

LORD MURUGAN - Group 3

Lord Murugan is the second son of Lord Shiva. He is a picture of human perfection and, through the language of symbolism, shows mankind the ways and means to reach that perfection.

The Tamil word “Murugan” means “beauty & youthfulness” and Murugan is the God with these aspects. Subramaniam, Kanthan, Velan, Kadampan, Karthigesan, Kumaran & Saravanan are other names for Lord Murugan. And each name has its own special meaning.

“Arumugan” is another name for Lord Murugan. It means “the One with six faces” and represents the fact that the Supreme Self expresses itself in the human being, through the five senses and the mind. When these senses and the mind are controlled, refined and sublimated, man will attain perfection.

Like a Guru, He whispered the Omkara Mantra to Lord Shiva and, hence, He is known as “Sivaguru”.

Lord Murugan is often depicted seated on a peacock, which is often seen gripping a snake. He has His consorts Valli and Theivayanai with Him, holds the Vel in His hand and has a Serval (Cockerel) on His battle flag. Valli, Theivayanai and the Vel symbolise Ichchai, Kiriya and Jnanam respectively.

The cockerel (serval) crows in the early hours of the morning, when the dawn breaks and when darkness vanishes. It represents the appearance of God’s Grace, that removes the darkness of Paasam (bondage) of the souls.

The peacock, upon which He is seated, symbolises the liberated soul. The snake, on the leg of the peacock, represents anavam (ego) which is not destroyed, even at the point of liberation, but merely loses its grip on the soul.

Lord Murugan is described as a Tamil God in Tamil Literature. Like Murugan, Tamil is a beautiful language with ‘youthfulness and vigour’. The Tamil vowels are classified as vallinam, mellinam and idaiyinam. Each of these groups has six letters, like the six faces of Murugan. The eighteen consonants are comparable to His eighteen eyes. The twelve vowels are comparable to His twelve hands.

The great Tamil epic, the Kanthapuram, speaks of the manifestation of Siva as Murugan, His marriages and His fight against evil and wickedness symbolised by the asuras. It describes the story of the rescue and redemption of the celestials from the cruel subjugation and atrocities committed by the asuras, whose indomitable leader Surapadman is eventually defeated and killed by Lord Murugan.

This great epic sings of the glory, power and grace of Lord Murugan, in rich melodious language. Its author, Kachiappa Sivacharyar, was the priest of Lord Murugan’s Kumara Kottam shrine in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. The Puranam, as it is usually called, consists of six kaandams – comprising of 10,345 stanzas in total. It is a treasure trove of diverse religious and philosophical ideas. And, by worshipping Lord Murugan, we will be blessed with jnanam (knowledge), beauty, youthfulness and courage.