

An insight into *naivEdya vidhAna*

It is a well-known fact that just sprinkling water & chanting a few *maMtrAs* does not constitute a true *naivEdya* process. Then, what is that a *sAdhaka* needs to do so that it not only reaches the Lord but pleases Him as well? Here is a brief abstract on this matter with supporting list of the delicacies, their corresponding *abhimAni dEvate* & respective *bhagavat rUpas*

Offering *naivEdya* to the one who is ever fulfilled (*nitya-tRupta*)

Lord Krishna in *shrImad bhagavat gIta* says “*yadAshnAsi tatkuruShva madarpaNaM*”, meaning, whatever we consume has to be first offered to Him. *shrI hari* is in a constant state of fulfillment & does not aspire for anything. His form is *aprAkRuta* & beyond the realm of human (*pRAkRuta*) imagination. With that in context, how can *sAdhakAs* offer anything from our world to the ever blissful? The only way is to do the *chintana* of the various *bhagavat rUpas* in these worldly eatables thereby giving *naivEdya* a true meaning. Offering whatever the Lord has given us with utmost devotion; the *sAdhaka* needs to complete his duty. As the famous verse goes, “*kereya nIranu kerege challi*”, while doing this kind of *naivEdya*, a true *sAdhaka* feels gratified as the Lord has provided such a simple & unique way to please Him. Finally, this action needs to be performed with no ego (letting go of *kartrUtva abhimAna*) whatsoever!! Extending this concept a little further, a *sAdhka* needs to perform a 3-fold *naivEdya* as explained below:

1. The *padArtha* (items) used for *naivEdya* have a *bhagavat rUpa* embedded in them. Doing *chiMtana* of these forms is the very 1st step. If one can't remember all the *rUpa-s* as mentioned in the *shAsTra-s* & reiterated by *shrI jagannAtha dAsaru* in *shrI hari katha amruta sAra*, at least doing the *anusAm dhAna* that a form of HIS resides in there will please HIM. The benefit of this step is that it purifies the food we are about to consume by HIS *sannidhAna*
2. The forms of The Lord in the eatables, the *rUpa-s* in the *shAlagrAma* & various idols and the *biMba rUpa* present within us are all the same!! Doing *aikya chintana* of all these forms is called *yOga* & is the 2nd step. Here is a supporting *pramANA*, from *mAnasa smRuti* composed by *shrI vyAsa tatvagnya tIrthru*:

ब्रह्मांड अंतर-बहिस्थानाम् रूपाणाम् अधि सर्वशः ।
आत्म हृत्पद्मगेन ऐक्य चिंतनम् परमार्चनं ॥

One of the greatest contributions of *shrImad AchAryaru* is the concept of *advaita-traya*. Even though we are staunch followers of *dvaita*, we are encouraged to follow not just 1, but a 3-fold *advaita* principle. The only difference is that it does not apply to *jIva* or *jaDa*, but pertains to The Lord Himself, briefly explained as below:

bhAvAdvaita

All forms of The Lord residing in everyone & everything is the same, implying the various *biMba rUpa-s* within the innumerable *jIva-s* & the various forms present in inanimate objects is none other than *shrI hari*. There is no difference whatsoever in any aspect of The Almighty when taking these forms, such as *guNa*, *AnaMda* & so forth. Meditating upon this aspect of Him is a form of *advaita chiMtana*

dravyAdvaita

Everything that we see in this universe belongs to Him, meaning the innumerable *dravya-s* have just different forms of the same Lord. In other words, there is no other owner other than The Lord. In a worldly, sense as humans, we don't even own the body that we're born with, let alone the rest of the stuff we accumulate during our lifetime. Letting go the attachment of ownership (*mOha*) is in itself doing this 2nd form of *advaita chiMtana*

kriyAdvaita

Lastly & the most important all actions seen are His, commonly known as *biMba kArya*. He is the one who talks, walks, hits/gets-hit, begs/gets & so forth. Without going into much detail (as it's beyond the scope of this presentation), this particular concept of *advaita chiMtana* leads one towards the belief of a *jIva* having no *kaRtrutva*. From a *loukika* perspective, one of the greatest benefits of practicing this is the state of constant humbleness (no anger towards anyone/anything as all actions are attributed as His & the belief that everything is happening for my/*jIva*'s own good)

3. Lastly, consuming the food is the 3rd & final step. The famous *maMtra* before we partake the food:

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ १४ ॥

Implies that this process is a very holy *hOma* in which the *sAdhaka* is doing an offering (*havis*) to The Lord. Here, our *iMdriyas* (organs) are in action & that is the only way to reach & please the Lord. Realizing HIS grace by enabling us to be able to consume the food (which is nothing but HIS *prasAda*) is the greatest form of worship. There is an age old tradition (believed to be named as *ekODi mouna*) that some folks follow wherein all the food items are served only once on the *yela*. *naivEdya* is done only once & only this much is consumed. There are no multiple servings since one can't do *punarnaivEdya*

What one should contemplate is that everything is “*avanu tiMdu biTTa ucchiShTa*”, meaning it's HIS *prasAda*. The Lord takes it first, then gives it to *shrI lakshmi dEviyaru*, from there it goes to *shrI vAyu dEvaru*, further down to all the *tatvAbhimAni dEvategaLu* & finally comes to the *jIva*. A true *sAdhaka* pays thoughtful attention to this. The greatest benefit of doing so is that one gets rid of the *baMdhana shakti* (life/death cycle). As Lord Krishna quotes (BG: 15_9)

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ॥ ९ ॥

As *shrImad AchAryaru* says in *gIta bhAshya* translating the above *shlOka*:

इंद्रिय द्वाराहि सोहि भुंक्ते

The Lord is only pleased when one does *samarpaNe* through the *iMdriyA-s* & not via the materialistic objects!! From a worldly perspective, if HE really started taking whatever is offered (fruits, flowers, nuts & such), people would totally stop doing *naivEdya* altogether. *shrI jagganAtha dAsaru* says the same in his magnum-opus *shrI hari katha amruta sAra* (*vibhUti saMdhI*):

अरियदिदरु एव्मोडिद्वनवरत विषयुगळुंभ,
ज्णानोत्तरदि तनगर्षिसलु चित्तुखिवित्तु संतैप,
सरितु कालप्रवहगळु कंठरैयु सरि कानदिरै पविववु,
मरळि मज्जन पान कर्मागळिंद सुखिविहवु ॥ ३२ ॥

Irrespective of whether one is able to comprehend or not, The Lord residing within us enjoys all the worldly pleasures (being the *bhOktru*) on our behalf. People normally do not have this *anusaMdhAna*, but the Indweller being the most compassionate that HE is, never stops working.

Once a *jIva* is able to perceive this concept & applies the same (by doing *samarpaNe* of everything to HIS lotus feet), he/she will start experiencing *svarUpa sukha*

[dEvata list with the corresponding bhagavat rUpas in the equipment used to prepare food](#)

1. Stoves (*olegaLu*): *shrI agni, shrI bhArgava*
2. Dried cake of cow dung (*beraNi*), logs & charcoal: *shrI vasaMta, shrI bhArgava*
3. Vessels: *shrI vAruNi, shrI anaMta*
4. *bALe ele* (plantain leaf from which food is eaten) & such items: *shrI durgA, shrI satya*
5. container that holds ghee: *shrI souparNI, shrI datta*

[List of dEvatAs aiding in organizing the food that is offered to the Lord \(read as prepared by\)](#)

1. *anna* (rice): *shrI saraswatI & shrI brahma*
2. *tovve* (plain daal) : *shrI shrIdEvi*
3. *bhakshya* (sweet dish): *shrI chaturmukha brahma*
4. *paramAnna* (*pAyasa*, sweet pudding): *shrI bhAratI*
5. *kAyi palya* (thawed vegetables with coconut): *shrI chaMDra*
6. residing in *chefs* is: *shrI shrIdEvi* & her Indweller *shrI vishwaMbara nAmaka paramAtma*
7. within the *maMDala* drawn for placing *naIvedya* items: *shrI bhUdEvi* & her Indweller *shrI bhUvarAha nAmaka paramAtma*
8. *purification* done by: *karmAbhimAni shrI puShkara*
9. residing in the *cloth* that is used to cover the dishes: *shrI gaNapati* & *shrI sanatkumAraru*
10. residing in the *tulasi* petals that is dropped in all the dishes: *shrI ramA* & her Indweller *shrI kapila nAmaka paramAtma*
11. residing in the *veil* that is used to momentarily block the view: *shrI vishwaksEna* & his Indweller *shrI puruSha nAmaka paramAtma*

[A way of offering to shrI vaishvAnara rUpi Lord](#)

Rice which is holy will purify a *sAdhaka*'s mind. As prescribed by the *shAstrAs*, rice that is prepared while remembering the Lord is bound to be pure & one the act of consuming such food is in itself a *yaj-ja*. As *shrImad AchAryaru* said, “भुंजेत हृदतं विष्णुं स्मरन् तद्गत मानसः” which implies that while feasting one should constantly think about Lord Vishnu who is present in several forms both in the food & the body.

As the saying goes:

नैवेद्यमन्नं तुलसी विमिश्रितं विशेषतः पादजलेन सिक्तं योऽनाति नित्यं प्रयतो मुरारे प्राप्नोति यज्ञायुत कोटि पुण्यम्

Any *sAdhaka* who consumes rice that has a *tulasi* petal & sprinkled with *shrI hari's pAdOdaka* (*tIrtha*) is bound to obtain *puNya* (virtues) that is equivalent to performing a crore *yaj-ja-s*

A means by which a *sAdhaka* can find the Lord through this *yaj-jya* called *bhOjana*

1. Residing in the eyes of the *sAdhaka*, *shrI kapila nAmaka paramAtma* sees the food items
2. Being in the nose, *shrI narahari rUpi* Lord enjoys the odor
3. *shrI bhArgava rUpi* Lord present in the mouth provides a means for the intake
4. *shrI matsya rUpi* Lord tastes the food while he dwells in the tongue
5. In the teeth is *shrI haMsa nAmaka paramAtma* enabling to bite down the food
6. By being present in our voice, *shrI hayagrIva* will give His own remembrance
7. The strength to even have food is provided by *shrI saMkarShana-pradyumnaru*
8. *shrI aniruddha-narAyaNaru* pervade the food items to protect them
9. In the throat & stomach resides *shrI vAsudEva* aiding the food to get there
10. *shrI shAMtIpati aniruddha* resides in *annamaya kOsha* (gross material body) in 8251 forms
11. *shrI kRutIpati pradyumna* resides in *prANamaya kOsha* (vital organs) in 5543 forms
12. *shrI jayApati saMkarShaNa* resides in *manOmaya kOsha* (mental sheath) in 562107 forms
13. *shrI mAyApati vAsudEva* resides in *vij-jAnamaya kOsha* (intelligent sheath) in 4374 forms
14. *shrI lakShmIpati nArAyaNa* resides in *AnaMdamaya kOsha* (innermost sheath in the body) in 5125 forms

A comprehensive list of items, their *abhimAni dEvate* & the respective *bhagavat rUpa*

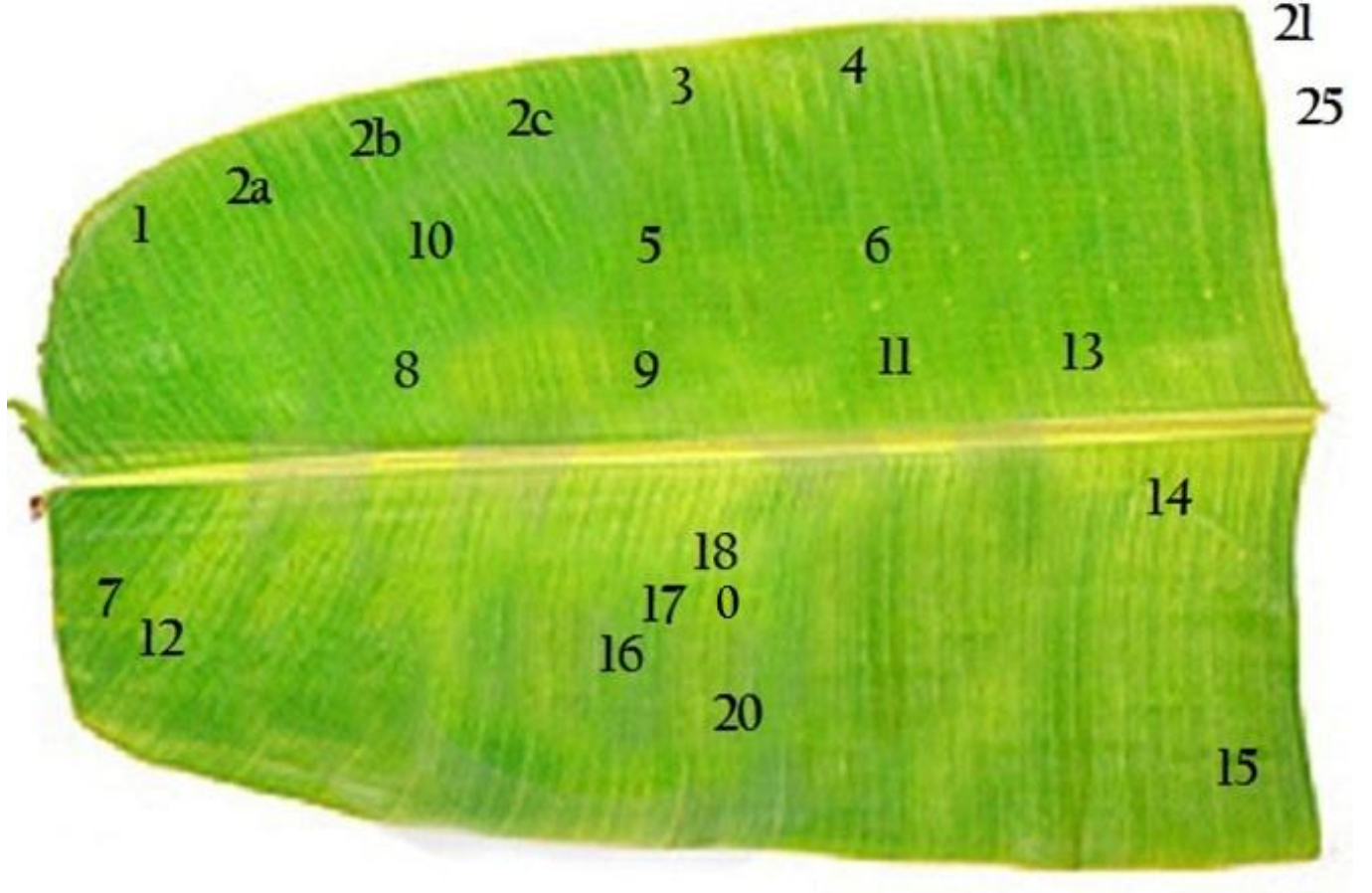
This is normally listed in the 24 *shrI keshavAdi nAma* order (as prescribed in the *Achamana* sequence), but to make it easier during events, it is hereby listed in the order of which each of these items are served

| # | <i>AhAra padArtha</i> | <i>abhimAni dEvate</i> | <i>bhagavat rUpa</i> |
|---|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>uppu</i> (salt) | <i>niraRuti</i> | <i>sougaMdhI sahita janArdhana</i> |
| 2 | <i>chutNi, kOsamBari</i> & so forth | <i>vAkyabhimAni bRuhaspati</i> | <i>satyA sahita pradyumna</i> |
| 3 | <i>palya</i> prepared using coconut | <i>shESha dEvaru</i> | <i>buddhI sahita padmanAbha</i> |
| 4 | <i>palya</i> prepared using <i>soppu</i> (leaves) | <i>mitra nAmaka sUrya</i> | <i>maMgaLadEvi sahita hRuShIkEsha</i> |
| 5 | <i>huLi illada stuff</i> (non-sour) | <i>rudra</i> | <i>hariNi sahita saMkarShaNa</i> |
| 6 | <i>kaTu dravya</i> (bitter dishes) | <i>yama</i> | <i>nityA sahita anirudhdha</i> |
| 7 | <i>huLi padArthagaLu</i> (sour | <i>gowrI</i> | <i>iMdirA sahita dAmOdara</i> |

| | | | |
|------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | dishes), <i>chitranna</i> | | |
| 8 | <i>bhakShyagaLu</i> (sweet dish) | <i>sUrya</i> | <i>kamalA sahita mAdhava</i> |
| 9 | <i>maMDige</i> (special kind of <i>hOLige</i>) | <i>brahma</i> | <i>kamalAlaya madhusUdhana</i> |
| 10 | <i>gojju</i> (juicy stuff), fried dishes (using ghee & oil) | <i>jayaMta, budha</i> | <i>sadAshraya adhOkShaja</i> |
| 11 | <i>jahaMgIru, vaDe</i> & other stuff made using <i>uddina bELe</i> (black gram) | <i>svAyaMbhumanu</i> | <i>sakhAdEvi sahita achyuta</i> |
| 12 | <i>kuMbaLakAyi, eLLu, uddina</i> dishes (such as <i>happaLa, saMDige</i> & so forth) | <i>dakShaprajEshvara</i> | <i>lakShminarasiMha</i> |
| 13 | fruits & their juices | <i>ahaMkArika prANa</i> | <i>suMdarI sahita upEMdra</i> |
| 14 | <i>tove</i> (plain daal) | <i>garuDa</i> | <i>dhanyaA sahita shrIdhara</i> |
| 15 | <i>paramAnna</i> (rice pudding) | <i>bhAratI</i> | <i>lakShmI sahita nArAyaNa</i> |
| 16 | <i>anna</i> (cooked rice) | <i>chaMdra</i> | <i>shrI kEshava</i> |
| 17&0 | <i>tuppa</i> (ghee) | <i>lakShmI</i> | <i>padmA sahita gOviMda</i> |
| 18 | <i>beNNe</i> (butter) | <i>mukhyaprANa</i> | <i>ramA sahita trivikrama</i> |
| 19 | <i>hAlu</i> (milk) | <i>sarasvatI</i> | <i>padminI sahita viShNu</i> |
| 20 | <i>mosaru</i> (butter milk) | <i>chaMdra & varuNa</i> | <i>vRuShAkapi sahita vAmana</i> |
| 21 | <i>kuDiyuva nIru</i> (drinking water) | <i>budha</i> | <i>shrI kRuShNa</i> |
| 22 | <i>sakkare-belle</i> (sugar-jaggery) | <i>iMdra</i> | <i>dakShiNa sahita vAsudEva</i> |
| 23 | <i>sAsive, iMgu, yAlakki, kEsari, karpUra, jIrige</i> & so forth | <i>manmatha</i> | <i>AnaMdA sahita puruShOttama</i> |
| 24 | <i>vILeyadele</i> (beetle leaf) | <i>gaMgA</i> | <i>shrI hari</i> |
| 25 | <i>pAnaka</i> (lemon juice) | <i>rati</i> | <i>vishva</i> |

Note: In some customs, *tuppa* is served at the very beginning which is termed as *pAtra abhigAra* (#0 is the below diagram). In the above list #25 is extra

Note: Always serve from the front side (i.e, the one serving should be facing the *bhOjana karta*)



References:

1. “*sarvapratiKa saMdhi of shrI hari kathA amruta sAra*” - Discourse by Shri Sanjeeva Murthy Dasaru
2. “*haribhajane mADO niraMtara*” - A TTD publication under the leadership of Shri Appannacharyaru
3. “*shrI harikathAmRutasAra sourabha*” – By Shri K M Krishna Rao
4. “*bhajana chaMdrika*” - By Shri Murugodu Dasaru

Courtesy:

Smt Ramaa Vasudeva Rao for collecting all the relevant notes (#3, #4 & #5) & reprinting #2 above