

The History of Lord Balaji

- By Sri Atma Tattva Das

What follows is a lecture by Sri Atma Tattva Das that was recorded in Grass Valley, California, 1992.

What is the meaning of Venkateshwara?:- Lord Balaji is also famous by the name of Lord Govinda (the Lord who pleases one's senses). Lord Balaji is very kind and helps anyone who prays to Him for help. Lord Balaji at Tirupati has performed numerable miracles. The surroundings of Tirumala awaken waves of bhakti of Lord Balaji and the name Govinda appears on the tongues of devotees. Millions of devotees visit Lord Balaji at Tirupati every year. The reason being that Lord Balaji is famous as the Lord who helps one during one's misfortunes. In the following paragraphs we will see how the Lord so mercifully descended in this world to live on the top of Seshachalam, the mountain that is located at Tirumala. Venkateshwara means the Lord, who frees us from all of our sins. Ven means sin, Kat means one who delivers. We remain in this world, suffering, birth after birth, because of our sinful reactions, now in this age of kali, it is an age of sin. It is an ocean of faults.

Who is Supreme Person? Thousands of years ago in Naimisharanya, the sages inquired from Srila Suta Gosvami, to narrate the katha of the incarnation of the Lord, by the name of "Venkateshwara". He narrated the following: that at one time Shree Narada Muni traveled to Brahma-loka (the 1st of the 14th planet where Lord Brahma resides over. Earth is number 7 on this list). Narada Muni being the manasa putra (one born from the mind of Lord Brahma), has this and many other special powers (siddhi's). "Shree Narada Muni bajaile radhika-ramana naame" - meaning ... "He is always playing his veena, and chanting the holy names of Shree Radha-ramana (Radha-Krsna), and he has the power to go anywhere and everywhere according to his will". Narada Muni can travel faster than the speed of light. He can travel to Shvetadvipa, to Kailasa, to Brahmaloaka, to Vaikuntha and come back to this earth, all in a matter of minutes. That is the power of his mystical devotion. So, he traveled to Satya-loka where Lord Brahma was surrounded by many of the chief celestials and Lord Brahma said to Narada

Muni that he was feeling a very deep concern in his heart. Lord Krsna states in the Bhagavad Gita “aham bija pradaha pita - that He is the seed-giving Father of all living beings”. Within this universe, the secondary father is Lord Brahma. So, he has love and concern for everyone in this universe, that he has created. “People in this age of Kali are so much covered by material desires. There will be such pollution and sin everywhere. What is their hope? We must approach the Lord to descend to this earth and we must call Him down to preside somewhere on this earth planet.” “So Narada Muni, I am giving you an assignment. Somehow or the other, by your creative genius, devise a means of bringing Lord Vishnu down to this planet earth.”

What is a guru-parampara? Guru Parampara is about following the order of the previous Acharyas (gurus). So, Narada Muni came to the bank of the river Sarasvati, where there was an assembly of great sages who were performing a sacrifice for the welfare of humanity. There were various sages of various sects. They were all united together for this purpose. So, Narada Muni, he challenged them, “If this sacrifice really going to be powerful, to satisfy the Lord we must all be fixed in one goal together”. So Narada Muni challenged “You are all worshipping in the sacrifice, the Lord. But which Lord are you worshipping? We must all be unified 'Who is supreme?’” So, some of those sages said, “Lord Brahma is supreme.” Another said, “Lord Shiva is supreme.” Another said, “No, Lord Vishnu is supreme.” There was some disagreement. So Narada Muni said, “Let us resolve the disagreement by testing the Tri-murtis, to see who is perfectly situated in pure goodness, and whoever is, to the ultimate extent, then we will agree to worship only him.” So all the sages agreed. So then they had to decide who is going the person who tests the greatest, most powerful of all the Deities. Vasishtha Muni, Atri Muni and others said, “We are not going to perform this service. To test these powerful Lords, is like testing a red-hot coal by touching it. We'll be burnt. But we know who has the power to do so. It is the son of Lord Brahma himself. - Bhrigu Muni”. Bhrigu Muni did not like this idea but everyone was appealing to him, “Please! This is so important for the welfare of all the world.” So Bhrigu Muni finally accepted.

Bhrigu Muni first went to Lord Brahma's abode, Satyaloka. When Lord Brahma saw his son arriving he was so pleased. Lord Brahma got up to receive Bhrigu

Muni, but he ignored his father and didn't offer his obeisances, neither he offered words of respect. This was a great offense - to not honor a senior person is low-class and uncultured. Of course, in Kali-yuga it is quite common. But, what is etiquette about? Etiquette is about offering respect to every living entity, according to one's particular relationship with them, and to seniors, especially one's father like Lord Brahma. He's not only a father, he's also a guru. To offer prayers, to offer obeisances, to offer services is mandatory. And the father wants to see the son growing up properly and behaving appropriately. So when Lord Brahma saw that Bhrigu Muni did not acknowledge him at all and ignored him, Lord Brahma became angry, but because Bhrigu Muni was his son, he controlled his anger and didn't mention anything. It is explained anger is like fire. In the process of creation, fire is first and from fire water was created. The elements are created from the subtle to the gross. First there is ego, then intelligence, then the mind, then ether, then air, then fire and finally comes water. Water is created from fire. But to extinguish fire we use water. So, Lord Brahma, with his good intelligence, he controlled his anger. But, Bhrigu Muni saw that he was deeply affected. So, he left that place.

Next he went to Mount Kailasa where Lord Shiva was sitting with Parvati Devi. And when Lord Shiva saw his brother Bhrigu approaching, he was so happy! "My dear brother Bhrigu, you have come all the way to my abode! Welcome! Welcome!" Lord Shiva came to embrace him and Bhrigu Muni's face just curled in disgust. He said, "Do not touch me! Your body is contaminated by filthy ashes from the crematorium. You have snakes all over you, and you associate with despicable demons in the mode of ignorance. Do not touch me. You'll make me impure!" When Lord Shiva heard this, his heart exploded with anger. His eyes became red. He picked up his trident and charged towards Bhrigu Muni to punish him. But, Parvati Devi, who is also known as Tri-gunamayi, pacified Lord Shiva, and Bhrigu Muni left that place.

Then Bhrigu Muni went to Shveta-dvipa, the abode of Lord Vishnu, where Lord Vishnu was lying on a flower bed, Lakshmi devi was massaging His lotus feet. As soon as Bhrigu Muni came into the room, Bhrigu Muni ran right into the room, and kicked Lord Vishnu right in the chest with his foot. Lord Vishnu got up. He put Bhrigu Muni on His bed, and spoke, "Oh today We are so fortunate, that a

great sage, a brahmana has come to Our home to sanctify Us. It is not a small fortune when a great, great personality comes out of their causeless mercy to Our home. Not only have you sanctified Shveta-dvipa by your lotus feet, but by putting your feet on My chest, you have made My body a place of pilgrimage. But, I fear something... that your feet are so soft like a rose, and My chest is so hard like a thunderbolt. I think that I must have caused pain to your lotus foot, so let Me lovingly massage your lotus feet”. And Lord Vishnu massaged the lotus feet of Bhrigu Muni, extolling the good fortune that He had received.

Three types of Offences:- When Bhrigu Muni saw the tolerance and pure goodness of Lord Vishnu's love and he was overwhelmed. He could not say a word. His voice was choked up, tears were streaming from his eyes. He began to dance in ecstasy, extolling the glories of Lord Vishnu as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There are 3 (three) types of offenses. Offense of the mind, offense of the word, and a corporal offense, offense of the body. Each one is progressively more severe by nature. The least type of offense is the offense of the mind. He committed an offense of the mind to Lord Brahma, and Brahma was angry, and the next most severe offense is the offense of the words, speaking harsh, impolite words to another. He did that to Lord Shiva, and Lord Shiva became very angry. But to Lord Vishnu he performed the greatest of all offenses- the offenses to the body, by hardly kicking Him in the chest (kicked Him hard), but Lord Vishnu lovingly forgave him, displaying His Supreme Greatness.

Mother Lakshmi Leaves Vaikunta-loka



So Bhrigu Muni went back to the banks of the river Sarasvati and he told the whole katha to all the eternally sages, and they all unanimously agreed, that Lord Vishnu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus they performed their

sacrifice chanting His holy name [Hare Krishna hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare. Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare]. Everyone was very happy, except Lakshmi-devi. She could not tolerate this insult to Her eternal Lord and Master, Lord Narayana. It was unbearable that she witnessed such a horrible sin of a mortal man coming and kicking with his foot, in the chest of the Lord of Her life. And the Lord is Shri-nivasa. That means He is the abode of Lakshmi residing upon His chest. She knows the sanctity. She worships the Lord there eternally. Lakshmi considered that She had become so sinful by seeing this sin, it was so unbearable for Her. She explained Her mind to Lord Narayana, but the Lord took it all very lightly. Any offense to one's self- one should be forgiving. But offense to the Lord or another devotee - we can become like fire. When Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was insulted in so many ways, He just forgave. When Lord Nityananda was beaten on the head by thugs Jagai and Madhai, He forgave, but Lord Chaitanya became like fire. We should tolerate any injustice to one's self, but we should not tolerate the injustices to the other devotees or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So, yes, Lakshmi devi was in this mood, 'My Lord, You may be forgiving and tolerant to the offense against You, but My heart is burning with anguish, for what I had seen.' And then She proclaimed, "I will leave Vaikuntha, and I will go down to the Bhu-loka, where I will perform tapasya, to atone for the sin of seeing this offense." Thus Lakshmi devi departed from Her abode, and wandered throughout this world, ultimately coming to the holy place Kolhapura (Maharashtra, India). She made that Her residence. It was in the holy abode of Kolhapura, that Maha Lakshmi sat to perform Tapasya, in the ecstasy of Her love for The Supreme Lord.

Lord Vishnu Feeling Separation From Mother Lakshmi.

As time went on, Lord Narayana was feeling immense separation from His wife Lakshmi devi. Even the Land of Shvetadvipa had no charm for Him without Lakshmi devi. So, He decided to come down to the earth to search for Her. And thus, perfectly according to Narada Muni's plan, Lord descended to this world as Shrinivasa. This is an appropriate name, because He is always the abode of Lakshmi devi, and now Lakshmi has left Him, so He has come to search for Her, to bring Her back Home.

Why the seven hills are called SHESHACHALA OR SHESHADRI HILLS

Lord Srinivasa walked throughout the world, through various forests, jungles and villages and ultimately came here, where we are sitting today, to the Sheshachala. Why is it called such? It is told that at one time, the great and powerful vedic deity, Vayudeva (the deity of wind) came to visit the Lord in Vaikuntha and Adi-shesha was at that time was on guard, and told Vayu that, "You have to wait and bow down your head before the Lord." But Vayu was not happy with this. He was eager. So a little argument took place. So the Lord came and to alleviate the argument, He said, "Why don't you have a contest to see who is stronger between the two of you?" Everything the Lord does has a very, very eternal purpose. So, it was arranged that Adi-shesha put his coils around one of the peaks of Mount Meru named Ananda Parvata, and the test was, who was stronger? Whether Vayu could move that mountain out of the grasps of the coils of Adi-shesha. So, Vayu was sending the most massive winds, unbelievable winds. In this world we have seen hurricanes and cyclones and tornadoes. These are just little, tiny tth tth tth... tth tth... tth th tth, but when Vayu, with all the force of all his power, blowing, he could not even slightly even a molecular particle of Adi-shesha or the mountain where they were holding. So he was blowing and blowing and sending wind after wind, and Adi-shesha was there just holding and holding and days went by, and meanwhile, all the air and all the wind, at the disposal of Vayu - he was using just for this purpose, and the rest of the universe was suffocating. Lord Indra was calling out, "Please! You know this... Adi-shesha... you may be winning the fight, but what about the rest of us?" So Narada Muni appeared and started playing his veena and singing the sweet glories of the Lord. Meanwhile Vayu was exhausted, so he stopped his winds, and at that time Narada Muni was singing and playing, and Adi-shesha was so charmed by the Glories of the Lord, that he lifted one of the hoods to listen carefully. As soon as he did that, Vayu blew right under that hood, with all of his force, and Adi-Shesha and the whole mountain peak of Ananda Parvata went flying and landed right here on earth. Then Vayudeva came down and begged apologies, "Oh, I am sorry! What have I done? Please come back. Come back to Vaikuntha." And Adi-Shesha said, "It is the Lord's lila. It is His plan that I remain here." So, this is known as Shesha Parvata because these seven mountains- they consist the abode of Lord

Venkateshvara. He is non-different than the body of Ananta-Shesha and it is considered to be non-different than Vaikuntha.

Lord Shrinivasa Tapasya

Shrinivasa was traveling in this area, and He made His residence in the hole in the center of a large ant-hill that was situated under a large tamarind tree. There, He performed tapasya (austerities). No eating, no sleeping. Just meditation on Lakshmi-devi to bring Her back. Lord Brahma saw the situation of the Lord, the nature of the Lord's love - that He has left the eternal abode of Vaikuntha where there is all opulence, and He is living as an ascetic under an ant-hill? So Lord Brahma approached Lord Shiva, and together they went to Lakshmi-devi in Kolhapura, so that the Lord could be fed. Lord Brahma became a cow, Lord Shiva became a calf and Lakshmi devi a cowherd girl. She, with a little stick led the cow and the calf, to a place called Narayanapura, which was the capital of the kings of the Chola dynasty. She proclaimed that, "I would like to see the king and queen, because I have an excellent cow and calf and that I desire to sell them." The king and the queen came and saw that cow and calf. They were so special. They were willing to pay anything, and Lakshmi devi, she charged a large price.

Just like as its said if we give away our books out for free, then people may take them very cheaply. They have to pay price, then they'll have some understanding that 'this is valuable'. In 1966, in New York City, Srila Prabhupada began the Hare Krishna Movement. At that time, the devotees, the first large public programme they ever made, they rented out an auditorium in Manhattan Island of New York City. And they sent out flyers. They were passing about in the streets by the thousands. And it was free admission, free prasada, free kirtana, free lecture by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, who was then called Swamiji. There was hundreds and hundreds of seats in that auditorium. But only a few people came. The devotees were terribly disappointed. Then Srila Prabhupada said, "Because you made it free." So therefore they think it is a cheap thing. If you make them pay, then they'll think there's something valuable about it. Yes? Then they'll take it seriously. He said, "Oh, but you didn't see?" Srila Prabhupada spoke as if there were thousands, millions of people there. He spoke with so much dynamic enthusiasm, led kirtana. He said, "You did not see? Narada

Muni was there. Brahma was there.” Devotees said, “We didn't see.” Prabhupada saw. Prabhupada was always preaching for the pleasure of the previous acharyas. Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thakura said, “If nobody comes to your programmes, you preach with full enthusiasm to the four walls.” Because, we are not preaching simply for material results. We are preaching... whatever we do is for the satisfaction of guru and the Vaishnavas. And the spiritual master and the previous acharyas are pleased by our effort, not by our results. So, Lakshmi devi, she charged a high price. And the king and queen bought this cow with the calf.

The Katha on how the Lord gets injured

There was a cowherd man who everyday took those cows out to the pastures, to graze on the grasses, and in the evening the cows would come back and would be milked. Many days went by, and there was no milk coming from this special cow. She just had a calf. There is no reason for this! The queen went to the go-shaala. “Where?! So many days! Where is the milk from this prized cow? We spent so much! Where is the milk from this prized cow?” She went to the cowherd man. “Are you drinking it? Are you stealing it?” He said, “No, no! I am not! Honest, I am not!” “If tomorrow, there is no milk, then I know you are! Then you will be punished with your life.” Now what happened is this. At a certain time everyday, during the grazing of the cows, this cowherd man would take a nap. He would go to sleep under a tree. And right when he went to sleep, that Brahma cow would run to the ant-hill and stand right over the ant-hill with her udder and then pour profusely nectarean, delicious, nutritious milk down, and Shrinivasa accepting the loving offering of His devotee, would just look up, open His mouth and the milk would come right into His mouth to feed Him for the day. This was going on everyday. This cow was a very, very faithful devotee. So, on this particular day, the cowherd man pretended to go to sleep. But slightly kept one eye open to watch the cow. And he saw that cow running. He saw that cow standing over an anthill, milk pouring down into the ground. Oh! He was furious. This was unbelievable. He was about to be killed because of this restless cow. He lost all intelligence. Lord Krishna tells in the Bhagavad Gita “When there is anger, one loses one's intelligence and one falls down into abominable activities”. So, this cowherd man in a rage of fury, picked up an axe, and attacked. He hurled the axe to cut off the head of the cow. But as the axe was coming down, Shrinivasa leaped up and

blocked the razor-sharp edge of the axe with His own forehead. When the cowherd man saw the most beautiful personality standing before him, bleeding profusely, he fell down unconscious. And news came to the king of what had happened, and he came running to the place. When he first saw his servant, the cowherd man laying unconscious, he thought he was killed. He saw blood all around. He was about to attack and chastise whoever that person was. But, when he looked closely at Him, He was the embodiment of all opulence and beauty. The king understood that He was a special personality, and the king asked, “What has happened?” And Shrinivasa explained exactly. The king begged forgiveness. *namo brahmanya devaya go-brahmana hitaya cha jagad-hitaya krishnaya govindaya namo 'namah*. We chant this prayer. But do we really acknowledge the significance of it? Lord Krishna is very fond of giving protection to the cows and the brahmanas. In the Katha of Bhrigu Muni, we see He tolerated the injustice of being kicked in the chest and forgave a brahmana, and here He is showing His love for the cow. To save a cow, He is willing to endure the pain of an axe, penetrating His own head. So He walked into the forest and He was bleeding and feeling much pain. This is the Lila of the Lord. And then Brihaspati, the high priest of the devas, approached. He asked Guru Brihaspati, “Can you tell me a herbal remedy to alleviate the pain and injury of my head?” Brihaspati explained exactly the herbs that were required. So He was searching for those herbs and at that time He came to Varaha Kshetra, where He met Lord Varahadeva.

Significance of Varaha Kshetra



Previously in the Satya-yuga, the great demon Hiranyaksha with his demoniac power, to please his elder brother Hiranyakashipu, created such chaos in this world, that the earth planet, Bhu-loka was cast to the bottom of the Garbhodaka

ocean. At that time the sages and devas, they were helpless. They did not know what to do. They approached Lord Brahma. Lord Brahma prayed to the Supreme Lord Vishnu, and in the course of his prayer, a very small, little boar creature came out of his nose - the size of his thumb, Instantly It grew larger and larger until It was like a huge mountain. He had most exquisite lotus-like eyes, although He was a boar, which is a wild pig, which is considered a very ugly animal. Sometimes we praise people by comparing them to animals. 'Fearless like a lion,' 'fast like a tiger,' yes? 'Graceful like a swan,' 'sings like a cuckoo.' But have you ever heard in your life or read in any books, anybody being glorified by being compared to a pig? No. 'You are sloppy like a pig!', 'You are ugly like a pig.' If someone calls you a swan, you feel very nice. But if someone calls you a hog. "You are a pig!" It's an insult. Very great insult. But when Lord Varaha, took the form of a boar- a wild pig, He was the personification of all opulences. He possessed all the six opulences. He was beautiful! He was hypnotizing people! Everyone, all the great devotees were falling in love with Him. That is the greatness of the Lord's power. How wonderful is our Lord! Achintya shakti - He can do anything. And how He does everything. Anyone who does not have faith in these stories is the most unfortunate dull-headed person in all the creation. The Lord is so amazing, that He can take the form of the most abominable of all animals, and be all-attractive! So that people are falling unconscious by the beauty of this Boar.

People are offering prayers with tears pouring out of their eyes, out of their love for this Boar. Sri Varaha Bhagavan ki... [jaya!]. Why not? If Lord Krishna wants to show His opulence, why not take the most despicable, abominable, obnoxious of all animals and show His glories and opulences and beauty, and enchant everyone's heart in that form. That is the Lord's greatness. And, He lifted the earth with the tusks, Jayadeva Gosvami sings in Dasha-avatara stotra. After He saved the earth and delivered Hiranyaksha, Bhu-devi, the presiding deity of this planet, she prayed to Lord Varaha that please make me home on earth, where I can be your consort, and live with you. Please make a home here. So, of all places, Lord Varaha-deva shows what He considered the most beautiful place on earth. The Tirumala Hills. On the top of these hills, Tirumala, it is called Varaha Kshetra. Bhu-devi gave this land to Lord Varaha-deva, where they lived together very happily. So Shrinivasa came, and He asked for a place to reside here. Please

listen carefully. Lord Varaha gave him a tract of land. Shrinivasa said, "If I'm taking this land from you, I want to pay rent. But I don't have anything. But the rent that I will pay is this: "I will induce all My devotees, for all the rest of the time in Kali-yuga, anyone who comes to see Me, in My temple, must first come and offer their worship and honour to You, Lord Varaha-deva." So to follow this tradition, which very few people do, it would be very nice tomorrow if, before going to see Lord Balaji, we offer our honour, worship and take blessings from Shri Bhu-Varahadeva, who are residing on the banks of the Svami Pushkarini, a beautiful, sacred lake non-different than the river Ganges (Ganga), which absolves one's sins.

Lord Shrinivasa Meets his Mother Bakula Devi



Lord Varahadeva told Shrinivasa that, "Your Lord eternal mother is living with Me. She has been acting as a very faithful maidservant, waiting for Your incarnation. Her name is Bakula mallika, or Bakula-devi. And she will take care of You and she will put the herbs on Your forehead, and love You like her own son. So Varahadeva called for Bakula-devi, and when she saw Shrinivasa, immediately her motherly love erupted within her heart, and Shrinivasa's love for her awakened. Bakula-devi embraced Him, and she gathered the various herbs and placed it with camphor, and saffron and musk and very sacred ingredients, and she made a paste, and put it on Balaji's forehead. And, to honour the love of Bakula-devi, and to remember the Lord's willingness to sacrifice for the welfare of His devotee, to this day, Venkateshvara is wearing that sacred mixture of paste upon His forehead. Bakula-devi, she showed such motherly affection. Who is Bakula Devi? It is explained that previously Bakula-devi was Yashoda mayi. Lord Krishna lived in Vrindavan for approximately twelve and a half years,

and it is the aspiration of every mother, to arrange for her childrens' marriage. But Lord Krishna left Vrindavana and it was in Dvaraka when He was under the care of Vasudeva and Devaki, that He married eight queens and sixteen thousand others. So, Yashoda-mayi was deprived of the opportunity to participate in these marriage ceremonies. But Lord Krishna, knowing her heart, gave her the benediction, that "In a future incarnation, you will be My mother, and you will make arrangements for My marriage."

Lord Srinivasa Meets Padmavati



As time passed and they lived in the forest together. In that He was often in His anthill doing tapasya. It came to his notice that that in the forest, on the top of the hill, there were some wild animals, was a many tigers, lions and elephants. They were harassing innocent people, sometimes even devouring them. So Shrinivasa told Bakula-devi that, "I want to go on a hunting excursion to protect the innocent from these dangerous animals." But as a mother she said, "No, no! You cannot go out there. It is very dangerous, it is a very strange place. You should not go." But He was insisting, so finally she accepted. So He put on the robes of a hunter, with a bow and an arrow, and a horse, and He went out, and there He saw a gigantic wild elephant. The elephant was running, and Shrinivasa was galloping on His horse after the elephant. The elephant came into a garden and there a beautiful princess of the name Padmavati, along with her maid-servants. The elephant lifted his trunk and offered praise to Padmavati devi, and then he disappeared into the forest. Shrinivasa came right behind him, and when He saw Padmavati, who was standing, stunned by the fear of the elephant, it just approached her. Shrinivasa was Himself stunned with her beauty. He got off His horse. He said, "Who are you? Have you descended from the heavenly worlds? In this earth planet, there is no one so beautiful. There is no one so enchanting and

so pure as yourself. Please tell me who you are?" She said, "My name is Padmavati, and I am the daughter of the king Aksharaja from the dynasty of the moon, and I am here in the garden with all of my friends. Can you tell me good sir, who are You?" He said, "I am also from a royal dynasty coming from the moon god. My father is Vasudeva and My name is Krishna. And, now My mother has taken the form of Bakula-devi, and she is searching to find a suitable wife for My marriage."

And just then the maid-servants of the princess came. And she (they) saw this Hunter talking with the princess. They were very offended by this. "Who is this... Who are You? What are You doing here?" And they started warning Padmavati, "You are a girl of great royalty. You cannot be just speaking to a hunter, a strange person alone in the forest. What is this?" Shrinivasa smiled and said, "O young maid-servants, do not be alarmed. I am in love with her, and she is in love with Me. And I am going to propose to marry her." "Haa?" (response of maid-servants). Padmavati was beginning to blush. She looked down and said, "First you have to ask My parents their permission." The maid-servants, they were very angry. "You are seducing the princess. Get out from here! Get out from here!" They picked up stones, and hurled the stones at Shrinivasa. Again and again, they were throwing stones and they were chasing after Him, and He jumped on His horse and rode away. And they were chasing after Him throwing stones. He was feeling great pain. He returned to the home of Bakula-devi. She saw that He looked unhappy. "Why are You unhappy?" He said, "Because I am in love. but the girl that I love, I cannot go anywhere near. All her friends throw stones at me!" and Bakula-mallika said, "You are the Lord of the Universe. How could You be enchanted by a mere mortal woman of this world? But still whatever You desire is my life. If you desire I will go to that place to negotiate marriage with her parents."

Who is Mother Padmavati?

Shrinivasa said, "You do not understand who this girl is." And he explained the katha. There was a great sage who lived in the Treta-yuga. His name was Kushadhvaja. He was performing a yajna. With great devotion he was chanting vedic mantras. From his mantra-chanting, the Goddess of Fortune took birth. She took birth from the yajna of the chanting of the Vedic mantras. And, therefore Her father gave Her the name Vedavati. When She grew up to marriageable age, She

was so beautiful, an ocean of good qualities. All great princes, kings wanted to marry Her, promising wealth, riches, luxuries and immense pleasures. But She had no attraction to any of them. Her heart was fixed exclusively on Lord Vishnu. From his divine vision Kushadhvaja understood She is a Goddess of fortune. Only Lord Vishnu is suitable to be Her husband. But it is not easy to attain Lord Vishnu. Kushadhvaja sent his daughter into the Himalayan jungles, to live all alone to perform severe austerities, meditating on the Lotus feet of Vishnu, to attract His mercy to accept Her as His wife. She remained in Himalayas for thousands of years, fasting, subjected to cold, snowy winters, to the hot, blazing summers, to the dangers of the snakes and animals and insects, tolerating all difficulty. Kings and princes and devatas were approaching to marry Her, offering Her royal palaces, offering Her luxuries - jewels, fine garments, food, and not only that, but they were most handsome, chivalrous and opulent in all respects. She rejected them. For what? To live in the jungle, wearing a deerskin, doing tapasya for thousands and thousands of years. This is devotional service.

We want Vishnu. We want devotional service to Krishna. He is our goal and ideal in life. So many things may come to us. Yes, the cheap things of this world - we may get money, we may get comforts, we may get fame, we may get so many things, we may get all kinds of pleasures, but a devotee is willing to give it all up to perform austerity and this all we have is austerity. A sadhana bhakta is a person who gives up so many of the pleasures of this world... for what? We don't even have Krishna. We're not tasting the love of Krishna. It is just tapasya. But that is the price! If we really want Krishna, we have to be willing with an empty heart of nothing, except tapasya, carry on even if it takes thousands and thousands and millions and millions of births. That was Mukunda Datta's example. He was willing to suffer in separation faithfully for ten million (10000000) births, if he knew in the end, he would get even one glimpse of Lord Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. That is devotion. Enthusiasm and patience. That is the example of Vedavati.

She gave up all the promises and hopes and opportunities of this world to do severe austerity. And what did She get out of it? Just living in the forest. Thousands of years passed. One day, the king of the Rakshasas, Ravana, was flying by in the airways and he saw Vedavati. He was immediately enchanted by

Her beauty. He came down and looked closer. Oh, the exquisite elegance of Her form, covered only with a crude deerskin, hair becoming matted. But yet She was effulgent with elegant charm. Ravana could not control his senses. He approached, assuming the form with one head and two arms, and we hear from the Sundar Kanda, that when Ravana assumed this form, he was youthful and he was so magnificently handsome, and strong. He was a scholar as well. He was speaking lovely poetry to win the heart of this girl. He was glorifying each limb of Her body, and the fragrance of Her form. "I am Ravana. I am the King. I have defeated Indra and all the devatas. I wish for You to be my wife. You come with me." She said, "I have given My heart to Vishnu." How amazing! All this tapasya, thousands of years! And Vishnu never even showed Himself to Her even for a second.

Vedavati - The Emblem of Chastity and Patience

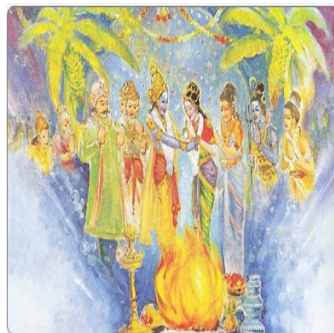
All this tapasya but Vishnu was not showing Himself and here is a chance to live with the wealthiest man on earth, the most powerful conqueror of the earth, the king of kings. She said, "Get out from here, I have given my heart to Lord Vishnu and I can accept no one else." Oh, when Ravana heard the name Vishnu, that really excited his anger, then he said, "What is this Vishnu, what is He doing for you? You are worshipping Him for all this time and He is just leaving you alone with no companion in this jungle with nothing to eat. What is He doing for you? Come with me, I will give you the robes and the jewels of a queen. I will give you pleasures that even the most elevated damsels of the heaven cannot dream of, you come with me!" She chastised him that "I have given my heart to Vishnu, get out from here". So Ravana went to take her by force, he grabbed her by the hair, and Vedavati, by her mystic power, just cut that hair right off and Ravana fell back. Then Vedavati invoked the presence of Agni Deva in the form of fire and then she spoke her final words to Ravana, "Because you have touched my body, my body is forever impure and therefore I must end it today. But I will take birth again and in my next birth I will be the cause of your destruction and the extermination of your entire dynasty." Then her body was engulfed with flames. Some time later, Suparnaka, the sister of Ravana, informed her brother about the beauty of Sita, and just by hearing the description of Sita's qualities, Ravana's heart was burning with desire. He induced Marica to take the form of a

magnificent deer and allure Lord Raam and Lakshman away. At that time, Ravana came to kidnap the consort of Lord Raam. But it is not possible for a demon like Ravana to touch Sita Devi. Agni Dev appeared and he replaced the original Sita with Vedavati. Vedavati looked identical to Sita. The Kurma Purana calls her the Maya Sita, the false Sita. She is actually an expansion of the Goddess of fortune but not the original Sita. So it was Ravana, he thought he stole Sita, but in truth he stole Vedavati. And it was this Vedavati, after thousands of years of tapasya, she still never even saw Lord Raam. She came to the world and was immediately kidnapped by Ravana and she was screaming in the air, and she threw some jewels down to the monkeys, Sugriva and Hanuman, when she was flying over Kindakshetra and ultimately she was a prisoner of Sri Lanka, captive in the Ashoka groves of Ravana, where everyday she was tormented, she was emotionally tortured, she was threatened in so many ways. Ravana was coming with the finest perfumes, the most elegant gowns, with by his mystic powers making himself the most handsome among men, well-groomed hair with scented oils, promising her jewels, and gifts and pleasures and everything, just become my consort and she refused. He would threaten her and scream at her and roar at her. And other raksasas were tormenting her, and raksasis, ugly raksasis, horrible, demoniac beings were surrounding her practically day and night, trying to emotionally break her down to submission. And this went on for about 10 months. Vedavati performed all this tapasya and this is all she was getting. She did it all as a service to Sita Devi. Ravana would curse her; Ravana would threaten her, "If you do not submit to me I will chop your body in fine pieces and I will drink your blood and eat your flesh as my morning meal. These are your two alternatives; either live as the primary queen of all the universe as my queen or die a miserable death and be eaten by me". Those were the two choices he gave. But Vedavati, so chaste, so absolutely pure, not even for one second ever deviated her mind from the loving remembrance of Sri Ramachandra. Lord Raam and Lakshman crossed over the bridge to Sri Lanka with the soldiers of Sugriva of the Vanara race; there was a great war, ultimately Vedavati's curse was fulfilled. All the sons, all the relatives, all the soldiers of Ravana were destroyed and ultimately Ravana fell to the ground dead. The raksasa race was exterminated of Ravana. Sita was brought back to Rameshwaram. It was Vedavati and after all this time, first time, Vedavati's actually seeing Sri Raam and He rejects her. He

says that, "How do I know you are perfectly chaste and pure? Living with such a great person as Ravana for 10 months, if even for one tenth of a second your mind went astray from thinking of Me then you are not pure, you're not chaste, and I cannot have you. So you should be tested by fire". He ordered Lakshman to get big logs, big logs of trees and start it on fire, it was a blazing fire, and Vedavati, in the role of Sita, she had absolute confidence of her chastity and her purity, she walked right into the fire. It was at that time according to Kurma Purana that Agni Deva appeared with the original Sita, Whom he had taken away and put in the care of Parvati for all of this time. And Agni Deva explained to Sri Raam this is the original Sita, and this is Vedavati, the Maya Sita, who is taken by Ravana. Lord Ramachandra accepted the real Sita as His wife. And Sita, Sita told Raam that, "Vedavati has performed such devotional service, such sacrifice under the torments of the prisonership of Ravana for all this time she did all for Me and You. Please accept her as Your wife; this is her only admission, her only ideal". And Lord Raam said that, "In this incarnation I have taken a vow of only one wife, so I cannot accept her in this incarnation, however in a future incarnation I will fulfill her desire and marry her". And Raam left with Sita. Vedavati still was alone with her mind fixed on the promise of the Lord that was in Treta yuga, the whole Dvarpa yuga passed, Krishna's lila was manifested on this world and then it went to another universe. Vedavati was waiting a long time, through Treta yuga, through Dvarpa yuga and in Kali yuga, she appeared, and it's a wonderful katha how she appeared. In the dynasty of the moon there was a great king of the Chola family of the name Sudarma. Sudarma had two sons, Aksharaj and Thondaman. He raised them and they were loving brothers. When they were of age to take the responsibility of the kingdom, Sudarma accepted Vanaprastha, he wanted to divide his kingdom in half before he left and give each of his two sons who were both worthy of being kings half of his kingdom, but the two brothers they had such deep love for each other, neither of them wanted half of the kingdom. "We will both rule the same kingdom together; we don't want to be separated". So that was the arrangement. Sudarma went to the forest, never to return, Aksharaj and Thondaman together ruled the kingdom as two kings, one kingdom, amazing example of brotherhood, they weren't suing each other in courts, they were working together with total love and respect. Aksharaj was the elder of the two. All of his desires were fulfilled in the way he

was ruling his citizens except one, he had no child, he longed for a child, he approached the Brahmans, and they told him, “You should perform a yajna for the purpose of having a child”. So as a part of the process of yajna the king had to plough several times around the yajnasala, so as he was ploughing around and around and around, his plough got caught in something in the ground and he pulled it, and out from the ground came an effulgent, golden box, on its own the box opened, revealing an exquisite golden lotus flower, in the whorl of the lotus flower was an effulgent little baby girl, smiling and glancing mercifully upon everyone. Aksharaj picked up the little child and showed her to the Brahmans and the Brahmans were amazed, they said, “Just as Janak Maharaja was ploughing the fields around the yajna and from the earth came Mahalakshmi, the Goddess of fortune, Sita, in the same way the Goddess of fortune has come again, and because she has been found on a lotus flower, her name will be Padmavati”. This Padmavati was Vedavati, who had taken birth again in this world. Aksharaj brought little Padmavati to his wife, Darini Devi, and they raised her with great, great affection. When she came of marriageable age, it created a big problem in the house. Who possibly is qualified to marry Padmavati? So many people were coming and offering their proposals but Aksharaj did not see that anyone was qualified. One day, Narada Muni took the form of a Brahman and while Padmavati was sitting in the garden, he said, “Let me see your palms”. She showed her palms, he saw beautiful lotus flowers in both palms, Narada Muni was ecstatic, tears flowed from his eyes, “I understand who you are, you don't know but I know, you are the Goddess of fortune, who has incarnated on this earth and Lord Vishnu will soon be your husband.”

Lord Srinivas Marries Padmavati



Padmavati, forgot what Narada Muni said. So many Brahmans say so many things in this world. Srinivas told Bakula Devi that this girl, Padmavati, is none other than My consort, Vedavati, who has been performing tapasyas for several yugas to gain Me as her husband. Bakula said, "I will go to negotiate the marriage". Bakula Malika went to a place called, Kapileshwar, the temple of Lord Shiva. There she found the maidservants of Padmavati offering very fervent prayers. She asked, they told that, "Ever since our princess, Padmavati, left that garden where she met a strange hunter, she has fallen deadly sick. She has high fever and Aksharaj and Darini Devi, her mother and father, they have brought the best doctors, every type of doctor, but nothing seems to work, she is dying and nobody can understand the cause or the cure. Kapileshwar to please give mercy and save her" Bakula Devi said, "That is why I have come, too. Please bring me to her mother and father" They said, "Yes, we will bring. You will give them hope." Meanwhile, Srinivas, it was His desire to elaborate this pastime. He took the form of a gypsy woman and had a mystical gypsy stick to put spells on people. And little baby, and she was dressed just like a gypsy, very authentic. And She came into Narayan puram, the capital of king, Aksharaj. And She was calling out that, "I am a gypsy woman and I have great powers, I could cure the sick, I could read the future". So one of the maidservants of the queen, she ran and told Darini Devi, Padmavati's mother that, "There is a gypsy woman, can I bring Her? She seems to know the future." She said, "Yes, bring Her immediately". So Srinivas came in. She said, "Please tell, what is the problem with my daughter? What is the future? What will happen to my daughter? Please tell me, oh gypsy woman!" He said, "I will tell. I will access the Goddess of the mountain to speak through Me but first you must bring me rice, kum kum, turmeric, silk saris and gold coins." And She set it all up very nicely, and started chanting mantras. She said, "Now you must bring your daughter to Me". Padmavati was brought in, Srinivas was very happy. The queen saw this gypsy woman gazing very deeply upon her daughter. She said, "Show Me your palms." She said, "I know what is her illness. She met a very great personality. She has fallen in love with him. And due to separation, she is love sick". The queen was insulted by this, "What nonsense you're talking, my daughter love sick?" She said, "Yes, this is what happened, I know. I could see it. I could see the past, and I could see the future. In fact, this person is none other than the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Lord, Who is living in

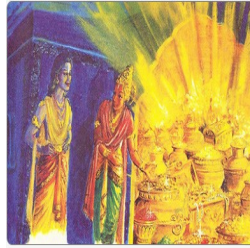
the mountains of Sheshachala. And He was hunting an elephant and He happened to see your daughter and all her friends when they saw this elephant coming, they all ran away and left your daughter alone, but this person was heroic. He came to rescue her. How do I know all these things? The Goddess of the mountain is telling Me.”

The queen rejected what the gypsy woman said. She said, “The mother of this great personality is coming very soon to negotiate marriage and you should accept it.” And the gypsy woman left and Srinivas went back to His ant hill. At the next moment, Bakula Devi arrived through another door but Bakula Devi, her stature was awesome, she had such majestic good qualities, although she just lived as a very simple woman with no possessions in the forest, she had such dignity that Darini Devi immediately was very deeply impressed and gave her a respectable greeting. And Bakula Devi offered her a plate made out of ivory that was covered with the most precious, celestial jewels, and presented it to the queen. She said, “I have come to ask your daughter's hand for the marriage of my Son, Who is the Supreme Lord, living in the hills of Seshachalam” The queen said, “What is this incarnation of God? I have not heard of any incarnation of Vishnu. And if Vishnu, Who is full of all opulences, were to incarnate in this world, what would He be doing living like a hermit in the jungles of the mountains? Let me speak to my king about this.” Darini Devi repeated the proposal to Aksharaj. Aksharaj consulted his ministers, who were Brahmins, they said, “We don't know of any incarnation of God on these hills, but the great sage, Shuka, he is living in those mountains. He is all-knowing, we should consult him.” They all went to the hermitage of Shuka, and Shuka said, “Yes, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayan, is living in the hills of Seshachalam. And king Aksharaj, you can never estimate your supreme good fortune that He wants to marry your daughter. Why does He want to marry your daughter? She is a Goddess of fortune, His eternal consort. You should immediately, as soon as possible, arrange for this marriage.”

Aksharaj, Shuka and the other family members came together and selected the soonest, auspicious date, which was on the next Ekadashi. And they wrote, Aksharaj wrote a letter to Srinivas proclaiming that he is offering the hand of his daughter in marriage. So Bakula Devi and the sage, Shuka, delivered that letter to the ant hill, where Srinivas was residing. Srinivas was very happy, very happy.

But the marriage was very soon, it was just a matter of days and He wanted to invite all the devas. So He meditated in His mind and from His mind, Garuda and Ananta Deva appeared. And He gave them the order, “Invite all the principal devas to come at once to My marriage” And soon they were coming, Brahma, Siva, Indra, Vayu, Agni, Surya Yamaraj, very auspicious, every one was coming.

Lord Srinivas borrows from Kubera



And when Srinivas saw the large crowds of very, very highly respectable people, He became unhappy. Brahma asked, “What is the problem? All arrangements are being made. Why are You unhappy?” He said, “How are we going to feed all these people? I'm living in an anthill, I don't have anything, and we have to make elegant. This should be a glorious marriage; this should be an elegant marriage. We need to arrange all the decorations, and not only that we have to feed everyone feasts of sumptuous Prasad, but I have nothing” So Brahma, he called for Kuvera. And Kuvera stood before Lord Srinivas with folded palms, offering his repeated dandavats, and said, “My Lord, whatever I have is Your property, You are the proprietor of everything that exists. The treasury of all the devas is ultimately Yours, just tell me and we will utilize it all”. Lord Srinivas said, “No. it is yours. I will not take anything from you but I will accept a loan.” Kuvera wanted to give everything but the Lord insisted, “No, it must be a loan, I must set the principle.” I guess it is the principle that for many marriages you need loan. But also the dignity of this avatar, He did not want to take His devotee's property. And then the Lord dictated the terms of the loan, He said “You give Me 14 Lakhs of gold coins with interest, and until the end of the Kali yuga whoever is really My devotee, when they come to see Me to take darshan, they will give their valuables and their wealth to pay the interest of the loan that I owe to you for My marriage”.

It is because of this ingenious contract that the Balaji Tirupati temple is the wealthiest temple in all the worlds. I have seen people put their wedding rings in the hundi. People give so much valuables but it is the duty of the devotees of Srinivas to keep the Lord's word. And He said, "Until the end of Kali Yuga, whoever My devotee is when they come for my darshan they will give substantial wealth to pay the interest, and then at the end of kali yuga then I will give back the principal as well". So this arrangement was made. And all the very, very opulent arrangements of marriage were taking place, but Srinivas again was looking sad, and He was asked why. It was because Lakshmi Devi was still all alone in Kolapur performing tapasya. He did not want to marry Padmavati without the presence of Lakshmi Devi. So Srinivas called for Surya, and told Surya, "Go to Lakshmi Devi and tell Her that I am sick, very sick, and She should come at once and then She will come". Surya was very afraid, "But You are not sick. You are not sick, how could I tell Lakshmi Devi a lie? What will happen to me if I tell my Supreme Mother a lie? She will know, She knows everything." And Srinivas said, "No, I will cover Her by my Maya potency so she will believe you" So Surya went to Kolapur, and told Lakshmi Devi that, "Srinivas is living in the Venkataswala, the hills that cure all sins, and He is very sick, very sick, and He is asking for You to be by His side" So Lakshmi Devi said, "I will go immediately." When She arrived, Srinivas fell to the ground pretending He was sick, and Her heart became very soft, but then She saw so many guests in all directions, She was wondering, "What's happening?", "Why all these guests?" and then the Lord opened the curtain of Maya, Yoga Maya, so that Lakshmi could understand everything. She looked at Her beloved Lord, Narayan, in the form of Srinivas, "I know what's happening. You are fulfilling Your vow, at last, to marry Vedavati, who has appeared in this world as Padmavati" The Lord said, "Yes." Lakshmi said, "I am thrilled with joy that You will do this. It is My great happiness. In fact, I will personally perform the bathing ceremony to consecrate You for Your marriage" Everyone was joyful. Lakshmi Devi consecrated the Lord with a holy bath and then the Lord descended the mountain to Narayanpuram, where Aksharaj was waiting with great opulence and this marriage ceremony lasted for several weeks with great festivities and joy. In the end, Bakula Devi told Aksharaj "Now, my son must return to His home" So Padmavati and Srinivas left the royal kingdom of Narayanpuram, and went back up to the top of mountain

Tirumala, where They decided to reside in the ashram of Agasya Muni. In this way They lived happily together. Some time passed, Padmavati noticed that there was a sadness in the heart of her beloved. She said, "I know why You are sad. You are feeling separation from Lakshmi, bring Her back."

Lord Srinivasa searching Lakshmi devi

Lord Srinivas said, "But will She come back? She is still performing tapasya because of Brigu Muni's kick on My chest, will She come back?" She said, "Of course She will come back." "But what about you?" Padmavati said, "It will be the greatest honour and joy of my life to share My home with Lakshmi. Together We will serve You for all of eternity." So Lord Srinivas went to Kolapur to bring Lakshmi back but Maha Lakshmi knowing He was coming, She disappeared, went to Patala-loka, where She took shelter in the ashram of Kapila Deva, the avatar of the Lord. The Lord could not find Her. It was at that time that the Lord was told that He should perform tapasya to get Lakshmi back.

Lord Starts Meditating on Lakshmi devi

On these Tirumala hills, He was to dig with His own hands a kund. He dug the kund and then He had Varuna fill it with ambrosial waters of sacred rivers and then He was to install a magnificent, golden lotus flower. And He was to sit in the whorl of the lotus flower and meditate on Lakshmi Devi. He sat on the lotus flower, the power of His meditation, the power of His love in separation created a heat that was filling the entire universe, and ultimately it reached the heart of Lakshmi. And She consulted Kapila Muni, "What should I do?" Kapila Muni told Her that, "Your Lord, Your beloved keeps feeling deep separation from You, He is performing tapasya to get You back, You should go to Him, it is Your heartfelt desire. Why are you taking so seriously this offense of Brigu Muni? After all, it was the Lord's plan. Even if Brigu Muni committed an offense by kicking Him in the chest, what is the result? **NOW THE WHOLE WORLD KNOWS WITHOUT EXCEPTION OF DOUBT THAT LORD NARAYAN IS THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, THE KING OF ALL KINGS, AND THE GREATEST OBJECT OF EVERYONE'S WORSHIP.** Brigu Muni, he has established that fact beyond doubt. So even if he committed some offense, the end justifies the means. He did a great thing. You should go back, You should forgive

Brigu Muni and You should give pleasure to Lord Srinivas.” That was just what Lakshmi Devi wanted to hear. With a blissful heart She traveled through the stem of that lotus flower, and in a most miraculous, astounding way through the lotus stem She just appeared on the whorl of the golden lotus at the side of Srinivas, effulgent like millions of suns. Srinivas and Lakshmi Devi gazed upon each other. They were united again. Sri Venkateshwara Dev Ki Jai !!!

Brigu Muni Begs Forgiveness from Mother Lakshmi

Brigu Muni came to that lotus flower as did the Devtas, and the rishis, and the sages and the devotees. Brigu Muni was just offering full obeisances, again and again and again, with tears of repentance in his eyes and begged forgiveness from Lakshmi Devi for what he had done. Lakshmi smiled, She said, “You are forgiven, you have done nothing wrong, this was all the lila of My Beloved Lord and you are just an instrument of this lila.”

History Behind How Tirupathi Temple Comes On the Tirumala Mountain

Lord Srinivas lived with Bakula, Lakshmi and Padmavati for many years. The King, Aksharaj, meditating on Srinivas left this world. At that time, difficulty came upon the kingdom. After Aksharaj had departed, his son, Vasudan, he considered that he was the rightful king. But there was a problem because Aksharaj shared the kingdom with his brother, Thondaman, for all those years. Thondaman said that, “It was our agreement. Originally, Sudarma, our father, wanted to divide the kingdom in half for both of us, but due to our love for one another we wanted to rule together, so we have been doing this so now I should rule with you”. But Vasudan said, “Is it in writing? Where is it in writing? How can you prove it?” It wasn't in writing. So Vasudan declared that his uncle was lying and that he would be the sole king. So there was a disagreement. The disagreement escalated, different people of the kingdom were taking either person's side and soon it came to the point where it was going to be a fratricidal war.

On the battle there was Thondaman's army, and Vasudan, the son of Aksharaj's army. How sad? This is the age of Kali. If you don't put things in writing, nobody knows what is truth. And we see this happening even amongst devotees today, people make agreements, people make policies, and then as years go by, different

people have different versions of what was agreed on. And then there is fighting with battles, and brothers become enemies and god brothers become hateful, and everything is finished.

So yes, here is a loving uncle and a loving son fighting over property and position. So they both wanted Srinivas on their side. So Srinivas went to Padmavati, He said "Who's side should I be on?" She said, she was so sad about this war, so sad, but she said still, "Vasudan is my brother, he is closest to me. You cannot go against him". So Srinivas gave His conch shell and His Sudarshan chakra to Thondaman. And He said He would be on the side of Vasudan. So the fight was raging but there was a problem. Thondaman saw that because Srinivas was on the other side none of his soldiers would fight enthusiastically, because they all loved Him. How can you fight against the ultimate object of your love? So his army was being destroyed, he was losing the battle simply because no-one wanted to fight against Srinivas. So he got so mad, he got so angry. Some say it was Thondaman, some say it was the son of Thondaman, that he took the chakra, the Sudarshan chakra that Srinivas gave them, and threw the chakra, threw Vishnu's chakra at Vishnu. And it hit Him, and Vishnu fell to the ground. It was His Lila, and He appeared lifeless. And everyone stopped fighting then, and they all gathered around and they were all crying and praying, "Please come back, come back, come back Srinivas, come back". And at that point Thondaman and Vasudan was thinking, "What nonsense are we doing fighting? Look what the result of the fight is? That Srinivas is injured, He may be killed". They were all crying and weeping and the news came to Agasya Muni's ashram, and Padmavati ran to the scene with Agasya rishi. And she was weeping and crying, and seeing that everyone's hearts were melting and then Srinivas came back into consciousness. And they both said, everyone said, "Whatever You say Srinivas, we will do". So Srinivas said, "We will divide the kingdom in two parts, and Vasudan, you be the king here and Thondaman, you be the king here, and forever you'll live in harmony with each other." And that took place. After some days, Srinivas approached Thondaman, who was a very, very great and dear devotee. And said, "In the place that Lord Varahadeva gave me, on the top of the mountain of Tirumala, build a glorious temple for Me, that is where I will reside". Thondaman, with great efforts, built the original temple of Tirumala. Srinivas,

Lord Narayan, resided in that temple with Lakshmi Devi and Padmavati. And at one time, very historical event, Srinivas said to Thondaman and the great rishis and sages that were gathered that, "As of now, I have speaking freely with human beings, acting as one of you, but the age of kali is progressing; I will no longer speak to just anyone. I will manifest My body as a deity, and whoever comes to worship Me with sincere devotion, I will deliver them from their sins and I will elevate them to Vaikuntha". Then Srinivas stepping on the altar of the temple manifested the vigraha of Sri Venkateshwara. Sri Venkateshwara Bhagavan Ki Jai!! Much louder please. Sri Balaji Maharaj Ki Jai!!!

Acharyas Tells Greatness About Tirupati Temple

The greatest of the acharyas (gurus) climbed this mountain with their own feet, as we are going to do tomorrow, eager for the darshan of Sri Venkateshwara. Shankaracharya came here to worship, and later on the great Vaisnava Acharaya, Ramanuja. Ramanuja declared according to the sastras that these seven hills are Vaikuntha on earth. Ramanujacarya was living in Sri Rangam but singing the songs and the hymns of the Alvars, always put him in a trance of ecstatic love. And one time while reading the glories of Tirumala and the Lord, Sri Venkateshwara, he told his devotees "We will go there". He came to the foot of the hill, and performed his bhajan, giving lectures on the Absolute Truth. One of his disciple, Anantacharya, he was living up there on the Lord's order, taking care of a garden, knowing that his guru was down at the bottom of the mountain, he came down and asked him "Please come up, please come up". But Ramanujacarya said, "How can I put my feet on that mountain, it is non-different than Ananta Sesha, it is Ananta Sesha's body. It is Vaikuntha, the spiritual world. I cannot go". But he said, "Ramanujam, my gurudeva, if you do not go then nobody will go. Even the pujaris, if you, the most holy and saintly and pure of all beings, are not willing to put your feet on the mountain then what is our position? The pujaris will come down; no pilgrims will go up there. Balaji will be up there all alone. You must come, please." So on the persuasion of the devotees, Sri Ramanujacarya climbed. As he was climbing, one of his spiritual masters, Sri Shaila Purna, came with garlands and Prasad, to greet Ramanujam, when he was just close to the top of the mountain. Ramanujacarya said to his senior, elder guru, he said "Why did you come with all this load of Prasad and garland yourself? Why didn't you just

send a junior devotee to do this? You are very old and it's very difficult for you.” Sri Shaila Purna responded that, “Yes, it is the proper etiquette for me to send a junior devotee, but I looked in all directions, and I could not find a single soul junior to myself. I am the junior most; I am the most neophyte of everyone so I had to do the chore myself”.

This is what a guru of Ramanujacarya was speaking. Sri Ramanujacarya's heart melted with the humility of a true Vaisnava. He stayed on the top of the hill for three days, having the darshan of Sri Balaji in great ecstasy. It is explained that over a period of time Balaji has four hands, over a period of time, the Vaisnavas worship Him as Vishnu, but the Shivaites worship Him as Lord Shiva. The followers of Shankaracharya consider that Balaji is Shiva. And the followers of Ramanujam and others consider Him Vishnu. So should we put the drum of Shiva and the trident in his arms, in His hands? Or should we put the conch shell and the disc? There was a dispute and you know how religious people can be when there is a dispute over theological issues. It was a heated debate. Ramanujacarya proposed a solution, he said that, “All followers of Shankar, you put Shiva's drum and Shiva's trident before the deity and I will put the conch shell and Sudarshan chakra before the deity, and then we will all leave the deity room and lock the doors so no one has any possibility of coming in. And in the morning we will open the door and see which symbols the Lord is holding”. Can you imagine the intensity of that night? I didn't read this but I don't think anyone slept that night, because this was in South India, this was like the ultimate deity. Is it Shiva or Vishnu? In the morning, the doors were opened and Sri Venkateshwara was holding the symbols offered by Sri Ramanujacarya of the conch shell and Sudarshan chakra. Venkateshwara Bhagavan Ki Jai!!!

Sri Ramanujacarya descended from the hill, he was about to depart for Sri Rangam, Sri Shaila Purna offered to teach Ramanujacarya Valmiki Muni's Ramayana for one full year in Tirupati. Ramanujacarya remained here in Tirupati for that year studying Sri Ramayana. Sripad Madhavacharya came here to Venkateshwara's mandir, resided for some time and worshipped Sri Balaji with great love and devotion with his disciples. Sripad Vallabhacharya came here and worshipped Sri Balaji with his disciples. In Sri Chaitanya Bhagavat we find Nityananada Prabhu's pilgrimage, He came to Tirumala to worship Sri

Venkateshwara with great love and devotion. And in Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita, Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, He walked up the same path we will be going tomorrow and in the presence of Sri Venkateshwara, in ecstatic love, He offered His prayers, He danced with His arms raised inducing every one around to chant the Holy Name. HARE KRISHNA HARE KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA HARE HARE HARE RAMA HARE RAMA RAMA RAMA HARE HARE

So many of our beloved acharyas worship this place, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, if we are fortunate we will see the lotus footprints of Lord Chaitanya that He installed here. And Srila Prabhupada, himself, came here. It is written about it in his biographies to take the darshan of Sri Balaji and he was very, very deeply impressed, in fact he told devotees that we should learn how to manage a temple very nicely and worship the deities so beautifully from Venkateshwara temple. Today, after lunch Prasad, which will be served if I ever end this long lecture, we will be visiting the temple of Padmavati. Tomorrow, for those with the strength, providing there's no cyclone rains, by Yoga Maya's potency, Christmas is such an immensely crowded place, time for Tirupati. More people come here on pilgrimage than any other temple in the entire world. Even though it is so difficult to get to. And Christmas time is a time where people all around have holidays. So this place should be swarming with hundreds and thousands of people, millions of people. However, because there are cyclones in Andhra Pradesh the vast majority of people are afraid to come. So the last few days I've been living on the top of the Tirumala Mountains and there's hardly anyone there, it's a great benediction. I mean, whoever suffering from the cyclone we definitely offer our prayers and our sympathies and pray for the Lord's compassion upon them, but at the same time there is some, some good that we can. So tomorrow those who are fit, we will leave at 4'o clock in the morning, and the meeting place will be announced. And we will, following in the footsteps of Sri Shankaracharya, Ramanujacarya, Nityananada Prabhu, Lord Chaitanya, Prabhupada drove off, so those who drive will be following in the footsteps of Prabhupada. And tomorrow, we will be having the darshan of Sri Venkateshwara Balaji. And the darshan is very fast, it is not like Radha Govinda temple, where you can stand all day long and chant prayers. In Venkateshwara temple you only get a few seconds and you are, "chalo chalo", you are pushed forward. But it's amazing. Sometimes people stand in line for 24 hours, 48 hours, 72 hours, just stand in line for all these hours, they have to bring

tiffins and just eating while standing in line, sleep at night where they are in line, just to get a three-second darshan, “chalo, chalo”. And in certain ways, in some people they shave their heads. There is a certain hall where they shave heads, hundreds and hundreds of people a day, men, women, everyone. As a traditional offering amongst the devotees of Balaji, an offering of surrender. Sometimes, when things are too easy to achieve we take it cheaply or as they say, for granted, but things that are very hard to achieve we meditate on its value more deeply. So this is one of the wonderful experiences about Venkateshwara, so much trouble to come here and then to get up the hill and then to stand in line and then just a second or two and then you are whisked away, but for that second or two, just offering the deepest, heartfelt prayers, praying for mercy, and beholding the form of the Lord, with much intensity, that is what we should do. Factually, that is how we should behold the deity all the time. When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was in Jagannath Puri, standing and gazing upon Lord Jagannath there will be tears pouring from His eyes, His limbs trembling, and however much time He was standing before Jagannath it was never enough, that is love. What should we pray? Na dhanam na janam na sundarim kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye mama janmani janmanisvare bhavata bhaktir ahaituki tvayi. In the line of Lord Chaitanya and the six Goswamis, our prayer is for eternal service, our prayer is for pure, unalloyed love, we want nothing else. My Lord, if You want to embrace me, or trample on me, or make me brokenhearted by not being present before me, as You like, I am Your servant, unconditionally. Many business people have become wealthy by praying to Balaji, by offering gifts to Balaji, many sick people have become healthy by offering their hearts to Balaji, but we do not want Karma-mishra bhakti, we do not want liberation, the desire of the jnana-mishra bhaktas, we want suddha-bhakta, we want pure devotion. What is pure devotion? Samsaddhir Hari tosanam, my Lord, how may I please You? Let me just be Your servant, unconditionally. That is my ultimate ideal, my ultimate aspiration, and even in the footsteps of Vedavati, if I have to suffer for yugas, I will never give up the hope of the shelter of Your lotus feet, in this spirit, let us worship the Lord and chant His holy names.

|| OM VENKATESHWARAYA NAMA ||

This lecture by Atma Tattva Das was recorded in Grass Valley, California, 1992.