

Myths Busted & Legends Revealed: Beyond the Text



General Collection

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Description: From sleepless Lakshmana to speaking elephants—clarifying myths and exploring the deeper meanings of Avatars and Divya Deshams.

Tags: myths, ramayana, avatars, divya desham, tamil literature, gajendra moksham



Myths, Legends, and Clarifications

The scriptures are full of stories that are often misunderstood. Here are detailed clarifications and fascinating legends based on the texts.

1. The Greatness of Janaka (Selflessness vs. Attachment)

King Janaka (Siradhwaja) is celebrated for his absolute selflessness and lack of *mamakara* (the sense of "mine").

The Fire Illusion: His greatness was illustrated when his Acharya created an illusion of fire in Mithila. While others panicked to save their possessions, Janaka calmly replied:

"Burning is Mithila. None of it is mine. If it is my country or palace, I would protect it, but I have not created it."

The Paradox: However, the text notes a beautiful paradox regarding his affection for his daughter. Despite having conquered attachment to an entire kingdom, when he gave Sita in marriage to Rama, he said:

"Yam Sita Mama Suta" (This Sita is **my** daughter).

Sita's virtues and discipline were so profound that they compelled even a detached soul like Janaka to feel a sense of possession and pride.

2. Is Tamil Vedic? (The Verdict)

It is a common misconception to label ancient Tamil literature as "Avaidik" (non-Vedic) just because of the language difference. The speaker argues that it is completely Vedic.

Evidence from the Masters:

- **Nammazhwar:** In works like *Thiruvaimozhi*, he references the Rig Veda (*irukkar mozhiyil*) and the Sama Veda (*Chandoga*). He even translates concepts from the *Chandogya Upanishad*—specifically the description of the Lord's eyes resembling a lotus (*Kavyasam Pundarikam*)—into Tamil as *Aravinda Lochanan*.
- **Andal & Thirumangai Alvar:** Both referenced the *Vishnu Sahasranamam* (a Mahabharata text) in their Tamil compositions. Andal refers to the Lord as *Namamayiram etha ninna Narayana* (The one celebrated by 1,000 names), and Thirumangai Alvar mentions *Peraayiram udaiyaan* (The one with 1,000 names).

3. Rama / Guruvayur: Who Sees Whom?

The text emphasizes that while we desire to see the Lord, it is more spiritually significant for **the Lord to see us**. In Ayodhya, there was a saying that a person whom Rama has not seen (or who has not seen Rama) should not exist.

The Guruvayur Anecdote: The preacher Jayarama Sharma once went to Guruvayur but cried afterwards because the pushing crowd prevented him from seeing the deity. A friend consoled him with a profound truth:

"While you might not have seen the Lord, the Lord has surely seen you."

This highlights the concept of **Kataksha** (divine glance)—the Lord's vision falling upon the devotee is the true blessing.

4. The Myth of Lakshmana Sleeping

The Myth: There is a popular belief that Lakshmana did not sleep for the entire 14 years of exile to guard Rama. **The Reality:** This is medically impossible!

The Correction: Acharyas explain that the statement "Lakshmana did not sleep" actually means he **did not sleep well** due to his constant worry for his brother's safety. The *Ayodhya Kanda* of the Ramayana actually cites an instance where Rama wakes Lakshmana up, proving that he did indeed sleep during the exile.

5. What is a Divya Desham? (The Sugarcane Analogy)

A *Divya Desham* is a sacred place (*kshetram*) where the location itself is considered the form of the Lord. You do not necessarily have to enter the temple to have a *darshan* (vision); stepping onto the land is equivalent to seeing Him.

The Sugarcane Analogy: The speaker cites Vedanta Desika, comparing the Lord to sugarcane:

1. **Sugarcane Juice:** This is the Lord's essence.
2. **Rock Candy:** When the juice is extracted and solidified, it becomes candy.

Similarly, the Lord's mercy (*Daya*) solidifies to become the hill at **Tirumala**. Therefore, the hill itself is the solidified mercy of the Lord. In a *Divya Desham*, the Creator is not just *in* the creation; the Creator **is** the creation.

6. Gajendra Moksham: Did the Elephant Speak Sanskrit?

In the story of Gajendra Moksham, an elephant caught by a crocodile recites Sanskrit shlokas (*Adi Beejay, Adi Avyaktay...*) to call the Lord. Skeptics often ask: *How could an elephant speak Sanskrit?*

The Correct Interpretation: The elephant did not literally speak Sanskrit grammar.

- **The Translator:** Sage **Shukabrahma**, who narrated the *Bhagavatam*, transcribed the elephant's anguished cry and *intent* into Sanskrit verses.
- **The Analogy:** Just as a pet owner understands their dog's body language and "speaks" for them, the Sage understood the prayer.
- **The Backstory:** The elephant was formerly a devotee King named Indradyumna (Pandya Raja) and had retained his devotional memory.

7. Avataram: How Many? (The Infinite Truth)

The common belief is that there are only 10 avatars (Dashavatara). The speaker clarifies that this is a misconception.

Key Clarifications:

- **Infinite Avatars:** The Lord takes infinite avatars (*Asankhye*). The Gita statement *Sambhavami Yuge Yuge* means He incarnates from time to time, not just once per age.
- **Variations in Lists:** The "Top 10" list varies by Acharya.
- *Vedanta Desika:* Includes Balarama but excludes Buddha.
- *Parashara Bhatta:* Includes Buddha (interpreting names like *Ratnanabha* and *Sulochana* in the *Sahasranamam* as referring to the original, non-monastic form of Buddha).
- **Universal Presence:** Philosophically, every proper noun in the world ultimately denotes the *Paramatma* (Supreme Soul), implying His presence and manifestation are limitless.

 Watch the detailed explanation here: [Youtube Link](#)



Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

These articles are based on discourses by **Sri Dushyanth Sridhar**, who renders discourses in English & Tamil on Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavata, Vishnu Purāna, Bhagavad Gitā, Vishnu Sahasranāma, and Divya Prabanda in the upanyāsam, pravachanam, or kālakshepam style. Visit <https://desikadaya.org> for more information. These notes are presented solely for educational purposes to help viewers download and benefit from these teachings. Any incorrect interpretations or inaccuracies are mine and unintentional—please forgive me. For any feedback, please send an [email](#).