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#MahaPeriyava Narrated by Prof S.Kalyanaraman, Neurosurgeon, Chennai
Compiled by Jagadguru Sri Maha Periyava - Kanchi Paramacharya/Fb

By the blessings of Sri Maha Periyava, I have been able to do brain operations in India continuously in the government General Hospital in Madras



from 1964 to 1992 and after I retired from government service, I have been in private hospitals for more than a decade. What is perhaps equally important is that I have been able to involve throughout these forty years in training several dozens of young doctors in neurosurgery

in the General Hospital, Chennai from 1964 to 1992 and in Apollo Hospital, Chennai recognized for DNB qualification in neurosurgery from 1992 onwards. In those days when a Brahmin boy went abroad and returned he was supposed to go to Rameswaram and have a bath in the ocean for

purification. Somehow although we are an orthodox family, I could not do this. Soon after my return I had to undergo surgery for hernia. Then I got married. Later I became very busy in hospital work and I could never get the time to plan a trip to Rameswaram. Sometime in 1975 I

went to Kancheepuram with my younger sister and niece to have darsanam of Maha Periyava. By that time I had already been abroad several times. An elderly Brahmin gentleman who had just come from Nigeria was present too to have darshan. There was a crowd of about sixty or seventy

persons and Maha Periyava talked for about an hour on my problem of going to Rameswaram. I am giving below the gist of the conversation His Holiness had with me.
His Holiness, while addressing the crowd of devotees: “This elderly gentleman had come from Nigeria to ask me if he

should do Prayaschittam for going abroad”. Turning to me he smiled “Probably, Kalyanaraman also had come because he has a selfish interest in this as to whether he should also go to Rameswaram”.

His Holiness: “How many versions of Ramayanam are there in India?”

SKR: “Probably

about a hundred”.
His Holiness: “There are about 300 languages and dialects in this country and probably an equal number of versions of Ramayanam. How did Rama and Sita return from Lanka to Ayodhya?”

SKR: By Pushpakavimanam.

His Holiness: “That is right. It is very interesting

that neither in Valmiki Ramayanam nor in any of the other 300 versions of Ramayanam there is any mention that Rama and others did prayaschittam after returning from Lanka. You may say that they travelled by air and prayaschittam is required only if you travel by sea.
Then He

mentioned the name of a Frenchman and asked if I had heard about him. I replied in negative.
His Holiness: “This man was a historian. He lived in India at the time of early Chola kings. At that time one of the daughters of the reigning King could not get suitable bridegroom in

India. In those days Hindu Kings were ruling over countries now known as Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia etc.” Have you been to Bangkok?

SKR: Yes.

HH: “Have you been to the famous Buddha temple there, which contains many pictures depicting the story of Ramayana in the

prakarams of the temple?”

SKR: Yes.

HH: “So the Chola king in south India chose a prince in Cambodia as his son-in-law. The prince came to India and married the princess. The royal couple accompanied by a large retinue of purohits, maids in waiting and servants returned by ship

to the bridegroom’s kingdom. After staying a few days there the purohits returned by ship to India. This French historian has given a very detailed day by day account of this marriage in his book. He has not mentioned that the purohits did Prayaschittam either on reaching

Cambodia or on returning to India.

Then His Holiness asked me: “How long does it take to go to America nowadays?”

SKR: It would take about eighteen hours and if there is a break of journey in London about twenty four hours.

Then His Holiness enlightened us:
“That is the real

point. In the Shastras it has been specifically stated that if one did not do nityakarmanushtanam (daily religious rituals like sandhya vandanam, samitadanam, agnihotram) for three days continuously one had to do prayaschittam. In those days practically everyone did their daily

religious duties. The only time they could not do so was when they travelled by sea as pure fresh water was not available for bath. That is why if they travelled by sea (for more than three days), they had to do prayaschittam. Probably the purohits reached Cambodia in two days

and Rama reached Ayodhya in a few hours. Therefore, there was no need for prayaschittam. If you apply that rule today, then some people in the present audience will need to do prayaschittam several times a year for omitting to do sandhya vandanam for three days in succession! One

need not go abroad to qualify oneself for doing prayaschittam!”

This is again a remarkable example of how His Holiness interprets the scriptures and gives simple anecdotes step by step to illustrate the point discussed, to a lay audience. Needless to say I was very much relieved

that I had not “sinned” by not going to Rameswaram! The occasion also reinforced my resolve never to omit Sandhya Vandanam or reciting the Gayathri manthram even for a single day.

His Holiness continued:
“Some people say that you should do prayaschittam only if you go to another

island. Is Africa an island?

SKR: Yes.

His Holiness: “No, Africa and Asia form single large mass of land. Only about a hundred years ago when the Suez Canal was dug by the Englishman, it technically became an island. In fact Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe were all one large

land mass and in the millions of years that have gone by, the land mass drifted away from one another with the oceans coming in between them and formed individual continents.”
Here again was another example of the vast knowledge of history, geography and geology that His Holiness

had mastered. He concluded by saying that neither the gentleman from Nigeria nor Dr. Kalyanaraman need to do prayaschittam because they have travelled for less than three days to reach India but everyone certainly had to do it if they had omitted Sandhya Vandanam for three days

or more!
Sarvam Sri Krishnarpanam ■■

Such an important thread, please read and share.