

Sri Vijayarayara Kavacha

PART II

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Verse 7:

kavanarUpadI hariya stavana mADidA
bhuvana bEDidA mAdhavana nODidA || 7 ||

Translation:

Through meaningful and melodious songs he worshipped hari. He saw mAdhava and achieved a happy state.

Commentary:

Like all the great haridAsas before him, vijayadAsaru also worshipped Lord through his touching, meaningful and melodious songs. He was very prolific and is credited with around 75,000 compositions. He did not create large and substantial works like the harikathAmruta sAra, preferring small and simple works like padas, ugAbhOgas and suLAdis. But there is no aspect of dvaita that he has not covered in detail.

"mAdhavan nODida" gives you the feeling that he saw mAdhava, and that it was a one-time climax to his illustrious career. Far from it. He saw and experienced hari's divine Illas hundreds of times in his life. He used to visit tirupati every year for the brahmOtsava and each year there used to be some special incident or the other. He visited all major shrines and temples of India, at least twice.

Verse 8:

ranganendanA bhavavu hingitendanA
mangaLAnganA antarangavaritanA || 8 ||

Translation:

He preached that by worshipping Sri Ranga one can get rid of all fetters of sansara. He has understood the heart of shri hari, who is full of auspicious attributes.

Commentary:

This verse is a terse statement of several dvaita concepts – hari sarvottamatva (supremacy of hari), and liberation being granted by hari as prasada for pure and unsullied devotion. The phrase 'mangaLanga' is based on another concept that the Lord's body is 'aprakruta' (a simple definition would be - something that is not made up of elements created by prakruti or nature). His body is made up of gyAna and Ananda (bliss and knowledge). The phrase 'antarangavaritana' can be interpreted in 2 ways - one who knows the heart of hari, and one who knows (or sees) hari in his heart. Both mean that vijayadAsaru was a brahma gyAni of the highest order (which is not surprising since he was an incarnation of bhrigu muni - the one who showed the world that hari is sarvOttama and worthy of the purest devotion). Another interpretation of "antarangavaritana" is that vijayadAsaru lead his whole life according to the dictates of the Lord, which is also true because he incarnated as vijayadAsaru only because it was the Lord's wish.

Verse 9:

kAshinagaradallidda vyAsadEvanA-dayava
sUsi paDedanA ullAsabharitana || 9 ||

Translation:

He worshipped Vedavyasa in Kashi and got his blessings. He is full of happiness.

Commentary:

In the first verse, it was said that vijayadAsaru got his dikshe from the Lord who came in the form of purandaradAsaru. Let me give you a little background as to why the Lord chose this form.

It is believed that bhrigu muni incarnated as vijayadAsaru. However, before incarnating as vijayadAsaru, he had incarnated as madhvapati, the last son of purandaradAsaru, and his favorite. Even as a young boy, madhvapati had offered naivEdya to hanumanta and made him eat it!

It is said that towards his last days, purandaradAsaru once took his favorite son to the vijaya vittala temple in hampi and told him in confidence, "I wanted to compose 5,00,000 songs and offer them to vittala. However, it is His will that I stop at 4,25,000. I want you to complete the balance 75,000 and offer them to vittala". madhvapati is supposed to have said, "If it is the wish of purandara vittala, I will definitely do it". To this, his father laughed and replied, "if not purandara vittala, then vijaya vittala will make you do it". Even though it was appropriate since it was the vijaya vittala temple, the true meaning of

those prophetic words was that madhvapati would complete his father's wish only in the next birth, as vijayadAsaru.

Anyway, madhvapati was reborn as the son of shInappa and kUsamma. His parents named him dAsappa. People used to call him derisively as 'kUsimaga dAsappa'. He had to undergo a lot of hardship and suffer a lot of humiliation. Finally, when his bad days ended, he visited maNikarNika lake in kAshi. One night, the Lord took on the form of purandaradAsaru and woke him up. He took dAsappa across the river to vyAsa kAshi and made him meet vEda vyAsa. He then wrote the word 'vijaya' on dAsappa's tongue and gave him the ankita of 'vijaya vittala'. From then on, dAsappa became renowned as vijayadAsaru, and went on to compose 75,000 songs, keeping the promise he had made in his previous birth.

Verse 10:

chinte bEDirO nishchintarAgirO
shAnta gurugaLA pAda vantu nambirO || 10 ||

Translation:

Discard all worries. Become calm and contented. Worship the feet of the guru who is a picture of serenity and calmness.

Commentary:

This verse uses a clever play on words to bring out an important point. At first sight, the first line seems to be a sophisticated version of "dont worry, be happy". You dont need an aparOkshagyAni to say that. However, there is more to it than just that. "bEDiro" also means "please ask or beg for" and "chinte" can also mean "chintana" or meditation. The question is - meditation on what subject? The answer is obvious – the one object that is worth meditating on, i.e., paramAtma. So, in a subtle way, the author is exhorting the readers to request or ask for the ability to meditate on the Lord. This is very appropriate because that is the most precious gift that a guru like vijayadAsaru can give. Here meditation should be understand to mean the essence of shravana (listening), manana and nidhi-dhyAsana.

The author also gives us the fruits of such meditation "nischintarAgiro". This can mean 2 things - freedom from all wordly worries (which is a pretty good thing to have), and total freedom from all possible worries - which can happen only in mukti. Thus, this meditation can give you fruits both in this world and on a lasting basis.

The last line reassures that vijayadAsaru has already done this chintane and has achieved the serenity that is the end result of such an act.

Verse 11:

khEdavAgadO nimage mOdavAhudO
Adi dEvanA suprasAdavAhudO || 11 ||

Translation:

You will not have any unhappiness at all; you will have only bliss all the way. You will get the blessings of the Adi dEva (the earliest or first God) - Lord hari.

Commentary:

This is a carry over from the previous verse. Here, the author is describing the benefits of surrendering at the feet of a guru like vijayadAsaru. The benefits are twofold - removal of sorrows and achievement of happiness.

This can be interpreted in both material as well as spiritual terms. His life is replete with examples of people, and sometimes even animals benefitting from his generosity and yoga shakti (supernatural power).

In the spiritual sense, kheda means agyAna (ignorance), lack of bhakti and vairAgya, since these three can lead to unhappiness on a more permanent basis. mOda means more than the mere opposite of these. As was stated in the commentary on a previous verse, earning the approval of the Lord is true happiness.

Verse 12:

tApa taDevano banda pApa kaDivano
shrIpatiya pada samIpaviDuvano || 12 ||

Translation:

He will block all your miseries and difficulties. He will cut your sins. He will keep you near the feet of shrIpati.

Commentary:

As was stated in the commentary on a previous verse, 'tApa' refers to 'tApatraya', the three miseries that dog all jIvas, and mankind in particular. tApa and pApa have an effect on a person's life in material as well as spiritual terms. The material effects, even though appearing to be more pressing, are ephemeral in nature. A jIvas goes through thousands, perhaps millions, of lives before it reaches its final destination. So, in the final reckoning, even an entire lifetime is a very short period of time! The spiritual effects, on the other hand are much more long term. They may take several lifetimes to correct. To illustrate, let me quote an unusual example from the life of vijayadAsaru (based on the book titled 'shrI vijayadAsara jIvanacharitre' by haridAsaratnam gOpAladAsaru).

Once vijayadAsaru and his disciples were in a forest near ahObala. Suddenly they saw a tiger and stopped. Except vijayadAsaru, everybody else was scared. Being an aparOksha gyAni, he was able to judge the nature of the tiger. He told his followers that the tiger was actually a pious brahmin, who had been cursed to take the form of a cruel animal. Even in that form, the tiger had full knowledge of its past life (because of all the pious acts performed in the previous birth) and was pining for release from its cruel fate. vijayadAsaru calmed his disciples down by explaining the true situation. As he was doing this, his disciples observed tears in the eyes of the tiger! He then kept his dEvara peTTige (box containing his idols) on the ground and composed a prayer to ahObala narasimha, asking Him to show mercy on the tiger. After this, he and his disciples moved back a few steps. An amazing thing happened! With tears in its eyes, the tiger went around the box, and lay down on the ground, and breathed its last!! By the grace of vijayadAsaru, the brahmin's life as a tiger ended! God alone knows how many more lifetimes it would have taken otherwise.

These six verses form a set and are part of an integrated picture that the author wants to present us. It does not make sense to look at them individually. Hence we will present the verses and their simple translation individually and one integrated commentary at the end.

Verse 13:

gange mindarE malavu hingitalladE
ranganoliyanO bhaktara sanga dorakadE || 13 ||

Translation:

When one dips in the holy ganga, associated dirt decreases (here, one may treat sins or blemishes as dirt). But, without the company of true devotees it is impossible to get the grace of ranga.

Verse 14:

vEda Odalu baride vAdamADalU
hAdiyAgadO budhara pAda nambadE || 14 ||

Translation:

Just studying the vEdas, shastras, and indulging in debates will fetch no results unless one surrenders at the feet of learned men.

Verse 15:

lekkavilladA dEsha tukki bandarU
du:khavalladE lEsha bhakti dorakadU || 15 ||

Translation:

Just visiting countless pilgrimage centres (without any devotion) will only strain you physically and not fetch any devotion.

Verse 16:

dAna mADalU divya gAna pADalU
gnyAna dOreyadO ivaradhInavAgadE || 16 ||

Translation:

Giving alms or singing devotional songs will not fetch any gyAna, unless one surrenders or yields at his (vijayadAsaru's) feet

Verse 17:

iShTu yAtakE kanDa kaShTavyAtakE
diTTa gurugaLa pAdamuTTi bhajisirO || 17 ||

Translation:

Why do all these things (the activities mentioned above like taking a bath in the ganga, giving alms etc) and undergo so many difficulties? Surrender at the feet of a capable guru and worship them steadfastly.

Verse 18:

pUje mADalu kanDa gOju bILalU
bIja mAtina phala sahaja dorakadU || 18 ||

Translation:

Just doing puja, and subjecting oneself to various hardships will not help one understand the true meaning of the scriptures.

Commentary for verses 13 to 18:

People perform various pious actions with the objective of pleasing God, gaining knowledge, getting devotion etc. Some of the more "popular" pious actions are:

- taking a bath in the ganga
- reading the vedas and engaging in scholarly debates
- touring holy places
- offering alms to needy people
- undertaking different holy actions (vratas) like fasts etc
- performing pujas and subjecting oneself to different hardships

The verses follow a common pattern - the first line identifies an action from the above list, and the second line bemoans the ineffectiveness of this action in fetching some desired result. Let us take a closer look.

While it is true that the activities identified earlier, are pious in nature, they are never decisive by themselves, there is something else that determines success or failure. This factor X is the attitude or spirit in which the action is performed. Any pious action steeped in bhakti, based on yathArtha gyAna (correct knowledge of the Almighty) and performed solely with hari-prIti (pleasure of the Lord) as the objective will definitely yield results, everything else is bound to fail in the long run.

This is beautifully described by shrI jagannAtha dasaru in his hari kathAmruta sara:

"ninna sarvatradali nenevaru anya karma mADidaru sari
puNya karmagaLenisuvavu sandEha venitilla
ninna smarisade snAna japahOmAnnavastra gajAshva bhUdana
dhAnya modalAdikhiLa dAnava mADi phalavenu"

"Actions performed by people who are forever thinking of you (everywhere) are deemed as meritorious acts, even if they appear to be otherwise. What is the use of performing meritorious acts like taking holy baths, meditation, hOma (a sacrificial ritual), different types of alms (rice, elephants, land, food grains etc) without your remembrance? In other words, such acts are totally useless."

The same spirit is echoed in hundreds of songs by other haridAsas. So it may be safely concluded that all gyAnis are unanimous on this count. The question that next comes up is - how does one get the proper frame of mind (and associated attributes like devotion, knowledge and renunciation). The author gives us the answer in the second half of each verse. The gist of his advice is - seek refuge at the feet of a competent guru and surrender to him completely (i.e., forsake your ego and follow

his lead totally), stay in the company of true devotees and soak your mind in devotion (the understanding is that other activities like shravana, manana, nidhi-dhyAsana automatically happen in such company).

What kind of guru or teacher should one look for? The author replies "diTTa gurugaLu". This means a teacher who is steadfast, tenacious and unyielding. The questions that next come to mind are - why is steadfastness needed? And in what aspect or parameter should this quality be demonstrated?

Steadfastness and tenacity in the guru is needed on two aspects – faith in (or knowledge of) the basic tenets of dvaita, and commitment to the student. The guru's faith in the basic tenets of vedAnta - hari sarvottamatva (the supremacy of hari), vAyu jIvOttamatva (vAyu being the primary jIva), the reality of the world, gradation of souls etc - should be firm and unshakeable. This should not be blind faith, but must have come from a true understanding of what the scriptures say. He must have learnt these concepts from a competent guru (this is generally covered under "shravaNa") and performed manana and nidhi-dhyAsana (contemplation, reflection, meditation etc). In addition, as postulated by the IshAvAsya upanishad, this knowledge should stem from acceptance of correct knowledge, and rejection of false theories or doctrines. The guru should have grasped the true essence of all scriptures, and should be able to explain the true meaning of statements in the scriptures, which appear to be mutually conflicting. A corollary to this is that the guru should practice these tenets in his life. He should be steadfast in condemning false doctrines and spreading correct knowledge, wherever possible. This is in line with what the IshAvAsya says about rejecting or condemning false doctrines.

The guru should also be firm in his commitment to the student. The student is bound to have numerous shortcomings, and is likely to stumble several times in his quest for true knowledge. Like a parent who lends a helping hand to a struggling toddler, the guru should stand by his student, inspite of all problems and setbacks. Another component of the advice was to seek the company of true devotees. The questions that come up are - who are true devotees? what are their characteristics? Our scriptures have answered this question quite unambiguously, and so have our haridAsas. I would like to quote from a famous devaranama by jagannAtha dAsaru titled "ranga ninna konDADuva mangaLAtmara". He provides the following characteristics of true devotees, and begs God to bless him by giving him the pleasure of their company:

(all references in the second person are to God)

- they don't know any God other than you
- they never forget the selfless help that you have rendered them
- they will never forsake the service of your feet even for a day
- they do not know anything other than paratatva (knowledge pertinent to you)
- they look like deaf and dumb people for bystanders
- they do not indulge in crooked thinking
- they treat all the following equally : victory/defeat, profit/loss, honor/calumny, fear/courage, happiness/sorrow, gold/a clod

- they treat likes / dislikes and praise / insult as being under your control, and as your gift
- they would like to pray to you in solitude (not making a big show)
- they are interested in performing actions that are appropriate for the region and time they are in
- they do not forsake their dharma under any circumstances
- they are free of the arishadvarga (anger, lust, greed, delusion, arrogance, jealousy)
- they have the power to curse or bless
- they see your vishvarUpa everywhere
- they considering eating as yagna and the food they eat as your Ahuti (offering)
- they do not accept anything that has not been offered to you first
- they do not hanker for liberation or comforts of any type
- they indulge in drinking the nectar that is your name
- they treat their wife and children as your gifts
- they do not want to associate with people who hate you
- they are always remembering your sportive acts and keep laughing and crying in free abandon
- they will never lift their minds away from you
- they treat poverty or richness with equal disdain.
- they are truly blessed since they are devotees of jagannAtha viTTala

Verse 19:

suraru ellarU ivara karava piDivarO
taraLarandadI hinde tirugutipparO || 19 ||

Translation:

All the gods hold his hands and like children, hover around him.

Verse 20:

grahagaLellavU ivarge sahAya mADutA
ahOrAtrilI sukhada nivaha koDuvavo || 20 ||

Translation:

All the planets assist him in his projects, and give happiness night and day.

Commentary:

shrI vijayadAsaru was universally revered by kings, ministers, heads of religious institutions and other aparOksha gyAnis. This is a well known fact, but what is perhaps

not so well known is that respect for him extended into the realm of the gods too. There is a reason for that.

He was an incarnation of bhrigu muni. Those who know tAratamya will remember that bhrigu is in the 15th kaksha (class or category), equal to Agni, and above gods like ganapathi and kubera. Perhaps even more important was that he was somebody who was personally blessed by hari and vAyu, and that was the reason even why even higher souls had a soft corner for him. Let me illustrate with an example (from the book by bEluru kEshavadAsaru).

vijayadAsaru once left on a tour of kAshi. As always, his adopted son, mOhana dAsaru also started making preparations to accompany him, but for strange reason, he was asked to stay back. vijayadAsaru called his daughter-in-law aside secretly and told her, "mOhana is going to face apamRutyu (untimely death). However, do not lose heart; stay steadfast in your belief that he will come back. Do not agree to final rites being performed on his lifeless body". Having said this, vijayadAsaru departed on his tour. As predicted, mohAnadasaru was afflicted with a strange disease and breathed his last. His friends and neighbours wanted to perform his last rites, but his wife refused to grant her permission. At that time, his ethereal self was being hauled up before yama (the god of death) for a trial. At that time, vijayadAsaru entered the assembly as bhrigu muni. Yama immediately welcomed the saint and offered him a ceremonial welcome due to him. bhrigu brushed aside the rituals and chastised yama for his mistake. Yama was surprised and wanted to know what the mistake was. Bhrigu replied "mOhana is not due to die, yet he has been brought here. If I had not come here in time, you would have committed a grave sin". Yama cross checked his records and found that what bhrigu muni was saying was true. He immediately ordered the release of mohanadAsaru, and profusely thanked bhrigu muni for correcting him in time. Back on the earth, neighbours were getting angry with mOhanadAsaru's wife for keeping a corpse at home for over 3 days. One of the more impatient and impertinent ones came near the corpse and said "Let's take the body by force. I have made all preparations for the cremation". Exactly at that time, mOhanadAsaru's spirit returned back to the body, and he sat up saying, "If you have made preparations, then you go!". The neighbour was flabbergasted and scared when this happened. In his haste to escape, he banged his forehead against the doorstead and died at that instant. Actually, it was his turn to die, and yama's attendants had made a mistake in taking the wrong person's spirit! The revived mOhana dAsaru comforted his ecstatic wife and explained to her what had happened. With tears in their eyes, and hearts full of gratitude, the blessed couple described the greatness of vijayadAsaru to the astounded gathering.

This incident, which has been documented in several devaranAmAs by aparOkshagyAnis, is a glowing testimony to the respect that even gods had for vijayadAsaru

Verse 21:

vyAdhi bAradO dEha bAdhe taTTadO

AdidEvanA suprasAdavAhudO

|| 21 ||

Translation:

No illness will come near you, nor will any physical problems trouble you. You will get the grace of the Adi dEva (the first or primary god - hari).

Commentary:

This verse has 2 interpretations - material and spiritual. Let us start with the material one.

shri vijayadAsaru's life is replete with examples where he cured people of diseases that had been incurable till then. For example, his close friend and disciple, panganAmada timmaNNa dAsaru was afflicted with a life-threatening disease and was counting his last hours, when vijayadAsaru cured him. Among his great compositions, the famous dhanvantari sulAdi ranks as one of the most popular. It is said that reciting this with devotion can cure even extremely potent diseases, in due course.

To understand the spiritual interpretation take a closer look at the term 'AdidEvana suprasAda'. What is the highest gift that only the AdidEva (hari) can bestow? Mukti or Liberation. In this vein, the words 'vyAdhi' and 'dEha' have to be reinterpreted.

There is one rOga orvy Adhi that is even more horrific than the deadliest ailments and that is 'bhava rOga'. This is a disease that no physician can cure, no lab can diagnose and no surgeon can mend. While other diseases affect only the health of the sufferer, bhava rOga can affect every single aspect of the person's life. Since this disease is the prime cause of rebirths and all the attendant sorrows, it may not be an exaggeration to conclude that this is the root cause for all the trials and tribulations that a jIva faces.

The term 'dEha' applies to all the three bodies that envelop the jIva, i.e., sthUla dEha (gross or physical body), anirudhdha or sUkshma dEha and linga dEha - a covering that is associated with the jIva from times immemorial and is discarded only at the time of the final disposition (liberation for good souls, andha tamas for evil ones and 'nitya sansAra' for mixed ones).

What is the cure for 'bhava rOga'? How does one escape 'dEha bAdhe' and the cycle of births and deaths? The answer is simple, His grace; that can come only through pure devotion, coupled with correct knowledge. To achieve this, one needs the grace of a good guru like vijayadAsaru.

Hence what the author is really saying is that by the grace of vijayadAsaru one can get cured of bhava rOga and achieve the suprasAda of the Lord, which is discarding of the linga dEha.

Verse 22:

patita pAmarA manda matiyu nA balU
tutisalApanE ivara atishayangaLA || 22 ||

Translation:

(the author says) I am an ignorant, dull-witted sinner. Is it possible for me to describe his astonishing excellence and greatness?

Commentary:

The author condemns himself and questions if he has the capability to do justice to the greatness of his subject matter - vijayadAsaru. This assessment makes sense since vijayadAsaru was a very, very high level jIva. Ordinary people can never hope to even begin to grasp the contours of his great personality. Only other great souls like gOpAla dAsaru, jagannAtha dAsaru etc can do justice to this matter. This list includes the author also, his protestations notwithstanding.

The term 'manda mati' has 2 interesting connotations; the fairly straightforward interpretation is 'dull witted' or 'slow brained'. The other interpretation is one whose mind is attracted towards and fixated on base objects. Such a person has a very high chance of becoming 'patita' (fallen) and 'pAmara'.

Verse 23:

karuNadindali emma porevanalladE
durita kOTiyA bEga tariva dayadaII || 23 ||

Translation:

Our of pity, he will take care of us and (in addition) will quickly destroy our mountain of calamities.

Commentary:

vijayadAsaru was a personification of mercy and kind-heartedness. Since he had personally experienced extreme poverty, humiliation and hardships, he easily understood the difficulties people faced and quickly provided solutions. There was nothing that he would deny those who sought refuge in him. Nobody was turned away and nobody returned empty handed. His generosity included material as well as spiritual wants. Let me illustrate with an unusual example from his life.

There was a old and pious brahmin who was a great devotee of vijaydAsaru. Once when dAsaru was planning a pilgrimage of kAshi, he invited all his followers to accompany him. The old brahmin felt very miserable at his misfortune in not being able to undertake this holy pilgrimage in such exalted company. dAsaru noted his distress and while returning from kAshi brought back ganga jala for the sake of the brahmin. This made the

brahmin very happy, but he requested dAsaru to bless him so that at least in his next birth he would be able to personally visit kAshi and take a dip in the ganga. dAsaru's heart melted at the old man's prayer; in addition, he also wanted to do something for the other old and disabled people in that village. He thought about it for a moment and said "Nothing is impossible for gangA-janaka. Tomorrow, exactly at noon, ganga will take birth in the tunga-bhadra and be present for an hour. Interested people may take bath in the river and enjoy the benefits of gangAsnAna". The brahmin greeted this with tears of gratitude and said "dAsare, your kindness is as deep as the ocean. We are indeed lucky to have your gracious presence amongst us. However, look at this pApi (sinner), even if ganga comes to our own village I am not destined to take advantage since I cannot walk upto the river and take a bath". The old man's helpness, his overwhelming desire to have gangAsnAna and his genuine remorse at his misfortune moved dAsaru, and he replied "AchArya, you have not understood the true extent of our gangAjanaka's kAruNya, and why the title of 'bhaktavatsala' is so apt for Him. You cannot come to the river? Allright, ganga will come to your house. Let your daughter-in-law keep two empty, large pails in your courtyard. Tomorrow exactly at noon, after ganga takes birth in the tunga-bhadra, she will come to your house and fill up these pails with her presence. Ask your daughter-in-law to give you a bath with water from these pails. You are indeed fortunate, lakshmiPati has so much benevolence on you that ganga herself is coming to your house". The next day, at the exact hour promised by dAsaru, water appeared in the two pails and filled them up to the brim. The Brahmin was beside himself with joy. His dream of taking a dip in the ganga was realized, overcoming superhuman odds, thanks to the benevolence of vijayadAsaru. He brought ganga, not only to the village, but to the very house of the brahmin.

No wonder the author says that ordinary mortals cannot do justice to vijayadAsaru's extraordinary capabilities and his kAruNya.

Verse 24:

mandamatigaLU ivara chandavariyaDE
nindisuvarO bhavada bandha tappadO || 24 ||

Translation:

Ignorant, dull people cannot comprehend his greatness. They criticize him and entangle themselves in the bonds of sansAra.

Commentary:

Criticising a parama-bhAgavata is a very heinous sin. There is no easier way of provoking the Lord. In a devaranAma, purandaradAsaru praises the Lord as follows, "When bhrigu kicked you, you tended to his feet, when shishupAla criticised you, you heard him with a smile, but when hiraNyakashipu harassed your devotee you displayed an anger that scared even your own wife". Truly, the Lord has absolutely no tolerance for anybody who causes insult or

injury to His devotees. It does not matter if it is an asura or a devarishi like durvAsa, hurting (or attempting to hurt) a devotee always attracts immediate and swift retribution. As the ambarisha incident illustrates, once you hurt a true devotee, even the gods will not (and cannot) save you.

Most people know how shrInivAsAchArya (who later became the great jagannAtha dAsaru) showed disdain for vijayadAsaru and suffered as a result. He went to tirupati, ghatikAchala and mantrAlaya, but did not receive any relief until he sought refuge at the feet of vijayadAsaru, as instructed by raghavEndra swamigalu (my personal observation - if rAyaru does not take pity on you, then your case is so bad that nobody ever will!).

The point to remember is that vijayadAsaru was the personification of serenity and patience. He remained calm even under great provocation; so, there was absolutely no question of his cursing somebody or wishing them any harm. People criticising him brought trouble upon themselves and not because of any reaction from him.

Verse 25:

indirApatiI ivara munde kuNivanO
anda vachanavA nijakke tandu kODuvanO || 25 ||

Translation:

indirApati (hari) dances in front of him, and makes everything said a reality.

Commentary:

The term 'indirApati' should be understood in the context of what our AchArya has stated so beautifully in dvAdasha stOtra ("shrIryat katAksha balavatyajitam nAmAmi"). The essence of this is that every deity (brahma, rudra, garuda, indra, sUrya, chandra etc) is able to function only because of Lakshmi's grace, and that She derives her power from Him. Since this indirApati was (and is) 'dancing' to vijayadAsaru's tune, there is nothing that his devotees cannot achieve with his grace.

The same sentiment is echoed in our scriptures too. They say that the highest achievement that any jIva can aspire for is attracting Lord hari's pleasure. Once that is achieved, then there is nothing more left to aspire for or to achieve.

The verse uses the phrase 'anda vachana' (what was said). This is applicable at 2 levels. The first one is vijayadAsaru himself. As long as he was physically present on earth, God ensured that everything said by him turned out to be true. Today he is present only in spirit in his 'kaTTe' at chIkalarparvi and continues to bless worthy devotees. God ensures that every boon granted by vijayadAsaru is fulfilled. The second and more potent application is to the verse itself. In other words, the author is saying that indirApati Himself will ensure that everything said in this kavacha is true and will remain so

forever. This is akin to the belief that Lord hayagrIva Himself is witness to the veracity of the rAghavEndra stOtra.

Verse 26:

udaya kAladi I padava paThisalU
madaDanAdarU gnyAna udayavAhudu || 26 ||

Translation:

If this prayer is recited early in the morning, one will get true knowledge, even if one happens to be a dullard.

Commentary:

You will recall that most of the verses had a material side and a spiritual one. This verse too has that dual nature.

From the material viewpoint, the obvious interpretation is that if recited in the morning, this prayer will grant wisdom and all its attendant benefits. But there is more to it than just knowledge because the very previous verse said that shrI hari Himself will make everything said in this prayer come true. So, let us revisit the prayer and list the direct benefits it promises:

- reduction of troubles, providing care (pallavi)
- acquisition of great munificence (Verse 2)
- avoidance of problems, overflow with happiness. (Verse 3)
- avoid the trials and tribulations of sansara (Verse 5)
- reduction of sins, removal of difficulties and pains (Verse 6)
- absence of worries (Verse 10)
- no unhappiness, bliss forever, grace of shrI hari (Verse 11)
- blocking of miseries and difficulties, reduction of sins, proximity to the feet of shrIpati (Verse 12)
- acquisition of knowledge (Verse 16)
- happiness day and night (verse 20)
- no illness, no physical problems, grace of shrI hari (Verse 21)
- merciful care, reduction of problems (Verse 23)
- dawn of knowledge (Verse 26)

In addition, to the above, there are certain implied benefits too:

- achieving shrI hari's grace (Verse 13)
- removal of obstacles (Verse 14)
- achieving devotion (Verse 15)
- acquisition of knowledge (Verse 16)
- understanding true meaning of scriptures (Verse 18)

From the spiritual viewpoint, the question to be asked is - what kind of udaya or dawn are we talking about? It is obvious that the author is talking about a spiritual awakening when the jIva wakes from its sleep of ignorance and begins to ask fundamental questions about itself and God. That is the kind of 'udaya' that the author has in mind. When this thirst for knowledge sets in, if the jIva seeks refuge in a great soul like vijaydAsaru, then it is blessed with pure and true gyAna, which in turn leads to the dawn of bhakti and vAirAgya.

Once the devotee reaches a level of perfection in bhakti, gyAna and vairAgya, then all the other attendant benefits accrue automatically, even if the devotee does not care or does not hanker after them.

Verse 27:

saTeyidallavO vyAsa viThalaballanO
paThisabahudidU kELi kuTilarahitarU || 27 ||

Translation:

vyAsa viThThala knows (or is the witness to the fact) that this prayer is not an exaggeration. Anybody who is without guile and deception, can listen to this prayer and recite it.

Commentary:

vyAsa viThThala is the ankita or poetic signature of the author, shrI subbaNAcharya (or vyAsa viThThala dAsaru as he was also known). He is stating that vyAsa viThThala is the witness to the fact that nothing in this prayer is an exaggeration.

The author is also imposing very minimal conditions for the efficacy of the prayer. There is nothing related to caste, creed, religion, profession, color, education or level of knowledge. The only thing that he is interested in is total absence of deception, hypocrisy, guile or crookedness. In other words, all that is needed is sterling character and a pure mind, full of faith, sincerity and devotion.

CONCLUSION:

With this posting we conclude the series on shrI vijayadAsaru. For a brief instant, as we focussed our minds on this great personality, we felt a divine spark in our minds. This spark had the glow of gyAna, the warmth of bhakti and the burning power of vairAgya. For an all too brief and fleeting instant, we sensed His presence in our hearts. We hope you too had a similar experience while participating in this exercise. It is our hope and belief that vijayadAsaru will pray to vijaya viThThala, to act through vAyu dEvaru and shower you and your family with His choicest blessings.

shrI kRishNArpaNamastu

