

# Maheswara Mahaa-Kalpa Mahaa-Thaandavam

Compiled by: R. SRIDHARAN

## A. Prologue

A.1. In Hindu philosophy, the Lord is one. He is the Supreme Being (பரப்ரஹ்மம்). Everything emanates from Him. He is the Supreme Soul (*Paramatma* - பரமாத்மா). Every other soul (*Atma* - ஆத்மா) is derived from Him, that is, is a part of Him. Every *atma* is given life by the Lord and becomes a soul-with-life (*Jeevatma* - ஜீவாத்மா). Everything created by Him, should pay obeisance to Him, that is, worship Him. Any form of worship of the *Parabrahman* is *Brahma-Vidya* (ப்ரம்மவித்யை).

A.2. He is the one who is responsible for the Creation (ச்ருஷ்டி - ஆக்கல்), Maintenance (ஸ்திதி - காத்தல்), Security (திரோதானம் - மறைத்தருளல்), Blessing (அனுக்ரஹம் - அருளல்) and Destruction (ஸம்ஹாரம் - அழித்தல்) of everything. If He can manifest Himself in all of us, as our souls, He can also manifest Himself in any form, to perform the above-stated *five functions* (பஞ்சக்ருத்யம்), as willed by Him. And He does it in His own inimitable style!

A.3. First He manifests Himself as Devi with the name of *Sri Lalitha Maha Tripura Sundari* (ஸ்ரீ லலிதா மஹா திரிபுர ஸுந்தரி), a female form of His own self. Man and Woman are equal in all respects. They are always to be paired for anything to happen. And He stands by that law of nature, which of course, is also given by Him. He is *Parabrahmam*, so also His Devi. There is absolutely no difference. Any worship of the Supreme Devi (ஸ்ரீவித்யை) is the worship of the Lord Himself (ப்ரம்மவித்யை). The events that follow, namely, everything that is connected with the *five functions*, happen both in the names of the Lord and the Devi. Whether They appear on the scene singly or together is immaterial. It is the act of the *parabrahmam*, as It wills (*It*, because we cannot specify that the He or the She form of the *parabrahmam* was behind!).

A.4. Any entity created by the *parabrahmam* to act on behalf of the *parabrahmam*, is also a *brahmam*. There are many such *brahmams* in Hindu philosophy. But five *brahmams* created by Him specifically to perform activities relating to the five functions (பஞ்சக்ருத்யம்) have a special status; they are called Pancha-Brahmams. They are named as Sadasiva (for Blessing - அனுக்ரஹம் - அருளல் - Sanctions), Maheswara – (for Safety & Security - திரோதானம் - மறைத்தருளல் - maintenance of secrecy to ensure well-being, peace, prosperity and productivity), Rudra (for Destruction - ஸம்ஹாரம் - அழித்தல் - Dismantlement, Rejection of outdated assets and technology, Recovery of reusable assets and resources), Vishnu (for Operation & Maintenance - ஸ்திதி - காத்தல் - O&M and Administration), and Brahma (for Creation - ச்ருஷ்டி - ஆக்கல் - Installation,

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Construction, including Planning). These Pancha-brahmans rank en-bloc higher in hierarchy to all other Gods and deities in Hindu philosophy, and amongst them, their ranking is as given above, in descending order, that is, Sadasiva, Maheswara, Rudra, Vishnu, Brahma!

**A.5.** The *panchabrahmans* are said to form a seat called Pancha-Brahma-Aasanam on which the Devi sits (பஞ்ச ப்ரஹ்ம ஆஸந ஸ்தீதா - லலிதா ஸஹஸ்ர நாமாவளி 58). This is to prove that the parabrahmam is above the five. And, to prove the point that the panchabrahmans are NOT timeless as is the case with the Lord and the Devi, the same seat is described as *Pancha-Pretha-Aasanam* (பஞ்சப்ரேதாஸநாஸநா-ல.ஸ. 249).

**A.6.** It therefore becomes clear that periodically, each *brahman* should get back to *parabrahman* to merge with It. Thus every *brahman* qualifies to be called as a *pretham*, that is, one who leaves one place to go to another place. After a *brahman* merges with *parabrahman*, in its place, a new *brahman* separates out from the *parabrahman*. The senior-most brahman, namely Sadasiva, is witness to many of His juniors going up to merge with the Lord for getting replaced. Finally, at the end of one full cycle, Sadasiva Himself goes up to merge with the Lord.

**A.7.** Devi is (மஹேச்வர மஹாகல்ப மஹாதாண்டவ ஸாக்ஷிநீ - ல.ஸ. 232), that is, She is witness to Maheswara Maha-Kalpa Maha-Thandavam of the Lord. What does it mean? When does that maha-tandavam take place?

**A.8.** When Sadasiva gets merged with the Lord, everything has vanished! The whole process of the *five functions* has to start from square one (square zero, if you so choose!). The Lord is happy that one full cycle is properly conducted by Him. Overpowered by His own happiness, He dances. It is the dance of happiness (ஆநந்த தாண்டவம்). It is witnessed by the Devi. She is the only witness, other than Nandideva, who keeps time. The very fact that there is somebody to witness His dance, entuses Him to produce a peak performance. That dance of His, becomes known as the Great dance (மஹா தாண்டவம்).

**A.9.** Is it possible to conjecture the time – interval between two such maha-thandavams? Is it possible to compute the life-spans of the *Pancha-Brahmans* in terrestrial terms?

*We looked into Siva Maha Puranam and other related books with the following results:-*

### **B. Time accounting for the mortal human beings** (மனிதர்களுக்கான காலப்பரிமாணக் குறிப்புகள்)

1. Nimisham (நிமிஷம்) = 0.42666 seconds, as we know of today.

2. Kashtai (காஷ்டை) = 15 Nimisham = 6.4 seconds

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3. Kalai (கலை) = 15 Kashtai = 96 seconds (விநாடிகள்)

4. Muhurtham (முஹூர்த்தம்) = 30 Kalai

= 48 minutes (நிமிடங்கள்) as we know of today

= 2 Naazhigai (நாழிகை)

*This Muhartham is less than the 1½ hour or ¾ Naazhigai – Muhurtham that we observe these days.*

5. Thithi (திதி - நாள்) (Day) = 30 Muhurthams

= 60 Naazhigais = One night followed by one Day

6. Paksham (பக்ஷம்) = 15 Days

7. Masam (மாதம்) = Month = 2 Paksham = 30 Days

8. Ruthu (ரூது) = 2 Masams

9. Ayanam (அயநம்) = 3 Ruthus

10. Varsham (வருஷம்) = Year = 2 Ayanams = 6 Ruthus = 12 Masams

11. One Day for Pithurars (பிதுரர்கள்) = 1 Month for Humans

Day Time for Pithurars is Krishna Paksham for Humans (தேய்பிறை); Night Time for Pithurars is Shukla Paksham for Humans (வளர்பிறை).

### C. Time according for the Devas (தேவர்களுக்கான காலப்பரிமாண குறிப்புகள்)

1. One Deva Day (தேவர்களுக்கான நாள்) = 1 Human Year

Day Time of Devas is Utharayanam for Humans; Night Time of Devas is Dakshinayanam for Humans.

2. One Deva Month = 30 Deva Days

= 30 Human Years (மனிதர்களுக்கான 30 ஆண்டுகள்)

3. One Deva Year = 12 Deva Months = 360 Human Years

4. One Chatur Yugam (சதுர்யுகம்)

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= One cycle of Krutha, Thretha, Dwapara, Kali Yugams (க்ருத, த்ரேதா, த்வாபர, கலி யுகங்கள்)

= 12,000 Deva Years

= 43, 20,000 Human Years =  $4,320 \times 10^3$  Human Years.

5. Life Time of One Indra (தேவேந்திரன்)

= approximately,  $300 \times 10^6$  Human Years.

6. One Kalpam (கல்பம்) = 1000 Chatur Yugams

=  $4,320 \times 10^6$  Human Years.

\* Present Kalpam is Sweta-Varaha Kalpam.

\* In one Kalpam 14 Indra's change.

\* One Kalpam is also the Life Time of 14 Manus, *i.e.*, 14 Manvantharams (மந்வந்தரம்). However, a Manu and an Indra need necessarily not be contemporaries with their life-spans co-terminating.

\* Present Manvantharam is Vaivasvatha Manvantharam, which is seventh in the cycle of fourteen Manvantharams.

### D. Time accounting for the Gods (தேவர்களுக்கான காலப்பரிமாண குறிப்புகள்)

1. One Brahma Day (ப்ரஹ்மதேவனின் ஒரு நாள்) = One Kalpam.

2. One Brahma Year = One Yuga-Kalpam = 1000 Kalpams

= 1 million Chatur Yugams =  $4,320 \times 10^9$  Human Years.

3. One Parardham = 100 Brahma Yeas

4. Yuga-Pralaya interval = 2 Parardhams.

### E. Yuga-Pralayam (யுக ப்ரளயம்)

Yuga-Pralayam occurs once every 200 Brahma Years --- *i.e.*, once every 200,000 Kalpas; *i.e.*, once after every 200,000,000, *i.e.*, once after every (200 million  $200 \times 10^6$ ) chatur-yugams; *i.e.*, once every  $864 \times 10^{12}$  Human Years.

In this Yuga-Pralayam, let us call this as Pralayam Level 1, all except Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheswara, Sadasiva, Nandideva and Parameswari, become ash and get absorbed into Lord Siva.

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5. One Brahma Yugam = 8000 Brahma Years = 40 Yuga Pralayams  
=  $8 * 10^6$  Kalpas =  $34,560 * 10^{12}$  Human Years.

6. One Brahma Chavanam (புரஹ்ம சவனம்)  
= 1000 Brahma Yugams  
=  $8 * 10^6$  Brahma Years =  $8 * 10^9$  Kalpas  
=  $34,560 * 10^{15}$  Human Years.

7. Brahma-Kalpam (புரஹ்ம கல்பம்) = Life Time of one Brahma  
= 9000 Brahma Chavanams =  $9 * 10^6$  Brahma Yugams  
=  $360 * 10^6$  Yuga-Pralaya Intervals =  $72 * 10^9$  Brahma Years  
=  $72 * 10^{12}$  Kalpas =  $3, 11,040 * 10^{18}$  Human Years.

### F. Avaanthira-Pralayam (அவாந்திர புரளயம்)

When one Brahma-Kalpam ends, Brahma-Kalpa Pralayam or Avaanthira-Pralayam (அவாந்திர புரளயம்) (*i.e.*, Pralayam Level 2) occurs. This happens once every  $360 * 10^6$  Yuga-Pralayams (*i.e.*, once every  $3, 11,040 * 10^{18}$  Human Years).

With Avaanthira-Pralayam, the life time of one Brahma ends and his skull is added to the garland worn by Siva (Nataraja).

In Avaanthira-Pralayam, all except Vishnu, Rudra, Maheswara, Sadasiva, Nandideva and Parameswari, become ash and get absorbed into Lord Siva.

8. One Vishnu Day (மஹா விஷ்ணுவிற்கான ஒரு நாள்)  
= Life Time of one Brahma

9. One Vishnu-Kalpam ¶  
= Life Time of One Vishnu = 100 Vishnu Years  
=  $100 * 10^3$  Vishnu Days = Lifetime of  $100 * 10^3$  Brahmas.

In other words, 100,000 Brahmas change during the life time of one Vishnu.

¶ *The terms Vishnu-Kalpam, Rudra-Kalpam, Maheswara-Kalpam and Sadasiva-Kalpam have been conjectured in this write-up for ease of understanding. The term Maheswara-Maha-Kalpam appearing in Sri Lalitha Sahasranamam appears to support this conjecture.*

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### G. Vishnu-Kalpa-Pralayam (விஷ்ணு கல்ப ப்ரளயம்)

When Vishnu-Kalpam ends, Vishnu-Kalpa Pralayam or Pralayam Level 3 occurs. It happens once for every 100,000 Brahma-Kalpa or Avaanthira-Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $36 \cdot 10^{12}$  Yuga-Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every 3, 11, 040 \*  $10^{23}$  Human Years.

With Vishnu-Kalpa Pralayam, the life time of one Vishnu ends.

In this Pralayam, all except Rudra, Maheswara, Sadasiva, Nandideva and Parameswari, become ash and get absorbed into Lord Siva.

10. One Rudra Day (ருத்ரனுக்கான ஒரு நாள்)

= Life Time of One Vishnu.

11. One Rudra-Kalpam

= Life Time of One Rudra

= 100 Rudra Years

=  $100 \cdot 10^3$  Rudra Days.

### H. Rudra-Kalpa-Pralayam (ருத்ர கல்ப ப்ரளயம்)

When Rudra-Kalpam ends, Rudra-Kalpa Pralayam or Pralayam Level 4 occurs. It happens once for every 100,000 Vishnu-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $10 \cdot 10^9$  Brahma-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $36 \cdot 10^{17}$  Yuga-Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every 3, 11, 040 \*  $10^{28}$  Human Years.

With Rudra-Kalpa Pralayam, the life time of one Rudra ends.

In this Pralayam, all except Maheswara, Sadasiva, Nandideva and Parameswari, become ash and get absorbed into Lord Siva.

12. One Maheswara Day (மஹேச்வரன் அல்லது ஈச்வரன் அல்லது ஈசானனுக்கான ஒரு நாள்)

= Life Time of One Rudra.

13. One Maheswara-Kalpam = Life Time of One Maheswara

= 100 Maheswara Years =  $100 \cdot 10^3$  Maheswara Days.

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### I. Maheswara-Kalpa-Pralayam (மஹேஸ்வர கல்ப ப்ரளயம்)

When Maheswara-Kalpa ends, Maheswara-Kalpa Pralayam or Pralayam Level 5 occurs. It happens once for every 100,000 Rudra-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $10*10^9$  Vishnu-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $10*10^{14}$  Brahma-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $36*10^{22}$  Yuga-Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $3, 11, 040 * 10^{33}$  Human Years.

With Maheswara-Kalpa Pralayam, the life time of one Maheswara ends.

In this Pralayam, all except Sadasiva, Nandideva and Parameswari, become ash and get absorbed into Lord Siva.

14. One Sadasiva Day (சதாசிவனுக்கான ஒரு நாள்)

= Life Time of one Maheswaran.

15. One Sadasiva-Kalpam = Life Time of One Sadasiva

= 100 Sadasiva Years =  $100*10^3$  Sadasiva Days.

### J. Maheswara-Maha-Kalpa-Pralayam (or Sadasiva-Kalpa-Pralayam)

(மஹேஸ்வர மஹா கல்ப ப்ரளயம்) (அல்லது சதாசிவ கல்ப ப்ரளயம்)

Sadasiva-Kalpam can also be conjectured to be called as Maheswara-Maha-Kalpam, that is, the Kalpam that is one level above Maheswara-Kalpam.

When Sadasiva-Kalpam *i.e.*, Maheswara-Maha-Kalpam ends, Sadasiva-Kalpa Pralayam, *i.e.*, Maheswara-Maha-Kalpa Pralayam or Pralayam Level 6 occurs. It happens once for every 100,000 Maheswara-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $10*10^9$  Rudra-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $10*10^{14}$  Vishnu-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $10*10^{19}$  Brahma-Kalpa Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $36*10^{27}$  Yuga-Pralayams, *i.e.*, once every  $3, 11, 040 * 10^{38}$  Human Years.

With Sadasiva-Kalpa Pralayam, the life time of one Sadasiva ends.

In this Pralayam, all except, Nandideva and Parameswari, become ash and get absorbed into Lord Siva.

16. One Day of Lord Siva (சிவபெருமானுக்கான ஒரு நாள்)

= Life Time of one Sadasivan.

This Maheswara-Maha-Kalpa Pralayam is what is referred to as *Maha Pralayam*.

Maha Pralayam occurs during the evening time of every day of Lord Siva. The dance performed by Lord Siva during Maha Pralayam is called, in Tamil, a ஊழிக்கூத்து.

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The only witnesses to this *Maha-Kalpa-Maha-Thandavam* are Nandideva (நந்திதேவர்) and Parameswari (ஸ்ரீ லலிதா மஹா த்ரிபுரசுந்தரி). In order to record this fact, the 232<sup>nd</sup> namavali in *Lalitha Sahasranamam* praises Her as “**Maheswara Mahaakalpa Mahaa-thaandava Saakshinee**”. That is, during Maheswara-Maha-Kalpam, everything is destroyed, but the Devi remains as witness to the Maha-Pralaya Dance of Siva. Of course, Nandikeswara is the other witness, as he is also *timeless*, and he is the one who keeps time (*thaalam*) with his *madhthalam* (percussion instrument) when the Lord dances.

Creation of the universe occurs during the daytime of Lord Siva starting from the wee-hours of the early morning. Mahapralayam occurs during Siva’s night time, starting from the *sandhya-kalam*.

### K. Epilogue

\* *Based on the foregoing, the eternity of Siva and the greatness of Nandideva can be understood.*

\* Nandideva is praised as the second *Parameswara*, as he is also *timeless*, like Lord Siva and Devi Lalitha Maha Tripura Sundari. That is why; his *ashtothara satha namavali* worships him as “**Soma Surya Agni Lochanaaya**”, and “**Parameswaraaya**”.

