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دانفانتاري

Meaning of Dhanvantari   Moving In A Curve

The Physician Of The Gods

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Dhanvantari

Dhanvantari (Sanskrit: धन्वन्तरि) is an Avatar of Vishnu from the Hindu tradition. He appears in the Vedas and Puranas as the physician of the gods (devas), and the god of Ayurvedic medicine. It is common practice in Hinduism for worshipers to pray to Dhanvantari seeking his blessings for sound health for themselves and/or others, especially on Dhanteras.

1 The legend

Dhanvantari is depicted as Vishnu with four hands, holding Shankh , Sudarshan Chakra, Jalouka (Leech) and a pot containing rejuvenating nectar called *amrita* in another. He is often shown with a leech in his hand rather than the scriptures. *Bhagavapurana* states that Dhanvantari emerged from the Ocean of Milk and appeared with the pot of nectar during the story of the *Samudra or Sagar manthan* whilst the ocean was being churned by the devas and asuras, using the Mandara mountain and the serpent Vasuki. The pot of Amrita was snatched by the Asuras or Demons, and after this event another avatar, Mohini, appears and takes the nectar back from the Asuras. It is also believed that Dhanvantari promulgated the medical science of Ayurveda.[1]

An idol of Dhanvantari at an Ayurveda Expo in Bangalore

2 Iconography

According to ancient Sanskrit work *Vishnudharamottara* Dhanvantari is a handsome individual and should usually depicted with four hands, with one of them carrying Amrita, the ambrosia of god. Since he is considered Vishnu himself, two of his hands are depicted carrying regular Vishnu symbols the Chakra and the Conch.[1]

Statue of Dhanvantari at Taxakeshwar temple

3 Birthday celebration

His birthday is celebrated by the practitioners of Ayurveda every year, on Dhanteras, two days before Deepavali, the Hindu festival of Lights. In the Samudra manthan, Dhanvantari appears with Amrita, Shankha, Chakra and Jalauka (leech), in each of his four hands.

4 Temples in India

In Northern India no permanent temple is established for Dhanvantari. The reason is not yet known, but in Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Varanasi, Uttar

Pradesh state, one statue of Dhanvantari is present in the University museum. Two statues are at the headquarters of the Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha at New Delhi. There is another statue inside the Ayurveda Maha Sammelan office, Dhanawantari Bhawan at New Delhi and one statue of Dhanvantari is present at Mohyal Ashram in Haridwar.

Vaid clan of Mohyal community is considered as Descendant of Dhanvantari. Bengali Vaid Brahmins of Dhanvantari gotra are also considered Dhanvantari's (or his incarnation Rishi Kakshivan's) descendants.

There are a few dedicated temples to Dhanvantari in South India especially in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, where Ayurvedic medicine is highly practised and patronised.

In Tamil Nadu, in the courtyard of Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple (Srirangam), there is a Dhanvantari shrine where daily worshiping of the deity is performed. In front of this temple there is an engraved stone believed to be from the 12th century. According to the writings on the stone, Garuda Vahana Bhattar, a great ayurvedic physician, established the statue inside the temple. As a 'Prasada' or 'Teertha', a herbal decoction is given to the visitors. The shrine is the oldest Dhanvantari shrine in the state.[2] Another Dhanvantari shrine is found in the second precinct of Varadaraja Perumal Temple in Kanchipuram.[3]

Another Dhanvantari temple in Tamil Nadu is located at The Ayurvedic Trust campus, Coimbatore.

The main Dhanvanthari temples in Kerala are:

- Thevalakkadu Sree Dhanwanthari Temple, Kulasekharamangalam Post, Vaikom, Kottayam, Kerala[4]

- Sree Dhanvanthari temple, Maruthorvattom, Cherthala,

- Sree Dhanwanthari Temple Prayikkara, Mavelikkara,

- Sree Dhanwanthari Temple Nelluvaya, Thrissur,

- Thottuva Dhanwanthari temple, Thottuva,

- Sree Dhanwanthari Temple Wadakkanchery, Thrissur,

- Sree Dhanwanthari Temple Chirakkal, Valapattanam.

- Sree Dhanwanthari Temple ThekkeNagamVelil, Idavatom, Thalayolapparambu, Kottayam

- sree Dhanwanthari-Narasimha Temple,Chathamangalam(Koozhakode), NIT, Kozhikkode(DT)

- Aanakkal Dhanwanthari Temple, Thaniyathukunnu, Thrissur[5]

- Sree Dhanwanthari Temple, Ramanathapuram, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu [6]

In addition to the above, there is a Deity in Sri Mahalakshmi Temple, Kolhapur, Maharastra.

5   Ashta Vaidya of Kerala

In Kerala, the family of "Ashta Vaidya" is famous and traditionally provide Ayurvedic and Siddha treatment to the sick. The present generation of these "Ashta vaidyas" are till today serving in the same manner as their forefathers did, centuries ago. This family worships Lord Dhanvantari. Some family members have built temples inside their houses while others have built proper temples in his honour. Near Kotakkalat Pulamantol village, here is a family of Ashta Vaidya. This family has a temple of Lord Dhanvantari. Vaidya Madam is near Vadakkancheri. Here the Ashta Vaidya Matra dattan have a statue of Dhanvantri, made of a mixture of five metals. In trishura's Perungva, a big temple is here built by Ashta vaidya. The Ashta Vaidya families are in the following places:

- Aalyittur

- Cannanore (kannur)

- Kuttancheri

- Taikkad

- Vayaskara

- Vellod

- Chirattaman

- Pulamanthole

- Olassa

It seems that tradition of Lord Dhanwantri worshipping is regularly persisting in the families to families in Kerala.

- A temple dedicated to Lord Dhanvantari in Kerala, is in a village called Nelluvaya, 20 kilometers from Guruvayur and Thrissur, located exactly midway between the two towns. The temple is believed to be as old as the temple of Guruvayur. Many ayurvedic doctors from kerala visit this temple before they start practicing medicine.

- About 10 km from the railway station is the ages old, very powerful **Dhanvantari Temple, kannur** (Cannanore), Kerala. A not so well known temple in its humble environs has a serene atmosphere. Dhanvantari pooja is performed here for the good health of anyone, of any faith, from any corner of the world. An added attraction is the huge temple pond with water lilies!

- Similarly, there is a Dhanvantri Kshetram (i.e. temple) in the outskirts of Calicut, in Kerala. This temple is gaining prominence, as people come from far off places to offer their prayers to the Lord, to cure them of their ailing diseases, or to be blessed with a healthy life ahead.

- There is also a Dhanvantari Kshetram in Peroorkkada, Trivandrum which is under the ancient Nair Family of Mazhavanchery Vadakkedom.

- Another famous Dhanvanthari Temple is near Perumbavoor in Ernakulam District of Kerala namely **Thottuva Dhanvanthari** Temple on the opposite side of Malayattoor on the banks of Periyar (Poorna). It has a calm and cool atmosphere. A tiny river nearby flowing towards the east is said to have medicinal properties. Now the temple is administered by a Trust.

- There is also another Dhanvantari Kshetram in Prayikkara, Mavelikkara which is under the people of Prayikkara.

- Another famous Arogya Kshetram for Lord Dhanvantari is situated at Kilpudupet, Walajapet, Vellore Dist., Tamil Nadu. Gnanaguru Sri Muralidhara Swamigal is the Founder of this Danvantri Arogya Peedam wherein Lord Dhanvantari is the presiding deity with 45 other unique deities in this Danvantri Arogya Peedam

- There is another famous and rare temple name Sri Rudra Dhanwanthari temple, pulamanthol, 11 km from pattambi and 12 km from perinthalmanna, malappuram kerala India. The temple belongs to the famous Ashta vaidya family pulamanthol mooss .

- Shree Dhanvantari Madir/Temple Bhusawal (Maharashtra State) (Dist.: Jalgaon)

- One and Only Shree Dhanvantari Temple Established in the premises (campus) of Government Ayurveda Hospital,Mulapet, Nellore, Andhrapradesh State, South India. It was built with special intreast of Vaidyacharya Gopinadha Raju who was then Senior Medical officer in that Government Hospital, Mulapet, Nellore.

- In chennai you can see Dhanvantari Temple near Sri ramchandra hospital porur chennai near the emergency exit where lot of devotees come and worship for speedy recovery .You can also worship vaitheeswaran temple in the same campus

- There is also another powerful Sri Mahadhanvantari Narayana Temple in Kudugere Village, off Madanayakanahalli, Bangalore North Taluk near Bangalore City (Near Acharya Engineering College).

6   Notes

[1] Madhavan 2007, p. 107

[2] Madhavan 2007, p. 108

[3] Madhavan 2007, p. 110

[4] http://www.sreedhanwantharitemple.in

[5] http://aanakkaldhanwanthari.com/home.htm

[6] http://temples.avpayurveda.com

7   References

- Madhavan, Chitra (2008). *Vishnu temples of South India, Volume two*. Chitra Madhavan. ISBN 978-81-908445-1-2.

- *Kalyan* Hindi monthly magazine, March 2001 issue, Geeta Press, Gorakhpur, UP

8   External links

- Hindu God Dhanwantari: The promulgator of Ayurveda.

- Does Ayurveda begin with Dhanvantari, the ancient physician? By D.P. Agrawal

- Dhanvantari in the Bhagavata Purana

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