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**#Mahabhashiam #GovindaBhagavatpada #AdiShankara**

**Adi Shankara's guru was Govinda Bhagavatpada who in turn was a shishya of Sree Gaudapadacharya. Interestingly, his story is connected to Mahabhashiam by Patanjali and his 4 sons are prodigies in their own right.**

1/

Sage Patanjali was very kind at heart, but extremely short tempered. After composing the colossal Mahabhashiam, he started to spread the knowledge by conducting classes.

Once, one of his students stepped out of class. Patanjali was very furious & flames came out of his eyes.

2/

The flames burnt all 999 students in the class. The student who stepped out came in and said, "Gurudeva, don't worry. I am alive. I can propogate the knowledge of Mahabhashiam"

Patanjali was furious that because of him he lost others & landed up burning him down too

3/

There was a Gandharva who comes & says, "Master, I have learnt the Mahabhashiam from the nearby Peepal tree. I can help spread the knowledge"

Patanjali was livid and anger and curses him that he has cheated and hence, should become Brahmarakshasa.

4/

Gandharva begs for forgiveness. Patanjali says that he will meet a befitting student to whom he should teach Mahaabhashiam. Once the student learns, he will be rid of curse

Brahmarakshasa starts to pose questions to passing by Brahmins. When they don't answer, he eats them

5/

One day, a Brahmin boy comes across. The Brahmarakshasa poses the same question to which the Brahmin boy answers correctly.

Pleased with his answer, he takes the Brahmin boy under his tutelage and starts his education on Mahaabhashiam

6/

Before he starts the class, he gives a special medicine to the student that rids him of hunger and sleep. For 6 months, the Brahmarakshasa writes on peepal leaves and drops them to the ground.

Student is very good and picks up the concepts in a very quick time

7/

When the education is completed, Gandharva resumes his original form and blesses the Brahmin kid. Before he leaves, he mentions that the drug will lose its effect if he touches water.

If he comes in touch with water, he will sleep for 6 months.

8/

The Brahmin boy collects all his peepal leaves into a bundle and starts his journey to spread the word

Once he comes across a river, but without any boat to cross. Thinking the water is shallow, he tries to cross the river, but falls in the river.

9/

Immediately, he falls asleep. Nearby a shudra lady would observe this and rescue him with the help of nearby people.

She takes care of him for 6 months during which he sleeps. Based on a doctor's advice, they cover him with rice (Annalepanam) to keep him rejuvenated

10/

After 6 months, he wakes up and eagerly searches for the bundle of leaves. Miraculously, he finds them near the river, but some leaves would be missing.

He observes nearby cows and checks on the owner who turns out to be the same lady.

11/

Next morning, he goes to the cowshed and checks the dung. As expected, the peepal leaves were untouched. He washes and categorizes the leaves.

It's the blessings of Rsi Patanjali & mahima of Mahaabhashiam that it was saved thus

12/

Pleased by the care of the Shudra woman, he requests her to ask for a boon. She says that since I took care of you, I can't take care of another man. I would like you to marry me.

The Brahmin who would be contemplating sanyaasa is now in a fix.

13/

After some thought, he says : Look I need to marry a woman of each varna before I marry you. Please wait for me.

True to his word, he marries a Brahmin lady, a Kshatriya, a Vaisya lady and finally the shudra lady.

He starts his family life with his 4 wives.

14/

Over a period of time, 4 sons are born from each mother. He teaches them with the restrictions applicable to varnas as was the norm of that time.

Hence, the son born to the shudra lady had to sit behind a curtain and he had to promise not to spread the holy text..

15/

The Brahmin's sons are:

1. Vararuchi - renowned Scholar of Prakrutaprakasham & Dhanapanchakam
2. Vikramaaditya - Emperor of Ujjaini
3. Bhatti - Minister of Vikramaaditya & author of Bhattivakyam
4. Bharthruhari - celebrated write of Hariteeka and Vakiapadyam

16/

After his sons were established, he left home and took up sanyaasa. His guru was Sree Gaudapadacharya.

The name the person took was Govindaswami / Govinda Bhagavatpaada, whose illustrious student is none other than Adi Shankara

17/

Ref: AithiyaMaala by Kottarathil Sankunni

Thank you [@/swamy64](#) Sir for this wonderful reference. I learnt a lot through this wonderful episode. Hope you too enjoyed the same.



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