांनिधिसमप्रभम् ।
 फणसप्तान्विते सर्पे पिङ्गलाक्षं चतुर्भुजम् ॥
 दक्षिणाग्रकरे चक्रं गदां तस्याप्यधःकरे ।
 शङ्खमूर्ध्वकरे वामे पद्मं तस्याप्यधःकरे ॥
 दधानं सर्वलोकेशं सर्वाभरणभूषितम् ।
 दुग्धाब्धिमध्ये संस्थाप्य तत आवाहयेत् सुधीः ॥

The Lord is resting on a seven headed *Śeṣha* in *Kshīrasāgara*. He is dark complexioned, has four shoulders, holds five weapons such as *Śankha* and *cakra*. He is being served by *Garuḍa* and *Vishvaksena*, and is accompanied by *Śrī-Bhū-Nīlā Devīs*, and *Dvārapālakas*. He is worshipped by *Brahma*, *Indra* and other *devatās*. He is attended upon by *Siddhas* like *Sanaka* etc and seven sages like *Bhṛgu* etc. He holds a disc in the upper right hand and a mace in the lower one, a conch in the upper left hand and a lotus in the lower one. He should be offered *Shoḍaśopacāras* in detail. Also, *pūja* of fourteen *āvaraṇa devatās*, *pūja* with fourteen *patras* and fourteen *pushpas*, and *pūja* with fourteen *doragranthis* should be offered to him. Fourteen types of *bhakshyas* (eatables) should be offered to him. They are- 1) *puri unde* 2) *pullangāyi unde* 3) *Tuṇitenkoḷalu* 4) *araḷunde*, 5) *Cakkuli* 6) *Thenkoḷalu*, 7) *muccore*, 8) *Kāyi obbattu* 9) *Sajjappa*. 10) *Āmbode*. 11) *Kārāseve* 12) *Kobbari Miṭhāyi* 13) *Kadubu* 14) *Atirasa* 15) Butter (mixed

with saffron, Cardamon and sugar) and, 16) beaten rice mixed with jaggery. (beaten rice should be prepared at home with purity)

Each one of these items should be prepared in twenty eight numbers and after offering them to God, fourteen from each of the items should be offered to *r̥thviks*. The rest fourteen should be retained as *prasāda*. And, the services viz *tambūla samarpaṇa*, *uttara nīrājana*, *arghya*, *pradakshiṇa* and *namaskāra* should be offered.

Then, new *doragrahaṇa* (is done next), reciting the *śloka*

अनन्तकामदं देव सर्वपापप्रणाशन ।
अनन्तदोररूपेण पुत्रपौत्रान्प्रवर्धय ॥
अनन्तसंसारमहासमुद्रे मग्नं समभ्युद्धर वासुदेव ।
अनन्तरूपिन् विनियोजयस्व ह्यनन्तसूत्राय नमो नमस्ते ॥

And saluting God, the *dora* should be tied to the right wrist. The following *śloka* is chanted during *dorabandhana*:

संसारगह्वरगुहासु सुखं विहर्तुं
वाञ्छन्ति ये कुरुकुलोद्भव शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।
सम्पूज्य च त्रिभुवनेशमनन्तदेवम्
बध्नन्ति दक्षिणकरे वरदोरकं ते ॥

The worn out old *dora* should be discarded chanting

“नमस्ते सर्वदेवाय विश्वरूपधराय च ।
सूत्रगन्धिषु संस्थाय अनन्ताय नमो नमः ॥

The last part of the *Vrata* is *upāyana dāna*. (The *Kalaśa* of *Āvāhana*, *vastra*, *dakshiṇā* and half of the *naivedya* offered to God should be given as *dāna* to *srotriyas*)

गृहाणेदं द्विजश्रेष्ठ वायनं दक्षिणायुतम् ।
त्वत्प्रसादात् व्रती देव मुच्यते कर्मबन्धनात् ॥

अनन्तः प्रतिगृह्णाति अनन्तो वै ददाति च ।
अनन्तस्तारकोभाभ्यां अनन्ताय नमो नमः॥

The hymn "*Devasyatvā*" should be chanted while offering the *dāna*, and also during the *Pratigraha*. *Pūjā* should be performed again. And *Anusandhāna* should be done with the wish that Lord *Anantapadmanābha* may become pleased, graceful and may grant boons.

अनया पूजया भगवान् सर्वात्मकः अनन्तपद्मनाभः सुप्रीतः सुप्रसन्नो वरदो भवतु”

The story of *AnantaVrata* should be listened to, after the worship.

An important point to be taken note of regarding *Ananta Vrata* is that the number fourteen is significant in this *Vrata*. The day of his *vrata* is *Caturdaśī*. The number of knots in the threads that are tied to the hand in his worship is fourteen. The number of deities in the *Āvaraṇapūja* is fourteen. The number of leaves, flowers and items for *Naivedya* are all fourteen. *Udyāpana* is also after fourteen years. This unique number is

symbolic of the fact that the entire universe consisting of the fourteen worlds is under his unabridged reign. *Ādiśeṣha* who happens to be his couch is *Ananta*. He (i.e. *Ādiśeṣha*) is adored with infinite qualities and endowed with endless power and is totally *Śeṣabhūta* to *Anantapadmanābha*. Remaining in close proximity to him, he happens to be the foremost recipient of his *Śeṣaprasāda*.

"Garuḍa and serpents are enemies by birth. But in the vicinity of Ananthapadmanābha, both are friendly and are completely at his service. Garuḍa is not gandering at his wings and Śeṣhanāga is not worried about his hoods. Because, the gazes of both of them are fixed at Nārāyaṇa who is the eternally blissful Lord." - These were the words of Śrī Gurudeva pertaining to this. *Kālidāsa* also describes this as "मुक्तशेषविरोधेन". ("The one who has not an iota of enmity with *Ādiśeṣha*") *Nāgasarpas* are of different colours and kinds. But this *Nāgarāja Ādiśeṣha* is pure white in complexion, as described by the *alvārs* who were greatest devotees. "Vellattaravil tuyil amarndavittinai". He is of pure bright white colors is of pure bright white colors is full of pure *Sattvaguna*, and not a smidgen of *rajas* and *tamas* is found in him. This *Anantanāgarāja* has one thousand hoods.

The *purāṇas* say that this entire earth is

perched on one of his thousand hoods, like a mustard grain. In the images and pictures in temples, he is seen with five or seven hoods. Which is this strange (imaginary) serpent?

One may say no such snake carrying the earth is seen around. Yes, it is not the physical serpent. This *Śeṣhasarpa* is the very *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* which is described in *Yogaśāstra* and visualized by *jnānis*. As it has countless *Vṛttis*, it is called as a thousand hooded serpent, say the *jnānis*. The *jnānis* who witness it say that the *Prāṇaśakti* (*Kuṇḍalini*) in our *pinda* (body) which has five *vṛttis* such as *prāṇa*, *Apāna* etc. or seven *Vṛttis*, is itself *Ādiśeṣha* as expressed in "सप्तप्राणाः प्रभवन्ति". That is why the *Ādiśeṣha* who is both the couch and umbrella etc to the Lord, is shown as a five hooded or a seven hooded serpent. One can see this *Śeṣhanāga* whom the *yogis* who are *jnānis* have seen with the *Jnānadr̥ṣṭi* and described, only after obtaining the inner eye.

Yogis see this *AnantaPadmanābha* who rests on this *Anantanāga*. We wish that the external worship offered to Lord *Padmanābha* helps us to obtain the *Yogadr̥ṣṭi* and *Jnānadr̥ṣṭi* which are needed for that.

We noted that as per precepts, fourteen pairs of *Bhakṣaṇas* should to be prepared and offered as

Naivedya in the worship of *Ananta*. What should one do if he cannot afford to prepare so many *Bhakshaṇas*? It will be O.K. even if one item among them viz. *Sajjappa* is prepared and offered. God will be pleased even if fruits are offered. Those who can afford, many prepare all of them in fourteen numbers which is a mystical, significant number and offer them for the awakening of the spiritual centres, and for bliss.

It is prescribed that at the end of the *Pūjā*, half of the things used for the worship of God viz the pot, the idol, clothes and the *Bhakshaṇa* and *Naivedya* etc., should be gifted to *Srotriyas*.

But, eligible recipients who are austere, do not (generally) receive (any gifts) from others. In such a case, without finding out whether a person is *satpātra* or *apātra*, can those things be gifted as *dāna* to anyone that comes by at that moment?

No. A *dāna* should be given to *satpātras* only. *Dāna* should be made after meditating upon God and with the sentimental feeling that all the items of gift are *Brahmasvarūpas*. The *dāni* also should receive it with the same *Brahambhāva*. Divine observances should be completed without any blemish touching anyone on both the sides. It is for this very reason, the following *sloka*, the purport of

which is, "everything is *Anantapadmanābha Svarūpam*" should be chanted and reflected upon.

अनन्तः प्रतिगृह्णाति अनन्तो वै ददाति च ।

द्वयोश्च तारकोऽनन्तः अनन्ताय नमो नमः॥

The person who receives the *dāna* is also *Ananta*, the person who gives it is also *Ananta* and the divine force that helps the two to attain salvation is also *Ananta*. We salute Lord *Ananta* again and again.

