**Paramaikāntis’ Svastivācanam**

(śrīmadāṇḍavan āśrama āsthāna Vidvān

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In the last issue, I had raised few questions: “Veda says that the Agni which is sviṣṭakṛt is an incomparable Rudran. Can we, the Paramaikāntis, perform homam towards Rudran? If we do that will we not stoop down from the position of not worshipping other deities even in the forgetfulness?”

“Veda ordains that we need to perform homam towards sviṣṭakṛt Agni who is Rudran. Veda is the commandment from the supreme Lord. Hence, we cannot disobey that. Hence, we need to understand that this homam is towards Emperumān who has sviṣṭakṛt Agni aka Rudran as His body.

You had insisted that if there are not explicit phrases in the verse that bars from interpreting the terms sviṣṭakṛt, Agni and Rudran as Emperumān, we should interpret them to mean Emperumān in accordance with the thoughts of our preceptors.

However, as per your own account of the history of sviṣṭakṛt, it is the deva-s who brought Agni to earth by offering him food and he came to be known as sviṣṭakṛt.

While this being the fact, if you tell that sviṣṭakṛt means one who makes the yajñā to be performed well and on that basis this represents Dġvapperumāḻ. Brahmā tried to perform aśvamvedha yajñā in Kāncīpuram, which is Satyavrata kṣetram. Angered by being left out by Brahmā while performing this, Sarasvatī devī got angry and came as Vġgavatī river to flood the place where yajñā was being held. At that time Emperumān appeared as a ‘sġtu’ to prevent the flooding. The demons created many obstacles. To remove the illusionary darkness created by them Emperumān appeared as ‘Viḻakkoḻi Emperumān’. When they came for waging war, He appeared as ‘Aṭṭabhuyakaran’ and destroyed them. Thus he ensured that the yajñā of Brahmā was well performed. On that basis He is sviṣṭakṛt. If you interpret it in this way, it is against the history of sviṣṭakṛt highlighted by Vedas.

He Himself appeared in the yajñā of Brahmā and is still preserved in that holy body by His mercy so that we can also see Him. Hence, He is Agni on the basis of ‘brahmaṇaḥ asmākaṁ ca cakṣuṣām agram svadayayā nītaḥ’. For the same reason cited above, you cannot give this story as well.

Veda itself says that ‘Rudran’ is name of ‘Agni’. In the fifth praśnā of the first kāṇḍā of taittirīya saṁhitā it gives a history starting with ‘devāsurāssamyattā āsan’.

War broke between devās and asurās. At that time devas won asurās. Devās took over the possession of gems, pearls, gold and other great wealth of asurās. Devās were afraid that they may lose all these to asurās if another war breaks out. Hence they handed over the wealth to Agni. As expected, asurās brought another army to wage war with devas. With the blessings of Emperumān, devās won the war again. After that they came to Agni to take back the wealth. Agni did not wish to give the wealth back. He was greedy and wanted to retain that wealth with himself. Hence, he ran away and hid himself. Devās followed him and caught him. Agni was feeling miserable since the wealth would go away. He cried then. He attained the name of ‘Rudran’ since he cried. Veda says that

‘sorodīt yadarodīt tat rudrasya rudratvam’

His tear drops turned into silver. Hence silver coins should not be given as dakṣiṇā in yajñā. The person who gives silver coin as dakṣiṇā will attain the misery within that year that will make him cry.

Hence, only gold coins should be offered as dakṣiṇā in yajñā.

Let us stop the story with this as we need to know only the background of how Agni got the name of Rudran.

Since Veda has explained that the person who cried is Rudran, this will contradict if we say that Aruḻāḻapperumān is Rudran. Hence we need to understand the sviṣṭakṛt and Rudran as the fire God Agni. To ensure that we do not deviate from our stand of not worshipping other deities, we need to understand this Rudran as the body of Emperumān while reciting this.”

Here we need to note down a fact.

In the grammar, 189th aphorism of uṇādi aphorisms, there is an aphorism: ‘roder niṇulk ca’. As per that it is mandatory to explain that rodayatīti rudraḥ. i.e. who makes one cry is known as Rudran. But, Veda says that Agni cried. It does not say that he made one cry. When Veda tells that one who cried is Rudran, can its auxiliary text vyākaraṇam (grammar) tell that one who makes other cry is Rudran?

Scholars tried to reconcile this in many ways. Jñānānanda Sarasvati has explained as follows in his commentary book ‘tatvabodhinī’ for the grammar: ‘śivā is one of the trinity deities and the deity for destruction. Hence, he was named ‘Rudran’ on the basis that he makes people cry and that is what this aphorism explains. Veda says that Agni is ‘Rudran’ since he cried. If we understand this then there is no contradiction.’

Even in Vedas there are many places where Lord śivā is denoted as ‘Rudran’. Agni has also been denoted as ‘Rudran’ in many places.

Hence śrī Sāyaṇācāryar explains as follows when writes commentary for the fifth praśnā of fourth kāṇḍā of taittirīya saṁhitā which is famously known as śrī Rudram and Namakam: “this praśnā has been praised as Rudrādhyāyam in smṛti-s, agama-s and purāṇā-s. I have explained this in a separate book named Rudra kalpam. Here, I am giving just the necessary explanation for the part that is required for Agni homam by the name of śatarudrīyam as ordained by the Veda”.

smṛtyāgamapurāṇeṣu rudrādyāyapraśamsanam |

bahvasti tadvistareṇa rudrakalpe'bhidāsyate ||

iha karmāṅgatā yādṛk varṇitā brāhmaṇena tām |

voḍuṁ śabdārthamātrasya vivṛtiḥ kriyate spuṭā ||

Thus based on the fact that Lord śivā has a name ‘Rudran’ and śrī Rudra praśnā explains the glory of Rudra, devotees of Lord śivā say that śivā has to be considered as Supreme deity.

In the book named ‘paratatva nirṇayam’ blessed by śrī Naḍādūr Ammāḻ, in the concluding portion of argument of Shaivaites, śrī Ammāḻ has offered counter arguments for the statement: ‘śrī rudrādyāyaśca rudra vaibhavaparāḥ prasiddhāḥ’.

In this counter, he has given three reasons:

śrī rudraḥ ca na rudrasya sarvaiśvarya pratipādana paraḥ |

1. atra jagatkāraṇatva- mokṣapratatvādi- sarveśvarāsādhāraṇa - dharma- pratipādanādarśanāt |
2. agniśayane ca arthāntaraparatayā tadviniyogāt |
3. pūrvoktānanyapara - aneka śrutyantara- virodāśca |

śrī Rudram does not explain the Lordship of Lord śivā over everything. There are 3 reasons:

1. The mantrā-s of śrī Rudram do not say that śrī Rudran is the cause for the entire world. They do not say that He is capable of granting salvation. Thus the mantrā-s do not attribute any characteristic of the supreme entity to Lord śivā.
2. People perform cityāgni homams assuming that these mantrā-s refer to Agni.
3. If we assume Lord śivā as the supreme entity because he is glorified in śrī Rudra praśnā, then this would contradict with many other verses which state Nārāyaṇā as the supreme entity.

Hence, śrī Naḍādūr Ammāḻ states that even if we assume that Rudra praśnā celebrate Lord śivā, we cannot conclude that Lord śivā is the supreme being.

We are not worried if these mantrā-s are taken as glorifying Lord śivā by the devotees of Lord śivā or if these are considered as glorifying Agni by others. When we recite these mantrā-s we will interpret as per the Vedic philosophy.

We will interpret this as the inner soul of Rudra or Rudra is the name for Emperumān as stated in the sahaśranāmam ‘rudro bahuśirā babhruḥ’.

Even śrī śankara Bhagavadpādar while explaining this name did not show the unity between śivā and Viṣṇu and show Nārāyaṇā appearing as Rudran. He has given three explanations all showing the reasons for the name of Viṣṇu as Rudran.

śrī Parāśara Bhaṭṭar has explained the same as follows: ‘evaṁ vida rūpa vividha ceṣṭida dhṛta hṛdayān sānanda bhāṣpavān kurvan rodayati iti rudraḥ’.

Emperumān is Rudran since he makes his devotees shed tears of joy by His beauty and various acts.

In the sannidhi of Dġvapperumāḻ, the devotees such as śrī Naḍādūr Ammāḻ relished the Lord and shed tears of joy, which has been noted by Svāmi Deśikā in Varadarāja Pancāśat:

bhūyo bhūyaḥ puḻaka nicitai raṅgakai redhamānāḥ

sthūla sthūlān nayana mukuḻairbibhrato bāṣpa bindūn |

dhanyāḥ kecid varada bhavataḥ saṁsadaṁ bhūṣayantaḥ

svāntai rantarvinaya nibhṛtaiḥ svādayante padaṁ te ||

I have personally seen śrīmadubhayave Dindigul Ramaswamy Iyengar who enjoys the arcāvatārams shedding tears of joy while offering obeisance to Lord Dġvapperumāḻ.

Why go this much? In Vedas, there are multiple places stating that:

sarvo vai rudrastasmai

puruṣo vai rudraḥ

yo devānāṁ prathamaṁ purastāt

viśvādhiko rudro maharṣiḥ

The Rudran which comes in all these places indicate Emperumān as per our preceptors.

śrutaprakaśika also states “in the place ‘sarvo vai rudraḥ’ indicates that Rudran is inner soul of all the beings. We cannot accept that the Rudran here is Lord śivā since He is not the inner soul of all the beings. Hence, we should interpret ‘Rudran’ here as Emperumān on the basis that he destroys miseries of this worldly life.”

In the same way, I had explained in the last issue that Veda states that ‘sakṛdivahi rudraḥ’. This is another form of the statement ‘He is the only one; He is second to none’. How can this be appropriate for Lord śivā?

Please see the commentary of śrī Bhaṭṭa Bhāskarar where he has emotionally stated as follows:

“anāvṛtyādi sāmānyatvāt tulyotkṛṣṭarahite pade sthitatvāt”

Here śrī Bhaṭṭa Bhāskarar states that He is the one who resides in the Paramapada where the people who do not return to earth reside. This is applicable only to Emperumān, isn’t it?

Hence we can enjoy that all the three names sviṣṭakṛt, Agni and Rudran denote Dġvapperumāḻ.