



# ॥ श्रीमद्वाल्मीकि रामायणम् ॥

## Rāmāyaṇam - Bālakāṇḍam

January 21, 2018

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# On Gangā

गंगे गंगेति यो ब्रूयात् योजननां शतैरपि ।  
मुच्यते सर्व पापेभ्यो विष्णु लोकं स गच्छति ॥

गंगे च यमुने चैव गोदावरी सरस्वति ।  
नर्मदे सिंधु कावेरि जलेऽस्मिन् सन्निधिं कुरु ॥

# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Message 1: Making Life choices

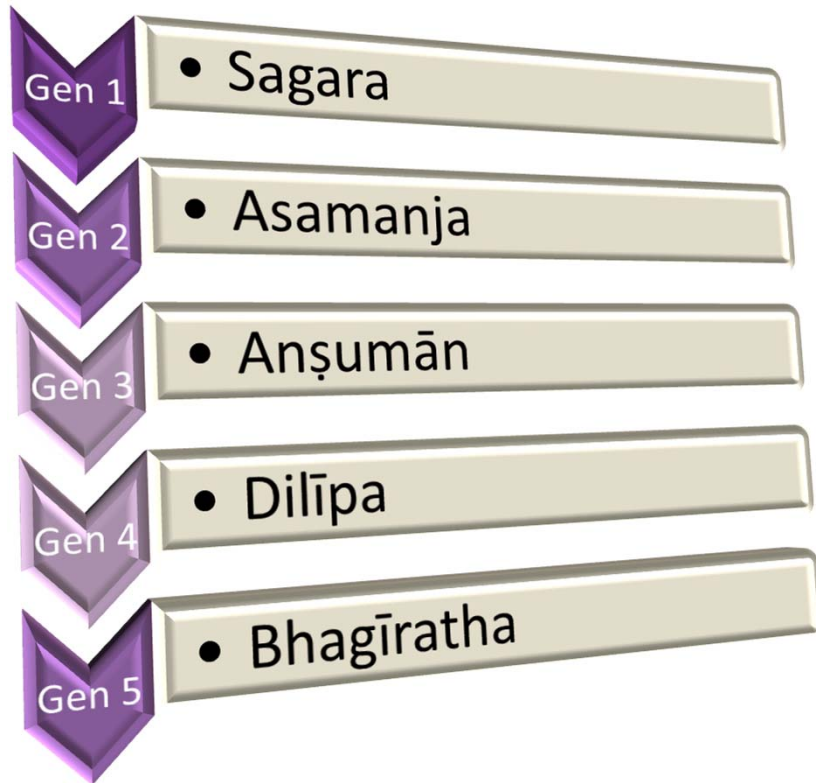
60,000 + 1 children for Sagara

- Life constantly **throws choices** in front of us which are **good** or **pleasant**
  - Good is far in between & few in number
  - Good is generally not appealing at the outset, even counterintuitive
  - Good is a less treaded path
- Individuals need to make these choices, the LORD does not hand down these choices to us
  - *However we can **pray to the Lord** for endowing us with a sense of discrimination*

# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Message 2: Importance of Ancestors

### Five generational effort for redemption



- Ancestors blessings are very valuable
  - They created the path for us to walk
  - They support us in every possible endeavor in our life journey
- Not able to see ≠ Does not exist

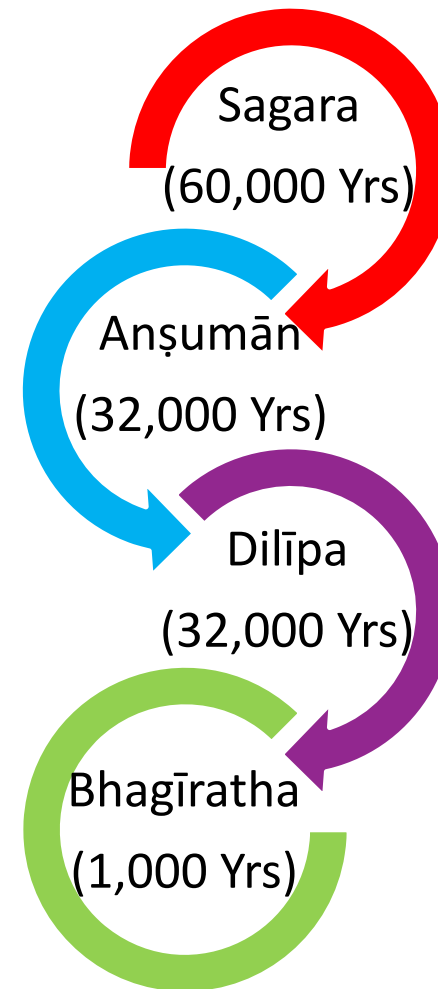
What was the motivation for Bhagīratha to redeem ancestors 4 generations before?

# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Message 3: Indications of great effort

### Multiple references to large numbers

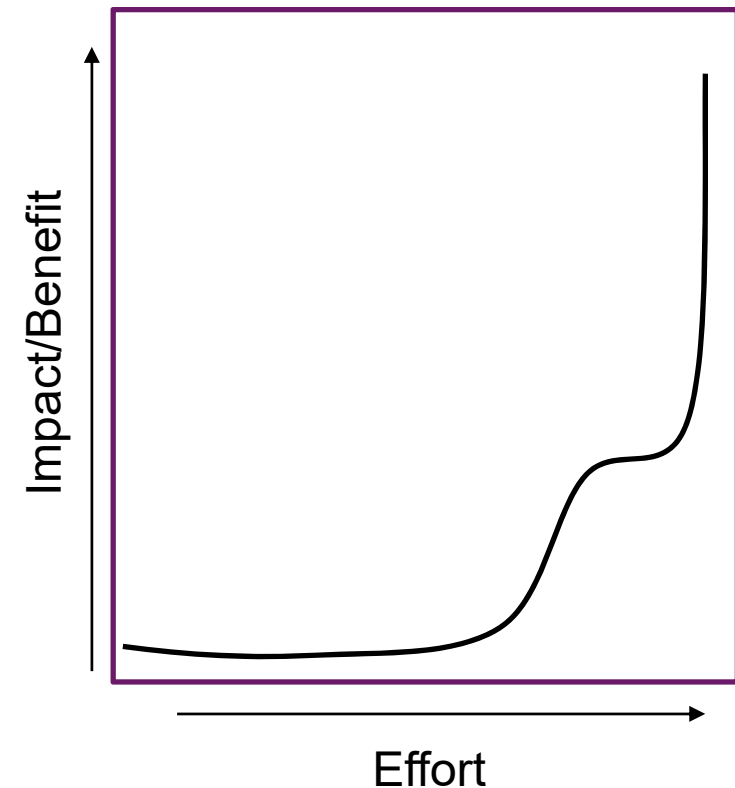
- Big numbers in the story
  - 60,001 children
  - 125,000 years of effort
  - 5 generations of coordinated effort
- These numbers are meant to emphasize the large effort required



# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Message 4: Great efforts & Great impact

- Enormous efforts
  - 125,000 years of penance spread over 5 generations
  - 60,000 perish for a cause
  - Coordinated efforts by many – Brahma, Śiva, Gangā, Devas, Indra, Elephants, Vinata, Kapila, Jahnu ...
- Impact **has to be** of equal magnitude if not more
- Greater good for the society in a sustained manner requires such efforts



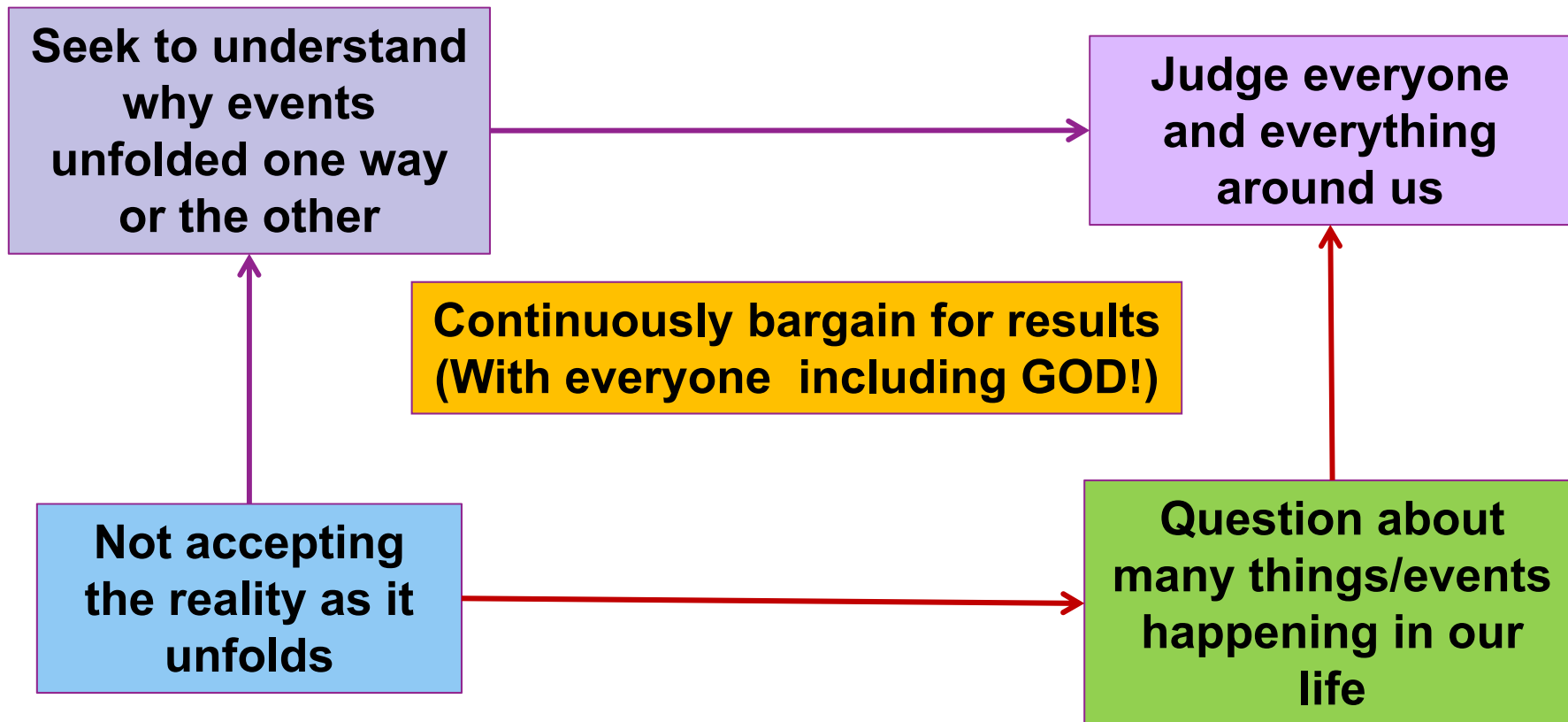
# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Message 5: Events in the episode?

- Why did the devas request Śiva not to procreate in the first place?
- Why were Sagara's wives blessed with 60,001 children by Bhṛgu?
- Why were 60,000 sons burnt to ashes? What sin did they commit?
- Why long years of penance of 4 generations were left unanswered?
- Why did Śiva hold Gangā in his hair? What was the role of Jahnu in the trajectory of Gangā?

# How do we spend most of our time in our life?

*There is a lot for our analytical mind to work on and seek answers !*





# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Message 5: Events in the episode?

- It is unwise to
  - Try to make sense of unfolding events
  - Judge events, people
  - Anticipate outcomes etc.
- It is better to put the best foot forward and go on in life pursuits
- The Lord created the world and the entities – has a larger plan & purpose with which lets events unfold

# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Message 6: Gangā Mātā is holy to us...

- The efforts and the results places this whole issue in a different pedestal
  - Gangā ≠ Ganges (River)
  - She is nothing but direct manifestation of Divinity
  - She has descended for a great cause
- Expression of the infinite compassion of Divine mother, Prakṛtī
- Reminds us of the five messages that we already saw
- Is a source of not only perennial water but also perennial inspiration

# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

**Devas watch the phenomenon in awe**

ततो देवर्षिगन्धर्वा यक्षसिद्धगणास्तदा ॥ 1.43.17

व्यलोकयन्त ते तत्र गगनाद्गतां गतां तथा ।

**Then devarṣis, gandharvas, yakṣas and hosts of siddhas looked on with astonishment at Gangā falling from the sky and descending on the earth.**

विमानैर्नगराकारैर्हयैर्गजवरैस्तदा ॥ 1.43.18

पारिप्लवगतैश्चापि देवतास्तत्र विष्टिताः ।

**Then, gods in a state of excitement in their aerial chariots as large as cities, on horses and on big elephants were stationed there (in the sky).**

# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

Devas watch the phenomenon in awe

तदद्भुततमं लोके गङ्गापतनमुत्तमम् ॥ 1.43.19

दिदृक्षवो देवगणाः समीयुरमितौजसः ।

Gods with great lustre arrived to witness the most wonderful, grand descent of Gangā.

सम्पतद्भिस्सुरगणैस्तेषां चाभरणौजसा ॥ 1.43.20

शतादित्यमिवाभाति गगनं गततोयदम् ।

The cloudless sky shone with the radiance of the ornaments of the gods alighting speedily to witness Gangā. It appeared as though the sky was filled with a hundred Suns.

# Gangā Avataraṇa Māhātmyam

## Gangā finally reaches the earth

तच्छङ्करशिरोभ्रष्टं भ्रष्टं भूमितले पुनः ।।1.43.25

व्यरोचत तदा तोयं निर्मलं गतकल्मषम् ।

The waters of Gangā descended on Śankara's head and from there to the earth. Freed from all impurities, the waters looked pure and clean.

# फलशृति

**For those who narrate this...**

धन्यं यशस्यमायुष्यं पुत्र्यं स्वर्ग्यमतीव च ।

यश्श्रावयति विप्रेषु क्षत्रियेष्वितरेषु च ॥ 1.44.21

प्रीयन्ते पितरस्तस्य प्रीयन्ते दैवतानि च ।

**He will be blessed with fame, longevity, progeny and (after death) heaven brahmins One who recites this story of Gangā to the Kṣatriyas and others, the gods and his forefathers would be pleased with him.**

# फलशृति

For those who hear this...

इदमाख्यानमव्यग्रो गङ्गावतरणं शुभम् ॥ 1.44.22

यश्शृणोति च काकुत्स्थ सर्वान् कामानवाप्नुयात् ।

सर्वे पापाः प्रणश्यन्ति आयुः कीर्तिश्च वर्धते ॥ 1.44.23

**O Son of the Kākusthas whosoever listens to this auspicious story relating to the descent of Gangā with concentration, all his desires will be achieved, his sins will be destroyed and his longevity and fame will increase".**