**Paramaikāntis’ Svastivācanam**

(śrīmadāṇḍavan āśrama āsthāna Vidvān

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Assume a respectable scholar visits our house. We would offer ‘pūrṇakumbham’ (vessel filled with water) to them at the entrance. After that the vedic scholars would start reciting ‘svastivācanam’ starting with ‘āśuśśiśāno’ while that ‘mahān’ enters the house.

Generally, the svastivācanam consists of compilation of apratiratham, jīmūtasya anuvākam, vihavyam and mṛgāram (the explanation of all the above came in Pādukā).

If you calculate the whole part as poem then this part has sixty seven verses.

If the same is calculated using pañcādi-s, then the first anuvākam has 290 words, i.e., it has 5 pañcādi-s and 40 words. In decimal equivalent, this is 5.8 pañcādi-s which can be approximated to 6 pañcādi-s.

In the second part jīmūtasya, there are 391 words, i.e., 7 pañcādi-s and 41 words. In decimal equivalent, this would be 7.82 pañcādi-s which can be approximated to 8 pañcādi-s.

In the third anuvākam vihavyam, there are 193 words. i.e., 3 pañcādi-s and 43 words. In decimal equivalent, this would be 3.86 pañcādi-s which can be approximated to 4 pañcādi-s.

In the fourth anuvākam mṛgāram, there are 334 words. i.e., 6 pañcādi-s and 34 words. In decimal equivalent it is 6.68 pañcādi-s which can be approximated to 7 pañcādi-s.

So, there are totally 1208 words. In decimal equivalent, it is 24.16 pañcādi-s. If we round of the decimal part then it is 25 pañcādi-s.

After starting svastivācanam, even before the recital of few pañcādi-s are completed that mahān may enter our house.

We cannot recite all the 25 pañcādi-s. Who has patience and time to completely recite all the 25 pañcādi-s?

Hence, we recite in a loud voice the concluding pañcādi of the svastivācanam.

For that in a group we start reciting the word ‘āgaḥ’ loudly. Since, the method of calculating the pañcādi is in vogue and since the first part of the verse ends with ‘āgaḥ’, the custom of starting the recital from that is still in practice.

Hence, we recite the word ‘āgaḥ’ in an earth shattering voice, give a pause and then recite the second part of the verse:

kṛdhīsvasmā aditeranāgā vyenāsi śiśrathoviṣvagagne ||

When a respectable elderly person is visiting the house, is it right to recite an inauspicious word ‘āgaḥ’ meaning sin?

Not only that. Is it right to cut off nine padās of this mantra that prays Emperumān to relieve one from the gravest sin of committing insult to devotees?

Can we, who believe that we would incur great sin if a letter or svara is mispronounced while reciting the Veda, commit this mistake?

Hence, isn’t it a good practice to recite the complete mantra,

yatte vayaṁ puruṣatrāyaviṣṭhā vidvāsaścakṛmākacca nāgaḥ |

kṛdhīsvasmā aditeranāgā vyenāsi śiśrathoviṣvagagne ||

when one is unable to recite the complete svastivācanam?

While talking about these mistakes, I am unable to control the thought of telling few things on the affinity towards ‘ghana pārāyaṇam’.

There are no two opinions that reciting ghanam is the highest level of perfection. ghanam will ensure that a person can recite Veda without violating merger rules of letters and accents. We should honor ghanapāṭhi-s and salakṣaṇa ghanapāṭhi-s. We should encourage them. This is an absolute must for protecting Vedas. But, is it required to arrange for ghana pārāyaṇam?

When the entire veda is recited as ghanam the meaning could be completely opposite to that of the original text.

Let us see an example for this:

There are some mantrā-s in Veda called sāmidheni mantrā-s. In the yajñā-s, people will recite these mantrā-s and add samit (sacred wooden stick) to the Agni. The details for this can be seen in the 26th paragraph in the book ‘srautam’ republished by śrīmuṣṇam śrīmadāṇḍavan. The third mantra in that is:

tantvā samidbhiraṅgiraḥ | ghṛtena varddhayāmasi |

bṛhadagne suvīryam ||

Veda gives a history regarding this mantra.

There were two sages by the name Nṛmedhan and Parucchepan. They had a competition among them to find out who is an expert in Veda. One wet wood would be placed in front of them and both should recite the mantra. On whose recital, the wet wood burns, he would be finalized as the expert in veda. Nṛmedhan recited the above sāmidheni mantra. Only smoke came out of the wood. When Parucchepan recited, the wet wood burnt with flame.

This comes in the eighth anuvākam of fifth praśnam of second kāṇḍam of taittirīya saṁhitā:

नृमेधश्च परुच्छेपश्च ब्रह्मवाद्यमवदेतामस्मिन्दारा वार्द्रेऽग्निञ्जनयावयतरो नौब्रह्मीयानिति नृमेधोऽभ्यवदथ्सधूममजनयत् परुच्छेपोऽभ्यवदथ्सोऽग्निमजनय्त्।

nṛmedhaśca parucchepaśca brahmavādyamavadetāmasmindārā vārdre'gniñjanayāvayataro naubrahmīyāniti nṛmedho'bhyavadathsa dhūmamajanayat parucchepo'bhyavadathso'gnimajanayt |

This is the root text. Root text says that Nṛmedhan created smoke and Parucchepan created fire. Here when the ghanam is recited using the three words dhūmamajanayat parucchepaḥ, the ghanam will be as follows:

dhūmamajanayadajanayat dhūmam dhūmamajanayat parucchepaḥ parucchepo'ajanayaddhūmam dhūmamajanayat parucchepaḥ

This literally means, “Smoke created by Parucchepan; Parucchepan created smoke; smoke Parucchepan created”. Here, the phrase ‘Parucchepan created smoke’ is recited three times.

This goes against the original text which says that ‘Nṛmedhan created smoke and Parucchepan created fire’.

Is this adverse modernity really required?

For the sake of expertise, ghanam can be practiced. When the meaning does not get changed completely, the verses which sounds good can be recited as ghanam. However, entire veda should not be recited as ghanam.

Hence, our elders did not show lot of interest in ghana pārāyaṇam. They focused only till krama pārāyaṇam.

ghanam is a sweet like ‘halwa’. This definitely adds to the tadīyārādhanam. However, can sweet alone become tadīyārādhanam?

Please do not ignore this as my exaggerated statement. This is the opinion of many vedic scholars as well.

Bhramaśrī śrī sundararāma vājapeya Ghanapāṭhi, who is born in the family that has produced ghanapāṭhi-s for fourteen successive generations, has the same opinion. In fact he told me this: “You are capable of explaining this to people in a way it reaches them. You should write at an appropriate time so that this ghanamoham is rid of their mind”.

It is in our hands to reduce this adverse trend.

Now let us see the Keith’s translation for twenty first mantra:

**Whatever sin we commit against thee,**

**As men are wont in ignorance, O most Young!**

**Make us blameless before Aditi,**

**Remove our evil deeds on all sides, O Agni**

We can change this as follows and relish Devapperumāḻ:

**Whatever sin we commit against your men**

**In ignorance, Oh! Varada! The youngest!**

**Relieve us of them in good manner**

**Make us sinless in the view of “all- sin- consuming Glutton” -the mercy of yours**

**Remove our evil deeds on all sides, the one kept as Varada before us by your mercy!**