

Garuda Dandakam (A Dandakam on Garuda)

By
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(Vedanta Desika is possibly one of the greatest poets of Srivaishnavism and lived between 1269 and 1370. He was born in Thoopul, near Kanchipuram. He was named as Venkata Natha and was trained in the philosophy of Saint Ramanuja. This great prayer extols Garuda, one of the foremost devotees of Lord Vishnu, who also is his steed. This poem is written in the Dandaka meter. (Dandakam is that poetry where some of the lines have more than 26 syllables. It very much resembles prose) An e- book containing , this stotra and its detailed interpretation can be had in www.sundarasimham.org/ebooks/10GD.pdf)

Sriman VenkataNadharya kavi tharkika kesari,
Vedantacharya varyo may sannidatham sada hrudhi

(I keep in my ,mind always and dedicate myself,
Sri Venkata natha , who is the lion among poets
And who is a great teacher of philosophy.)

Nama pannaga nadhaya Vaikunta vasa varthine,
Sruthi Sindhu sudothpada mandharaya guruthmathe.

Salutations to the Lord of Serpents,
Who resides in control of Vaikunta,
Who like the mandara mountain,
Churned the ocean of Vedas,
And has the nectar of it on his legs

Garudamakhila veda needadhiroodam dwishath peedanath kanditha kunta Vaikunta
peetikrutha skandameede swaneedagathi preetha Rudra sukeerthi sathanaa bhoga gaado
upagooda sphuratha kantaka vratha veda vyadha vepamana dwi jihwa aadhipakalpa
vishpharyamana sphatavatika rathna rochichchata raji neerajithm kanthi kallolini
rajitham. 1

The God Garuda who uses the Vedas as his nest as well as the seat,
who leaves Vaikunta and accompanies his Lord Narayana , who rides on his shoulders in
his endeavors to kill and destroy the enemies of his devotees,
who on his return is deeply hugged by his wives Rudrai and Sukeerthi, who miss his
absence,

which makes his hairs stand erect like thorns and hurts the conquered serpents that he uses as his ornaments ,
which makes the two tounded serpents overcome with fear and make them open their hoods , leading the gems in their hoods to emit strong red light
Which in turn gives out an appearance of showing of camphor light. which makes him shine in the wave of light.

Jaya Garuda suparna dharveekaraahara devaadhipahara haarin divoukspathi kshiptha dhamboli dharaa kina kalpa , kalpantha vaathoola kalpodhayan aalpa veerayithodhya Chamathkara dhaithyari jathra dwajarooha nirdharithothkarsha sankrashanathman garuthman maruth panchakadeesa sathyadhi moorthe na kaschid samasthe namasthe punasthe nama. 2

Victory to Garuda with very pretty wings, who uses huge serpents as his food, who stole the nectar from the devas, which made the king of devas angry with Garuda and made Indra throw his Vajrayudha on him , which in turn caused many wounds on his body , which healed wounds today shine like his ornaments,
Who shines in the waving flag of Lord Vishnu during his war leading to the extermination of the Rakshasas and his being recognized as the soul of the war,
Who is the personification of truth and assumed the form of five winds Prana, upana , Samana, udana and Vyana

There is none like you, I salute you first then again salute you and again salute you.

Nama idham jahath saparyaya paryaya niryatha paksha anila sphala nodhwela padhodhi veechi chapeta hadha agadha patala bhankara samkrudha nagendra peeda sruni bhava baswan nakha srenaya chanda thundaya nruthya adbhuhda janga bruve vajrine dhamshtaya thubhyam adhyathma vidhya vidheya vidheya bhavaddhaasya-maabhadhaydhaa dhayedhascha may. 3

Saluted by very many great learned men, when you fly, your wings generate such a storm that it creates waves in the ocean, which reach Patala (the nether world) and a great sound resembling “Bham”, disturb the elephants who are in guard there , who in turn try to attack you , and your form with your sharp nails similar to the goad used to control elephants repulses them , and you look fearful to your enemies , with your big beak which raises terror, your squinted eye brows resembling a look of a cobra, and your canine teeth which resembles the Vajrayudha (weapon of Indra), please make the knowledge of God as mine and take mercy on me and protect this , your slave ,

Manuranugatha pakshi vakhtra spurath tharaka sthavaka schithra bhanu Priya shekhara
sthrayatham nas thrivargapa varga prassothe para vyoma dhaman vala dweshi dharpa
jwala dwalakhilya prathigna vatheerna sthiraam Thathwa budhim paraam bhakthi
dhenum jagan moola kandhe mukunde mahananda dhogdhim dhadhidhaa
Mudhaa kama heenaam aahee nama heenanthaka. 4

Oh Bird who resides in the abode of Vishnu,
with the five syllable manthra starting with Om and ending with the name of the wife of
the fire God(Swaha) ,
you who were born to fulfill the curse of sages called Valakhilya on the Lord Indra,
fulfilled their curse,
you who are the lord of death to the base serpents that challenged you,
you whose lord is Mukunda who is the root cause of the universe and the great milk
man constantly giving great happiness,
be pleased to bless me with discriminative knowledge ,
be pleased to bless me to be a cow constantly giving the milk of devotion
and be pleased to be blessed with joy which is bereft of ordinary passion,

Shad trimsath gana charano nara pari paati naveena gumbha gana,
Vishnuradha dandakoyam vighatayathu vipaksha vaahinee vyooham.

This poem comprises of 4 lines , with each line having 36 groups,
With each group consisting of three syllables and follows the rules of the poem,
And if recited is capable of driving away enemy formations completely.

Vichithra siddhidhada soyam Venkatesa vipasschitha,
Garuda dwaja thoshaya geetho Garuda Dandaka.

This Dandaka in praise of Garuda , was composed,
In honour of The Lord who has Garuda in his flag,
By a scholar called Venkatesa and fulfill the wishes,
And grant many fold blessings to the reciter.