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## **01. 108 DIVYA DESA ASHTOTTARA SATHA NAAMAVALI**

### **Param**

1. Sri Periya pirAtti MahAlakshmi samEtha - Sri Paramapadha nAtha parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Paramapadam)

### **2. Vyuham**

Sri Boo dEvi nAchiyAr samEtha - Sri KsheerAbdi nAtha parabruhmanE namah /  
(TiruppArkadal)

### **Chozha NaaDu**

3. Sri Ranga nAchiyAr samEtha - Sri RanganAtha parabruhmanE namah /  
(Srirangam)
4. Sri kOmalavalli (padithAndA pathini) samEtha - Sri SARangapAni parabruhmanE namah /  
(Tirukudanthai) ®
5. Sri Kamala valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri Azhagiya ManavAla parabruhmanE namah /  
(Tiru Uraiyyur)
6. Sri Sen kamala valli samEtha – Neelamegha parabruhmanE namah /  
(Thanjai mA mani Koyil)
7. Sri Azhagiya valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri SundarAja parabruhmanE namah /  
(Tiru Anbil)
8. Sri PoorvA devi samEtha – Sri PurushOthama parabruhmanE namah /  
(Tirukkarambanur-Uttamar Koyil)
9. Sri Pankaja valli samEtha - PunDareekAksha parabruhmanE namah /  
(Tiruvellarai)
10. Sri PotrAmaraiyAl (HemAbjavalli) samEtha - Valvilirama parabruhmanE namah / (Tirup pullam  
bhootham kudi) ®
11. Sri Kamala valli (IndirAdevi) samEtha – Appala RanganAtha parabruhmanE namah /  
(Tiruppernagar – AppakkuDathAn)
12. Sri Ranga nAyaki samEtha – Aandu Alakkum Ayya parabruhmanE namah /  
(Tiru Aadanur)
13. Sri Senkamala valli samEtha DevAdirAja(Aamaruviappa) parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruvazhundur-Ther azhundur)
14. Sri Thiru mA magal nAchiyAr samEtha – ArulmAkkaDal (KripA samudra) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru  
SirupPuliyur)
15. Sri Sara nAyaki samEtha – SARanAtha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tirucherai)
16. Sri Thalai sanga nAchiyAr samEtha – NANmadhiya (vyOmajyOti) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Thalai  
sanga Nan madhiyam-ThalaichankAdu)
17. Sri Kamala valli nAyaki samEtha – Hara sApa vimOchana parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk KanDiyur)
18. Sri Bhoomi dEvi nAchiar samEtha – Oppili appa (Srinivasa) parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruvin nagar, Oppili appan Koyil)
19. Sri Kanna pura nAyaki samEtha – Neela mEgha (SourirAja) parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kanna puram)
20. Sri Amrutha gaTa valli samEtha – VayalAli manavAla parabruhmanE namah/  
(TiruvAli- Tiru nagari)
21. Sri Soundarya valli samEtha – Soundarya rAja parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru nAgai- NAgap pattinam)
22. Sri Vanjula valli samEtha – Thiru naraiyoor nambi parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru naraiyoor- NachiyAr koyil)
23. Sri Shenbaga valli samEtha – Jagan nAtha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Nandhi pura Vinnagaram-Nathan koyil- Dakshina JagannAth)

24. Sri Parimala Ranga nAyaki (Chandra Sapa vimOchana valli) samEtha – Parimala RanganAtha – (Maruviniya mainda , Suganda vana nAtha parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Indalur)
25. Sri Pundareeka valli samEtha – Govinda rAja (dEvAdi dEva) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Chitra Koodam- Chidambaram)
26. Sri Loka nAyaki (mattavizh kuzhali) samEtha – Tiru vikrama (ThAdAla) ) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiruk Kazhi SrirAma Vinnagaram - SirkAzhi)
27. Sri PadmAsana (Pushpa valli) samEtha – Vaiyam KATHa (Jagat rakshaka) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Koodalur, Aadaturai PerumAl koyil)
28. Sri Aravinda valli (IOkanAyaki) samEtha – Shyamala mEni (IOkanAtha) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiruk Kannan kudi)
29. Sri AbhishEka valli samEtha – Bhakta vatsala parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiruk Kanna mangai)
30. Sri ramAmani valli (PotrAmaraiyAl) samEtha – Gajendra varadha parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Kavi Thalam, Kavisthalam)
31. Sri Maragathavalli samEtha – KOLA val vili rAma (sringAra sundara) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Velliyan kudi) ®
32. Sri Pundareeka valli samEtha – Sri nara nArAyana parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru mani mAda koyil, Tiru nAngur)
33. Sri VaikunTa valli samEtha – Sri VaikunTa nAtha parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru VaikunTa Vinnagaram, Tiru nAngur)
34. Sri Amruta gaTa valli samEtha – Kudam Adu kootha parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Arimeya Vinnagaram, Tiru nAngur)
35. Sri KaDal magal nAchiyAr samEtha – Deiva nAyaka parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru ThevnAr Thogai)
36. Sri PurushOthama nAyaki samEtha - PurushOthama parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Vann PurushOthamam, Tiru nAngur)
37. Sri Alli mA malar nAchiyAr samEtha - Sri pErarulAla parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Semponsei koyil, TirunAngur)
38. Sri Tiru magal nAchiyAr samEtha – Mani kooda nAyaka parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru manik Koodam, Tiru nAngur)
39. Sri Sen kamala valli samEtha – Senkan mAl parabruhmanE namah/ (Tirutthetri ambalam, Tiru nAngur)
40. Sri Madavaral Mangai samEtha – GopAla krishna parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiruk kAvalam pAdi, Tiru nAngur)
41. Sri PoovAr Tirumagal nAchiyAr samEtha – Anna nArAyana parabruhmanE namah/ (Annan Koyil, Tiru VellakkuLam, Tiru nAngur)
42. Sri ThAmarai nAyaki samEtha – ThAmaraiyAl kElva parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru PArthan Palli, Tiru nAngur)

**PanDiya Nadu**

43. Sri Sundara valli samEtha – Sri Kallazhaga (mAlirum sOlai nambi) parabruhmanE namah/ (Azhagar koyil, TirumAlirum Solai)
44. Tiru mA magal nAchiyAr samEtha Uragamell anaiyA(SowmyanArAyana) parabruhmanE namah/(Tiruk Koshtiyur)
45. Sri Uyya vandha nAchiyAr samEtha Sathya giri nAtha parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru meyyam)
46. Sri KalyAna valli samEtha –Sri KalyAna jagan nAtha parabruhmanE namah/ (Tirp PullANi, RAmanAthapuram)
47. Sri Anantha nAyaki samEtha – Nindra nArAyana parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru thankAl)
48. Sri Megha valli samEtha – kALa mEga parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru mOgur)

49. Sri Madhura valli,(Vagula valli) samEtha – Koodal azhaga parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk Koodal, Madurai)
50. Sri GodhA devi samEtha Vata patra sAyi (rangamannAr) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru villi puttur, Sri villi puttur)
51. Sri Aadhi nAtha valli samEtha – Aadhi nAtha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kurugur, AlwAr Tirunagari)
52. Sri Karum thaDan kanni nAchiyAr samEtha – AravinDa IOchana parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Tholai villi mangalam, Erattai Tirupati)
53. Sri Siree vara guna mangai samEtha – ThothAdri nAtha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Siree vara mangai, VAna mA malai, Nanguneri)
54. Sri Pulingudi valli samEtha –Sri Kaichina vEnda parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tirup pulin gudi)
55. Sri Kuzhaik kAdhu valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Makara neDum kuzhaik kAdha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Then TiruppErai)
56. Sri VaikunTavalli samEtha – Sri KaLLa pirAn parabruhmanE namah/  
(Sri vaikuntam)
57. Sri Vara guna valli samEtha – VijayAsana parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru vara guna mangai)
58. Sri Kulandhai valli samEtha – MAYak kootha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kulandai, Perun kulam)
59. Sri Kurun gudi vall nAchiyAr samEtha – Srivaishnava Nambi parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk Kurun gudi)
60. Sri Kumuda valli (Kolor valli) nAchiyAr samEtha – Vaittha MAnidhi parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiruk Kolor)

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**Malai Nadu**

61. Sri Srihari lakshmi samEtha – Ananta padma nAbha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru anantha puram, Trivandrum)
62. Sri Kamala valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri Tiruk Kural appa parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru VaNN ParisAram)
63. Sri VAtsalya valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Katkarai appa parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kAt karai)
64. Sri Madhura vEni nAchiyAr samEtha – Tiru moozhik kala(Sri sookti nAtha) parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru moozhikkaLam)
65. Sri PorkoDi nAchiyAr samEtha – Mayap pirAn parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tirup Puliyur, Kutta nAdu)
66. Sri Senkamala valli samEtha – Imayavar appa parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru chen kundrur)
67. Sri Malar mangai nAchiyAr samEtha – NavAi mukunda parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru nAvAi)
68. Sri Vatsalya devi (Selva Tiruk kozhundu)nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri Vallabha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru valla vAzh, Tiruvalla)
69. Sri Kamala valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Pambanai appa parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Vann vandur)
70. Sri Maragatha valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Aadhi kesava parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru vattAru)
71. Sri Vithuvak kOttu valli samEtha – Uyya vandha nAyaka parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Vithuvak kOdu)
72. Sri Karpaga valli samEtha – Sri Amruta (Adbuta) nArAyana parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kadithAnam)
73. Sri PadmAsani nAchiyAr samEtha – Tiruk kural appa (SeshAsana) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Aaran vilA, AaranmUla)

### **Nadu Nadu**

74. Sri HemAmbuja valli samEtha – Sri Deiva nAyaka parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru vaheendra puram, Ayindhai)
75. Sri Poon gOvai nAchiyAr samEtha – Tri vikrama parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kovalur, GopAla puram)
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### **Thondai Nadu**

76. Sri Perun dEvi (mahAdevi) nAyaki samEtha - Sri PErarulAla VaradarAja para bruhrmanE namah  
(Tirukkachi – Athigiri)
77. Sri Alarmel mangA samEtha – Aadhi kesava (chakradhara) parabruhmanE namah/  
(Ashta bhujA karam, Kanchee puram)
78. Sri Maragatha valli samEtha – Sri Deepa prakAsa parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru thankA, Thoopul, Kanchee puram)
79. Sri Velukkai valli samEtha - Sri Mukunda nAyaka parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru vElukkai, Kanchee puram)
80. Sri Rukmini Sathya bhAmA samEtha – Pandava Thoodha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tirup PAdagam. Kanchee puram)
81. Sri Nila mangai valli samEtha – Sri Jagadeesa parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Neer agam, Kanchee puram)
82. Ner oruvar illA valli samEtha – Chandra chooda (nilA thingal thunDa) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru  
NilA Thingal Thundam, Kanchee puram)
83. Sri PadmA mani nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri KarunAkara parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kAr agam, Kanchee puram)
84. Sri Kamala valli (ThAmaraiyAL) samEtha Sri KaLva parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kAr vAnam, Kanchee puram)
85. Sri Amudha valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri Tri vikrama parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Oor agam, Kanchee puram)
86. Sri Komala valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri YathOkta kAri (VegAsEthu) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru  
vekkA, Kanchee puram)
87. Sri Anjila valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Aadhi varAha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kaLvanur, Kanchee puram)
88. Sri PavaLa valli samEtha – Sri PavaLa vanna parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru PavaLa vanna, Kanchee puram)
89. Sri VaikunTa valli samEtha – Sri Parama pada nAtha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru ParamEswara Vinnagaram, Kanchee puram)
90. Sri Maragatha valli samEtha – Sri Vijaya rAghava parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tirup put kuzhi)
91. Sri SudhA valli (Ennai petra thAyAr) samEtha – Sri Bhakta vatsala parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Nindra  
voor)
92. Sri Kanka valli (Vasumathi) samEtha – Vaidya Veera RAghava parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru EvvuL,  
Tiruvallur) ®
93. Sri Ani mA malar Manga SamEtha – Neer vanna parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Neer malai)
94. Sri KOmala valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Laksmi varAha (Nitya kalyAna) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru Eda  
vendhai)
95. Sri Nila mangai nAyaki samEtha – Sthala sayana thurai parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiruk kaDal mallai, MahAbali puram)
96. Sri Veda valli samEtha – Sri Venkata krishna (Partha sArathi) parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Allik Keni, TruvallikkEni)
97. Sri Amrutha valli samEtha – YogA nrisimha (AkkArakkani) parabruhmanE namah/

**Vada Nadu**

98. AlarmEl manga (Padmavati) SamEtha Tiruvenkatamudaiyaan/Srinivasa parabruhmanE namah/ .  
99. Sri Senju lakshmi samEtha – AhObila nrisimha parabruhmanE namah/  
(SingavEzhkundram, AhObilam)  
100. Sri SeethA PirAtti samEtha Sri RAma (Chakravarthi Thiru magan) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru  
AyOdhi, AyOdyA)  
101. Sri Srihari lakshmi samEtha – Sri Srihari(DevarAja) parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru NaimisAranyam)  
102. Sri SridEvi nAchiyAr samEtha – Sri Sri moorthy parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru ShAla grAmam.MuktinAth)  
103. Sri Aravinda valli samEtha – Badari nArAyana parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru Badarika Ashramam, BadrinAth)  
104. Sri PunDarIka valli samEtha- Sri PurushOttama parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru KanDam kaDi nagar, DevaprayAg)  
105. Sri ParimaLa valli nAchiyAr samEtha – Parama purusha parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tirup Prithi, NanDa prayAg, Joshi mutt)  
106. Sri KalyAna nAchiyAr samEtha – KalyAna nArAyana (DwArakAdheesa) parabruhmanE namah/ (Tiru  
DwArakai, DwArakA)  
107. Sri Sathya bhAmA samEtha – GovardhanEsa parabruhmanE namah/  
(Tiru VaDa mathurai, Mathurai)  
108. Sri Rukmani Sathya bhAmA samEtha – Nava mOhana krishna parabruhmanE namah/ (TiruvAippADi,  
Gokulam)



## 02. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE DIVYA DESAM AND WHY?

Dear Suhrids

Way back in August 1998, I initiated an interesting discussion in the then extant "Bhakti list" maintained by Sri Mani Varadarajan Swami titled "**What is your favorite Divya Desam and Why?**"

1. This was in the nature of modern day "*PaTTi Manram*" and not intended to invoke any acrimonious debates to involve anyone in "*Bhagavad Apachaaram*". This was meant purely to appreciate the glory of the various *Divyadesams* for our edification only. Many members joined the discussion.

Naturally, some of them declared their native place as their "most favorite Divya Desam".

2. The second part of the question on "Why?" elicited interesting replies. I am giving below excerpts from their replies in their own words, lest I should distort the force of their reasoning.

The places identified by them include-

Tiru Arangam (Srirangam)

Tiru VenkaTam (Tirumalai)

Tiru Anbil-AppakuDathaam

Tiru Allik KENi (Triplicane)

Tiruk Kudanthai (Kumbakonam)

Tiru SingavEL KunDram (Ahobilam)

Nava Tirupati

A member has considered Dasaavataara Sannidhi as is his favorite Divya Desam

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From the Bhakti List Archives

[Ram Anbil](#) • August 10, 1998

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### 1. TIRU ARANGAM (SRIRANGAM) and 2. TIRU VENKATAM

Most Bhaagavatas have chosen 1. Tiru Arangam, which is hailed as "*BhoolOKa VaikuNTam*" sung by all Azhwars to be followed by Tiru VenkaTam which is the Kula Deivam" for many Srivaishnavas.

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### 3. TIRU ANBIL- APPAKKUDATHAN

From the Bhakti List Archives

[Ram Anbil](#) • August 10, 1998

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Some of you (including myself) have been voting for one or the other of the Divya Desams as the 'Most favored'. Some of you have based your views on the largest number of Paasurams or the number of Azhwars who have consecrated and many other criteria.

As one belonging to the *Divya desam* of *Anbil- Appak Kudathaam (Koviladi or Tirupernagar)*, I am tempted to project this Divyadesam as 'the most favored' as shown below.

It is argued that the *Prapanna Jana Koodastha*, Sri Nammazhwar did Prapatti at Tiruvenkatam, citing the famous Paasuram "*Agalakillen Enru Alarmel Mangai Urai Maarbhaa*". But, Nammazhwar seems to have surrendered himself at several Tirupathis as well.

WHERE IN THE WORLD that the Alwar finally got what he has been yearning for all along pleading soulfully to the different deities in the different Divya Desams?

I have heard in *Kalakshepams* that the very last Divyadesam he had sung (his swan-song, as it were)- is on this *Anbil-Appak Kudathaam* (traditionally referred to as the twin Divya desams that lie on either banks of *KoLLiDam* with the name of Sundararajan (*Vadivazhagiya Nambi*) in *Anbil and Appak Kudathaam* in *Tirupernagar*) (Vide Tiruvoimozhi 10.8.1 to 11).

This is the Divya Desam where the Lord who had devoured the seven clouds, seven seas and seven mountains filled completely Azhwar's *Nenju (Nenju Niraiya Pugunthaam)* and the Azhwar devoured the "*Aaraa Vayitraanai Adanga Pidithene*" (10.8.2). A case of divine Cannibalism as A.K. Ramanujan would put it !

This is the Divya Desam where the Alwar puts the Lord in a spot and demands an explanation as to why He, who was indifferent to him so far, though it fit HERE (in Tirupernagar) and NOW (at long last) to fill his *Nenju*

(*Inru Ennaip Porul Aakkith Thannai Ennul Vaiththan, Anru Ennaip Puram Poga Punarthathu En Seivaan?*)(10.8.6).

As per 6000 Padi, the Lord could not reply the Azhwar. In His eagerness to take the Azhwar to Paramapadam, The Lord almost sought his excuse by asking what else Azhwar wanted.

To this, the Azhwar finally seems to have demanded that indeed, he had got what he wanted HERE, but that he wanted this *Kainkarya* Sri to continue in Paramapadam also.

"*Utren Ugandhu Pani Sithu Una Paadam Petraen; Eedhe Innum Venduvadhey Endhaai*" (10.8.10)

Whatever comes after this decad 10.8 is in the nature of description of Chetana- *Achetanas* (10.9.1); The higher worlds (10.9.2); *Adivaahikas* (10.9.3); The Celestials (10.9.4); *Varuna* Indra and others (10.9.5); Veda Strees (10.9.6); *Maruthganas* and Vasus (10.9.7); Nityasuris (10.9.8,9); Reception by the Lord (10.9.10) and *Phalasruti* (10.9.11) The entire decad 10.10 is the Epilogue (*Nigamanam*) of Tiruvoimozhi. Thus, the decad dealing with Tirupernagar is the Charama (last)decad on Divya Desams and no other Divya Desam came to be sung after this.

Thus, the Alwar really ascended to Paramapadam only at this ANBIL- TIRUPPERNAGAR Divya Desam - the culmination and consummation of all his psalms hailed as *Vedam* in Tamil and the Azhwar himself known as "*Vedam Tamizh Seitha Maaran*".

Viewed in this light, we may conclude that this ANBIL - TIRUPPERNAGAR may be considered as the 'Most favored Divya Desam.'

BTW, Sri Krishna Premi Swami is said to have evidence to show that it was in this ANBIL that Sage VALMIKI was born. While this is a matter for research, I am aware of one great Mahan who was born here-viz., ANBIL V. Gopalachariar who instituted the Vidwat Sadas in honor of the founder of Pundarikapuram Andavan Ashramam.

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#### 4. TIRU ALLIK KENI (Triplicane)

From the Bhakti List Archives

Our Azhwars and Acharyas have ad infinitum emphasized the importance of the three Rahasya Mantras for our SOS (Saving our Souls) of the *Mumukshus* (Those desirous of Moksha).

Viz., *Ashtakshara, Dvaya and Charama Sloka*.

Swami Desika in his Rahasya Traya Saram (Sara Nishkarsha Adhikara advises in his Pasuram

"*Amayaa Evai Yennum Aasaiyinaal Imayaa Imaiyyavar Yethiya ETTu IranDu Enniya Nam Samayaasiriyar Sadirrkum Thani Nilai Thanthare*".

One can go on adding any number of degrees and doctorates behind one's name, but they serve only to increase one's burden (*Thogai Evai Yenru*) and cannot lead to true knowledge.

#### What then is true knowledge?

Our great Acharyas have taught that only an understanding of the "*ETTu*" (i.e.). *Ashtaksharam* and "*Erandu*" (i.e.) the two other mantras of *Dvayam* and *Charamaslokam* can lead one to the desired goal of Moksham (of course, by making the *Mumukshu* to take recourse to Bhakti or Prapatti. That truly is the "*Sadirrkum Nilai*"- the redemption of our souls.

The ***Ashtakshara*** describes how Paravasudeva presides over the whole universe sitting on his throne in Paramapadam (*Savyam Paadam Prasaarya Vaikunta Naathah*). ***Dvayam*** describes how Vyuh Vasudeva rules over the universe reclining on his serpent bed in *Ksheerabdi* (*Ksheerambo Nidhiratna...Laksnmi Sa Narayanam*). **But, look at what Charamaslokam does?** This provides us immediate relevance to us in a manner we can readily understand. Its projects (of course, through Arjuna) promise of Moksha, guarantee of protection and an unequivocal reassurance 'not to grieve'. What the three famous ***Charama slokas*** convey?

1. ***Varaaha Charama*** Sloka conveys Lord's intention in a suggestive manner that He would remember the Prapanna while lying like a stone or log of wood at the time of death provided the Prapanna remembered him while in fine fettle. (*Aham Smaraami Madbhaktam*)

2. **Rama Charama Sloka** assures protection to the one who surrenders 'freedom from fear of all beings' (*Abhayam Sarva Bhutebhyoh Dadhaami*)
3. **Krishna Charama Sloka** not only commands directly "*Maam Ekam SaraNam Vraja*". It also projects a solemn promise to release the Prapanna from all Papas (*Aham Tva.... Moksha yishyaami*) and finally provides an unequivocal reassurance not to grieve (*Maa Suchah*)

**It is said that this promise of Lord Krishna is inviolable. Why?**

Because the Lord himself is said to feel 'Nirveda'(repentance) for not having rushed on time to protect those who had surrendered to him earlier at least on three occasions.

- i) In the case of Gajendra: Gajendra, a great Bhakta had to fight the crocodile for one thousand years before the Lord would condescend to save him.
- ii) In the case of Vibishana, even though he surrendered himself, he was made to wait in mid-air while Rama was engaged in a debate with his ministers of war whether to accept him or not.
- iii) In the case of Draupadi, she was already a surrendered soul as per the Mahabharata story. She had to undergo the traumatic dishonor of being dragged to the open assembly and wait for her savior till the last moment (i.e.) when she was about to be disrobed.

The Charama Slokam of Krishna is so emphatic that one can sense palpably the tinge of guilt he felt in the cases of Gajendra, Vibishana and Draupadi and his Sankalpam (determination) never again to repeat the delay to any future jeeva that surrenders. The Lord would never again delay us deliverance once we surrender to him at his feet as per his command.

The commandment of Lord Krishna to us to surrender to him (*Maam Ekam Saranam Vraja*), even leaving off all Dharmas (*Sarva Dharmaan Parityajya*); the solemn promise of ridding us from all Paapa (which includes *PuNyasa* - befitting one to reach *Moksha*) - (*Sarva Paapebhyo* and *Mokshayishyaami*) and rounding it off with an inalienable assuaging reassurance (*Maa Suchah*) - all seeking to give us hope and to avoid any misgivings about the Lord's granting Moksham to us.

**And, who gave this command, this promise and this reassurance? Not Sri Ranganatha, Not Sri Srinivasa, Not Sri Varadaraja, Not Sri Tirunarayana, Not any of the Lords of any other Divya Desams. It was Sri Parthasarathi, the Charioteer of Partha who delivered all these- promise of deliverance, reiteration of protection and the much-needed consolation. I would, therefore, vote for Tiru Allik KENi as the most favored Divya Desam.**

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**5. TIRUKKUDANTAI- KUMBAKONAM**

From the Bhakti List Archives

[Krishnamachari, N \(Krish\)](#) • August 28, 1998

I have now gotten around to really get in the act. The kshetra purANam of tirukkudandai is found in brahmANDa purANa, pAdma purANa, bhavishya purANa etc. So, what I am including below is not some folklore, but is based on authentic sources.

My initial reasons for not voting for **tiruvE~nkaTattAn** are pure selfishness. Whenever I have gone there, He does not make it easy for me to get into His residence. Once, He even used His door keeper to keep me out by saying that I have girdhA (whatever it means, since I did not intentionally have it - I just did not worry about how I looked, and He decided this was sufficient reason to blame me with a girdhA!).

**ara~ngan** is catching up with tiruvE~nkaTattAn in not being a friendly host also. Even when there are not too many people waiting in line, He uses His servants to kick us out of His sannidhi of late without allowing us time to enjoy His darSanam.

This is not the case with **my ArAvamudhan**, and I hope He will not ever become an unfriendly host. So, on purely selfish grounds, I will vote for ArAvamudhan. But there are also very sound reasons why He is No. 1.

**tirukkudandai is where tiruppati ve~kaTAlapati and triuvara~ngam's ran~gaSAyi ended up ultimately.**

First is the story of how SrInivAsa ended up in triukkuDandai. Lakshmi got angry that Her husband put up with bhr\*gu maharshi's kick on the chest, and left SrIvaikunTham and came down to this earth.

SrIman nArAyaNa could not live separated from Lakshmi in SrIvaikunTham, descended down to earth, and came to tiruppati, but here He met PadmAvati and married Her. When Lakshmi found out that SrInivAsa got married to padmAvati, she got furious and came to tiruppati looking for Him And SrInivAsa did not want to face Lakshmi and so He came to tirukkuDandai and took refuge in a cave in the temple of ArAvamudhan (the sannidhi in the temple in tirukkuDandai is called the *pAthALa SrInivAsar sannidhi*). Lakshmi became sad that She could not find Her Lord in tiruppati and decided to do penance in the hema pushkariNi in triukkuDandai, and so appeared on a lotus flower in the pushkariNi. Bhr\*gu maharshi who had committed the apacAram of kicking the Lord on the chest in SrIvaikunTham which started this whole episode, decided to do severe penance in tirukkuDandai as hema maharshi to get Lakshmi as his daughter so that he can serve her and thus remedy his sin. When he found this beautiful child in the lotus flower, he was overjoyed and took the child with him and brought her up.

When SrIvaikunTha nAthana came to KumbhakONam, He assumed the name of ArAvamudhan and married kOmaLavalli and decided to rest here in His serpent bed.

For those of you who are pitching in for tiruve~nkaTam as the No. 1 divyadeSam, just be aware that tiruve~nkaTattAn just had an **intermediate stop** in tiruppati, but then proceeded to kumbhakONam, where He assumed the name of ArAvamudhan, and got united with Lakshmi in the form of kOmaLavalli. This is confirmed by tirumaZhiSai AzhvAr in tiruc-canda viruttam -

*"Sezhu~nkozhum perum pani pozhindiDa uyarnda vEi  
vizhundu ularndu ezhundu viN puDaikkum vE~nkaTattuL ninRu  
ezhundirundu tEn porundu pUm-pozhil tazhaik-kozhum  
Sezhun-taDam kuDandaiyuL kiDanda mAlum allaiyE"*

Also remember that tirukkuDandai is where Goddess Lakshmi decided to take her incarnation in the form of kOmaLavalli, and tirukkuDandai is where bhr\*gu maharshi (assuming the name of hema maharshi) decided to wait for nArAyaNa to become His son-in-law. By now, it should be obvious what divya deSam is No. 1.

Just to give additional reasons, we will look at more data.

After the paTTAbhisheka, SrI rAma gave away the ancestral ArAdhana vighram to vibhIshaNa as a parting gift. vibhIshaNa rested the vighraha on the ground in SrIra~ngam but could not take it back from the ground again, bhagavAn having assumed His reclining pose as Lord ra~naganAtha. But He told vibhIshaNa that he planned to proceed to tirukkuDandai with half of his vimAna (the vaidika vimAna) to marry Lakshmi (komaLa valli) and bless hema maharshi. Then He proceeded to KumbhakONam and assumed the name and form of ArAvamudhan and married kOmaLa valli. Thus, ArAvamudhan is none other than ra~nganAtha, who also ended up in kumbhakONam because kOmaLavalli decided to reside in kumbhakONam.

It should be noted that our thAyAr is a paDi-thANDAp pattini in every sense of the term. Even for kanup-piDi, when the thAyArs from other temples come to the poRRAMarai tank just outside the temple, our thAyAr stays inside the entrance and does not come out of the door to the tank which is literally 10 feet away from the door. Such is Her devotion to the service of Her Lord.

The chariot of perumAL in tirukkuDandai was given to perumAL by none other than tiruma~ngai AzhvAr (as found in the account by SrI A. ethirAjan in his account of the 108 divya kshetra-s), and is one of the largest in South India.

The AzhvAr's composition tiruvezhukkURRirukkai, the words of which can be arranged like a chariot (you can see it in the temple when you visit the place), is on this perumAL. This emperuman's role in the revelation of the nAIyira divya prabandham should be well known to bhakta-s. It was here that nAthamunigal got his directive from bhagavAn for restoring the nAIyiram. Thus, our ArAvamudhan is credited with giving us back the divya prabandham. He is also called **ArAvamudha AzhvAr** for this contribution of His.

tirukkuDanthai is a svayam-vyakta kshetram like kA~nci, SrIra~ngam and tiruve~nkatam. This is also the place which was drenched by the nectar of creation that spilled from the pot (kumbham) soon after the waters of pralaya subsided, and in this sense kumbhakONam (tirukkuDanthai) is the nucleus of creation.

kumbhakONam is also the place where bhAskara (Sun) performed intense penance to regain the luster that he lost in a battle with sudarSana cakra, and Sar~ngarAja ultimately acceded to bhAskara's request that kumbhakONam may also be remembered as **bhAskara kshetram**.

The vaiDika vimAnam in which ArAvamudhan resides in kumbhakONam is one of three vimAna-s in which bhagavAn appeared in response to the penance b ybrahma and Surya (the second one is the praNavAkAra vimAnam in SrIra~ngam and third is the SrIvaikunTha vimAnam).

Even the corridor of ArAvamudhan's residence is sung by periAzhvAr

(*tU-nilA muRRattE pOndu viLaiyADa...*).

Of the 108 tiruppati-s, the corridors of only three kshetra-s are sung by AzhvAr-s: that of ArAvamudhan, ra~nganAthan, and nIla meghap perumAL. There are 54 pASurams on this perumAL by our AzhvAr-s - bhutattAzhvAr, pEyAzhvAr, tirumazhiSai AzhvAr, nammAzhvAr, periyAzhvAr, ANDAL, tiruma~ngai AzhvAr, kamba nATTazhvAr, and a Slokam by svAmi deSikan in tAtparya ratnAvaLi (Sloka 66).

I could go deeper into the meanings of the outpourings of the AzhvAr-s on ArAvamudhan, but even without that, the point is made in my opinion on why His kshetram is the foremost one.

## 6. TIRU SINGA VEL KUNDRAM (AHOBILAM)

From the Bhakti List Archives

(Ramesh Saranagapani)

Kaliyan while singing the glory of Azhagiya singar (at Tiruvalikani) narrates succinctly the avathara rahasyam of Lakshmi Narasimhan and says "Angu Appoyude avan viya thondriya en singapiran perumai"...meaning "that day when his parama bhakta, Prahaladan, was in distress, our Lord came to his rescue in an instant".

That same Lord, "Engu eppOyudum" (even now, to this day), wearing His padukas is going from village to village and rescuing countless devotees by having samashrayanam and bharanyasam performed on them under His lotus feet.

Show me one other Lord who is doing this?

It is one thing to preach the charama slokam, but something all together different to execute it day-in-and-day-out (for all Tiru-alli-kAni vasis)

**Of what use is the sweet smile on the tirumukam of tiruvenkatamudayan**, if i can enjoy it for only a fraction of a second? (may be a minute...if i can spare 10 bucks :-))

**Of what use is even our Periya Perumal** if he refuses to budge from his "bed"?

**Devadirajan**, of course, standing on Attigiri and holding his abhaya-hastam is showering His benign glance on all His devotees. But then it takes just one "dancer" (Arayar) to snatch away even his darling son (Udayavar). Personally, i would think twice before taking refuge under such a "vehuli" :-)

So, friends...maybe now you would like to change your mind (vote)...it is never too late!  
on Ahobilam, much better than what i have done here.

## 7. NAVA TIRUPATI

From the Bhakti List Archives

Thirumalai Vinjamoor Venkatesh 8/31/1998

Please go to the divya dEsams like Navathiruppathi near and around AzhwAr Thirunagari and many other not so popular (when I say popular it is with respect to discussing it as no.1 against any other divya dEsam) divya dEsam. I would say, the emberumAns in these divya dEsams will rather come out even to the "oor ellai" to receive you as They hardly have any devotees over the years, excepting the one or two local fellows and the Archakar. Go to the PravALa vaNNar sannidhi in Kanchi. Here also, the case is same. Likewise, there are many other divya dEsams. If the no. 1 position is to be accorded on this basis then there are other divya dEsams which begs the no.1 place on these grounds.

I heard that very clearly ThiruppANazhwAr says in his 3rd pAsuram. "mandhi pAi vada vEngada mAmalai, vAnavargaL sandhi seyya ninrAn - arangatharavinaNayAn" meaning, Arangan, when he decided to come down to BhoolOkam came and first stood there at Thirumalai for the "VANavargaL" to do their "Sandhi".

Likewise, where is the account that Arangan then came to Thirukkudanthai to marry KomaLavalli. Again, as I had indicated in my earlier post, a divya dEsam could be dearer to anybody but the no.1 is always one and only one which indeed is Srirangam undoubtedly. Sri RanganAyaki thAyAr samEtha Sri RanganAthar thiruvadigale saraNam adiyEn RAmAnuja dAsan Thirumalai Vinjamoor Venkatesh

## **DASAVATAARA SANNIDHI**

From the Bhakti List Archives

### **Now regarding- Dasavatara Sannidhi - A Divya Desam?**

Someone voted for the Dasavatara Sannidhi as the most favorite DivyaDesam. A Divya Desam is one sanctified by the mangalaasaasanam by one or more of the 12 Azhwars. Thus, this Sannidhi does not qualify to be a Divya Desam. It is not even an acknowledged "Abhimana Kshetram" like Namakkal, Thanthonrimalai, Vaduvur, Sriperumpudur, Tirumazhisai, Singaperumal koil, Madurantakam, Tirumandankudi or even Udipi or Guruvayoor.

Nor is it an acknowledged "Purana Sthalam" like Rajamannargudi, Tiru narayanapuram, Srimushnam, Srikoormam or even Nathdwara or Pandaripuram.

It is not even a temple like our Sri Ranganatha Temple at Pomona or Venkateswara temple at Pittsburgh. It is only a "Sannidhi" as the name shows; It can at best be an "Abhimana Sannidhi" in the sense that by virtue of its being the headquarters of Azhagiyaasinghars, many Sishyas get their Samasrayanam and / or Bharanyasam there.

But then, this does not make it any special because Sishyas get them done at the other Sannidhis also like Poundarikapuram Ashramam, Periyashramam, Parakala Matam (which in fact, is a temple in its own right). and the Ashtanga Yoga Vigyana Mandiram of Sri Rangapriya Yathi.

The only sense, if at all, all Sannidhis in Srirangam can be considered "Divya Desams" is because they are all within the precincts of and form part of the "Bhooloka Vaikuntam".

If this Sannidhi alone is to be deemed a " Divya Desam " based on the criteria cited in the post, anyone of the myriad Sannidhis dotting the entire landscape of not only Bharata Varsha but also the entire oriental and occidental Worlds (wherever newer Sannidhis are springing up, as a testimony to the vibrant resurgence of Hinduism in general and Vaishnavam in particular deserve to be called "Divya Desam".

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS ON ONGOING DISCUSSION ON TEMPLES AND DEITIES**

From the Bhakti List Archives

[surfing](#) • August 14, 1998

Dear Members,

To an outsider, it may appear as if our Gods and Goddesses are competing for first place in human recognition, and with them, the temples too in which they are residing. A closer reading however would reveal that the competitors are only the Bhaktas who keenly desire for the supremacy of the idol of their devotion. Existing beyond all our egos and hence out of reach of our ego, they silently listen to our words and communicate a message to which we could pay heed:

"The Wise Without taking credit, are accredited Without claiming, are acclaimed Not competing, Find peaceful competence."

Adiyen Dasan

MK Krishnaswamy [surfing@pacbell.net](mailto:surfing@pacbell.net)



## **SRIRANGA VIJAYAM**

**Acharya Sri Ahobila Aasthaana VidwAn Purisai Nadadur Sri Bashya Simhasanam Sri U. Ve. Krishnamachariar Swami, Editor, Sri Nrisimhapriya, Journal of Ahobila Mutt.  
(Translated by Anbil Ramaswamy)**

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Srimukham blessings of Purisai Swami

Dated 19th September 2000

To Sri U. Ve Sriman Anbil Ramaswamy Iyengar

I am extremely happy to know that you are starting an electronic journal named SRI RANGA SRI.

I offer my earnest prayers to Sri Ranganatha and Sriranga Nachiyar that SRI RANGA SRI should spread all over the world and everyone should be benefited by reading the same.

I am sure that you will publish only Satsampradayam matters while taking care not to hurt the feelings of anyone.

I have no doubt that the great Srivaishnava savants will perform Mangalasanams always and shower their grace with the utterance-

***Sri Ranga Srischa VardhathAm***

(Sd) Purisai Nadadur Krishnamachariar

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**While conveying the above blessings, Sri Purisai Swami commanded that since the journal is named "Sri Ranga Sri", we should commence with his series "Sriranga Vijayam" on the glory of Srirangam and the Divya Dhampathis there. I studied Sri BHaashyam at his feet. The translated version of his book is given below.**

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### **"SRI RANGA VIJAYAM" –Part 1**

The word "Koil" may apply to all holy places where the Lord appears in His iconic (*archa*) form but Srirangam is known as "*Periya Koil*" to signify its unparalleled importance. The Lord Himself is known as "*Periya PerumAL*"

Bhagavaan whose permanent abode is in Paramapadam, in His Archa form descended to Satyalokam where He was worshipped by Brahma and other Devas. When the same Bhagavan, descended down to earth, He was worshipped by Sri Rama in His Vibhavam. Since Sri Rama Himself is an emanation of PerumaaL, the Lord worshipped by him came to be known as "*Periya PerumAL*".

When Sri Rama presented his *IshTadevata* to his Companion, VibheeshaNa, (*thuNaiyAna VeedaNarkku thunaiyAm*) and the latter carried Him towards his capital in Lanka, the Lord, attracted by the beauty and the holiness of Srirangam, the island that lay between the two branches of the river Kaveri, (*ubhaya KAVeri madhyE*) decided to take His abode on earth there and promised Vibheeshana that He would forever bless Lanka with His benign glance. No wonder, Srirangam is known as the "*BhoolOka VaikunTam*".

All the *AzhwArs* and all the *Poorva and Prakritam Acharyas* (including Sankara, RamAnuja, Anandatheetha and other streams) have enjoyed and praised our Periya PerumaaL. We publish below this series "SriRanga Vijayam" to familiarize the glory of Srirangam and the divine couple to everyone, especially the younger generations.

(foreword by Sri Narasimharaghavachariar Swami)

*KAVeri Virajaa sOyam VaikunTam Ranga mandiram/  
Sa VasudEvO RangEsa: prathyaksham paramam padam//  
Vimaanam praNavaakaaram vEda srungam mahaadbutham/  
SriRangasaayee Bhagavaan praNavarthaa prakaasa://*

Meaning:

This River Kaveri, which is holier than even Ganga, is verily the *Viraja* that flows on the outskirts of *SrivaikunTam*, where the Lord reclines on the five headed serpent as "*ParavAsudEva*". Therefore, this Srirangam is verily *Paramapada* but one that can be seen with mortal eyes by *SamsAris*. The turret over the sanctum (*VimAnam*) is the very embodiment of "*PraNavam*"; the golden domes atop are the "*Vedasrungam*"- (i.e.) the *Upanishads*. This Lord who is reclining under this *VimAnam* is proclaiming the meaning and significance of *PraNavam* for our emancipation.

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### **SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - Part 2. SRIVAIKUNTAM**

The world of *SrivaikunTam* (hereafter referred as SV) is far higher than all the other worlds. There is none above or superior to it. It lies above the various other *IOkas like Bhoo, Bhuvar, Suvar, Mahar, Jana, and Satya LOkas*. *Bhuvar IOkam* is 10 times vaster than *Bhoolokam*. Each of the other *lokas* is 10 times bigger than those lying immediately below. It is not possible to figure out the extent or describe the wonder that is SV. All we can say is that its glory is unsurpassed and beyond the comprehension of Devas and Asuras. The extent, wealth and nature of SV cannot be described by such great souls (*mahAtmas*) like Brahma, Siva, Sanaka and others.

While all other *IOkas* are "*prAkrita IOkas*"(created worlds) SV is made of what is called "*aprAkritam*"(sui generis) and shines with brilliance infinitely brighter than the combined luminosity of the Sun, the moon, fire etc. Just as during the daytime, we find the fading away of the starlight, Sunshine verily fades away before the brilliance of SV.

Compared with the enjoyment of SV what with its lush gardens, rivers and rivulets gushing forth pure waters incessantly and massive buildings and palaces etc, thousands and thousands of massive ramparts (*madhilgal*) surrounding mansions of gold, tall towers and steeples, groves, courtyards and play places etc even the high heavens (*svarga*) popularly deemed the ultimate in enjoyment would appear like another hell (*naraka*)!

The fragrance of flowers of *Karpaga, PArijAtha* and other trees spread far and wide without ever fading. This combined with the fragrance of Sandal paste (*chandanam*) eaglewood paste (*akhil*), camphor (*Karpooram*) and musk (*Kasturi*) mix gently with the wind (*mandamArutham*) and create a pleasant atmosphere.

Honeybees that suck honey from these flowers and varieties of bees and beetles roam about humming their tunes and add to the sounds of several celebrations that go on continuously. Cuckoos, Peacocks, parrots, and other exotic birds sing and dance to the tunes suitably.

Besides separate playgrounds for PerumAL and PirATTi, there are common grounds for them to play together. There are numerous bodies of water like rivers, lakes, tanks, wells, natatoria etc. in which waters pure and unsullied flow perennially.

The Capital of SV is filled with innumerable multistoried buildings, *maNTapams*, gem studded palaces, high rise ramparts (*praakaarams*) decorated with flags and festoons (*thOraNam*). The most important of all these is the *ThirumaamaNi maNTapam* (the great Durbar court) with a throne supported by lion figures (*simhaasanam*) on which sits in all His majesty Sri Para vaasudEva with Periya PirATTi surrounded by devotees - some singing melodious *saamagaanam*, some rendering service with fans (*visiri*), some with royal insignia made of yak tail hair (*aaAmaram*), some with colored umbrellas (*kuDai*). All the above are made of *Suddha Satvam* (sui generis) and never get destroyed.

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### **SRIRANGA VIJAYAM - PART 3: THE GLORY OF THE LORD OF SRIVAIKUNTAM**

The Emperumaan who presides over this glorious *SrivaikunTam* is the very embodiment of all the auspicious qualities (*kalyANaguNagaNa*) which remain unsurpassed He supports (*AadAratvam*) controls

(*niyantrutvam*) and has mastery (*sEshitvam*) over all that exists both from within and without. He is the soul of all Sentient beings (*chEtanas*) and Insentient things (*achEtanas*).

In tune with His nature, His form (*svaroopam*) is divine (*divya mangaLa vigraham*) a unique body that is forever beautiful (*soundarya*), forever youthful (*soukumaarya*), forever enchanting (*laavaNya*) and is of extreme brilliance (*tejOmayam*).

Some of His intrinsic qualities are: Omniscience (*jnaanatva*), Being ever joyous (*Aanandatva*), Blemishlessness (*amalatva*), Truthfulness (*sathyatva*) and being unlimited by time, space or matter (*ananthatva*).

Some of His qualities that have manifest are: Wisdom, Knowledge (*jnaanam*), Strength, Supporting everything (*balam*), Lordship, Mastery over everything (*aiswaryam*), Prowess (*veeryam*), Power, Energy (*Sakti*), Splendor, Luster (*tEjas*) etc.

His other qualities include: Excellence of disposition (*souseelyam*), Love that ignores faults in others (*vaatsalyam*), Softness, compassion (*maardavam*), Straightforwardness (*aarjavam*), Friendliness towards *Bhaagavatas* (*souhArdam*), Not differentiating between high and low (*sAmyam*), Mercy, Feeling one with others in grief (*kaaruNyam*), Sweetness, Being pleasant (*mAdhuryam*), Feeling as if he is receiving while giving (*udhAratvam-oudhAryam*), Cleverness -winning over opponents (*chAduryam*), Steadiness, Never forsaking *Bhaktas* (*sthairyam*), Courage (*dhairyam*), Heroism, Fearlessness (*souryam*), Valor in destroying evil (*parAkramam*), Benevolence- Desiring only good (*satyakaamam*), Benevolence in determination (*satyasankalpam*), All actions directed towards uplift of *Bhaktas* (*krititvam*), Gratitude towards even the smallest good acts (*kritajnatvam*) and many, many more.

He wears an incomparable divine crown (*makuDam*) bedecked with [crest](#) jewels. Diadem (*ChooDaavadamsam*), a large and beautiful coil of hair (*KoNDai*) etc which shed luster all around. His ears are adorned with dolphin shaped round ear rings (*makarakuNDalam*); He wears around His neck an ornament called *kraivEyakam*; On His broad chest shines a necklace made of pearls and other celestial gems; There is a mole on His chest called *SrIvatsam*; He wears also a gem studded ornament called *Kousthubam*; With ornaments adorning His shoulders, He wears an anklet (*thaNDai*) at His ankles and a waist girdle (*oDDiyaaNam*) made of precious gems around His hip.

He wields divine weapons like Conch (*Sangu*), discus (*chakram*), mace (*gadhai*), sword (*khaDgam*), bow (*dhanus*) called *Sarangam* etc. all with extraordinary powers.

Creating, protecting and dissolving the worlds is His sport. Thus, the Lord of seven worlds rules over heaven and earth with His sovereign scepter. If one were to have a glimpse at Him, one would immediately realize that He is the Lord of both *SrivaikunTam* (*Nityavibhoothi*) and the other worlds (*Leela vibhoothi*).

It is this *ParavaasudEvan* who in His iconic form (*Archaa roopam*) as *Sri Ranga Sri* (*Thiruvaramba selvan*) has taken His abode at Sri Rangam for emancipating us.



## SRIRANGA VIJAYAM - PART 4: THE UNIQUE GLORY OF ARCHAVATARA

SrIranga sthala vEnkaTaadri karigiri Adhou satha AshTottara-  
SthAnE graama nikEthanEshu cha sadhaa saannidhyam AsEdushE /  
Archaa roopiNam archakAthy abhimathaana sree kurvathE vigrahaan  
Poojaam cha akhila vaanchithaan vidadhathE sreesaaya thasmai namah //

meaning

I bow to the consort of SrI, who has taken His divine format such temples known as Koil, Tirumalai and Perumaal koil etc. and in all villages, hearts and homes of Bhaagavatas as per their wishes and bestows all that they desire.

As per the above sOkam of Sri NaDaadur ammAL, Emperumaan appearing in His iconic form presents Himself in all Bhaktas' places and confers His blessings on them.

PARAM: is SrivaikunTam, the abode of ParavAsudEva, as we already know. But, is like water lying beyond the Cosmos completely sealed off from access to human endeavor. (AvaraNa jalam).- (enveloping waters)

VYUHAM: is the form of the Lord as VasudEva, Sankarshana, Pradhymna, and Aniruddha. It is in the milky ocean which could only be imagined but could not be obtained.

VIBHAVAM: relates to the various descents of the Lord as Nrisimha, Rama, Krishna etc. But it is like the torrential and turbulent waters of a huge river in full flood and cannot therefore be approached easily.

ANTARYAMI: represents the Lord as the indweller in everyone's heart. But it is like the underground water which cannot be either seen or reached without effort

ARCHA: is the form of the Lord as seen by us in temples and homes as mentioned earlier. This is like the water stored in a water-pot readily available to drink with which to quench one's thirst with absolute ease.

The 'Archa Murthis' - the idols in the temples are as follows :

i. SWAYAM VYAKTHA: Those which emerged on their own (e.g.) Srirangam, Srimushnam, Tiruvenkatam, saaLigraamam, Naimisaaranyam, ThOthaadri (Vaanamaamalai), Pushkaram, and Badrikaasramam

ii . DIVYA : those in which the Lord appeared as per the wishes of DEVAS.

iii. SAITDHA: those installed by 'SIDDHAS'

iv . MANUSHA: those constructed by 'HUMANS'

Of these, the Swayam vyaktha kshEtras are considered the best

## Sriranga Vijayam - Part 5:

### The penance that Brahma performed

When the Lord decided to [create](#) the worlds, He first created the four-faced Brahma from the lotus of His navel chord. Initiating him in the Vedas, He bade Brahma to proceed with the work of creating the worlds.

As Brahma was engaged in this task, at some stage, two asuras called Madhu and KaiTaba carried away the Vedas to a hide out in the nether region (*pAthALam*). Brahma was stupefied at the loss, cried, and prayed to Sriman Narayana, the ultimate refuge of all. *EmperumAn* took the form of *Hayagriva* (lit. Horse necked), proceeded to the hide out, fought with and killed the asuras and redeemed the Vedas.

With the instructional hand gesture (*vyaakhyaamudra*), holding His conch (*sanku*), disc (*chakra*) and mace (*gadha*), the Vedas in the form of a book. With MahAlakshmi seated on His lap, the Lord appeared in His form as Hayagriva before Brahma. Restoring Vedas to Brahma, He asked Brahma to proceed with his duties.

Once, Brahma contemplated on the nature of creation, the lives of the creatures in them and on his own status. He realized that all these were impermanent and subject to dissolution in the near or distant future and that none of them was free from the fear of destruction (*mrithyubhayam*) and no one could escape this one certainty of the uncertain world. He further realized that the only way to escape this puzzling situation to achieve everlasting happiness was to surrender totally and unconditionally at the feet of Sri Mukunda (who alone could grant *mOksha*). He started a severe penance of *AshTakshara japam* and prayed to *Emperumaan* for relief.

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**Sriranga Vijayam - Part 6:**  
**The temple steeped in insatiable nectar**  
**(*AarAdha aruLamudham podhintha koil*)**  
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Pleased with the severe penance of Brahma, Bhagavaan boarded His aerial car shaped like the mystical syllable (*PraNavaakaara vimaanam*). It zoomed from the celestial skies (*Paramaakaasam*) and landed precisely at the place of Brahma's penance. Brahma welcomed it with folded hands. He saw in it all the inhabitants of SrivaikunTam.

- GaruDAzhwaar was bringing the vehicle on his broad shoulders.
- Thumburu and Narada were playing Veena.
- VishwaksEna, the Chief of staff was regulating the milling crowd with staff in his hands.
- The Sun and the moon were waving reverentially the yak tail fans (*Chaamarams*).
- The celestial band was in attendance. Nityasooris (Never borns) and Muktas (liberated ones) were hailing the Lord.
- When Brahma looked at the Vimaanam, he witnessed a great light equal to a thousand Suns. That light was none other than Lord Sri Ranganaatha reclining on His serpent bed of AadhisEsha. The Lord was mammoth in stature but nevertheless appeared as a youth. With Periya PiraaTTi on His side, he was showering His moon-shine-like grace. He revealed Himself (*Svayamvyaktha*) for the benefit of all to behold. Brahma worshipped Him again, again and again and yet was not satiated and yearned to worship Him incessantly and forever. Such was the nectarine sweetness of the Lord's graceful appearance (***AarAdha aruL amudham***).

The Lord bade Brahma to do the worship 5 times daily (*panchakaala*) as per *Pancharaatra Aagama* and advised him to constantly meditate on Him with the *AshTaakshara and Dvaya mantras* and promised to grant him *Parama padam* in due course where he can enjoy eternal and unparalleled divine bliss, totally relieved from the cycle of births and deaths (*samsaara bandha*).

Accordingly, Brahma commenced his prayers with wholehearted devotion and unconditionally surrendered at the lotus feet of the Lord. However, he prayed that the Lord should forever remain in *PraNavaakaara vimaanam* and give *Darsan* to devotees and grant them also *mOksham* at the end of their current lifetime, exactly as was guaranteed to himself.

The Lord granted the prayer and added that He would also grant to such devotees all that they desired during their lifetime besides *mOksham* at the end of their current life. He informed Brahma that He had come down taking this iconic form (*archA*) for facilitating freedom from bondage to the bonded souls and to ensure easy accessibility to devotees (*patruDai adiyavarkku eLiyavan*) and beyond comprehension to others (*pirarkku ariya vithagan*). "Remember" He said "I am the same *Paramaatma* here who am in the *SrivaikuNtam as Paravaasudeva*. Those who consider my form as made of stone or metal and those who view their AchAryas as ordinary human beings will go to hell.

As ordered, Brahma bore the *Vimaanam* on his head, consecrated in a holy place in his world called *BrahmalOkam a.k.a. SatyalOkam* and worshipped the Lord. This fact is confirmed by *pramaaNam* thus- *Aadhyam sthalam svayam vyaktham sathyaloK prathishTitham* meaning For the first time ever, the Lord descended to *SatyalOka* in His iconic form on his own accord.

**Sriranga Vijayam - Part 7:**  
**The temple that the lotus-born gifted to the King of AyOdhya**  
**(ambuyathOn ayOdhi mannarkku aLitha koil)**

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As Brahma was performing the daily ritual worship (*TiruvArAdhana*), Rudras and *Brahmarishis* used to assemble to witness the same. Brahma once desired that all the celestial beings (*Devas*) should also benefit. On his invitation, *Swaayambhuva manu*, *Dakshaprajaapathi* and other *Devas* took bath in the holy waters and presented themselves before him who initiated them in the 12 lettered *Dvaadasa mantram*, explained the procedure of worship as per *Paancharaatra Agama* and directed them to keep up the traditional worship.

Later, he did the same to Sun God (*Soorya*) who commenced the worship. After so propitiating the Lord for thousands of years, the Sun God handed over the icon (*Vigraha*) to his son *Vaivaswatha manu* who in turn bequeathed the same to his son, King *Ikshvaaghu*.

But, *Ikshvaaghu* had difficulty in commuting to *SatyalOkam* every day for performing *Tiruvaaraadhana*. He consulted *VasishTa* and other *Maharishis* to find out if the Lord's *vigraham* could somehow be brought down to earth (*bhoolOkam*) but he was also worried whether Brahma would consent. He did a penance to Brahma. Though Brahma wanted to oblige *Ikshvaaghu*, he could not cope up with the prospect of separation of the Lord from his own *SatyalOkam*. The other *Devas* also tried to stop the transfer by placing too many impediments to the proposal. *Ikshvaaghu* bore all the torments with fortitude and thwarted their efforts.

Not knowing what to do, *Ikshvaaghu* performed a severe penance to Lord Sri RanganAtha Himself. The Lord was so pleased with his penance that He resolved to accede to the prayers of *Ikshvaaghu*. He called in *Prajaapathi-Brahma* to announce His decision. The Lord, however, consoled Brahma and others by offering an alternative. He suggested that Brahma and all the *Devas* could go down to earth at daybreak everyday (*ushatkAlam*) and offer worship along with *Ikshvaaghu* and declared that thenceforth the lineage of *Ikshvaaghu* would have the right to worship Him in *BhoolOka*. Accordingly, Brahma had *GaruDaaZhwaar* carry the *Vigraham* with the *Vimaanam* to *Ikshvaaghu's* place, he himself riding on his Swan vehicle (*Hamsa vaahanam*) for the installation ceremony (*prathishTai*).

*Ikshvaaghu* was so much immersed in deep meditation that he did not notice their arrival. Brahma asked him to open his eyes and see for himself the miracle. *Ikshvaaghu* was overwhelmed with joy at the benign grace of the Lord and immediately offered his total surrender at the feet of the Lord. Brahma initiated *Ikshvaaghu*, the King of AyOdhya into *Dvaadasa mantra* and the *Pancha ratra* procedures.

King *Ikshvaaghu* built a golden temple on the banks of Sarayu river with ramparts and towers studded with precious gems, installed Lord Sri Ranganatha in the temple on an auspicious day and commenced the daily worship. He also built around the temple hermitages for *Maharishis* like *VasishTa*, *VaamadEva*, *Jaabaali*, *Kaasyapa* and *Gauthama* who joined him in his worship.

It was thus that Lord Sri Ranganatha came down to *BhoolOkam* through *Sooryavamsam* to which *Ikshvaaghu* belonged so that even we could have His *Darsan* here and now and attain *mOksham* in the hereafter.



**Sriranga Vijayam - Part 8:**  
**The temple that the Invincible hero worshipped**  
**(thOlaadha thani veeran thozhudha koil)**

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Thus, the Kings of Ikshvaaghu dynasty were worshipping Lord Sri Ranganatha with such utmost devotion that the Lord Himself longed to be born in that dynasty of *Parama VishNu bhaktas*. He resolved to be born as Sri Rama, the son of King Dasaratha.

In due time, Dasaratha wanted to install Sri Rama as the crown prince (*YuvarAja paTTa AbhishEkam*). As advised by the *Kula guru* (Family priest) VasishTa, Sri Rama finished his bath and ablutions in holy waters and got ready for the installation functions, he straight went to the temple of Lord Sri Ranganatha to offer the customary prayers as detailed in the 6th Sargam of AyOdhyA kHANDam of Srimad RAmAyaNa.

*GathE purOhitE raama: snaathO niyatha maanasa:/*  
*Saha patnyaa visaalaakshyaa naaraayaNam upagamath//*

The word "*Visaalaakshaa*" denotes how Sri Sita was enchanted by the pulchritude of Lord Sri Ranganatha which seemed to exceed that of Sri Rama himself. "The word *naaraayaNam* refers to Lord Ranganatha. To whose temple did Sri Rama go. While the word *agamath* itself means came to the prefix '*upa*' denotes that the Sita-Rama dhampathis did all the *upachaaras* and *Aasanas* prescribed in the procedure for *Tiruvaaraadhana* to Lord Sri Ranganatha" says *GovindarAjeeyam* commentary.

Swami Desika also says in *SEsha Paddathi* of *paaduka Sahasram* that it is Sri Ranganatha who took the form of Sri Rama.

*Bharatha sirasi lagnaan paadukE doorathas tvaam*  
*Sva tanum api vavandhE lakshmana: sEshabootha:/*  
*Kim idam iha vichitram nitya yuktha; sishEvE*  
*Dasaratha thanaya: san Rangantha: svayamEva|*

When Lakshmana saw Bharatha carrying the Sri Rama's *Paaduka* on his head, he prostrated before it with folded hands. When both LakshmaNa and *Paaduka* were the same *avataara* of *Aadhishesha*, does it not mean a case of self-prostration? The question is answered in a later context (*uttarArtham*) that when there is no doubt that Sri Rama worshipped himself in the form of Sri Ranganatha, this is also possible.

In yet another context, Swami Desika refers to Sri Rama as the indefatigable self-reliant hero par excellence (**thOlaadha thani veeran**).

In *SaarabOdhini*, he says that the invincible hero Raghuveera in his *Vibhava Avataara* form worshipped Lord Sri Ranganatha in His *Archa* form because it was more adorable as possessing unmatched easy accessibility (*Soulabhya*) and other qualities in fullest measure. Is not the Lord in the iconic form most easily accessible to His devotees (*archaka parAdheena*)? BhaTTar is amazed at this *Soulabhyam* which cannot be expected in a *Vibhava avatAra*.

This is not to say that in *Vibhava*, there is no *Saulabhyam*. But, this *Saulabhyam* is mixed up with Lord's *Paratvam* (Omnipotence) unlike in *Archa Avataara* where this is seen in all its pristine glory, untainted by any trace of *Paratvam*.

To illustrate, when Sugriva failed to turn up at the appointed time to help him in his search for Sri Sita, Sri Rama sent a warning through LakshmaNa that - the path by which Vaali was dispatched was not yet closed meaning Sugriva will meet the same fate if he did not turn up. This showed his *Paratvam*. But, when Sugriva appeared before him, he remarked who else is there in this world who is such a kind-

hearted friend? (*suhrid - snEhita*). This showed his *Saulabhyam*.

When someone questioned BhaTTAr that Sri Rama lacked the *Saulabhyam* which Sri Krishna exhibited, he is reported to have replied our Rama is also very accessible but since he was the crown prince of a great empire, no one dared to label him as a messenger and send him on a mission.

Realizing his own limitations in exhibiting his *Sarvasaulabhyatvam* because of his royal compulsions, Sri Rama was overwhelmed by the love towards Sri Ranganatha's absolute, unalloyed *Sarva Saulabhyam* and worshipped Him.

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## "Sriranga Vijayam - Part 9

### "The temple that became the Companion to the Companion" (*thuNaiyaana veedaNarkku thuNaiyaam koil*)

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After admitting VibheeshaNa to his fold, Sri Rama told him:

"I promise to crown you as the King of Lanka after killing RaavaNa and his kin. I vow not to return to AyOdhya without killing RaavaNa wherever he may hide, whether in the nether worlds (*PaTaaLam*) below or the world of Brahma above" In his turn VibheeshaNa vowed

"In besieging Lanka and in the decimation of RaaavaNa, I pledge myself to the maximum of my capacity till the very end of my life"

*rAkshasaaNaam vadhE saahyam lankaayaascha pradharshaNE/  
karishyaami yathaa praaNam pravEkshyAmi cha vaahineem//*

It was with this in view that Swami Desika used the words

#### "**VibheeshaNa, the Companion**" "*thuNaiyaana veedaNan*"

Looking at it superficially, it would appear that VibheeshaNa did SaraNagathi only with an ulterior motive to secure the kingdom because it was only after Sri Rama promised to make him king "*Raajaanam tvaam karishyaami, sathyamEva braveemi thE*" that VibheeshaNa pledged his help to Sri Rama.

Let us see what Swami Desika says on this:

A casual cursory observer might conclude that what VibheeshaNa desired was "*lankaiswaryam*"; But if we look deeper from the point of view of VibheeshaNa himself we will find that all he desired was to serve the Lord. When he did surrender, he proclaimed in no uncertain terms "Abandoning all that is dear and near to me like children, wives etc. I have surrendered to Sri Raghava" "*tyaktvaa putraam cha dhaaraams cha Raaghavam saraNam gathah:*"

**This shows that he has made it abundantly clear that he had no other desire in surrendering.**

He further added - "I have abandoned Lanka, friends, wealth etc. and that his own life, wealth, welfare and kingdom were totally dedicated to be at your disposal" He has openly declared in so many words that the only objective (*purushaartha*) he sought was the feet of the Lord

and that he did not desire anything except service to the Lord (*Bhagavad kainkaryam*).

Then, why did Rama offer him the kingdom?

It was out of extreme love and affection (*prEmAdhisayam*) towards his devotee that he offered the royal gift by way of bonus.

Do not the Saastras say-` Lord VishNu grants to his devotees not only liberation (*mOksha*) but also physical health, material wealth and all other enjoyments as a bonus (*anushangika*)"?

*Sareera AarOghyam arthaams cha bhOghaams chaiva anushnagikaan/  
Dadhaathi dhyaayinaam nityam apavarga pradO harih://*

Once, VibheeshaNa prayed to Brahma that he should be granted the boon of never swerving from the path of righteousness. Pleased with this, Brahma granted not only this but also deathlessness

(*amaratvam*) and long life (*chiram jeevatvam*). In the same manner, the Lord granted VibheeshaNa all other benefits as bonus to his devotee.

In a sense, VibheeshaNa's acceptance of the offer was also by way of obeying the command of the Lord (*Aajnaa Anupaalanam*) as a service to the Lord, even though he himself did not desire the "*Raajyam*". Thus, it was out of compulsion by the Lord that he accepted the offer.

Since VibheeshaNa did not desire anything other than service, Sri Rama handed over to him the "*kovil AzhwaAr*" of "*Sri Ranga Vimaanam*" with Lord Sri Ranganatha, whom he himself was worshipping. "*Labdvaa kuladhanam Raajaa lankam praayaadh VibheeshaNa:*" says the maharishi.

GovindarAjar also confirms in his commentary that since VibheeshaNa said "I am ready to serve even at the cost of my life", he did not come to Rama for the sake of the kingdom"

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**"Sriranga Vijayam - Part 10**

**Part 10 A: The meaning of "*Ikshvaaghu kula dhanam*"**

**Part 10 B: A clarification on the timing of the grant of the above.**

**Part 10 C: The "*Kuladhanam*" in "*Paanchraatra*"**

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**Part 10 A: The meaning of "*Ikshvaaghu kula dhanam*"**

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The word "*Kuladhanam*" means "the wealth of the lineage of Ikshvaaghu" - says GOvindaraajar. Before and after the killing of RaavaNa, VibheeshaNa was promised and crowned as King of Lanka. So, it cannot refer to Lanka.

In Uttara RamayaNa, we see that when the Lord was about to ascend to his *Nitya Vibhoothi* (permanent abode), Sugriva, HanumAn, VibheeshaNa and others offered their obeisance. When Sugriva prayed to accompany, the Lord readily accepted saying that he would not go leaving him behind. When VibheeshaNa pleaded to accompany, the Lord asked him to stay back and perform his duties as King till such time as the Sun and moon existed and so long as Srimad RamayaNa was being told and retold. He added that VibheeshaNa should continue to offer

*TiruvArAdhana* to "*Ikshvaaghu kula dhanam*"

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**Part 10 B: A clarification on the timing of the grant of the above.**

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It is not correct to hold, as some do, that Sri Rama handed over the *ArchA vighraha* of Sri Ranganatha at the time of his coronation (*paTTAbishEkam*) because after this he ruled for over 11,000 years. Did not the Gitachaaryan say that He continued to do *Nityakarma anushTAna* because if he abandoned doing it, others would follow His example and incur sin? Therefore, we cannot presume that Sri Rama failed to perform *Tiruvaaraadhana* by handing over the *Vighraha* at the time of coronation till His ascent to *Paramapadam*.

Like his forefathers in the Ikshvaaghu line, he also must have continued his daily worship during all these 11,000 + years. It is only appropriate to conclude that the grant of the Vighraha at the time of coronation was a promise offered and he kept up the promise by handing over after the 11,000 + years when he ascended to *Nityavibhuthi*. This is like the preliminary coronation done on the Seashore even before the war commenced and was followed by the final coronation after the war.

## Part 10 C: The Kula dhanam in Paanchraatra

The 10th Chapter of *Kriyaa khaaNDam* of *ParamEswara Samhitha* in *paaancharaatra* confirms that Sri Rama handed over the *Vimaanam* with the "*Ikshvaaghu Kuladhanam*" to his dear friend VibheeshaNa and the latter accepted and bore it on his head and headed towards his Capital in Lanka.

*Dadou VibheeshaNaaya Asou priyaaya priyakaariNE*  
*SastrOpadEsa poorvam thu Vimaanam divya lakshaNam /*  
*Sopi thath sirasaa gruhya yayou dEsam svayam prathi //*

### Sri Ranga Vijayam Part 11 Between the two kAveris.

As VibheeshaNa was carrying Sri Ranganatha vigraham with the *Sriranga vimaanam* to Lanka, he came across the "Moon Tank" (*Chandra PushkaraNi*). It was noon then and he had to perform his *mAdhyAhnikaM*. So, he placed the *Vimaanam* on the banks of the tank, bathed in the waters of the tank, performed his worship (*uchchikaala puja*). News of this spread like wildfire and all the people all around the holy city including *Maharishis*, *Maharajas*, Brahmins and common-folk flocked to witness the great event. Dharma Varma, the ruler of *NisuLaapuri* was one among them. VibheeshaNa performed Archana with a variety of flowers like Red lilies (*senkazhneer*), black water lily (*karuneithal*), *Champakam* (*SheNbagam*), mountain ebony (*manthArai*), White lotus (*veNNthAmarai*), arabian jasmine (*mullai*), jasmine (*malligai*), tuscan jasmine (*iruvAtchi*), [roses](#) (*rOjA*), yellow and red flowers known as (*pAdiri*), the holy basil (*thuLasi*) etc. Then, he offered several varieties of foods. Those assembled were singing sweetly hymns of praise of the Lord.

As VibheeshaNa prepared to leave, Dharma varma requested him to stay back a few more days and perform the *Aradhana* in Srirangam itself and offered to bear all the expenses connected therewith. VibheeshaNa was in a hurry to get back to Lanka that very day to commence *BrahmOtsavam* in Lanka. Dharmavarma insisted on having the *BrahmOtsavam* in Srirangam itself. VibheeshaNa agreed. The nine days *utsavam* was celebrated with great éclat. Dharma varma had widely publicized the great event inviting one and all to attend. Kings and Brahmins, young and old, men and women [from](#) all directions converged at the arena which reverberated with Vedic chants and songs. Music played on 18 different instruments like *bEri*, *mridangam*, *dundhubi*, etc. rent the air. Though it was celebrated by Dharmavarma, it equaled in grandeur the ones celebrated by Brahma himself and the kings of the Ikshvaaghu lineage. Seeing the extraordinary interest and devotion of Dharmavarma, VibheeshaNa agreed to stay another fortnight doing *Tiruvaaraadhana* at Srirangam itself. After 15 days, VibheeshaNa took leave of everyone and started to Lanka with *Perumaal*.

But, to his utter amazement, he could not even move the *Vimaanam*, let alone lifting it. He was stunned and stupefied and was beside with grief, tears flowing from his eyes like a torrential waterfall. With folded hands, he prayed to the Lord literally begging for pardon to any faults (*Apacharams*) on his part. He pitifully pleaded to the Lord to let him keep up his promise to [install](#) Sri Ranganatha at Lanka for worship.

Moved by his pathetic pleadings, the Lord assuaged him saying that He had resolved to stay permanently in Srirangam in response to the intense penance performed by Dharmavarma and earlier to that by *Maharishis* to whom He had given word that at the time when VibheeshaNa crosses Srirangam, He would accede to their request and also for fulfilling a boon to river Kaveri on these lines. He further assured VibheeshaNa that he was blemish-less but since He had to keep up earlier promises to Maharishis and Kaveri, He had to stay at Srirangam and further reassured him that from Srirangam He would constantly be looking at and blessing Lanka and VibheeshaNa forever and bade him to proceed to Lanka as directed.

## **Sri Ranga Vijayam Part 12**

### **The penance performed by Dharma Varma.**

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**You may wonder who is this Dharma Varma and what penance he did and why.**

Dharma Varma was a King in *ChOzha Desam* (not the present geographical area known as *ChOzhanaadu*). Once, he visited AyOdhya to attend the *Aswamedha yaaga* performed by King Dasaratha. The *Maharishis* assembled there narrated to him how Sri Ranganatha came down from SatyalOkam to AyOdhya and how the Ikshvaaghu lineage kings attained name and fame by worshipping him.

Dharma Varma desired to likewise bring the Lord from AyOdhya to his own place and worship him in the manner of Ikshvaaghu kings. Handing over his royal responsibilities to his ministers, he retired to Srirangam, erected an *Ashramam* on the banks of the Moon-tank (*Chandra PushkaraNi*) and commenced a rigorous penance. He was undaunted by heat and cold, thunderstorms and torrential rains, braving the fury of the elements with utmost fortitude and subsisting on mere roots and fruits. Years rolled by but he would not give up because he believed that the Lord would accede to his prayers.

Once the Sages who lived around the place visited him. They advised him to give up the penance, go back to his kingdom and continue to rule righteously as before, as that was the duty of a *Kshatriya*. They assured him that they were the ones to perform such severe penance and the king would reap the benefits accruing therefrom and he had no need to subject himself to the rigors of penance. The *Maharishis* revealed to him that the Lord had already decided to take permanent abode at the very place at which he was doing penance.

They also revealed to him how once upon a time, a Maharishi called Taalabhya was doing penance along with other *Rishis* at the very same place, how a Raakshasa by name Vyaagramaasa tormented them and spoiled their tapas, how the Lord killed the demon and appeared before the *Maharishi* to assure that He would be taking his permanent abode on a future occasion at the time when a bhakta called Vibheeshana brings His *ArchA vighraha* from AyOdhya en route to Lanka. At that time the Lord had also mentioned to them that He would be fulfilling the wishes of another bhakta, Dharma Varma.

They also narrated how they once went to the world of Sun-God (*Surya manDalam*), proceeded with [Surya](#) to *BrahmalOkam* to have the *Darsan* of the Lord. The Lord blessed them all and told Surya in their presence that at some future period of time he would be born in the *Surya vamsam* and be worshipped by the lineage of Ikshvaaghu.

He also assured Surya that when Vibheeshana rests at Sri Rangam on his way to Lanka, he would settle down at Srirangam between the two *kaaveris* as prayed for by Dharma Varma. The *Rishis* also promised Dharma Varma that as and when Vibheeshana arrived at Srirangam, they would let him know. and asked him to carry on his duties as king till then.

Dharma Varma was happy to hear the message. As directed, he stopped Tapas, took leave of the Sages and returned to *Nishulaapuri* and lived happily thereafter.

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## **"Sri Ranga Vijayam" Part 13.**

### **"The Ganga- Kaveri dispute goes to the Supreme Court"**

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Once, rivers like Ganga, Kaaveri, Saraswati, GOdaavari, Narmada, KrishNa, Sonaa etc. took the form of damsels and were playing on the top of the Vindhya mountains. At that time, a Gandharva by name Viswaavasu was travelling from the north to the south to have the

*darsan* of Lord Anantapadmanaabha Swami in Truванanthapuram. When he saw them, he offered his obeisance with his folded palms.

After he left, a doubt arose as to whom he "elected" to offer his courtesy. First, everyone claimed that she was the object of his worship but when Ganga bragged that since she was the greatest of all rivers, the Gandharva worshipped her only, all other rivers "conceded" to her victory. But, Kaaveri objected.

When the Gandharva was on his way back, he again paid his respects. Ganga and Kaaveri stopped him and demanded to know to whom he was offering his obeisance. He answered: "To the best of you!" and left without elucidating, leaving open the dispute unresolved!

The dispute dragged on and both entered their pleas in the court of Brahma. Brahma heard the arguments of both sides and handed his verdict that since Ganga flowed from the feet of Lord VishNu, she was the best. Beside with disappointment, Kaveri did a severe penance. Pleased with her penance, Brahma appeared before her and declared that from then onwards Kaaveri would be **equal** to Ganga in greatness. Kaaveri demanded a re-consideration which she said would convince Brahma to accept her as more sacred than Ganga. Brahma tried to pacify her saying that since Ganga flowed from the feet of the Lord, "technically", he had no "jurisdiction" to reverse his decision to disallow a reconsideration. All that he was prepared to do was to declare a 50:50 decision in favor of both (i.e.) Kaaveri as "more equal" to Ganga!

And, the dispute remained as unsettled as ever before!

Having failed in the lower court, Kaaveri appealed to the Supreme Court of Lord VishNu at *TiruchErai Pancha saara Kshetram* where she commenced a "battle royal" through a still harder penance. When the Lord appeared before her, she recounted her predicament and begged for a boon on the lines she had pleaded earlier with Brahma.

Agreeing that Ganga's flowing from his feet was a valid point for "selecting" her as the holiest "for now", the Lord concurred with the verdict of Brahma. But, He said that a time would come when He would concede to her request on a "later occasion".

He assuaged Kaaveri saying that since this "flowing" happened eons ago and that He would be taking His permanent abode between the two branches of Kaaveri, on a future date, when she would be forever in His close proximity and be considered "holier than Ganga".

And, that is how, **today**, Kaaveri is deemed holier than Ganga despite all the "*kumbha mELas*" - "*Gangaiyilum punithamaaya KaavEri*"

And, citing this, the Lord bade VibheeshaNa to go back to Lanka and live happily there and said "Though I may not physically come with you to Lanka, I will recline here facing your kingdom and blessing you from here".

VibheeshaNa replied that he loathed returning to Lanka without the Lord and offered to stay in Sri Rangam to continue his worship.

The Lord reminded him how Sri Rama performed the coronation for him as "King of Lanka", not once but twice both before the war on the Seashore and after the conquest and that he should not transgress the command of *Chakravarthi Thirumagan*. The Lord also assured him that no harm will befall him or Lanka so long as He was blessing him with His benign glance and that he need not have any fear from anyone "so long as the Sun and the moon existed"

VibheeshaNa submitted that he had no use for the lordship of Lanka or any other benefits when he could not worship the priceless gift of "*IkshvAghu kuladhanam*" which Sri Rama gifted to him with so much affection and begged Sri Ranganatha to accept his Tiruvaaraadhana at Srirangam itself. The Lord replied that since He had already promised to the *Rishis, yOgis* and other devotees who did penance for long to stay at Srirangam, He was bound to grant their wish as promised much, much earlier, and He cannot go back on that under any circumstances.

He asked VibheeshaNa to constantly meditate on Him staying in his kingdom - which would honor both the gift of Sri Rama and His own order to asking him to go back to Lanka to carry on his royal duties. VibheeshaNa took leave of all and returned to Lanka.

Dharmavarma who happened to hear the conversation of the Lord with VibheeshaNa was *overwhelmed with joy*. He constructed the huge temple complex with 7 ramparts (*praakaarams*), *manTaps*, *vimaanams*, *gOPurams* etc. and built hermitages (*Aashramams*) to accommodate the *Rishis*, houses for *bhaktas* and choultries for common-folk and many gardens, waterfronts etc.

He also arranged for the daily poojas in accordance with *Paancharaatra Agama* and scheduled the various daily, fortnightly, monthly, and annual festivals (Utsavams) to be celebrated. After worshipping the Lord thus for a long time, he attained Paramapadam.

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**"Sri Ranga Vijayam" Part 14.**  
**"The Lord rediscovered by kiLi chOzhan"**  
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Long after the time of Dharmavarma, once kaaveri was in great floods. The entire city was submerged including *Sri Ranga Vimaanam*. The whole place looked like veritable sand dunes. Much later, one of the successors of Dharmavarma came to the very place for hunting. Having become tired, he rested under the shade of a tree. A parrot perched on top of the tree was repeating the following sLOka:

*kaavEri virajA sEyam vaikunTam Ranga mandiram  
sa vaasudEvO RangEsa: prathyaksham paramam padam /  
vimaanam praNavaakaaram vEda srungham maha atbhutham  
SrI Rangasaayee Bhagavaan praNavaartha prakaasaka: //*

Meaning

This kaaveri which is the holy Viraja river that flows on the borders of SrivaikuNTam.

This Sri Rangam, the abode of Sri RanganAtha is SrivaikuNTam itself.

This Sri RanganAtha is none other than ParavAsudEva reclining on the serpent bed of AdisEsha.

This *BhoolOka VaikuNTam* is the same as the *Nityavibhuthi* SrivaikuNTam with the difference that *Samsaaris* on earth can see with their own eyes and enjoy the experience available only in the *Nityavibhuthi*.

Sri Ranga Vimaanam is of the shape of PraNavam.

The "*kalasams*" atop the *Vimaanam* are the Upanishads (*vEda-srungham*), =the crown jewels of the *Vedas*.

The Lord who reclines here is constantly brining to light the meaning of this PraNavam"

The King could not figure out what the parrot was saying and why. On his return to his palace, he consulted his ministers. They told him what they had heard through hearsay, that the big temple with its ramparts (*praakaarams*) was buried under the sand dunes. The King ordered clearing the trees and the debris. But, having had no luck in unearthing the temple, he became very depressed.

That night, Bhagavaan appeared in his dream and asked him to continue the digging and assured him that He would give Darshan at the very spot where he was resting. The next morning, the King ordered

the commencement of the digging work with renewed vigor. He was delighted to find *Sri Ranga Vimaanam* emerging from under the debris.

He caused the renovation of the temple, reconstruction of the *manTaps*, and the relaying of the roads etc. He constructed strong embankments on the banks of the rivers to avoid a repetition of erosion in the future. He performed the "*SamprOkshaNam*" and recommenced the various festivals (*utsavams*) as usual.

Since the parrot indicated the location of the Lord's place, he constructed a *manTap* and called it the "Parrot manTap" (*kiLi manTapam*) brought parrots and reared them in the *manTap*. Even to this day, one can see parrots being nurtured in this *manTap*. Since he was inspired by the parrot to renovate, he is remembered as "Parrot *ChOzhan*" (*KiLichOzhan*)

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### **Sri Ranga Vijayam - Part 15** **The Glory of SriRangam**

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The mystic saints (Azhwars) have consecrated 108 holy places (Divya Desams).

A Tamil verse enumerates them thus:

Eer irupadaam chOzham, Eer onbathaam paaNDi

Ore pathinmoonraam malai naaDu, Ore iraNDaam seer naDu naadu

AarODu eereTTu thoNdai, av vaDanaadu Aar iraNdu

Kooru thirunaaDu onraak koLL

Though the modern divisions like ChOzha, Sera. PANDya etc regions were not there, based on the ancient mapping this verse of PiLLAI PerumAL AyyangAr lists these 108 DivyadEsams as follows:

*ChOzhanaaDu*: Modern ThanjAvur, Tiruchy and environs:(2x20) 40

*PANDiya naaDu*: Modern Madurai and environs: (2x9) 18

*Malai naaDu*; Modern KeraLa and environs: (1x13) 13

*NaDu naaDu*: Modern South Arcot District and environs(1x2) 02

*VaDa naaDu*: Modern North India (6x2) 12

*ThONDai naaDu*: Modern Chengalpattu & North Arcot Dists.(6+ 16=2x8) 22

*Thiru naaDu*: Paramapadam (1x1) 01

Total 108

Of all the DivyadEsams in the world, the foremost is Tiruvarangam. The Lord manifests Himself on His own accord (*SvayamvyakTham*) because it was here that such manifestation took place **for the first time ever**.

The only Lord for whom all the 10 AzhwArs and ANDAL have dedicated their *Mangalasanams* is this Sri Ranganatha.

Not only have they sung over 200 verses on Him here, but they have all stayed here permanently at Sri Rangam. It was in view of this that in *SaraNaagathi Gadhyam*, the Lord is reported to have asked Emperumanaar to live permanently in Sri Rangam "*atraiva SriRangE sukham Aasva*".

This DivyadEsam is also known as BhoolOka VaikunTam, Koil as PeriyaKoil.

SrivaikunTam is beyond regions known as BhoolOkam, BhuvarlOkam, SuvarlOkam, MaharlOkam, JanalOkam, TapOlOkam and SatyalOkam. One can reach it only after crossing all these seven lOkas. Similarly, Sri Ranga *vimAnam* can be reached only after crossing the seven rounds *sapthapraakaarams*.

And, that is also one reason why it is called *BhoolOka VaikunTam*. That is why our forefathers celebrated

Srirangam with the SIOkam repeated by the parrot.

BhaTTar in his Rangaraja Sthavam described SriRangam as very *Paramapadam* itself and concluded by saying that he should be blessed forever to remain in this holy place. BhaTTar proceeds to say that the human beings, animals, birds and other living creatures blessed to live in Sri Rangam should not be considered as such but as *Nityasooris* and *muktas* who have taken those forms and bows to everyone of them.

(Of course, he was talking about his time. We do not know how far this is true today!)

In Sri Ranganatha StOtram, BhaTTar offers his obeisance to the DivyadEsam as follows:

I enjoy prostrating before Lord Sri Ranganatha who reclines on his serpent bed of AdhisEsha, under the PraNavaakaara vimaanam which appears as a lotus bud, the city itself lying between the two KavEris, who is forever youthful, who has one hand resting on His thigh, and the other showing His feet that are gently rubbed by Sri DEvi and Bhoo Devi?

*Saptha praakaara madhyE saraja mukuLoth bhaasamAnE vimaanE  
KAVeri madhya dEsE mridhutara paNiraat bhOga paryanka bhaagE/  
Nidraa mudraabhiraamam kaTini kaTasira ;paarsva vinyastha hastham  
PadmaadhAtri karaabhyaam parichitha charanam Rangaraajam bhajEham//*

Come! Let us join BhaTTar to enjoy the *Darshan* of Sri RangarAjan.

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### **SriRanga Vijayam Part 16: The 7 Enclosures (*Saptha praakaarams*)**

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The 7 enclosures (*AavaraNams*) Sri RanganAtha are:

1. *mADa maaLigai soozh Tiruveedhi*
2. *mannu sEr thiruivikraman veedhi*
3. *AaDal maaran akaLangan veedhi*
4. *Aali nADaam amardhu uraiyum veedhi*
5. *KooDal vaazh kulasEkharan veedhi*
6. *Kulavu raasaa mahEndran veedhi*
7. *TheriDariya Dharmavarman veedhi*

### **Where do we start to enter the Enclosures?**

The Lord reclines with His head on the West; His feet to the East; He is facing the South. Let us "Catch His eye" by entering from the South and proceed closer. He is facing South so that even the devotee standing farthest may receive His benign direct vision and get His blessings true to the saying-  
*Duhkhaapaaya praNayinE janE dhoora dhaththa Aabhimukhyam*"

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### **SriRanga Vijayam Part 17: "Enter the holy City"**

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Our entry into the holy city commences at what is known as "*Ammaa manTapam*" on the banks of the "*kaaveri on the South*" (*ththen-thiruk- kaaveri*). This is the place which the Lord visits on the 18th day of the Tamil month "*AaDi*" when the river is in full floods known as "*PathineTTaam perukku*". We finish our bath in the cool waters visualizing mentally the groves where the honeybees hummed and peacocks danced and the drizzles gently drench, cuckoos softly coo (*vaNDinam muralum sOlai, mayilinam Aadum Solai, konDal meedhaNavum SOlai*). We then complete our daily chores ("*nitya karma anushTAnams*) and start towards the temple.

As you step out, remember to pay your respects to the divine guards like *Kumudan, Kumudaakshan, PunDareekan, Vaamanan, SankarNan, SarpanEtran, Sumukhan, SuprathishTan* and other group leaders (*Ganaadhipathis*), their weapons, their associates (*parivaaras*) and their vehicles (*vaahanams*) and secure their permission to enter the city thus-

*"KumudAya GaNaadhipathayE savaahana parivaara praharaNaaya namah:"*

In Sri Rangaraja Sthavam, Sri BhaTTar says-

*Janapadasarree thanthreepa pushyath-pura paripaalana nitya jaagarookaan/  
PraharaNa parivaara vaahanaaDyaan Kumuda mukhAaan GaNanaayakaan namaami //*

After these guards, he pays his respects to all living beings like cows, birds, trees and humans and even inanimate objects like stones, rocks etc. He holds that "those who know" would not deem them as ordinary beings and objects but as the eternal (*nityas*), the liberated (*muktas*) or those desiring moksha (*mumukshus*) who had come into the place and in these forms for the specific purpose of staying in the holy city.

In the next SIOka, he wonders that perhaps, Mother earth (*BhoodEvi*) had come to Sri Rangam to pay her obeisance to *Sri Ranga Vimaanam*. She seems to be accompanied by huge mountains, trees fully laden with fragrant flowers, the seven seas, and the islands within - all helping her in offering prayers to the Lord. The streets seem to him like the seven islands lying between the ramparts that appear to him as the seven seas. The great *manTap (mahAmanTapam)* seems like the magnificent mount "*MEru*".

As we enter the holy city, we find on the left the sanctum (*Sannidhi*) of "*TirukkuraLappan*". This seems to be very ancient. When Madhurakavi Azhwar carried the icon of his Achaarya, Nammaazhwar from Azhwaar Tirunagari for the *Tiru Adhyayana Utsavam*, he is reported to have stayed at this Sannidhi.

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**SriRanga Vijayam Part 18.**  
**The RaayagOpuram"**

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A few yards from there, you can see a tower entrance (*Gopura vaasal*). But as this was not completed it used to be called "*moTTai gOpuram*"-"Bald tower". It was also called "*RaayagOpuram*" because it was built by krishNa dEva raaya of Vijayanagar empire. It is said that he commenced building it in 17c A.D. But, after the disintegration of the empire ravaged by war, the construction stopped half-way.

This bald tower was reconstructed with 13 tiers by the 44<sup>th</sup> Pontiff of AhObila Matam, SrivanNN saTakOpa SrI VedAnta DEsika yatheendra MahAdEsikan. He is said to have been directed by Sri Ranganatha Himself. He was wondering how he could carry out the Lord's command. At that time. He says a conversation took place between himself and the Lord:

HH: "Oh! Lord! I am not able to decide if it would at all be possible for me to carry out your bidding"  
Lord: "Only you have to undertake this *Kainkaryam*"

HH: "There were so many great souls all these years. How come you never asked any of them to undertake this work? You know that funds are hard to come by these days"

Lord: "You are quite unlike your predecessors. Only you have been taking up the work of constructing towers, digging tanks etc. Did Kaliyan who constructed the Dasaavataara Sannidhi [start](#) with lots of [money](#)? It was by sheer will power that he accomplished this. Similarly, you resolve to do this. Do not hesitate. Go ahead!"

HH: "But, he had a large circle of disciples and followers to carry out whatever he commanded. I have none like that. Also, he is said to have raised lot of money since people in those days felt happy to

participate in such *kainkaryams* and donated liberally. Is it possible in these days to garner funds as he did? I have become too old to undertake a work of this magnitude. Better look out for a more capable person for this"

Lord: "Of course, we ordered you to construct as did Kaliyan. But we did not ask you to raise funds the way he did. You are not any the less in will power. Why are you so nervous about the project?"

You say Kaliyan had disciples. You also have several thousands of disciples able and willing to offer you what is needed for this righteous cause. You are yourself the head of a wealthy monastery. People who read your writings feel one with you. You are bearing the name of Sarvatantra Swatantra Sri Vedaanta DEsika. You are equally capable of completing whatever work you undertake. When we are here on your side, why should you hesitate to carry out our command (*Aajna anujna kainkaryam*)?

You say you are old. But, when you commence the work, you will gain the energy and enthusiasm of youth. Newer methods will automatically occur in your mind. Take the help of other Yathivaras like you, because this work cannot be accomplished by anyone alone but only with the support of so many. (It is worth remembering in this context that H.H. GOpaala dEsika MahAdEsikan of PounDarika puram ANDavan Swami Ashramam helped with funds for one of the tiers of the GOPuram)

The media and the great souls will praise and encourage you in your efforts. We will also have a sense of fulfillment, which has been deluding us for a long time"

HH: "That old man commanded this old man into this project. I could not but obey. It is Lord Ranganatha who decided to build this and made me an instrument in His hands. What a great blessing for me!"

Erecting makeshift steps to climb up HH dedicated one tier to "*Muniyappa*". Hence, this *GOPuram* is also known as "*Muniyappan GOPuravaasal*".

As we cross the entrance, we see shops on either side and we head to the 7th enclosure called *Chithirai Veedhi* which is covered by another enclosure which for that reason is called "*ADaiya valanjaan*"- "The encasing Street". But this street is not reckoned as one of the 7 enclosures (*sapthaprAkArams*). It is the 8th one. On the Southwest corner of this *Adaiyavalanjaan*, there is a Sannidhi for ANDAL also called "*VeLiANDAL Sannidhi*" built by one "*vallabhadEvan*"

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## **SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 19**

### **THE 7TH ENCLOSURE.**

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When we cross the *Adaiyavalanjaan*, we reach *KaTTai Gopuram*. We are now at the 7<sup>th</sup> Enclosure. Which is also known as *Chittirai Veedhi*. This is the Royal way, what with mansions and houses on both sides. This is the road through which the Lord travels on the temple car (*ThEr*). At the middle of West Chitra Street, on the right side there is a tower that leads to the 6<sup>th</sup> Enclosure. On the left is the *Mela Gopura vaasal* leading to the Tank used for the float festival.

As we enter from the West to the North Chitra Street, we can see Swami Desikar Sannidhi. At the middle of this street also there is a *Gopuravaasal* on the left side, which leads to the 8th enclosure, *VadaTirukkaveri*, Sri Ahobila Matam, Dasavataara Sannidhi, the Ashramams of Srimad Andavan of Poundareekapuram Swami and that of Periyaasramam as also what is known as *Tirumangai mannan PadDithurai*.

At the junction of North and East Chitra Streets, there is a tall temple car known as *GORatham* which is like the legendary *Pushpaka Vimaanam*. It is on this car that the Lord goes round the Chitra Streets on the day following the day on which the Lord and Thayar give *darsan* together (*Serthi*). Since this

*Utsavam* is said to have been initiated by *Aadhipiraan*, this festival is known as *Aadhi Brahmotsavam*.

Like in the other streets, at the middle of East Chitra Street, there is a Gopuram on the right leading to the 6th enclosure and through the *VeLLai GOpuram*, we can reach the 1000 pillared *manTapam*. The *GOpuram* on the left is called *Damodaran KoTTai Vaasal*. There is a Sannidhi here for Kannan. People offer a lot of butter to this Kannan. It is believed that this offering wards off poisonous creatures. Students appearing for their examinations can be seen emptying ink from their inkpots (now fountain pens) in front of this Kannan. It is believed that this offering ensures them success in their examinations. This entrance also leads to the 8th enclosure and the Srirangam Railway station. On this street there is another temple car known as *Chittirai ThEr*. Next to this car lies the mansion of Nampillai and on the opposite side, is the mansion of Koorathaazhwaan. A few blocks away are the mansions of Mudaliyaandaan and Vanamaamalai mutt. As we turn to the South Chitra Street, we come across *Maadhva* mutt.

In the 16th century AD, the Vijayanagara Emperor, Achyutharaayan was living in a mansion in this street. As one of the Vijayanagara emperors, Viruppannan by name established the car festival in the month of Chitrai, the festival came to be known as *Viruppannan Thirunaal*. Thousands of people from all places around Srirangam used to participate in this festival with great devotion. We will now go to the 6th Enclosure.

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**SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 20**  
**THE 6th ENCLOSURE.**

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We now enter the 6th Enclosure of the temple town of Sri Ranga KshEtram.

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This enclosure is known as Chozha King *Trivikraman Veedhi*. From the Southern Gopuram, we now go in a clockwise direction. The Disc and the Conch of the Lord guard this Gopuram. It is in this street that the famous festival of *Bhoopathi Tirunaal* is celebrated during the Thai month when the Lord goes on His rounds seated on the various mounts (*Vaahanams*) and on the day of float festival moves to the tank. This street is also known as *Utthra Veedhi* where there are houses only on one side, the other side being covered by a tall rampart wall (*Madhil Suvar*).

As we turn to the right, we reach West Uthra Street. There is a gOpuram in the middle of this street through which we can go to the 7th enclosure and *TeppakkuLam*.

Proceeding further, as we turn to the right again, we hit the North Uthra Street, Right at the middle of this street, there is an opening on the left that takes us to *Vada Tirukkaaveri*. On the right side, there is a *GOpuravaasal* that lets us go to the Thaayaar Sannidhi. If we go straight, we come across the *Matam of Sriranga Narayana Jeeyar*. It is here that Emperumaanaar stayed doing *Tiruvaradhanam* etc. according to *Paancharaatra Aagama*. It is here that he appointed the 74 *Simhasana Adhpathis* to carry the torch of *Visishtadvaita Siddhantam*.

Proceeding still further, we reach the end of this street that turns into the East Uthra Street. In the middle of this street is what is known as White *GOpuram* through which we can go to the 1000 pillared *manTap*. It is said that Paraasara Bhattar used to go through this *GOpuram* for doing *Mangalaasaasanam* to the Lord. On this street is the Ahobila MaTam and the Desikar Sannidhi belonging to Poundarikapuram Swami Ashramam. The mansions of *Arayars* are also on this street. The icon of *Utsava moorthi* of Lord was taken away by the Muslim rulers to Delhi, where the princess kept it as toy to play with. It is said that *Tiruvaranga Perumaal Arayar* went to Delhi and with the permission of the Baadushah brought the icon back and did *PratishTai*. Hence, the entire *Arayar kulam* became famous and are celebrated to this day.

As we proceed further and turn right, we come back to the South Uthra street where there is the Sannidhi of Manavaala Maamuniugal.

## SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 21 THE 5th ENCLOSURE.

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We are now at "*Naanmugan KoTTaivaasal*" from which we proceed to the 5th Enclosure also known as "*Akalanagan Street*". Dharmaadhyaksha and Niyantha guard this. In front of us stands a 4 pillared *manTap* which the Lord visits during *Utsavams* and receives "*KuDa Dheepam*".

After the "*Tiruvandikaappu*" ritual, the mounts of the Lord are taken to the special *manTap* meant for keeping them. Opposite this *manTap* is the Sannidhi of Sriman NaathamunigaL, the prime mover of *Visishtadvaita Siddhantam*. His grandson, Sri Aalavandaar's Sannidhi is also in the same place. The figure of Poet Kambar with folded hands can be found on one of the stone pillars, commemorating his "*arangEtram*" of his "Kamba Ramayanam"

Nearby is the "Elephant *manTap*" (*YaanaI manTapam*) at an elevation. The Lord comes to this *manTap* only when mounting on "*YaanaI Vaahanam*". There are quite a few architectural depictions here relating to Islam. It is said that these were inscribed in honor of the daughter of Delhi Sultan who loved PerumaL and followed Him all the way from Delhi to Srirangam and got merged with PerumaL. Even to this day, we see the Lord being offered Bread, Butter, Dhall along with Pongal every morning. During "*Pagal pathu*" *utsavam*, the Lord gives Darsan to "*Thulukka NaachiyaaR*"

Next, we see the Sannidhi of Sri Rama in a grove and, therefore, this Rama is called "*ThOppu Raman*" and Andal whose Sannidhi is next to this, is known as "*uLL ANDAL*". On the 6th day of the *Utsavam*, the Lord comes to this Sannidhi and has the exchange of garlands (as we see in marriages) with Andal.

Proceeding further, we come across Venugopalan Sannidhi, and this is old. Exquisite pictures are engraved here e.g. "a damsel looking into the mirror" and "a damsel playing Veena" etc. Onlookers cannot avoid admiring these pictures.

Next to this is the "*Vaahana ManTapam*", where all the mounts used in *Utsavams* are kept. There is a *Sannidhi* here for Garuda holding the pot of nectar (*Amrutha Kalasam*). On our right, we have a large *manTap* called "*Ranga Vilaasam*" where sculptures created by Kings of Vijayanagar empire and Madurai Naickers can be seen.

Towards the north is the "*Bali PeeTam*" (sacrificial altar) and a small Sannidhi for Anjaneyar. It is here that the annual *Deepotsavam* (*SokkappaanaI*) takes place. Through this, the Lord proceeds to the "*Vasantha ManTap*" for the Spring festival (*Vasantha Utsavam*)

On the left side is the Sannidhi of the famous *Chakrathaazhwaar*. (*SudarsanaR*). He is a great "*Varaprasaadi*" (One who grants boons). Numerous cases of cures from diseases and relief from fear have been chronicled and are experienced to this day. As we circumambulate this Sannidhi, we can have the *darsan* of "*Tiruvarangathu Amudanaar*" who sang "*Ramanuja Nootrantaadhi*".

Nearby is a beautiful grove where the lord enjoys His "*VasanthOtsavam*" (spring festival) during the month of Vaikaasi. A moat is provided around this *manTap* and water is filled from the "Tank of the moon" (Chandra Pushkarani)

We now go to have Darsan of Thayar.

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## SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 22 THAYAR SANNIDHI

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We are now at the entrance of Thayar Sannidhi. At the entrance is a big ManTap where *Navaraatri Utsavam* is celebrated. As we go past this *manTap*, we see a figure of Anjaneya sculptured on a pillar. Some people light lamps in front of this Anjaneya. People also used to circumambulate this pillar (*Pradakshinam*) before entering the Sannidhi. Immediately on entering, we come across a 4 pillared *manTap* where Thayar has her festival of flowers (*Poochaathu utsavam*).

Crossing this, we enter the Sanctum Sanctorum of Thayar (renowned as being ignorant of punishing) (*nityam agjaana nigrahaam*). Her beauty is beyond description. It is here that Thayar's Utsavamoorthi enjoys *Utsavams*. Far behind the *Moolavar*, there is another *Moola Vigramam*. It is said that during the Muslim invasion, the local elders caused to erect a wall to hide this Vigramam and that when the danger had passed off Thayar instructed through the *Archakas* to remove this wall.

After *Darshan* here and after taking *Prasaadams* of *Theertham*, *SaTaari*, *Manjal* and *Kumkum* we come to the outer enclosure and as we take our *Pradakshinam*, we come across a raised *manTap*. This is the famous *Panguni Uthra Mantapam* where Bhagavad Ramanuja surrendered at the feet of *Divya Dhampathi* in *Serthi*.

On the pillars of this *manTap* are engraved figures of Sri Rama, Lakshmana, Hanumaar, Sugriva, Jaambhavaan and the ministers of Vibheeshana all reminding us of the famous *Vibheeshana Saranaagathi* episode in Srimad Ramayana. There are also figures of several *Azhwaars* here.

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## SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 23

### *PraNaya Kalaham*

Lord Ranganatha participates in the 6<sup>th</sup> day's function of *Adi BrahmOtsavam* in the company of *Uraiyur Nachiyaar* and returns to Sri Rangam next morning. Coming to know this, Thaayaar gets angry and refuses admission to him to enter her quarters. A domestic feud with exchange of accusation by Thaayaar and PerumaaL's denial presents an interesting anecdote for onlookers like us. Finally, Nammazhwar intervenes and brings about reconciliation between them. After this, both enter the "*Panguni Uttara ManTapam*" and present themselves in their wedding attire and bless the millions of milling crowds gathered to enjoy this "*SErthi sEvai*"

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## SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 24

### BIRTH OF GADHYA TRAYAM -GADHYA TRAYA AVATAARAM

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As mentioned earlier, it was on one of those *Panguni Uthram* days when Perumal and Thayar were in *Serthi Sevai* that Bhagavad Ramanuja surrendered to them submitting His *Gadhya Trayam*. To save the world, he composed *SaraNaagathi Gadhyam*. In this, he has explained the basic tenets of Visishtadvaita viz. unconditional surrender to the Lord known as *SaraNaagathi Saastram* and how it should be implemented. Along with this, he also composed two other Gadhyams viz. *Sriranga Gadhyam* and *Sri Vaikunta Gadhyam*. This event is commemorated even to this day by reciting all the three Gadhyams on *Panguni Uthram* day every year in which a large number of Sri Vaishnavas participate.

On the northern corner to the left of this *ManTapam* is another one where the *DOI Otsavam* (swing festival) of Perumal and then that of Thayar take place during the month of Aippasi. As we circumambulate and proceed further, we see a bael tree (*Vilva maram*). It is said that during the muslim invasion, Thayar was kept under a platform erected around this tree. The height of the platform has been raised so that people do not set their foot or walk on the ground sanctified by Thayar there. We go round this platform and come exactly in front of Thayar Sannidhi.

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## **SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 25**

### **SWAMI SRI DESIKAN SANNIDHI**

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Opposite Thayar Sannidhi, is the Sannidhi of Swami Desikan also called *uLL Desikan Sannidhi*. After Bhagavad Ramanuja, it was this unique Acharya who firmly established *VisishTadvaitam* by authoring hundreds of works. It was he who revived the *Adhyayana Utsavam* held in Margazhi month after demolishing the faulty arguments of opponents. But for him, we would not be celebrating the twin Utsavams of *Raa pathu* and *Pagal pathu*. Lord Ranganatha conferred on him the title of Vedantachariar and Thayar the title of *Sarva Tantra Svatantrar*. This *Sannidhi* is being administered by *Ahobila Matam*.

There is 4 pillared manTap adjacent to Desikar Sannidhi. It is here that Kambar ( known as Kavi Chakravarthi) presented his *Hiranya Vadhaip padDalam* as part of his magnum opus Kamba Ramayanam. When some people objected to the presentation of the story of HiraNya, he offered to submit it only if Azhagiya singhar accepted it. In the presence of the great Acharya Naathanunigal, Kambar presented his work and Azhagiya singhar is reported to have approved it by nodding His head. From then this *MaTapam* came to be called *Kambar ManTapam*. Since the sanctorum of Nrisimha is at a high altitude, He is known as *METTu Azhagiya Singhar*. Once when there was a debate between Bhagavad Ramanuja and one Yagjnamoorthi, it is said that this Azhagiya singhar approved the arguments of Ramanuja against those of Yagjnamurthi.

As we proceed from this Sannidhi, we hit a junction of three openings called *Aindhu kuzhi- Moonru vaasaL*. On the eastern side, we have the famous 1000 pillared *manTapam* at the center of which is what is known as *TirumaamaNi manTapam*. Commencing the 10 days of *Raa pathu* from the *VaikunTa Ekaadasi* day, the Lord holds court here to listen to Tiruvoimozhi on *Tiruvoimozhi TirunaaL*. Millions of devotees assemble to pass through *VaikunTa Vaasal* on *VaikunTa Ekaadasi* day.

A white Gopuram leads us to the 6th enclosure. If we go straight, we reach the *Chozha raayan ManTapam* where we can find beautiful sculptures. Beyond this is the Sannidhi for the great TennAchArya Acharya Pillai Lokachariar, who composed several works. Next to this is the Sannidhi for Lord Parthasarathi. Proceeding further, we come to the Sannidhi of Bhagavad Ramanuja, the scion of Visishtadvaita philosophy.

**It is here that the physical frame of Emperumaanaar was interred and is known as *Thaanaana TirumEni*.**

Beyond this is the library and the Devasthanam office. Offering our obeisance to ThoNDar aDip poDi Azhwar and Koorathaazhwaan, we enter the 4th enclosure.

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## **SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 26**

### **THE 4th ENCLOSURE**

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The 4th Enclosure is known as *Tirumangai mannan Sutru* or *AalinaaDan Sutru*. It is believed that this is guarded by Yamunai and Gangai. In the big ManTapam here is the huge figure of *Periya TiruvaDi (GaruDaazhwar)* in a sitting posture with folded hands and facing the Lord's *Sannidhi*. It is said that when Brahma deputed GaruDa to bring Periya Perumal to his *SatyaloKam*, the Lord ordered GaruDa to stay back in Srirangam itself.

Opposite this Sannidhi is a *ManTapam* called *Para ManTapam*. During the *Saatrumurai* on the 10th day of *Pagal Pathu* known as *Tirumozhi TirunaaL*, Namperumaal appears as the enchanting divine damsel *MOhini* (vide Koorma Avatara story).

To the west of this, is the Sannidhi for Swami Nammazhwar, Madhurakavi Azhwar and Tirumangai

Azhwar. Adjacent to this is the *Sri Ranganatha PanDaka Saalai* (the pantry). Beyond this, on the west side is the *Mel Pattaabiraman Sannidhi* and then the Sannidhi for the 3 Mudal Azhwars.

Opposite to this, is the Moon tank (*Chandra PushkaraNi*). On its bank, there is a mast wood tree (*Punnai maram*), and Sannidhis for *Santhaana goOpaala krishNan*, *Raadha aalingana krishnan*, *Vyaasa munigaL*, *Varaaha PerumaaL* and *Varadaraaja PerumaaL*.

Nearby is the Sannidhi for the famous *Dhanvantari* (the Divine physician) who brought the pitcher of nectar (vide *Koorma Avataara* story). There is a great entrance that is always closed except on *VaikunTa Ekaadasi* day. This is the famous *Paramapada Vaasal* through which pass millions of devotees and proceed to have *Darshan* of the Lord in the Sanctum Sanctorum.

On the east side, we have the Sannidhis for KothanDaraaman, Kulasekara Azhwar, Paramapada naathan, and PaTTaabi Raman and the *Poochaathu ManTapam*. If we go past these, we encounter the entrance to the 1000 pillared *ManTapam* also known as *ThaTTaara Vaasal*. Beyond this is the Sannidhi for Tirumangai Azhwar and then we come to the Sun Tank (*Soorya PushkaraNi*) and the Sannidhi for Tirukkachi nambi.

We have now completed circumambulating of the 4th Enclosure and enter the 3rd Enclosure.

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### **SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 27**

#### **THE 3rd ENCLOSURE**

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Before entering the 3rd Enclosure called *kuklasEkarana Sutru* we have to enter the *AryabhaTTar Vaasal*. Once upon a time, some Brahmins known as *Aryas* are believed to have been taking care of this entrance. Hence, the name. GaruDaazhwaar and Chakrathhaazhwar are said to guard this entrance.

As we enter, we see the gold-plated sacrificial altar (*BalipeeTam*) and flag-post (*Dvaja Sthambam*). This is the famous *aNiyaranga Tirumutram*. On our left, we have the *PavitrOtsava manTapam* where are the *Sannidhis* of Lord Hayagrivar and Goddess Saraswati. It is said that KulasEkara Azhwar built this *manTapam*.

A little further on the north, we have the summer festival manTapam (*kODai Tirunaal manTapam*) built by Vijayaranga Sokkanaathar. Adjacent to this is the *Veda manTapam* where they offer their petitions to the Lord before He proceeds to *Paramapada vaasal* on *VaikunTa Ekaadasi* day. Devotees believe under this runs the mythical Viraja river. On one of the pillars here is depicted the scene in which VibheeshaNa is shown as carrying the *Sri Ranga Vimaanam*.

As we turn northwards, on our left is the famous *Paramapada vaasal* which is opened only on *VaikunTa Ekaadasi* day. We can see devotees offering their prayers to Varaaha PerumaaL by clapping their palms. Here is the royal kitchen known as *aranga naayakiyaar Tiru maDappaLLi*, Next to this is the *DOIOtsava manTapam* where during the month of Aippasi, NamperumaaL has His swing festival. There are two wells known as ghee wells nearby.

Opposite to this is a 4-pillared *manTapam* where the Lord presides over the flag hoisting ceremony (*Dvaja AarOhaNam*) during the annual festival of *BrahmOtsavam*. The Sannidhi of Siriya TiruvaDi is on an elevated plane on this *manTapam*. He is considered a great *Vara prasaadhi* (one who grants boons). Devotees used to adorn Him with garlands of cakes made of black gram (*VaDaimaalai*).

We now stand in front of the *BalipeeTam* where we chant our *Guru parampara slokas* and enter the 2nd Enclosure. We cannot complete the circum-ambulation of the 3rd, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1st Enclosures. We must come back only anti-clockwise, unlike in other Enclosures where we have more than one exit.

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## SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 28 THE 2nd ENCLOSURE

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The 2nd Enclosure is Chozha Mannan Raja *MahEndran Sutru*. The entrance is known as *Naazhigai kETTAan Tiruvaasal* because in the olden days people used to inquire "What is the time now?" The front side is said to be guarded by Bhadran and Subhadran while the rear one by Sankanidhi and Padmanidhi. When the Lord passes this entrance, they used to play VeeNa. The Lord's gait in moving step by step listening to the music of VeeNa is a sight for Gods to see!

As we enter, on our left we see the Safe vault for Lord's ornaments, where precious jewels of Perumaal and Thaayaar are kept in safe custody. Next is a cloaks room and separate rooms for offerings to *Samaya puram Maari amman*, for *ThOLukkiniyaan*, for *kaaNikkai*, for *Sukravaara arai*, where articles like civet, fragrant sandal paste, musk etc. used for applying to the Lord on Fridays are kept. Next to this is the *parivaTTa* room for keeping special robes of the Lord.

Proceeding further, we come across the place where during the month of Kartigai on the Kaisika Ekaadasi day the Lord enjoys *Karpoora PaDiEtram*. Vijaya Ranga Chokkanaathar used to attend this every year with his entire family. Once, he was late. By the time he arrived the function was over. It seems that he stayed put there itself for one whole year till the function in the next year! Even today the figures of the family can be seen on one side of this enclosure.

On the northwest side is the *Yaaga Saalai* (Sacrificial altar) and opposite to this is the *ThoNDamaan KuraDu* constructed by King ThoNDamaan. Next to this is the big Sannidhi for VishvaksEnar. There is a manTapam called *Arjuna Mantapam* where the *Pagal Pathu utsavam* is held during the month of Margazhi. Also, can be seen the Sannidhis for KulasEkara and Tulukka naachiyar.

Opposite this is the *KiLi mantapam* where parrots were kept. From a spot on this *manTap*, we can have Darsanam of *Para VaasudEvar* on the *PraNavaakaara Vimaanam*. There is also a huge mirror on which the Lord's reflection can be seen when the Lord takes His stroll.

On the East Side is a *manTapam* called *Azhagiya MaNavaaLan Sandhana ManTapam* where Namperumaal has His *Tirumanjanam* (ceremonial bath) on special occasions. We can have a good Darsanam of Periya perumaal from here. There is a figure of AnjanEyar here. Azhagiya Singhar used to observe in a light vein that because the Lord was constantly reclining on His couch of AdisEsha, AnjanEya, out of utmost care always stays nearby to rush to the Lord if ever He were to be affected by the poison from the serpent.

There is a Mirror room (*kaNNaDi arai*) nearby where the Lord used to rest during *BrahmOtsavams*. When the Lord emerges from this, He adopts the style of a lion (*Simhagathi*) and while returning He adopts the style of a serpent (*Sarpagathi*)

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## SRI RANGA VIJAYAM - PART 29 THE 1st ENCLOSURE

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We now enter the first and innermost enclosure known as *Dharmavarman Sutra* to have the *Darsanam* of *Ikshvaaghu Kuladhanam*. The entrance is called *Tiru aNukkanTiruvaasal*. Jayan and Vijayan are said to guard this entrance. Taking their permission, proceed to the Sanctum Sanctorum (*Garbhagruham*).

We have a closer look at the deities guarding *the PraNavaakaara Vimaanam*. There is a *maTapam* inside with 24 pillars. *Gayatri Mantram* has 24 letters; this *manTapam* is called *Gayatri ManTapam*. The pillars are gold plated.

With folded palms, we enter the *Garbhagruham*, without stepping on the step called "*KulasEkarappaDi*" and have an eye-filling, soul- stirring, mind- boggling view of the reclining *Moolavar*, *Periya PerumaaL* and the *Utsava PerumaaL* called *NamperumaaL*. We can recite *Amalanaadhipiraan*, *SaraNagathi Gadhyam*, *Sriranga Gadhyam*, *Bhagavad Dhyaana sOpaanam* and other works of *Azhwars* and *Acharyas*. With *TiruppaaNaazhwar*, we can enjoy the Lord who captivates our heart, the Lord of Lords, Lord *Ranganathan* (*en uLLam kavarnDhaanai, aNDarkOne aNiyarangan*) and reciting that my eyes set on the nectarine Lord will never ever see anything else (*en amudhinaik kaNDa kaNgal matronrinaik kaaNaavE*).

Taking the *theertham* (holy waters) and *TuLasi Prasadam*, we come out with a heart full of the Lord's *Soundarya anubhavam*.

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## 04. Divya Desangal : Introduction

### An Introduction

Those "KshEtrams" on which Azhwars have sung in their 4000 Holy collects known as "AruLicheyal" are called "Divya Desams". There are 108 Divya Desams . If we commence writing on the Anubhavam of all The Azhwars on all these 108 Divya Desams would indeed be a stupendous task that cannot be accommodated in this write up. So, we restrict ourselves to just 3 or 4 of them (3 on which Sri Vedanta Desika has celebrated in Sthaana visEsha Adhikaaram of Srimad Rahasya Traya Saaram).

This does not mean that the other Divya Desams are not important.

### **(J-1) Tiru Aarangam known as Bhooloka VaikuNTam with the maximum number of 247 Pasurams by 11 out of 12 Azhwars. Swami Desika's Paasuram:**

*Aaraada aruL amudam podinda koil  
Ambhuyathan ayOdhi mannarku aLitha koil  
tOLaada tani veeran tozhuda koil  
tuNaiyaana veeDaNarku tuNaiyaam koil  
sEraada pyanellaam sErkum koil  
sezhu mraiya mudal ezhuthu sErnda koil  
theeraada vinai anaithum theerkum koil  
Tiruvarangam ena thigazhum koil taanE (27)*

This is the Divya Desam where Bhagavad Ramanuja did his SaraNaagati on a Panguni Uthram day. This is the place from where he attained Paramapadam and his mortal remains are interred in the precincts of this temple.

### **(J-2) Tiru VEnkatam with 202 Pasurams. Swami Desika's Pasuram:**

*kaNnan aDiyinai emakku kaaTTum verpu  
kaDu vinaiyar iru vinaiyum kaDiyum verpu  
thiNNam itu veeDu ena Thigazgum verpu  
teLinda perum theerthangaL seritha verpu  
puNNioyathin pugala idu ena pugazhum verpu  
ponnulgil bhOgam ellaaam puNarkum verpu  
viNNavarum maNNavarum virumbhum verpu  
vEnkaTa verpu ena viLangum vEda verpE (28)*

This is the Divya Desam where Nammazhwar did SaraNaagati as evidenced from his famous Pasuram "agalakillEn enru...aDikkeezh amarndu pugundEnE"

### **(J-3) Tiru Kachchi (Kanchipuram) with 7 Paasurams.**

Swami Desika's Pasuram:

*Uttama vamarthalam amaitha Ore  
Ezhirranuuvinnun uitha kaNaiyal  
Athira arakkan muDi pathum our  
Kottu ena udirtha thirOne  
Matturu migutta tayir moitha veNNei  
Vaithadu uNNum athan iDamaam  
Athigiri bather vinai tothu vara arukkum  
aNi athi giriye (29)*

This is the Divya Desam where Swami Desika did SaraNaagati as evidenced from "Nyaasa Dasakam"  
*nyasyaami akinchana Srimaan anukoolO anya varjita:/*  
*viswaasam praarthanaa poorvam aatma rakshaa bharam tvayi//*  
meaning

Absolutely helpless and incompetent as I am, Oh! Lord of Sri! With the resolve that I shall henceforth act in accordance with your wishes, avoid all transgressions, with supreme confidence that you will liberate me, I have laid down the responsibility of my protection at your feet"

**(J4) Tiru Anbil (with just 1 Pasuram)**

Though Nammazhwar did his Saranaagati in TiruvEnkatam, he attained Moksham only in what Tirumazhisai Azhwar has termed as "pEranbil" the twin Kshetrams of "TiruppERnagar" (AppakuDathan) and Tiru Anbil as evidenced from Nammazhwar's Paasurams in Tiruvoimozhi 10.8. (More details in the write up on Tiru Anbil) This is also called "KOvil aDi" meaning "Just one step ahead of "Sri VaikuNtam" aka "Paramapadam". I have therefore appended a short note on this place which is my native place.



**J – Divya Desangal**  
**J-01: TIRU ARANGAM (Sriirangam)**

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**Moolavar:** Sri Ranganathar, Periya Perumal, Azhagiya MaNavaaLan

**Utsavar:** Nam Perumal

**Sayanam:** Bhujanga Sayanam (AdisEsha Sayanam)

**Facing:** South

**Thaayaar:** Sri Ranganayaki (**Ranga Nachiyar**)

**PushKaraNi:** Chandra PushkaraNi, Kaveri, KoLLiDam, Vedasringam Rivers

**Vimaanam:** PraNavaakaara Vimaanam

**Prathyaksham:** Dharma Varma, Ravi Dharma, Chandra, VibheeshaNa

**Sthala Vriksham:** Punnai

**Specialities**

- **Hailed as "BhooLOka VaikuNTam" (Heaven on Earth)**

- Known as "Periya koil". Everything here is "Periya" meaning "huge'

- Perumaal: Periya Perumaal

- Thaayaar: Periya PiraTTiyaar

- Koil: Periya koil

- Ramparts: Periya Madil

- RajagOpuram Periya Gopuram

- Main offering: Periya vasaram

- GaruDan: Periya TiruvaDi

- **On top of the golden Vimaanam above the Sanctum Sanctorum of Periya Perumal, stands "ParavaasudEvar".**

- It has 7 Praakaaras and 15 Gopurams

- Aradhana Deivam for: Ikshvaagu dynasty, VibheeshaNa.

- Avataara Sthalam of: BhaTTar, Periya Nambi, PiLLai LOKaachaarya, VaDakku Tiruveedi PiLLai and many others.

- **ThoNDar aDippoDi Azhwar did Nandavana Kainkaryam here**

- Arayar Sevai musical rendering of Divya Prabandam initiated by Sri NathamunigaL is famous.

- Perumal and Thayaar conferred **respectively** the titles of Kavitaarkika Simham and Sarva Tantra Swatantrar to Swami Desika.

- A unique ritual called "MattaiyaDi" is enacted with great fervor on Panguni Utram day when Nam Perumal returns after sojourn from Uraiyur. A domestic feud ensues between Peraumal and Thaayaar. The dispute is amicably settled at the intervention of Nammazhwar.

- The Sannidhi of Dhanvantari (God of Universal Cure) is unique and situated north of Paramapada Vaasal.

- Bhagavad Ramanujar's physical body is preserved in a separate Sannidhi.

- Swami Desika composed and submitted his "Paaduka Sahasram" here.
- The tallest Rajagopuram in India was constructed by AhObila Mutt Jeeyar.
- METTu Azhagiya Singhar approved Kamba RamayaNam by a nod of his head.

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**MANGALAASAASANAM: (TOTAL: 247) (ALL AZHWARS EXCEPT MADURAKAVI AZHWAR)**  
**Numerator: Composed/ Denominator: Commented)**

- I. POIGAI AZHWAR (1/1)
- II. BHOODAT AZHWAR (4/1)
- III. PEY AZHWAR (1/1)
- IV. TIRUMAZHISAIPIRAAN: (14/2)
- V. NAMMAZHWAR (12/3)
- VI. PERIYAAZHWAR (35/3)
- VII. *ANDAL* (10/1)
- VIII. KULASEKARA AZHWAR (31/2)
- IX. TIRUPPAAAN AZHWAR (10/1)
- X. THONNDAR ADIP PODI AZHWAR (55/7)
- XI. TIRUMANGAI AZHWAR (73/4)

**ACHARYAS**

- XII. SWAMI VEDANTA DESIKAR: (1/1)
- XIII. PILLAI PERUMAL IYENGAR (1/1)

=====

**I. POIGAI AZHWAR (1/1)**

***Mudal Noorantadi (6)***

*Onru marandariyEn Oda neer vaNNanai naan,  
 Inru marappEnO YEzhaigaaL  
 Anru karuvarangatuT kidantu Kai ThozhdEn  
 kaNDEn TiruvarangamEyaaan disai*

Even when I was in my mother's womb (at a stage impossible for anyone) Tiruvarangan revealed to me his Form, nature, qualities etc. merely by his grace, thus got wisdom. I have remembered him since then. I cannot forget him now.

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**II. BOODAT AZHWAR (4/1)**

***irandam Noorantadi (88)***

*tiram pirrini arindEn Tennarangathu enthai,  
 tirambaa vazhi senraarkku allaal,  
 Tirabaa chedi neekkit thaam selvadan munn,  
 VanOR kaDi naraga vaasr Kadavu.*

I learned today that the doors of VaikuNTam would be closed to people other than those who strictly cling to Lord Ranganatha. Only such persons would be able to smash the forest of Samsaara infested with thorns and bushes.

---

### III. PEY AZHWAR (1/1)

#### moonraam Noorantadi (62)

*viNNagaram vehkaa viri tirai neer vEnkaTam,  
MaNNagaram MaamaaDa vELukkai – maNNagatha  
ten KuDantai tEnaar Tiruvarangam ten kOTTi  
tan kuDangai neerETraan taazhvu*

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### IV. TIRUMAZHISAIPIRAAN: (14/2)

#### Tiruchanda Viruttam 21

*arangnE! Taranga neer Kalanga anru kunru soozh  
marangaL tEya maanilam kulunga maasuNaansulaai  
nerunga nee kaDainta pOdu ninra soorar en seitaar?  
kurangaiyaaL uganta vethai kooru tEra vEridE*

Oh! Lord! When the milky ocean was churned, what did those warriors do except silently watching you. What did you do? You did everything including taking the form of tortoise etc. But you gave credit for all these to these warriors as if they did everything. When you decimated Ravana and his horde, you gave credit to the monkey squad for this great feat. What a great affection to your devotees!

#### Naanmukan Tiruvantaadi 30

*Avanennai yaaLi arangathu arangil  
Avan ennai Eitaamal kaappaan  
avanennathuLLathu ninraan irundaan kiDakkumE  
veLLath aravaNaiyin mEl*

Lord Ranganatha who took me over will protect me from falling a victim of worldly life. This Emperumaan entered, stood, and remained in my heart. After finding my heart so cozy, would he ever wish to go back to his serpent couch?

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### V. NAMMAZHWAR (12/3)

#### Tiruviruttam 28

*TaNNantuzhai VaLai kOLvadu yam IzhappOm, NaDuvE  
VaNNam tuzhaavci Ore vaaDai ulkaavum valvaaijalaal  
Pull nandu uzhaamE poru neer Tiruvarangaa! AruLaai  
eNNam tuzhaavum iDathu uLavO paNDum innannavE?*

Oh! Lord of Tiruvarangam! When the birds protect your conch with their sharp beaks, certainly you with your fragrant TuLasi garland will be even more merciful. As I am engrossed in you, why do you allow this dry air to torment me? Has anyone else been tortured like this?

#### Tiru Voi Mozhi 7-2-1

*kangulum Pagalum kaNN tuyil ariyaaL  
kaNNa neer kaigaLaal iraikkum  
sangu sakkarangaL enru kai kooppum  
Taamarai kann enrE taLarum  
enganE darikkEn unnai viTTu ennum  
iru nilam kai tuzhaa virukkum  
senkayal paay neer Tiruvarangathai!  
ivaL tirathu en siginraayE?*

Night and day, she knows no sleep. Even in separation, this. All the time she sheds tears in such torrential floods that she must wipe out continuously with her hands. Remembering your form, she supplicates her hands saying "Sankhaa", "Chakraa" she utters "Lotus eye" but unable to complete the sentence, she sighs and settles. "How shall I sustain without you?" she mutters. She searches all around. Oh! Lord of Srirangam! With water resources that nurture red fish, - pray tell me what you propose to do in the case of this damsel of mine!

**Tiru Voi Mozhi 7.2.9**

*En TirumagaLsEr maarvanE! Ennum  
 ennuDai AaviyE ennum  
 nin tiru eyitraal iDandu nee koNDa  
 nilamagaL kELvanE! Ennum  
 anruruvEzhum tazhuvi nee koNDa  
 Aai magaL anbanE! ennum  
 Then Tiruvarangam kOil koNDaanE!  
 teLigilEn muDivivaL tanakkE*

Oh! My Lord! Who has on his chest My Sri Mahaalakshmi, My life and soul!  
 Consort of Bhoomi Devi! Whom you dug out of the deep walls of the outer universe!  
 Dear Consort of Gopi, Nappinnai whom you won by embracingly killed seven bulls!  
 Oh! Lord! Who chose to reside in sweet Srirangam- So says my daughter. I do not know what end she will have!

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**VI. PERIYAAZHVAR (35/3)**

**PERIYAAZHVAR TIRUMOZHI 4.9.2**

*tammaDiyaar tirahagathu, taamaraiyaaL aagilum sidagu uraikkumE!  
 ennaDiyaar adu seybaar, seydaarE! nanru seidaar enbar pOlum  
 mannuDaiya VeeDaNanrakkaa madiL ilangai disai nOkki malar kann vaitha  
 ennuDaiya Tiruvarangaat ku anriyum, matroruvarkku aaLaavaarE!*

PiraaTTI may be the mediatrix recommending our case to the Lord. After this, even if she were to complain about us, the Lord would say that "his" aDiyaars would never do anything wrong. Even if they did anything in the belief that I would pardon them, they would have done the only right thing". When such is the case, would anyone having become dear to Lord Ranganatha resort to anyone else?

Note: See the difference between "Tamm" meaning "our" and "Enn" meaning "mine".

**PERIYAAZHVAR TIRUMOZHI 4.9.3**

*karuL uDaiya pozhil marudum,  
 kadakkaLirum pilambamaiyum kaDiya maavum  
 uruL uDaiya sagaDinaiyum mallaraiyum  
 UdaiyaviTTu Osai kETTAan  
 iruL agatrum eri kadirON maNdalathooDu  
 yEtri vaithu YENi vaangi  
 arul kODuthiTTu aDiyavarai aaT koLvaan  
 amarum oor aNI Arangame*

*If anyone remembers and praises the feats the Lord exhibited when he*

- Broke the two huge trees of YamaLaarjuna
- Killed the huge elephant, Kuvalayaapaatam
- finished the cruel Pralambaasura in his attempt to kill his playmates
- decimated KEsi who attacked in the form of an unruly horse
- destroyed the twin wrestlers, MusHTika and ChaanOOra

He would take them to his Paramapadam like making them climb a ladder and after they reach Paramapadam, he would take away the ladder making it impossible to climb down. This Lord is now relining in the beautiful Sri Rangm.

### **PERIYAAZHWAR TIRUMOZHI 4.10. 1**

*tuppDaiyaarai aDaivadellaam sORviDathu TuNai aavar enrE  
oppinEn aagilum ninnaDaintEn aanaikku nee aruL sidamaiyaal  
eyppu ennai vandu naliyum pOdu, angu Edum naan unnai ninaikka MaaTTEn  
appOdaikku IppOdE solli vaithEn Arangathu AravaNaip PaLLiyaanE*

Oh! Lord Ranganatha! Having surrendered to you in the absolute confidence that you will save me like you did for Gajendra, in the final moments of my life when I will lie unconscious like a log of wood or a stone, I will not be able to remember you. I am therefore making this request to you now itself to save me at that time.

### **VII. ANDAL (10/1)**

#### **Nachiyaar Tirumozhi 11.10**

*Semmai UDaiya Tiruvarangar taam PaNitha  
Meymei Peru Vaarthai ViTTuchittar kETTiruppaar  
Thammai ugapaarai taam ugappaaar enum sol  
tammiDiyE poyyaanaal Saadippaar yaar iniye?*

Thoughts, words, and deeds of Tiruvarangar has uniformity (Semmai uDaiya Tiruvarangar). VishNU chittar would have heard these words from such Tiruvarngar. What are those words? They are the essence of Charama SIOkam solemnly declared by him saying that he would protect those who resort to him. If those words become false, whose words can then be true?

{Comment:

There seems be some anachronism apparent in this. Charama SIOkam was delivered by Lord Krishna in Mahabharata war (in Dvapara Yuga). VishNu chittar (Andal's father) was in Kali Yuga. How he could have heard what was said in Dvapara yuga?

Answer:

VishNU Chittar is the incarnation of GaruDa. GaruDa transformed himself as Arjuna's Chariot used in the war. So, he could have heard the promise of the Lord declared while on the driver's seat on the chariot.}

### **VIII. KULASEKARA AZHWAR (31/2)**

#### **Perumal Tirumozhi 1.9**

*Moithu kaNn pani sOra meygAL silirppa YEngi iLaithu ninru  
Eithu kumbiDu naTTamiTTu Ezhundu aaDippaaDi irainji enn  
Athan achyutan Aranganukku, aDiyaargaLaagi avanukkeE  
Pitharaam avar pitharallar, matraiyaar mutrum pitharE*

They are not insane when they think of Lord Ranganatha- who

- shed tears of joy flowing incessantly from their eyes
- experience horripilation all over their bodies
- dance nonstop in trance with great enthusiasm all over the place
- sing songs on Lord Ranganatha as father. Master etc.
- become totally immersed in divine love towards him

Only those who do not do like this are the insane people.

#### **Perumal Tirumozhi 3.8**

*pEyarE enakki yaavarum, yaanum oru  
pEyanE. Evarkkum idy pEsi enn?*

*AayanE! Arangaa! Enru azhaikkinrEn  
pEyanaai ozhindEn Empiraanukke.*

All the folks in this world are madcaps. I am also one. What is the use in talking about this? I exclaim: Oh! KrishNa! Sri Ranganaatha! I am in love with Emperumaan, while they may be in love with all things other than Emperumaan.

=====  
**IX. TIRUPPAAN AZHWAR (10/1)**

***Amalanaadipiraan 9***

*Aala maamarathin ilai mEl oru Baalaganaai  
Jnaalam yEzhum unDaan Arangathu AraviNaiyaan  
kOLa MaamaNi Aaramum muthu Daamamum - muDivillatOr Ezhil  
Neela mEni AiyO! Nirai koNDatu enn nenjE*

Lord Ranganatha reclining on the serpent couch (AdisEsha) in Srirangam is the one who long ago having devoured the seven worlds (as seen by Sage MaarkaNDeya) was found lying on a little leaf of a great banyan tree as an exquisite child, incomparable. This same Lord Ranganatha is adorned with beautiful garland studded with precious gems and pearl necklace. His holy body (archa form) of blue diamond luster is of enormous charm and excellent complexion. Such a divine body of God has, overpowered my mind (AiyO!).By showing his whole body he has taken away everything of me – my mind, heart, and soul.

=====  
**X. THONNDAR ADIP PODI AZHWAR (55/7)**

***Tirumaalai 2***

*Pachai maa malai pOl mEni pavaLavaai kamla seNkaNN  
Achyutaa! Amarar YErE1 AAYar thum kozhundE1 ennum  
Ichuvai tavira yaan pOi IndiralOkam aaLum  
Achuvai perineum vENDEn Arangamaa NagaruLaanE!*

Oh! Lord Ranganatha! Your body is like the green emerald mountain. Your lips are coral red. Your eyes are like the red lotus. You will not let down your devotees. You are the Lord of the celestials. Yet you appeared as the young prince of the cowherd people. I will not trade the sweetness of uttering your names and will not like the worlds to rule as the very Indra.

***Tirumaalai 3***

*vEda nool praayam nooru manisartaam puguvarEnum  
paadiyum urangip pOgum ninradil padinai aaNDu  
pEdai Baalakanatu aaagum PiNi pasi mooppu thunbam  
aadalaal piravi vENDEn Arangamaa NagaruLaanE*

Aranga Maa Nagar uLaanE! Even if men live for 100 years as per the Veda texts, half of it will go away in sleep. Of the balance of 50 years, 15 years will go as child, adolescent and then youth when one will be overpowered by the inevitable pleasures of the 5 Indriyas, then old age, ill health, and other sufferings. I do not like to go through this painful life.

***Tirumaalai 14***

*vaNDinam muralum sOli mayil inam aaDum sOlai  
KoNDal meedaNavum sOlai, kuyil inangal koovum sOlai  
aNDarkOne amarum sOlai aNI Tiruvarangam ennaa  
minDar paaindu uNNUm sOtraI vilakki naaikku iDUmineerE*

Your groves are surrounded by

- sounds of bees that crowd
- dances of colorful Peacocks
- covered by clouds as if embracing

- bevy of cuckoos singing melodiously
- This is where the chief of celestials stays

Ignorant folks who cannot appreciate all this beauty are unfit to live in this world. They are so ungrateful that any food offered to them should be plucked away from them and the grateful dogs may be fed with such food.

### **Tirumaalai 19**

*kuDa disai muDiyai vaithu GuNa disai paadam neeTTi  
vaDa disai pinbu kaaTTi, then disai Ilangai nOkki  
kaDal nirak kaDavuL enthai, AravaNai Thuyilumaa kaNDu  
uDal enakku urugumaalO! En seigEn ulagatheerE!*

My Lord, Ranganatha has the same color as that of the sea. He keeps his head in the west, his feet to the East, He shows his back to the north. He looks lovingly at the South ruled by his devotee, VibheeshaNa. He sleeps on the couch of AdisEsha. My mind melts on seeing his pulchritude. What can I do?

### **Tirumaalai 23**

*Gangayir punidam aaya Kaaveri naDuvu paTTu  
Pongu neer parandu paayum poompozhil arangathannuL  
Engal maal iraiyan eesan kiDandadOr kiDakkai kaNDum  
Enganam marandu vaazhgEn yEzhaiyEn YEzhaiyEnE!*

After seeing Lord Ranganatha who resides between two holy rivers, reclining on his serpent couch and surrounded by beautiful groves. He has great affection towards his devotees. He is the Master of all, how can I forget this wonderful scene. I am stunned on seeing him. I am at a loss to know not knowing what to do.

### **Tirumaalai 29**

*OOriEN kaNi illai, uravu matru oruvar illai  
Paaril ninn paada moolam patrilEn Parama moorthi  
kaaroli VaNNanE! kaNNanE1 KadarukinrEn!  
aar uLar kaLai kaN ammaa! Aranga maa nagar uLLaanE*

I have no properties to boast. I have no relatives. I have surrendered at your feet. Oh! Lord of all being totally orphaned. Oh! Lord! You are known to save people like us. I am crying aloud seeking your blessings. Who else can offer protection to me except you?

### **Tirumaalai 38**

*Mem porul pOga ViTTu maymayai miga unarndu  
Aambari sarindu koNDu aim pulan agathu aDakki  
Kaambara Thalai siraithu unn kaDai thalai irundu vaazhum  
sOmabarai ugathi pOlum Soozh punal ArangathanE/  
This Paasuram is said to be equal to the Charama SLOkam of Bhagavad Gita.  
Oh! Lord Ranganatha! You are sleeping in the temple surrounded by KavEri river.  
You are fond of only those who*

- Have eschewed connections with worldly matters.
- Have understood their true nature and their duties in doing service to you
- Have controlled their 5 senses from going astray
- Have abandoned their attachment to "my" and "mine"
- Have also become incapable of doing anything to protect themselves
- And, remain lazy having laid all their burden on you.

## **XI. TIRUMANGAI AZHWAR (73/4)**

### **Periya Tirumozhi 5. 4.1**

*Undi mEl naanmuganaip padaithaan ulagai uNDavan*

*Enthai pemmaan ImayOrgal taataiikku iDamenbaraal  
sandhinODu maNiyum kozhikkum punal Kaaviri  
andhi pOLum nirathaar vayal soozh TEnn ArangamE  
Where is Srirangam?*

- *It is where River KavaEri brings Sandal wood and gems in its floods.*
- *It is where the fields shine wearing the evening colors*
- *It is the beautiful Divya Desam called "Tiruvarangam"*
- *It is where the Lord who created Brahma from his navel*
- *It is where lies the one who created the worlds , swallowed the worlds during deluge and kept them in safe custody inn his tummy*
- *It is where resides the one who is the father to my father's father and his father.*
- *It is where resides the Lord of Nitysooris*

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### **Periya Tirumozhi 5.4.8**

*yEna meen aamaiyODu ariyum siru kuraLum aay  
taanum aay maaya TaraNt Thalavan iDam enbaraal  
vaanum maNNUm niraiya puguntu teeNda vaNangum nal  
tEnum Paalum kalandavan avan sEr Tenn ArangamE*

Here the poet describes how Lord Ranganatha helped by taking several incarnations:

- ❖ He took the form of a wild boar
- ❖ He took the form of a fish
- ❖ He took the form of a tortoise
- ❖ He took the form of a half man-half lion
- ❖ He took the form of a fully developed man as Sri Rama

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### **Periya Tirumozhi 5. 8.1**

*yEzhai yEdalan keezh magan ennaadu, irangi matravarkku innaruL surandu  
maazhai maan maDa nOkki unn thOzhi, umbhi embhi enru ozhnduilai ugandu  
thOzhan nee enakku ingu ozhi enra sorkaL vandu aDiyEn manam thirundiDa  
Aazhi vaNNa! Ninn aDiyiNai adaindEn, aNi pozhil Tiruvarangathu ammaanE!*

Guha was a hunter. He was involved in petty pleasures in life. His only occupation was killing animals. Despite all these, you showered your grace on him saying "Sri Sita is your lady friend, that LakshmaNa was his brother. You are my friend." Having heard all these over generations, it has sunk deeply into my mind. So, Oh! Lord! Whose qualities are vaster than the oceans! I have surrendered at your feet.

### **Tiru Kurum TaaNdakam 12**

*Aaviyai aranga maalai, azhukku uDambu echil vaayaal  
Thooimaiyil thoNdanEn naan, sollinEn thollai naamam  
paaviyEn pizhathavaaru! Ennu anjinEn anjarkka enru  
kaavi pOl vaNNar vandu enn kaNNuLE thOnrinaarE*

When I hesitated to mention the holy names of the Lord because of my being dirty body, a mind debased with evil thoughts and tainted mouth soiled by praising worthless people, he appeared and assured me not to feel ashamed but to go ahead with uttering his holy names. This Lord Ranganatha mercifully entered my mental eye in all his glory. (I/26)

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**(I/27)**

### **Tiru NeDum TaaNdakam 25**

*Minnil angu thiru uruvam Periya thOLum,*

*kari muninda kai thalamum kaNNum vaayum  
Tann alarnda narum thuzhaai malarin keezhE,  
thaazhndu ilangum makaram sEr kuzhaiyum kaaTTi  
Enn nalanum, enn niraivum, enn chintaiyum,  
enn vaLaiyum, koNDu ennai aaLum koNDu,  
Ponn alarnda narum serundip pozhilin ooDE  
Punal Arangam enru pOyinaarE*

Azhwar describes the favors conferred on us by Lord Ranganatha from birth till we surrendered to him:

- He proved that all that we see in this world are temporary and evanescent like a lightning
- He provided us with the four Vedas for our redemption.
- He revealed himself to dispel the darkness of ignorance surrounding us
- Like the moon that rises from the mountain and climbs on the sky to the joy of all, he granted me clear knowledge.
- He enabled me to hear through ears, absorbing the truths, retaining them in the mind,
- He showed me all the 24 Tattvas and my Atma (which is 25<sup>th</sup>)
- He promised to grant eternal life bereft of sorrow, disease, old age etc.
- He resides in all elements like land, water, fire, sky, wind etc.
- He is the paramEshTi, PuNaan, Viswam, nivrittam, sarvam mentioned in the Upanishads
- The feet of such a Lord. Lord Ranganatha is upon my head.

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## **ACHARYAS**

### **XII. Swami Vedanta Desikar:**

#### ***Bhagavad Dhyana SOPaanam 10***

*Paada ambhOjam sprusati bhajatE Ranganaathasya jhanghaam  
Ooru dvandvE vilagati Sanai: oordvam abhyEti naabhim/  
vakshasyaastE valati BhujayOr maamikEyam maneeshaa  
vaktraabhi khyaam pibati vahatE vaasanaam MouLi bhandE//*

- ✓ My mind (Buddhi) dwells on the sacred lotus feet of Lord Ranganatha.
- ✓ Then moves on to Darsanam of his ankles.
- ✓ Then rests on his majestic thighs
- ✓ Then reaches his navel.
- ✓ Then gets set on his chest.
- ✓ Then revolves around his majestic hands.
- ✓ Then drinks the nectar of his samudaaya SObhai and
- ✓ Finally settles on his crown.

In this sLOkam SVD enjoys the "PaadaadikEsa VarNanam" as dung by TiruppaaN Azhwar. 45<sup>th</sup> PaTTam Azhagiya Singhar comments that in this Swami imagines the bride called "Buddhi" first slowly touches the holy feet and moves up limb by limb till she reaches settles at the crown of the Lord and says that by this she has proved true the elders' blessing " Moordhaanam PatyU: AarOha" meaning "Climb over the head of your husband"

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### **XIII. Pillai Perumal Iyengar: 108 Tirupati Antaadi**

*Seer vanda undhi disai mukhanaal allaadu enn  
sOrvanda sollaar surungumO -aarvam  
oruvar aranga kOil ugantavarai aaLwaan  
Tiruvarangan koil sirappu*

*Even Brahma who sprang from Lord Ranganatha's navel cannot fully describe the Lord. How can my limited totally debilitated mind that has not shed its infatuation with worldly temptations attempt this stupendous task of describing Lord Ranganatha's beauty?*

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## **J: DIVYA DESANGAL**

### **J.2. TIRUVENKATAM**

=====  
**Location:** Tirupati, Tirumalai

**KshEtram:** Adi Varaaha KshEtram

**Perumal:** Govindarajar/ Bhujanga Sayanam / Facing East

**Thaayaar:** PuNDarikavalli

#### **I. In Tirumalai:**

**Perumal:** Moolavar: TiruvEnkaTamuDaiyaan, Srinivasan, VEnkaTachalapati, Baalaaji, Standing/Facing East

**Utsavar:** KalyaaNa VernkatEswara

**PushkaraNi:** sEshaachala aka Swami PushkaraNi,

**Theerthams (15):** KOneri, VaikunTa , Chakra, Japali, Aanaaksha, Paapavinaasam, Ganga, PaaNDava, Kumaradhaarai, RamakrishNa, Thumburu, sEshaachala, Sukasandhana, Yuddhakala, and Seetarama

**Vimaanam:** Anandanilaya Vimaanam

**Pratyaksham:** ThoNDamaan, shanmukha

#### **II. In Tiruchanoor: (Mangaapuram)**

**Thaayaar:** AlarmEI Mangai, Padmaavati/ Facing East

**PushkaraNi:** PadmasarOvar

#### **Specialties**

##### **Adi Varaahar Sannidi:**

- It is customary to have darshan of Lord Aadi Varaaha before Lord Srinivasa. Prasaadam to Lord Srinivasa is first offered to Varaaha Perumal.
- *Tirumalai is situated amidst 7 hills. They are-*

- Anantaadri	- SEshaachala
- Anjanaadri	- VEdaachala
- GaruDaachala	- vEnkaTaadri
	- Vrishabhaadri

- Both Paancharaatra and Vaikhaanasa agamas are followed here.
- Sri srisaila poorNa (Tirumalai Nambi) maternal uncle and one of the Achaaryas of Bhagavad Ramanuja did Teertha kainklyam. He is affectionately called "Taata" and his Vamsa paramparai is called "Tatachariars"
- AdivaNN SatakOpa constructed the steps to Tirumalai.
- The BrahmOtsavam during PuraTTasi (September- October) at Tirumalai and during Kaarthigai (October- November) at Tiruchanoor are important festivals.
- Legend has it that when Bhrigu Mahrishi kicked the Lord on his chest and the Lord ignored it, his spouse Mahalakshmi got angry and left to BhoolOka. The Lord came in search of her and found her settled under a tamarind tree at Tirumalai assuming the name "PadmaavatI" (daughter of Akaasa Raja. The Lord wanted to marry her but had to take a huge loan for this purpose from KubEra. It is believed that the Lord is repaying to this day and will continue to do so till the end of Kali Yuga.

## **AN INTRODUCTION**

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TIRUVENKADAM:**

We are living in "Kaliyuga"

Vishnu Purana portrays the extent of deterioration of standards in this yuga:

- In the Kali Yuga, there will be numerous rulers vying with each other.
- They will have no character.
- Violence, falsehood, and wickedness will be the order of the day.
- Piety and good nature will dwindle slowly.
- The man of property alone will be venerated.
- Power and pelf only would draw devotion.
- Passion and lust will be the only attraction between the sexes.
- Women will be the objects of sensual pleasure.
- Dishonesty will be the bottom line of subsistence.
- Learned people will be ridiculed and put to shame.
- The word of the wealthy person will be the only law.
- People will not live for more than 23 years by the time the Kaliyuga draws to a close.
- Satva, enlightening goodness will become extinct.
- No wise man, no true saint, no one uttering truth and standing by his sacred word can be seen on the face of earth.
- Old people will try to behave like the young and the young will lack the candor of youth. Everyone will be indulging in banal vulgarity"
- A Hindu verse says that Kaliyuga is so abominable that if a person tells the truth, he will be beaten but if he lies, cheats and bluffs, he will be liked and accepted.
- KALI MAHATMYAM says: "Since it is more than 5,000 years since Kali age started, there will be debasement of Caste, decline in religion and Vedic studies, degeneration, violence, ignorance, sorrow, materialism, chaos, evil, absence of devotion, upsurge in lust and anger in general and abuse of virtuous persons"

The Kalki Avatara is sure to take place before the end of this Kali Yuga. For reassuring us of His apocalyptic final Avatara, the Lord has appeared meanwhile in *Archa* form as TiruvenkaTam udaiyan to save the souls of Bhaktas still clinging to values and virtues laid down in the Saastras. As the Lord took Avatara -

- as Nrisimha in Kritayuga,
- as He did as Sri Rama in Tretayuga, and
- as Lord Krishna in Dvaaparayuga,
- He appears as VenkaTeswara in this Kaliyuga in Archa form (till His Avatara as Kalki)

There is a famous Sloka which says this:

*KritE nrusimha bhoothsou TrEtaayaam Raghunandana:/*  
*DvaaparE Vaasudevas Cha Kalou Venkata naayaka://*

There is another Sloka attesting to the importance of VenkaTaachalam mountain itself.

*KritE Vrishaadrim vakshyanthi TrEtaayaam anjanaachalam/*  
*DvaaparE Sesha sailEthi Kalou Sree VenkaTaachalam //*

Meaning: It is said that the mountains of *Vrishabaadri*, *Anjanaachalam*, *Seshasailam* and *Venkataachalam* are the reputed ones during *Krita*, *Treta*, *Dvaapara* and *Kali Yuga* respectively.

It is said that in the olden days, people used to crawl all the way up without setting foot on the divine mountain. Later on, people used to prostrate before climbing the mountain chanting "*VenkaTa vaasinE namah*" Indeed, a salutation to the very inhabitants of the holy hills!

Today, we have automobiles to carry us to the top of the hills. May be, not in the distant future, we will have not only cable cars but also even choppers to take us up!

Elders used to mention that the very mountain bestows immortality to Celestials (*VINNOOr*), Liberation to atmospheric beings (*VaanOr*) and extinguishing sins of terrestrial beings (*MaNNavar*)

*VenkOr amrutha beejam syaath, KaTam aiswaryam dadhaathi cha Paapa vinaasanam karoThi ithi*  
*UchyathE*

Swami Desika in his *Dayaa Sathakam* says that the *TiruvenkaTamudaiyaan* is the Sugarcane; His mercy is the juice; It is He who raises the crop and allows it to flow and solidify into sugar cube in the form of the seven hills.

He goes one step further and implies that while *Thaayaar* is compassion incarnate and *Daya* can tolerate sins, the *Tirumalai* mountain actually destroys sins!

*PrapadhyE thum girim praaya: Sreenivaasa anukampayaa/*  
*Ikshusaara sravanthyEva yanmoorthyaa sarkaraayitham //*

Bhagavad Ramanuja says that Lord *Sreenivaasa* stands on top of *Upanishads* and proclaims His protection: *Sruthi sirasi BrahmaNI SreenivaasE*. Without "*Sree*", "*nivaasa*" will be meaningless!

*Bheeshma Pitaamaha* in *Sri Vishnu Sahasranaamam* emphasizes the role of *Sri* when he repeats this *Sri* 9 times:

*Sreedha:, Sreesa:, Sreenivaasa:, Sreenidhi, Sreevibhaavan:, Sreedhara:, Sreekara:, SrEya:, Sreemaan*

*Madhwaacharya* also visualizes that the Lord seems to have climbed to the very top of the mountain and stands there looking with His compassion in all directions to protect the world :

*Drishtvaa Disi Disi sveeyaan dayayaa paalayan iva/*  
*vardhathE viswathas Chakshu: VenkatE VenkaTEswara://*

The word *TiruvenkaTam* can mean both *Tiru* and *VenkaTam* or *VenkaTam* blessed by *Tiru*

The word *Vem* means sins *kaTam* means to destroy. There is a solitaire in Tamil which says:

*Vem koDum PaavangaL ellaam VenthiDa seivathaal Nalla*

*MangaLam porundhum seer VenkaTa malai aanadhu* which means "Because the mountain incinerates all our sins, it has acquired the auspicious name of *VenkaTam*"

**TIRUVENKATAMUDAIYANUM AZHWAARGAL ANUBHAVAMS**

**MANGALAASAASANAMS TOTAL: 202**

**(Numerator: Composed/ Denominator: Commented)**

I. Poigai Azhwar:	10/3
II. Bhudat Azhwar:	09/1
III. pEy Azhwar:	19/2
IV. Tirumazhisai Azhwar:	15/3
V. Nammazhwar:	52 /24
VI. Periyaazhwar:	07/1
VII. Andal:	16 /1
VIII. Kulasekara Azhwar:	11 /10
IX. TiruppaaaN Azhwar	02/1
X. Tirumangai Azhwar:	61/12
XI. SVD Daya satakam	01 /1
SVD Adikara sangraham	01/1
XII. Pillai Perumal Iyengar	01/1

**Note:**

**ThoNDar aDIp poDi Azhwar and Madura Kavi Azhwar have not submitted any Paasurams.**

**I. POIGAI AZHWAAR  
MUDAL TIRUVANTADI:**

*i. ezhuvaar viDai koLvaar een thuzhaayanai  
vazhuvaa vagai ninaindhu vaigal - thozhuvaar  
vinai chuDarai nandhuvikkum vEmkaTamE, vanOr  
mana chuDarai thhoNDum malai (26)*

Some pray for wealth; Some may want *kaivalyam* (enjoying one's own soul); others would pray for being in the company of the Lord who wears the fragrant TuLasi garlands - all in the early morning (*vaigal*). But, in any case, the mountain rids them all their sins and enables them to achieve their objectives. So, we also can hope to get our sins extinguished by going to TiruvEmkaTam.

*Ezhvaar:* Those who wish to secure wealth (*Aiswaryarthi*)

*ViDai koLvaar:* Those who prefer to secure *kaivalya anubhavam*

*VaanOr:* *Nitya sooris*.

*Why Nityasooris?* The Lord's easy accessibility (*soulabhyam*) shines in its full glory only in VemkaTa mountain.

*ii. VenkaTamum viNNagarum vehkaavum ahkaa  
poonkiDangin naal kOval ponnagarum - naangiDathum  
ninraan, irundhaan, kiDanthaan, naDanthaanE  
enraal. keDumaam iDar (77)*

Even if you mention that He stood, He sat, He lay down and He walked at *VenkaTam, ViNNagaram,*

*Vehkaa*, and *TirukkOvalur*- all our miseries will be destroyed. Note that the first DivyadEsam mentioned is VenkaTam.

This is a favorite theme with all Azhwars especially the 3 *Mudal Azhwars*, *Naamaazhwar* and Tirumangai Azhwar. Let us enjoy a random sampling of their *Paasurams*.

**(iii)** *uLan kaNDaai nannenjE! Uthaman enrum*  
*uLan kaNDaai ulluvaar uLLathu - uLan kaNDaai*  
*veLLathiln uLLaanum vEnkatathu mEyaanum*  
*uLLathiln uLLaan enru Oore/ (99)*

Meaning:

Oh! My heart! You know that the Lord of TiruvEnkaTam is the Supreme Being (*uthaman*). He is always with us. He is not only in the milky ocean and TiruvEnkaTam but also in the hearts of those who have Him in their heart. So, please always remember Him (*uLLam* is heart, not mind - because the heart can show the right path while the mind will run after worldly pleasures)

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## **II. BHUDAT AZHWAR**

### **IRANDAM TIRUVANTADHI**

*verpenru irum sOlai vEnkaTam enru ivviraNDum*  
*nirpenru nee madhikkum neermai pOl -*  
*Nirpenru uLam kOyil uLLam vaithu uLLinEn*  
*veLLthu iLam kovil kai viDEI enru*

Meaning

Oh! Lord of TiruvEnkaTam! I know that you have made my heart your favorite temple (*Moola sthaanam*) just like Tirumaalirum SOLai and TiruvEnkaTam. I would advise you not to abandon the milky ocean. Remember that it is also your Baalaalayam-(*ILam Kovil*)?- temporary resting place.

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## **PEYAAZHVAR**

### **MOONRAAM TIRUVANTADHI (39)**

(i)

*iraiyaa nilanaagi eNDisaiyum thaanaayi*  
*maraiyaa marai poruLaai vaanaai - pirai vaaindha*  
*veLLathu aruvi viLankoli neer vEnaktathaana*  
*uLLathuin uLLe uLan*

Meaning

Oh! Lord of TiruvEnkaTam! You are the possessor of all the worlds.  
You are the in-dweller (*antharyaami*) of this earth and all that is in it.  
You are occupying all the eight directions.  
You published the Vedas.  
You are yourself the subject and object of all the Vedas.  
You are the Lord of your permanent abode (*nityavibhoothi*).  
You came down to the sky-scraper mountain of TiruvEnkaTam from which  
flow the pristine clear waterfalls with a huge roar.  
I know why you had chosen this mountain.  
It is only to gain access to my heart!  
I also know that having got into my heart you never like to leave it!

**(ii)**

*uLan kaNDaai nannenjE! Uthaman enrumu*  
*uULan kaNDaai uLLuvaar uLLathu -*  
*uLan kaNDaai viNNoDungak kODu uyaraum veenkaruvi Venkatathaana*  
*maNNoDunga thaana aLantha mann (40)*

Meaning:

Oh! My good heart! This Lord of TiruvEnkaTam is known to come into the hearts of those who think of

Him. That is why He abandoned His permanent abode and has taken shelter under this mountain with peaks touching the heavens and which is full of beautiful waterfalls; He is the one ever anxious to save those who resort to Him. Did He not take back His own earth from Mahaabali after assuring Himself of the correctness of its measurements? When He has come into my heart, what more is there for me to desire?

(Note that he almost repeats verbatim the first 2 lines what Poigai Azhwar says (vide (i) above)

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### III. TIRUMAZHISAI AZHWAAR NAANMUKHAN TIRUVANTADHI

*i. Senru VaNabguminO sENuyar vEmkatathai  
ninru vinai keDukkum neermiyaal - enrum  
kaDikkamala naanmukanum kaNN moonrathanum  
aDi kamalam iTTEthumangu (42)*

Go, bow to the very mountain says the Azhwar. Why?  
Azhwar lets out a secret. Even the Brahma and other Devas go and offer flowers at the feet of the Lord there because the mountain by its very nature incinerates all sins.

*ii. mangul thOi chenni vaDavEnkaTathaanai  
kangul pugundhaargaL kaappaNivaan - thingaL  
saDaiyEra vaithaanum thaamarai mElaanum  
kuDaiyEra thaam kuvithukkoNdu (43)*

All divine beings including the Siva who wears the moon on his matted hair (*saDai*) and Brahma who sprang out of the lotus flower bow to vEnkaTavan only. They go to VenkaTam mountain whose peaks (*chenni*) rise above the clouds (*mangul*) at nightfall (*kangul*) to present their offerings to Him to rid themselves of their karma. (It is believed that the celestials assemble at His *Sannidhi* during the night to offer their worship and Poigai Azhwar says that they worship early morning (*vaigal*) (Vide *Mudal Tiruvantaadi* 26)

*iii. vEnkaTamE viNNOOr thozhuvadum meimmiyaal  
vEnkaTamE mei vinai nOi theerpathuvum  
vEnkaTamE dhaanavarai veezha than aazhi paDai thoTTu  
vaanavarai kaappaan malai (48)*

vEnkaTam is where Devas congregate to offer worship; vEnkaTam really burns even interminable sins (relating to both the soul and the body (*mei nOi* and *vinai nOi*) that can be used up only by experiencing their effects; vEnkaTam is the place where the Lord stands ever ready to save His devotees with His disc ready at hand.

### IV. NAMMAZHVAR TIRUVOIMOZHI

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*i. vEm Katangal meymmEl vinai mutravum  
thAngaL thungatku nallanavE seivaar  
vEnkaDathu Uraivaarkku nama vennalaan  
kaDamai, adhu sumanthaarkatE (3.3.6)*

It is our duty to offer our obeisance to the very denizens of VenkaTam mountain because of their innate auspicious-ness being in such a place and this very act is sure to save us from our sins.

*ii. Kunram yEnthi uLir mazhai kaathavan*

*anru jnaalam aLandha piraan- paran  
senru sER TiruvEnkaTa maamalai  
onrumE thozha namm vinai OyumE (3.3.8)*

When He appeared as Krishna, He saved the cows and cowherds from biting cold by lifting the huge *GOvardhanam* mountain; When He appeared as *Trivikrama*, He measured the whole universe. Such a Lord has taken His abode presently at this VenkaTam. The very act of bowing to the mountain will remove our sins.

(iii) on Tiruvenkatavan being the real parent at all times  
*i. pOginra kaalangaL, pOya kaalangaL, pOgu kaalangaL  
Thaai thanthai uyir aaginraai! Unnai naan aDainthEn viDuvEnO  
Paaginra thol pugazh moovulagukkum naathanE! Paramaa!  
ThaNN VemkaTam mEginraai! ThanDuzhaai virai naaru gaNNiyanE! (2.6.10)*

"Oh! vEmkaTava! You are my father, mother, and soul to me in the past, present and in the future also. You are the Lord of the three worlds. Your auspicious qualities (*gaNNiyan*) is well known throughout and everywhere. Having got you, will I ever leave you?"

*iv. enthai thanthai thanthai thanthaikkum  
munthai, vaanavar vaanavar kOnODum,  
sindhu poo magizhum TiruvEnkaTathu,  
anthamil pugazh kaar ezhil aNNaIE (3.3.2)*

"Oh! vEmkaTava! You have been the primordial parent to generations of my forefathers and to me. You stand as such in the fragrance of the Sindhu flowers and the fragrance of your glory has no end too (*anthamil pugazh*)"

=====

(v) Tiruvenkatamudauyan is in my heart!  
*yennthai! thaNN TiruvEnkaTathuL  
ninraai! Ilangai setraai! Maraamaram  
painthaaL yEzhu uruve oru vaaLi  
kOtha villaa!  
kondhaar ThaNNan thuzhaayinaai! AmudE!  
unnai yennuLLE kuzhaitha vem  
maindhaa! VaanErE!  
ini engu pOginrathE? (2.6.9)*

Meaning:

Oh! MY father! You stand on top of the cool vEnkaTa Mountain! You destroyed Lanka! With your bow and a single arrow, you pierced holes at one stroke in each of the Seven stout trees (*maraamaram*)! ; You wear the fragrant bunches of the holy basil! You are my nectar! You who has made TiruvEnkaTam your abode. You are the Lord of all the celestials. Leaving all these, how come you chose to get into me, and become one with me - a poor human being? Having thus got into me, no way can you go away anywhere!?

Nammazhwar's 4 works are the essence of the 4 *Vedas*. Of these, Tiruvoimozhi takes the pride of place as the essence of *Saama Vedam*. They convey not only the emotional and sentimental outpourings of the Azhwar but also contain deep inner esoteric meanings of the eternal truths (*tattvas*) central to *Srivaishnavam*. While all the verses are gems leaving no scope for choosing one over the other, we are compelled to limit ourselves to the enjoyment of only a few of these *Paasurams* dedicated to TiruvEnkaTam.

(vi) ozhivil kaalamellaam uDanaai manni  
vazhuvilaa aDimai seyya vENDum naam  
Thezhi kural aruvi TiruvEnkaTathu  
ezhil koL sOthi enthai thanthai thanthaikkE 3.3.1

Meaning:

We should go, stay close to the Lord at TiruvEnkaTam and render faultless service incessantly and forever. The Lord whose place is beautified with clear waterfalls, the Lord who shines with incomparable effulgence, the Lord who is the primordial father for our countless generations before and hereafter.

Comments:

This verse is the very life - breath of *Srivaishnava Sampradaya*. The Azhwar desires that he should render *Vazhuvillaa ADimai* (faultless service) without interruption (*Ozhivil*) forever (*Kalam ellaam*) being always with the Lord (*UDanaai Manni*). He desires to do service like what Lakshmana did in the forest and what Bharata did in Ayodhya.

*Kaalam Ellaam* might mean including the past. How is it possible to do service retrospectively? The implication is that the service done from now on should be so intense and so dedicated as to make up for the opportunity lost in the past.

How can Lakshmana be cited as role model of *Kaalamellam*, *Udanaai Manni* and *Vazhuvilaa ADimai* etc.? He did fail on every count. Let us see how:

**First**, he did not stay with Rama when Rama went after the mysterious stag. Hence, he failed in keeping **constant** company that he promised viz. *Sarva desa, Sarva Kaala, Sarva Avasta* etc. Even when Rama and Sita were together privately, Lakshmana stood outside possibly to avoid embarrassment to the couple enjoying each other's company.

In an imaginary dialogue, Acharyas used to say, that Lakshmana asked the Azhwar what he would have done in the circumstances. Azhwar replied that he would not leave the place but convert himself into a lamp (*Kutthu ViLakku*) or a stepping stone (*PaDik kall*) or some such inanimate object and would have stayed put there itself and thus avoided embarrassment.

**Second**, He did not render ' *Vazhuvillaa* ' faultless service because when Rama had specifically asked him to stay and guard Sri Sita, he left her when she uttered some harsh words. This indeed was *Dharma sankamTam* (dilemma) for Lakshmana but it is undeniable that he transgressed the specific orders of Rama and his own promise "*Aham Sravam Karishyaami*".

The Azhwar is said to have replied that in this event, being a *Nityasuri* especially the one who is reputed to be *Senraal KuDaiyaam, irundhaal Simhaasanamaam, ninraal maravaDiyaam* etc., he would have split his personality one to guard Sita and the other to accompany Rama. All this may look like poetical fancy and imagination running riot, but the beauty of the imagination cannot go un-admired.

*Vazhuvillaaa* also means devoid of *Ahamkara, Mamakara*, and craving for name or fame, sense of competition or jealousy, *Sva-boghyatha* attitude (i.e.) Sense of self- gratification (Vide Sri Vachana Bhushanam)

Well. That was in *TrEtaa Yuga*.

What about Kali Yuga when the Azhwar lived?

Precisely for giving an opportunity for devotees like Azhwar that the Lord had come all the way down to the earth in Tiru VenkaTam. The service one expects to do in SrivaikuNTam can be done HERE AND NOW and the Lord would in His *Soulabhyam* be prepared to accept it.

*EzhiL KoLL Jothi*: His Soundaryam Also, it means the one who shines in the company of PiraaTTI. *EzhiL=*

*PiraaTTI (Mahalakshmi)*. Also means the light atop the mountain.

Enthai: Swami, Seshi

*ThanthaiKKE*: The emphasis on KE denotes '*akaaraartha eva*' (i.e.) for the sake of the Lord ONLY, the focal emphasis of *Tirumantram*, viz. The *Sesha- Seshi bhaavam*

It would appear that Azhwar Tiruvaranga Perumal Araiyaar while reciting this verse was so overwhelmed by emotion that he would go on repeating "*Ozhivil Kaalam ellaam, Kaalam ellaam, Kaalam ellaam*" for long without proceeding further.

Swami Desikan concludes the Nigamana Adhikara of his Srimad Rahasya Traya Saram quoting this verse "*Sarveswaran Thaalinaik Keezh Ozhivil Kaalam Ellaam Udanaai Manni Vazhuvillaa Adimai Seyya Vendum Naam Enra manOrathathin PaDiye Sarva Desa, Sarva Kaala, Sarva Avasthochita, Sarva Vidha KainkaryankaLaiyum Petru Vaazhvaarka* "

*(vii) sonnaal virOdham idhu aagilum solluvEn! kENminO!*

*yen naavil in kavi yaan oruvarkkum koDukkilEn*

*thennaa thenaa enru vaNDu mural TiruvEnkaTathu*

*ennaanaai ennappan em perumaan uLan aagavE 3.9.1*

Meaning:

"Friends! Poets! Countrymen! Lend me your ears" Azhwar seems to say. "You might feel offended if I say this. But I cannot help telling the truth for your good! You folks are running after petty pleasures and silly satisfactions wasting your energies by singing paeans of praise of unworthy entities. I, for one, would never misuse my tongue in such pursuits but would dedicate all my hymns at the feet of my father, the Lord of TiruvEnkaTam who is majestic like the mighty elephant and in whose place bees hum his glory".

Comments:

The Azhwar says that we should use the faculties granted by the Lord only for His purpose and not waste on others. The Azhwar feels sorry for those who use their literary talents to suppressing their defects (*suppressio veri*) and invent non-existent qualities in people (*suggestio falsi*) - all for "a few dollars more" or for currying some silly gains from them. He asks them to give up this unholy habit and unavailing exercise and turn to sing about the Lord who has all the auspicious qualities and who is totally devoid of any blemishes and who alone can grant more than what one could wish for, even in their wildest imagination. Seeing the apathy of people to this appeal, he turns to himself and says at least for his part, he would practice what he preached.

Nampillai says that the *Azhwar's* regaining composure in this thought is like a pilgrim in a party who was somehow spared and let off with his possessions while all the rest in the party were plundered by highway robbers.

The Azhwar seems to imply -

I was thinking that only my objective in life was to attain Him. But, He seems to think that His only objective is to hear me singing about Him and that is why He is standing in Tirumalai not minding the pain and cramp affecting His legs by standing indefinitely for this!?

What an *Anubhavam!*

*(viii) maari maaraatha thaNNam malai vEnkaTathu aNNalai*

*vaari maaraatha paim poom pozhil soozh kurugoor nagar*

*kaari maaran saTakOpan soll aayirathu ippaththaaL*

*vEri maaraatha poomEl iruppaaL vinai theerkkumE 4.5.11*

Meaning:

The cool rains fall mainly on the hills and plains of TiruvEnkaTam. Here stands the Lord with His

proverbial compassion. You know who has sung on Him *Kaari Maaran* a.k.a. SaTakOpan of Tirukkurugoor that abounds in gardens of fragrant flowers.

You know what will happen?

Competing with the Lord, Thayar who sits on the fragrant lotus flower will rush with unsurpassed compassion to protect those who recite these 10 out of the 1000 Paasurams of Tiruvoimozhi

Comments:

Why should Thaayaar do this?

The secret is that She had recommended as mediatrix (*Purushaakaaram*) to the jivas in the first place for the Lord's grace. It is but natural for Her to overtake the Lord in granting protection to Her protégé!

**(ix) In this part, we continue to enjoy a few more of the *Tiruvoimozhi PaasurangaL*:**

***ulagam uNDa peru vaayaa! Ulappil keerthi ammaanE!***

***nilavum suDar soozh oLi moorthi! neDiyaa! adiyEn aar uyirE!***

***thiladham ulagukkaai ninra TiruvEnkaTathu em perumaanE!***

***Kula thol aDiyEn una Paadam kooDum aaru kooraaE 6.10.1***

**Meaning:**

**Oh! Lord of TiruvEnkaTam, which is verily the crowning auspicious mark on the forehead of the world (*tilakam*)! You have such a huge appetite that you literally gobbled up with your huge mouth and held in safekeeping the entire universe! Your glory is without limit! You shine in pure *Suddha Satvam* both within and without! Not only now but also for generations have I been your slave. Remember this and instruct me the way to attain your feet.**

**Comments:**

***Peru Vaayaa:***

**The Azhwar seems to ask the Lord -**

**- Is my eagerness to reach you any less than the size of the world you swallowed?**

**- You saved the world at the time of the deluge. Can you not save me now from the deluge of Samsaara in which I am drowning?**

**- You saved the world when nobody sought your help. Here I am crying hoarse for your attention. Can you not show mercy on me?**

**- You enlarged your appetite for the universe, Have you enlarged also your indifference to those who surrender at your feet?**

**- Did I ask you to save my body (*Sareera RakshaNam*)?**

**Did I not ask only for "SOS" (saving my Soul (*Aatma RakshaNam*))?**

**Why this indifference?**

***Ulappil Keerthi ammaanE:***

**Your glory is limitless. How? Those who have surrendered to you can live even amid their enemies without fear because of your care. Did not the serpent live safely as an ornament to GaruDa, because you had granted protection to it? I am sure such a one can save me too!**

***neDiyaa:* refers to the *Svaroopaa roopa guNa* etc. of the Lord as the Lord.**

***Kulathol aDiyEn:* refers to the *svaroopam* of the Azhwar as His eternal slave.**

***Aaaru: Aarudhal in Tamizh.* The reference is to the reassurance promised by the Lord "Maa Suchah in Charama Slokam.**

**(x) *agalakillEn iraiyum - enru alarmEl mangai urai maarbhaa!***

***nigaril pugahaai! Ulagam moonru uDaiyaa! ennai aalwaanE!***

***nigaril amarar muni gaNangaL virumbhum TiruvEnkaTathaanE!***

***pugal onrum illaa aDiyEn unn aDik keezh amarndhu pugunthEnE! 6.10.10***

**Meaning:**

Oh! Lord of TiruvEnkaTam! Your fame in protecting your devotees is nonpareil. Your suzerainty over the three worlds is equally well known. You are my Lord. It is also known that Celestials and Sages come in droves yearning to have your Darsanam. The fact that the ever compassionate Thaayaar Mahaalakshmi always rests on your chest saying that she will never ever leave Her seat in your heart but will stay put there, This is so reassuring to me that I have taken the liberty to surrender at your feet as my TiruvEnkaTam! Only you have to save me."

You are my only refuge. I have no other go.

Comments:

- In the previous decad, the Azhwar invoked the Lord and therefore, it is considered the essence of Tirumantram.
- In this decad, he invokes the PiraaTTi who is always and without interruption residing in the heart of Bhagavaan to exercise her *Purushaakaara* and surrenders. This is, therefore, considered to be the essence of *Dvaya Mantra*.

Let us see how this Paasuram reflects the *Dvaya Mantra*:

Alarmel Mangai: Sri

Agalakillen: The intervening 'Math'

From Nigaril Pugazhaai to *TiruvEnkadathaane*: Narayana

*Unn Adik Keezh*: Charanou

*Pugunthu*: Saranam

*Amarndhu*: Prapadhye.

(Acharyas used to explain this as alluding to the 2nd line of Dvayam – (SrimatE NarayaNaaya namah)

*Agalakillen*: cf. Dhyaana Sloka of Dvaya Mantra "*Srikaanthyya Aalingitham*". She never released the Lord from the grip of her embrace.

Venkatadri Swami of Arasaanipaalai in his *Lakshmi Sahasram* humorously remarks how even when the Lord appeared as Vaamana Brahmachari before Mahaabali, the *PiraaTTi* was still adorning the Lord's chest. He says that the Lord covered her up with His deer skin upper cloth. Why?

If the Lord had not done so, *PiraaTTi's KaTaaksham* would have fallen directly on Mahaabali, thus defeating the very purpose of the Lord in His attempt to dispossess Mahaabali!

It is this *Purushaakaaram* that saved the raven

It is the absence of *Purushaakaaram* that led to the downfall of Ravana

The word *AgalakillEn* suggests that PiraaTTi is inseparable from the Lord both in *Upaaya dasa* (means) and *Praapti dasa* (goal)

The word *PugundEn* is in Past tense.

*Panneer aayirap paDi* explains that as the Azhwar had already taken refuge at the Lord's feet, there was no occasion for him either to do anything else or to go anywhere else and was destined to stay put there doing eternal *kainkaryam*.

You will remember that the Azhwar started Tiruvoimozhi with the words "*Tuyar aru SuDar*

***aDi***-(the feet that dispel misery). It is worthy of note that in this Paasuram, he completes his surrender referring to the same feet as "*aDik keezh*".

Both the expressions at the alpha and omega of Tiruvoimozhi viz. *SuDar aDi* and *aDik keezh* blast the concept of the *niraakaara, niravayava Brahmam* espoused by Advaitins.

Another interesting point to note in this verse is to remind how the Lord of TiruvEnkaTam shows his feet with his right palm as the refuge and how His pose of protective embrace indicated by his left hand is so reassuring.

When BhaTTar was about to initiate Azhagiya Manavaala Araiya into *Dvaya Mantram*, he asked all the assembled Sishyas to move out. Nanjeeyar also went out with a heavy heart that even he had been asked to clear out. But BhaTTar endearingly inquired the whereabouts of Nanjeeyar, called him back and asked him to witness the initiation. Nampillai says that Nanjeeyar used to mention this incident with pride in his *KaalakshEpa*m sessions.

(xi) *kooraai neeraai nilanaagik koDuvall asurar kulamellaam  
seeraa eriyum Tiru nEmi valavaa! deivak kOmaanE!  
sEraar sunai thaamarai sen thee malarum TiruvEnkaTathaanE!  
aaraa anbil aDiyEn unn aDi sEr vaNNam aruLaayE 6.10.2*

Meaning:

Oh! Lord of TiruvEnkaTam, where the red lotus flowers blossom in the muddy ponds and look like the red flames arising therefrom! You are the Lord of *Nityasuris*. You hold on your right hand the sharp pointed disc, which emitted an infernal fire to incinerate the evil Asuras and reduced them to cinders. It shines brilliantly in having accomplished this. You know my insatiable love (*aaraa anbil*) towards you. Please show me the way to reach your feet.

Comment:

If the Lord might turn him away because of his sins, the Azhwar asks the Lord:  
Is your fiery disc that destroyed the wicked *Asuras* not capable of destroying the obstacles to my reaching you and enjoying the grand sight of seeing you holding such a disc?

Here seems to be an indirect allusion to the *Sudrasana Dhyaana Slokam*:

*Sudarsana! Mahaajvaala! kOTi soorya sama prabha!  
agjnaana thimira anthasya mE dEva! vishNOor maargam pradarsaya*

Meaning:

Oh! Brilliantly shining Sudarsana! Your brilliance is equal to a thousand Suns appearing at the same time. I am blind with ignorance. Please throw light on the path to the Kingdom of Lord VishNu.

*sEraar sunai thaamarai senthee malarum:*

Nampillai commented

*"eNNaiyaalE eriyum viLakku ozhiya,  
neeraalE eriyum viLakku kanDu anubhavikka kaaNum  
iver aasaip paDukirathu"*

Meaning:

The Azhwar appeared to enjoy seeing the wonder of lights burning with water, while normally they can burn only with oil.

(xii) The word *Anbil* answers a little-known fact about this well-known Azhwar! We all know that Nammazhwar did his *SaraNaagathi* at the feet of TiruvEnkaTamudayaan. (Vide *agalakillEn* paasuram cited above)

Where in the world that the Azhwar finally got what he has been yearning for all along pleading soulfully to the different deities in the different Divya Desams?

The very last work of Nammaazhwar is Tiruvoimozhi. The very last Divyadesam he had sung in this (his swan-song, as it were) - is on this *Anbil-Appak KuDathaan* (traditionally referred to as the twin Divya Desams that lie on either banks of *KoLLiDam* with the name of Sundararajan (*Vadivazhagiya Nambi*) in Anbil and *Appak KuDathaan* in TiruppEr-nagar). (Vide Tiruvoimozhi 10.8.1 to 11).

This is the Divya Desam where the Lord who had devoured the seven clouds, seven seas and seven mountains filled completely *Azhwar's Nenju* (*Nenju Niraiya Pugunthaan*) and the Azhwar devoured the "*Aaraa Vayitraanai Adanga PiDithEnE*" (10.8.2).

### **A case of divine cannibalism as A. K. Ramanujan would put it!**

This is the Divya Desam where the Azhwar puts the Lord in a spot and demands an explanation as to why He, who was indifferent to him so far, thought it fit **HERE** (in *TiruppEr-nagar*) and **NOW** (at long last) to fill his *Nenju*.

*(xiii) inru ennaip poruL aakkith thannai ennuL vaithaan  
Anru ennai puram pOgap puNarthathu en seivaan?  
Kunrannath thigazh maaDangaL soozh TiruppEraan  
Onru enakku aruL seyya uNarthal utrEnE?*

It is to be noted that it was only while mentioning this Divya Desam, the Azhwar puts this inconvenient question to the Lord asking:

How come you have found me worthy of being taken to your Kingdom only now and why were you indifferent all these days? I need an answer right now (10.8.9)

When someone asked BhaTTar what did the Lord reply to this, he said that the Lord could not give a convincing reply and had to hang His head, making a circular mark on the ground! (Vide *EeDu*)

In his eagerness to take the Azhwar to Paramapadam, The Lord almost sought his excuse by diverting the conversation by asking what else Azhwar wanted.

To this, the Azhwar finally seems to have demanded that indeed, he had got what he wanted **HERE**, but that he wanted this *Kainkarya Sri* to continue in *Paramapadam* also.

*(xiv) "Utren Ugandhu Pani Seithu Una Paadam Petraen; Eedhe Innum Venduvadhey Endhaai" (10.8.10)*

Whatever comes after this decad 10.8 is description of

- Chetana and
- Achetanas (10.9.1)
- The higher worlds (10.9.2)
- Adivaahikas (10.9.3)
- The Celestials (10.9.4)
- Varuna Indra and others (10.9.5)
- Veda strees (10.9,6)

- Maruthganas and Vasus (10.9.7)
- Nityasuris (10.9.8,9)
- Reception by the Lord (10.9.10) and
- Phalasruti (10.9.11)

The entire decad 10.10 is the Epilogue (*Nigamanam*) of Tiruvoimozhi.

Thus, the decad dealing with TiruppEr-nagar is the *Charama* (last) decad on Divya Desams and no other Divya Desam came to be sung after this.

Thus, the Azhwar ascended to *Paramapadam* only at this **Anbil-Tiruppernagar** Divya Desam - the culmination and consummation of all his psalms hailed as *Vedam* in Tamil and the Azhwar himself known as "*Vedam Tamizh Seitha Maaran*".

As stated earlier, *Anbil- Appak-KuDathaan* is a **twin Divyadesam** located on either side of *KoLLiDam* river They are always spoken of in the fashion of modern day twin cities, say of Hyderabad- Secunderabad, Delhi-New Delhi etc.

This tradition is no invention but was conferred by no less a personality than Tirumazhisai Azhwar who has sung the twin Divya Desam of Anbil- Appak-kuDathaan as "**PER-ANBIL**" Vide his famous Paasuram in Naanmughan Tiruvanathaadhi (36)

*naagathiNai kuDanthai vehkhaa Tiruvev vuLL*  
*naagathaNai arangam PERANBIL - naagath*  
*thaNaip PaarkkaDal kiDakkum Aadhi neDumaal*  
*aNaippar karuthan aavaan*

(xv) In the 6th "*Pathu*", Nammazhwar assumes the role of the mother of the heroine and complains how in her love for Lord TiruvenkaTamudaiyan, her daughter sacrificed numerous precious things that adorned her. This is a very emotionally surcharged decad that catalogues what her daughter had lost and appeals to the Lord that He should not delay His grace anymore to her.

*Maalukku Vaiyam aLantha maNaaLarkku,*  
*Neelak karu mEgha nyaayarkku,*  
*KOLach senthaamaraik kaNNarkku, - enn kongalar*  
*YElak kuzhali izhandhathu **SANGHE** (6.6.1)*

Oh! Lord! In constantly thinking of -

- your soft and blue hued form and lotus like eyes

- your feet that measured the three worlds,

She became head over heels in love with you so much that she has become so emaciated, lean and thin that her bangles fell off her hands!

**Sanghu** = Bangles

(xvi) *Sanku vill vaaL thaNDu sakkarak kaiyarkku,*  
*senkani vaai seyya thaamaraik kaNNarkku,*  
*kongalar thaNNan thuzhaai muDi yaanukku, - enn*  
*mangai izhandhathu **MAAMAI NIRAME** (6.6.2)*

Oh! Lord! My daughter has fallen for

- your ruddy lips and eyes,

- your crown adorned with cool and honey dripping *ThuLasi* garlands and

- your manner of wielding your five weapons.  
In pining for you, she has lost her wonderfully attractive complexion.  
**MAAMAI NIRAM** = Beautiful complexion

(xvii) *niram kariyaanukku neeDu ulagu unDa,  
thiram kiLar vaai siruk kaLLan avarkku,  
karangiya chakkrak kaiyavanukku, - enn  
pirkirun Koonthal Izhandhathu **PEEDE** (6.6.3)*

Oh! Lord! My daughter has fallen not only for your complexion. She was amazed at  
- your wonderful feat of devouring the whole world with a small mouth of a baby and  
- your holding the ever shining, ever vigilant disc.  
In the process, she lost her concern for grooming her plentiful locks of hair and looks so disheveled as to lose her respectability!  
**PEEDU** = *Neermai* in Tamizh = Respectability

(xviii) *PeeDuDai naaan mughanaip paDaithaanukku,  
maaDuDai vaiyam aLantha maNaaLarkku,  
naaDuDai mannarkku thoodhu sel nambikku, - enn  
paaDiDai algul izhandhathu **PANBE** (6.6.4)*

Oh! Lord! She is carried away by your exploits such as  
- your creating the four faced Brahma from your navel,  
- your taking an appropriate form of a dwarf Brahmachari  
- your subsequent measuring of the worlds with giant steps to take possession of your property from Mahaabali in a blood-less coupe  
- your taking the role of a mere messenger for the PaaNDavas in spite of your *Paratvam* as revealed in the above feats!  
You know what?  
She has lost her very modesty!  
**PANBU** = Modesty

(xix) *PaNbuDai vEdam payantha paranukku,  
maNN purai vaiyam iDantha varaagarkku,  
theN punal palLLi enn Devap piraanukku, - enn  
kaNN punaik kOdhai izhandathu **KARPE** (6.6.5)*

Oh! Lord! She is totally overwhelmed by learning -  
- how you taught the Vedas to Brahma  
- how you took the form of a wild boar to rescue the earth from the depth of the ocean and  
- how as Vaasudeva, you reclined in the milky ocean ever sought after by the celestials  
She has no thought other than these, with the result that she has lost the powers of intellect to think of anything else!  
**KARPU** = Here means Intellect, not chastity. *Seermai* in Tamizh.

(xx) *karpaka kaavana narpala thOLarkku,  
por chuDark kunranna poonthaN muDiyarkku,  
narpala thaamarai naaN malar kaiyarkku, - enn  
vir puruvak koDi thOtrathu **MEYYE** (6.6.6)*

Oh! Lord! She is enamored of -  
- your four arms that are as generous as the legendary Karpaga tree  
- your crown that looks like a veritable golden hill with green *ThuLasi* covering it

- your hand-ends that look like large lotuses with long stalks  
- your face, eyes and feet look like a garden of lotuses  
Your appearance has robbed my daughter of her physique! She could have easily conquered the whole world with the charm of her very brows that look like bent bows!

(xxi) *meyyamar palkalan nangu aNinthaanukku,  
pai aravin aNaip palliyi naanukku,  
kaiyoDu kaal seiya kaNNapiraanukku- enn  
thaiyai izhandhathu thannuDai* **CHAAYE** (6.6.7)

Oh! Lord! You are bedecked with numerous jewels and look captivating. Added to this are the fragrance, the softness, and the coolness of your serpent couch. The beauty of your feet, your hands and your entire frame far exceeds the combined glitter of your ornaments and AdisEshan. Having seen your ravishing pulchritude, my daughter's charm has faded irrevocably.?

**CHAAYE** = Charm also known as *LavaNyam*

(xxii) *saayak kurundham ositha thamiyarkku,  
maaya sakaTam udaitha maNaaLarkku,  
pEyai piNam paDap paal uNN piraanukku, - enn  
vaasak Kuzhali izhandhathu* **MAANBE** ( 6.6.8)

Oh! Lord! My daughter is fascinated by -

- your pulling down the *Kurundha* tree and killed the demon who took refuge in it  
- your killing the demon by breaking to pieces the wheel in which a demon had taken shelter

(*SakaTaasura*)

- your sucking the very life of the devilish *PuTanai* under the pretext of suckling her breast for milk so much that she has forfeited her feminine radiance?

**MAANBU** = Feminine gracefulness

(xxiii) *maaNbamai kOlathu emmaan maayak kuraLarkku,  
sEN suDar kunranna senchuDar moorthikku,  
kaaN perum thOrratheng Kaakutha nambikku - enn  
pooN punai men mulai thOrrathu* **PORPE** (6.6.9)

Oh! My Lord! My daughter is a beauty queen. Her ornaments and make-up enhance her natural beauty. After you entered her mind, she has become indifferent to all these. Due to dejection, she is now a pathetic figure. You know who is responsible for her present plight? It is you who

- with great charm as Vaamana grew up to be Trivikrama filling the whole universe and  
- with your impeccable character by being an embodiment of Dharma as Rama (*RaamO Vighrahavaan Dharma:*) and absolutely lovable disposition (*manathukku iniyaan*)

(xxiv) *porpamai neeN muDip poonthaNDuzhaayarkku,  
marporu thOLuDai maayap piraanukku,  
nirpana palluruvaai nirkum maayarkku- enn  
karpuDaiyaaTTi izhandhathu* **KATTE** (6.6.10)

Oh! Lord! Your handsome elegance is enhanced by the royal crown, *ThuLasi*, flower garlands, sandal paste etc. You are indeed a miracle maker

- How come when you fought and felled the mighty wrestlers, you did not suffer even a scratch on your body?

- How come you are in all things with forms, names and appearances and yet remain unaffected by their defects?

My daughter is very discreet. Yet, she fell for you because of these miracles and has lost all sense of proportion and with it the respect of the world!?

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## VI. PERIYAAZHVAR

### **Periyaazhvar: Tirumozhi 5.4.1 (463)**

*senniyOngu thuNN TiruvENkdamudaiyaai, ulagu  
tannai vaazha ninra nambee daamOdara sadiraa!  
Ennaiyum en uDamaiyaiyum, sakkarap pori orrik koNDu  
ninnaruLE purindu irundEn, ini yen tirukkurippE?*

"Oh! Lord VenkaEswara!

You are residing on top of TiruvEnkaTa Mountain whose peak touches the sky!

You are residing there with all your auspicious qualities only for saving the souls.

You have the capacity to ignore the faults and failings of your devotees.

I have always wanted my Atma, my body which is my possession to be dedicated to your service.

Now, tell me what you would like to do with me

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## VII. ANDAL

### **Naachiyaar Tirumozhi 8.9 (585)**

*Mada yaanai pOI ezhunda maa mugilgaal! Venkatathaip  
Patiyaaga vaazhveerga! paambaNaiyaan vaarthai ennE  
Gati enrum taan aavaan karudaadu Ore peNN koDiyai  
Vadai seidaan ennum sol vaiyagathaar madiyaarE*

"Oh! Clouds!

You reside on Tirumalai taking the shape of massive pachyderms in rut.

What does Emperumaan who reclines on his serpent couch say about me?

Tell him that if he continues to keep his silence, the world will blame him only for torturing and killing a helpless girl pining for him?



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## VIII. KULASEKARA AZHVAR

### **PERUMAL TIRUMOZHI.**

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#### **DECAD 4.1 to 10**

In the 4th decad, Kulasekara Azhvar expresses his longing to be associated with TiruvEnkaTam- the abode of Lord VenkaTeswara in any capacity- whether as an animate being or even as an inanimate object.

"Can I be born?" he asks

as a *kurugu* bird in the Tirumalai forest, or

as a fish in the pond, or

as a temple spittoon vessel for the Lord , or

as a flower at his feet, or

as a pillar, or

as a flowing rivulet, or

as a rock or even

as a steppingstone leading to the innermost sanctum sanctorum in the temple of the Lord on which the Bhaktas would place their holy feet- all in the sacred Tiruvenkadam?

It can be seen that such a step in every Vishnu temple is called as "*kulasekarap padi*"- the '*kulasekara step*'

And finally, as anything in TiruvemkaTam!

It is heart- rending prayer that he offers to the Lord.

The opening words of the Paasurams and what he would like to become are indicated:

i. Oneru selvathu: kurugaai pirappEnE

-a bird in TiruvEmkatam (4.1)

ii. *Aanaadha Selvathu: meenaai pirakkum vidhi uDaiyEn aavEnE* - a fish in the pond in TiruvEmkatam (4.2)

iii. *pinniTTa saDaiyaanum pon vaTTil pidithuDanE pugazh peruvEn aavEnE* - one holding the spittoon vessel to the Lord of TiruvEmkaTam (4.3)

iv. *ONN pavaLa vElai: SeNbaga maai nirkum tiruvuDaiyEn aavEnE* - a tree bearing the *Shenbaga* flowers in TiruvEmkaTam (4.4)

v. *kamba Madha yaanai thambakamaai* - a bush in TiruvEmkaTam (4.5)

vi. *minnanaiya nuNNiDaiyaar porkuvaDaai arunthavathan aavEnE* - one of the peaks in the mountain of TiruvEmkatam (4.6)

vii. *vaanaaLum maamdhi pO kaanaaraai paayum karuthuDaiyEn aavEnE* - a wild forest stream in TiruvEmkaTam (4.7)

viii. *piraiyEru SaDaiyaanum: neriyaai kiDakkum nilaiyuDaiyEn aavEnE* - a footpath on the way to TiruvEmkaTam (4.8)

ix. *seDiyaaaya valvinaigaL: PaDiyaaik KiDandhu un pavaLavaai kaaNbEnE* - a steppingstone at the Sanctum Sanctorum (4.9)

x. *umbar ulagaanDu oru kuDai keezh Emperumaan pon malai mEl edhEnum aavEnE* - become anything on the mountain of TiruvEmkaTam (4.10)



## IX. TIRUPPAAN AZHWAR

### ***Amalan aadi piran 3 (929)***

*Mandhi Paai vaDa vEnkata Maamamalai, vaanavargaL*

*Sandhi seyya ninraan arangath aravin aNaiyaan,*

*Andhi pOl nirathu AaDaiyum adan mEl ayanaip padaitha Ore ezhil*

*Undhi mEl adanrO aDiyEn uLLathin innuyitrE*

Male monkeys hop from one branch to another of the trees that grow tall on top of TiruvEnkaTam mountain.

Reclining on the cozy couch of Tiru Anantaazhwaan, the lord is being worshipped with flowers by Nitysooris.

Me mind revels on the silken Peetaambaram covering his beautiful navel that gave birth to the four-faced Brahma

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## X. TIRUMANGAI AZHWAR NAICHYANUSANTHANAM IN PERIYA TIRUMOZHI-

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Tirumangai Azhwar comes to TiruvEmkaTam in the fond hope of conversing with the Lord. When the Lord did not respond, he thinks that his sins were responsible for the Lord's indifference. He prays to the Lord through an appeal to Thaayar. In all the following Paasurams, the Azhwar brings out his Naichya anusanthaanam and prays to the Lord at VemkaTam to save him.

*(i) ThaayE thanthaiyE enrum ThaaramE kiLai makkaLenrum  
NOyE pattu ozhindEn NaayEn Unnai kaaNbathOr aasaiyinaal  
VeyEy poompozhiil soozh virayaar, VengaTavaa!  
NaayEn vandhu aDainthEn nalgi ennaik KonDu aruLE (1.9.1)*

Oh! Lord of the bamboo and flower laden groves! I have wasted my whole life suffering in disease of imagining that father, mother, wife, children were the real relatives. I realized they are just body related (*Dehabandhu*) relatives. As for me, I realize that I have been living a dog's life. Now, I have realized that you are, indeed, the true relative in every sense (*nirupaadhika bandhu*). Please accept me.

*(ii) MaanEi kaNN maDavaar mayakkir paTTu maanilathu  
naanE naanaavidha naragam pugum paavam seidhEn  
thEnEi poompozhiil soozh TiruvengaTa maamamali- enn  
aanaai vandhu aDainthEn aDiyEnai aaTkondDu aruLE (1.9.2)*

Oh! Lord VenkaTeswara of the groves where the honeybees hum pleasantly! I have committed innumerable sins that can pelt me into innumerable kinds of hells irretrievably because of my falling prey to the bewitching deer like eyes of young women. I am sorry. Please accept me.

*(iii) KonrEn paaluyirai KurikkOL onru ilaamaiyinaal,  
enrEnum irandaarkku inidhaaga uraithariyEn  
kunrEi mEgamadhir Kulir maamalai vEmkatAvaal!  
AnrE vandhu aDainrthEn aDiyEnai aaT koNDu aruLE (1.9.4)*

Oh! Lord of VenkaTam of cool clouds of the size of gigantic mountains! Due to lack of any discretion, I have indulged in mass murder. I have never uttered a pleasant word to anyone coming to me for help, let alone not helping them. With all these faults, I surrender unto you. Please do not turn away from me.

*(iv) kulandhaan ethanaiyum, pirandhy irandhu eithu ozhindEn,  
nalanthaan onrum illEn nalladhOr aram seidhum ilEn  
nilam thOi neeL mughilsER neriyaar TiruvEmkaTavaa!  
AlandhEn vandhu aDinthEn aDiyEnai aaT koNDU aruLE (1.9.4)*

Oh! Lord of VemkaTam! Huge clouds surrounding your mountain verily reach from the high heavens right down to the earth. I have been born in numerous *kulams* and I have died numerous times too, so that I have become totally famished. I have absolutely no merit, no virtuous deed to my credit. At long last, I have come and surrendered at your feet. I have no other go. Please do not abandon me.

*(v) theriyEn baalaganaai pala theemaigaL seidhum ittEn,  
periyEn aayinapinn pirarku uzhaithE Ezhai aanEn  
karisER poompozhiil soozh Gana maamalai VemkaTavaa!  
AriyE! Vandhu aDainthEn aDiyEnai aat koNDaruLE (1.9.7)*

Oh! Lord of VenkaTam where you shine as the powerful lion roaming among mammoth elephants that abound in the beautiful forests! As a child, I committed lot of sins without even knowing what I was doing! When I grew up to youth, I squandered my youth toiling all through in providing for family and relatives. I have now taken refuge at your feet. Please accept me.

(vi) *patrel onrum iEn paavamE seidhu paaviyaanEn,  
matrElonru ariyEn maayanE! EngaL maadhavanE!  
Kal thEn paaindhu ozhugum kamala chunai VemkaTavaa!  
AtrEn vandhu aDainthEn aDiyEnai aat konDu aruL (1.9.9)*

Oh! Lord with wonderful qualities! Oh! The one who is the spouse of Alarmelmangai! Oh! You who reside in VenkaTam where rivers flowing with honey reach the lotus ponds below! I have no basis, no support whatsoever to deserve your grace. I have been and continue doing only evil and have become an unpardonable sinner. I do not know how to carry on my life with such a huge burden. All I can do is to fall at your feet, pleading mercy. Please save me

(vii) ON ALL DIVYA DESA PERUMALS BEING ONLY TIRUVENKATAVAN

Tirumangai Azhwar is known to have traveled far and wide throughout the country and offered *MangaLaasaanams* to the Perumal in various Divya Desams. But wherever he went, Lord TiruvEmkaTamudaiyaan seems to have been always on his mind. Other Azhwars are also seen to sing on this theme. For the sake of brevity, we give below the opening words of the relevant *verses* indicating the *Divya Desams* that the Azhwars identify with TiruvEmkaTam.

- i. anriyavaaNan aayiram thOLum - Naangai Sempon sei koil (4.3.3)*
- ii. vEDaar Tiruvenkatam mEya vilakke - TiruveLLakkuLam (4.7.5)*
- iii. vaampariyuga mannar tham uyir sega - TiruveLLarai (5.3.4)*
- iv. veruvaathaal vaai veruvi vEmkaTamE - Tiruvarangam (5.5.1)*
- v. sinthanaiyai thavaneriyai tirumaalai - Tiruvarangam (5.6.7)*
- vi. maan koNda thOl maarvil - Tirunaraiyoor (6.8.1)*
- vii. anngu vennarakathu azhundumpOdu - Tirunaraiyoor ( 7.3.5)*
- viii. engaLukku aruL seikinra eesanai - TirukkaNNamangai (7.10.3)*
- ix. aruvi ser vEmkaTam neermalai - TirukkaNNapuram (8.2.3)*
- x. paNNulaam menmozhip paavaimaar - Tiruvallavaazh (9.7.4)*
- xi. valampuri aazhiyaanai varaiyaar thiraL - TirumaalirumsOlai (9.9.9)*
- xii. ponnai maamaNiyai aNiyarndhOr - TiruthaNkaa (10.1.2)*

(viii) Tirunedumthaandakam

*neeragathai!neDuvaraiyin uchchi melaai* - All Divya desams in *Kanchi* and environs especially *Tirukkovaaloor* ( 8)

(ix) On all Avataras being those of only Tiruvenkatavan

Again, Tirumangai Azhwar asserts that all the *Avataras* the Lord took belong to TiruvEmkaTamudaiyaan. We present a few *Paasurams* in this regard:

- i. ninra maamamarudhu itru veezha naDantha - KaNNapiraan ( 1.8.3)*
- ii. Paartharkaai anru Bhaaratham kai sei - Parthasarathi (1.8.4)*
- iii. ENDisaigaLum Ezhulagamum... ariyai - Nrisimhaavataara (1.8.6)*
- iv. kaLLathaal maavaliyai moovaDi maNN - Vaamana ( 11.5.10)*

(x) *manna im manisap piraviyai neekki  
thannaakki thann innaruL seyyum thalaivan  
minnaar mughil sEr TiruvEnkaTam mEya  
yennaanai ennapppan enn nenjil uLLaanE*

Meaning

Oh! Lord of vEnkaTam! You have on your blue hued chest Mahaalakshmi who shines like lightning! You are the one to rid us of this wretched human life and take us unto your kingdom by your sheer compassion. For this purpose, you have taken your abode in TiruvEnkaTam on whose peaks the clouds with the lightning rest and you yourself shine as a mammoth elephant! What a wonder that you have now chosen to take your seat in my heart?

(*minnaar mughil sEr* can refer to both Mahalakshmi shining like lightning on the chest of the Lord and the mountain peak shining with lightning)

(xi) *maanEi maDa nOkki tirathu ethir vandha  
aanEzh viDai setra aNIvarai thOLaa!  
ThEnE! TiruvEnkata maa malai mEya  
kOnE! yen manam kuDi koNDirunthaayE! (PERIYA TIRUMOZHI 1.10.7)*

Meaning:

For securing the hand of the deer eyed Nappinnai, you charged at and killed the SEVEN proud bulls. Your shoulders were so huge and high like the lofty mountain. But, at the same time your demeanor is sweet like honey. Oh! Lord of TiruvEnkaTam! How come, you seem to have leased my mind and stayed put permanently there?

(xii) *vandhaai enn manam pugunthaai manni ninraai!  
Nandhaatha kozhum suDarE! yengaL nambee!  
ChinthaamaNiyE! TiruvEnkaTam mEya  
yenthaai! ini yaan unnai enrum viDEnE! (1.10.9)*

Meaning

You came! You saw! And, you conquered my mind by gatecrashing into it! Not only that. You also stayed put permanently in my mind! Hereafter, I will never ever let you go! You know why? You are the ever-shining brilliant flame. You the one who can grant all that one could aspire for! You are the one who rested at Tirumalai.

COMMENT:

Number 7 seem to have some mysterious appeal to Azhwars.

- The Mountain is called the 7 hills. (YEzhu-malai)
- The Lord vanquished 7 bulls, to claim the hand of Nappinnai.
- The Lord pierced the 7 trees.

## **XI. SWAMI VEDANTA DESIKA**

Though Swami Desika is NOT an Azhwar, no write up on TiruvenkaTam udaiyaan will be complete without our enjoying the Anubhavams of Swami Desika through his-

- Dayaa Sathakam on the Quality of mercy of TiruvenkaTamudaiyaan
- Some slokas from Hamsa SandEsam and
- The Paasuram from his magnum opus, Srimad Rahasya Traya Saaram

### **FROM DAYA SATHAKAM**

As every Slokam of Dayaa Sathakam is a multifaceted gem flashing a wealth of meanings and significance, it is not possible in a short write up to present them in full. We, however, try to savor a few of the Slokams by random sampling of how Swami Desika enjoys his *anubhavam*.

**Slokam 1:**

*PrapadhyE tham girim praaya: sreenivaasa anukampayaa /*

*Ikshu saara sravanthyEva yan moorthyaa sarkkaraayitham //*

TiruvEnkaTamudaiyaan is the Sugarcane; His mercy is the juice; It is He who raises the crop and allows it to flow and solidify into sugar cube in the form of seven hills.

**Slokam 26**

*KamalaA nilayas tvayaa dayaaLu: karuNE niskaruNaa niroopaNE tvam /*

*Atha yEva hi thaavaka aasrithaanaam durithaanaam bhavathi tvadEva bheethi://*

Addressing Dayaa Devi Swami says:

Lord Srinivasa becomes merciful (*dayaaLu*) because of you. But a closer look reveals that you are not merciful at all! See how the sins of your devotees are so mortified because of you that they run away from them in sheer fear!

**Slokam 28:**

*KarunE durithEshu mAmakEshu prathikArAnthara durjayEshu khinna: /*

*Kavachaayithaa tvayaiva sArngee vijaya sthAnam upaasrithO vrishaadrim //*

"Oh! *Dayaa DEvi!*

Do you know why the Lord is wearing a *kavacham*?

The Lord considered my sins as His enemies and desired to rout them.

But, alas! My sins are too powerful that even He could not succeed.

They continued to pierce His heart like poisonous arrows.

He found in you an effective shield to protect Himself from the shafts of my sins.

Then, He armed Himself with His *saaranga* bow (and arrows).

Still, He had to find a fortress.

So, He took His abode in TiruvEnkaTa mountain.

Now, what is the nature of this mountain?

By its very nature, the mountain is capable of destroying all my sins.

So, He eternally lives there with you as his protective shield"

What a combination of forces and precautions the Lord had to take, just to ward off the darts of powerful sins of Swami!

- He had to wear a *Kavacham* for 'defense'

- He had to arm Himself with *saaranga* bow and arrows for 'offense'.

- He had to have a safe haven to operate from! Really, imagination runs riot!

**SIOkam-29**

*mayi thishTathi dushkrithAnAm pradhAnE*

*mitha dOshAn itharAn vichintvathee tvam /*

*aparAdhagaNair ApoorNa kukshi:*

*kamala kAntha dayE katham bhavithree //*

Meaning

"Oh! *DayA DEvi!*

You have such a big stomach (*kukshi*) with insatiable hunger.

Unless it is fed properly, you will be starving.

What is your food?

The sins of Jivas are your favorite food. There is none in the world who can provide you enough of this food than myself because I am the foremost among sinners. You will not find another equal to me in this respect. When I am here capable of filling your belly to saturation, why run after and chase others who cannot provide you even a fraction of the food I can give? If you leave me and resort to others, only you will be fated to starve. I am sorry for you!"

Comment:

Another ingenious way to bring out his own *naichya* and the supremacy of Dayaa DEvi all at once!

### **Slokam 30**

*aham asmi aparAdha chakravarthee  
karuNE tvam cha guNEshu sArvabhoomee /  
vidushee sthithim eedriseem swayam  
mAm vrishasailEswara pAdasAth kuru tvam //  
" Oh! DayA DEvi!*

I am the emperor of all offenses (*aparAdhas*). My empire consists of all sins.

You are the empress queen of all auspicious qualities.

When both of us are thus equal in status, each in our own way, why not you invade my kingdom, take me prisoner of war (POW) and imprison me at the feet of your Lord VrishasailEswara?

Comment:

1. The slokam begins with "*aham*" which means "I"- There seems to be a purpose in this. Swami dexterously demonstrates how retaining the very word '*aham*', it could be sublimated into "*saatvika aham-kaaram*" in 'spirit' by equating '*aham*' with '*aparaadha chakravarthi*'. To wit, from 'SOham" to DaasOham," which latter does retain the '*aham*' part of it but without the odium attached to it.

2. The more powerful the vanquished enemy, the greater is the valor of the victor.

What avail is it for the '*saarvabhoomee*' to confront petty and weak chieftains, when she can cover herself with greater acclaim only by an equally powerful '*Chakravarthi*'?

And, what are her weapons? Mercy, Compassion and so on.

So, the Swami dares '*Dayaa Devi*' to use all these weapons and meet his challenge!

A clever way to invite the '*kaTaaksham*' of '*Dayaa DEvi*'!

### **SLOkam 33**

*phalavitharaNadhksham pakshapAthAnabahigjnam  
praguNam anuvindhEyam prApya padmA sahAyam /  
mahathi guNa samAjE mAnapoorvam dayE tvam  
prathi vadhasi yathArham pApmanAm mAmakAnAm //*

Meaning

"Oh! DayA DEvi!

In the case brought against me, TiruvEnkaTamuDaiyAn presides over the court.

The bench includes Periya Piriya PiraaTTi.

My sins are the prosecutors, who demand severe punishment for me.

The other qualities of the Lord like Jnaana, Sakti, Veerya, Tejas etc are the Jurors listening intently to the arguments to help the judge in meting out justice

- Which inevitably means sure penalty for me.

On my side, you appeared as Defense attorney.

With your clever arguments, you demolished the allegations of the prosecution.

Finally, you cited from '*Saastras*' (the Lord's Law books) that all my sins had been already pardoned and wiped out when I did '*SaraNaagathi*'. Thus, you secured me freedom.

I do not know how to admire you!"

Comment:

This court scene was very vividly described in the Tele- *Upanyasam* of *Srimad Andavan* of *Poundarikapuram Ashramam*.

### **Slokam 100**

***Na atah param kiapi mE tvayi naathaneeyam  
Maatar dayE mayi kurushva tathaa prasaadam/  
baddhaadarO Vrishagiri praNayee yathaa asou  
mukthaanubhootim iha daasyati mE Mukunda: //***

In this SLOkam, swami prays to the lord's Daya to bless him with the experience of the muktas in this world itself for the rest of his life. (NK P. 81)

## FROM HAMSA SANDESAM:

Let us now enjoy a few slokas of Swami Desika from his *Hamsa SandEsa*

Addressing the swan messenger, Swami describes how the TiruvEnkata Mountain is comparable to *Adishesha*.

1. *VishNOor vaasaath avani vahanaath bhakta ratnair sirObhi:  
SEshas Saakshaath ayam iti janai: samyak unneeyamaana: /  
Abhrair yukthO laghubhir achiraath muktha nirmOga kalpai:  
AgrE bhaavO tad anunayanE ranjayan anjanaadri: //*

Meaning:

Oh! Swan! As you proceed further, you will see the great TiruvenkaTa Mountain. It is known as *SEshaachalam*.

Do you know why?

- Like *Adishesha*, this mountain also does all *kainkaryams* to the Lord, In the milky ocean, *Adishesha* becomes His seat; This mountain is also His seat when He came down to earth to bless the world.
- Like *Adishesha* who bears the earth with his thousand hoods, this mountain bears not only the Lord who bears the world but also all the Jivas residing here.
- Like *Adishesha* who is reputed to be adorned with glittering precious gems on his hoods, this mountain also shines with innumerable minerals and ores, which illuminate the surroundings.
- Like the skin just shed by the great serpent, thin and white clouds crawl around its peak.
- It is also called *Anjana* Mountain because, like collyrium, it imparts certain coolness to the mind and eyes of the onlookers.

2. *tatraarooDai: mahathi manujai: svarghibi: cha sraavatheerNai:  
satvOnmEshaadh vyapagathamithas sthaarathamyaadi bhEdai: /  
saadhaaraNyaath phala pariNatEsankasO badhyamaanaam  
sakhyaa kaamam madhu vijayinas tvam cha kuryaath saparyaam //*

Here Swami Desika describes how TiruvenkaTa Mountain is a great leveler. He says-

- The crowds that go up the mountain consists of great *Saatviks*, those governed by *RajOguNa* and *ThamO guNa* drawn from different backgrounds and different stages of spiritual evolution. Not only humans, but also the celestials descend from their high pedestal of *Svarga* to mingle with the rest. All of them shed their differences and become one in uttering the name of TiruvenkaTamudaiyaan.
- The Lord also does not make a distinction as between them in granting His bounteous benevolence.
- All their sins get incinerated and all become purified without exception.
- For this reason, even Lord Siva joins them in offering his prayers.

3. In the following Sloka, Swami describes how not only the sentient beings but also the insentient creations join in this joint worship.

*SthOkOn magna spuritha phulinaam tvan nivaasEscha yeva  
Drakshsyaaraath kanaka mukharaam dakshiNaa manjanaadraih /  
Aasannaanaam vana viTapinaam veechi hasthai: prassonaa  
Nyarchyaa hEthO roopa harathiyaa noonam ardhEndhu mouLE: //*

Meaning:

Oh! Swan! There is river called *SvarNamukhi* on the south of the mountain. Several mounds rise above the flowing waters of the river. Do you know why?

- It is only to offer Swans (*Hamsams*) like you a place to rest and reaffirm their contact you.
- Not only for you, but also for *Acharyas* who are also called *Hamsams* - swans. They take bath in the river, sit on these mounds for performing their *Nitya anushTaanams*. It is also for gaining contact with these *Acharyas* that the mounds show up like this.
- According to *Vaishnava Sampradayam*, womenfolk do not perform these anushTaanams, and *Bhagavad Araadhanam* directly. By collecting and offering the articles like flowers, sandal paste etc., they help their *Yajamaana* in performing these. So also, the river (being considered as feminine) cannot flow up to the

Sanctum Sanctorum of TiruvenkaTam udaiyaan to do this *Araadhana*. So, they help with flowers etc. falling from the tress in the forest with their waves as their hands (alaikkarangaL) to Lord Siva who is a great Vishnu bhakta to perform his *anushTaanams*. When nature itself does her part in this *kainkaryam*, Oh! Swan! You also do your little bit of *kainkaryam* before you leave TiruvenkaTam to proceed further?

**FROM SRIMAD RAHASYA TRAYA SAARAM:**

In *Sthaana VisEsha Adhikaaram*, Swami Desika has beautifully summarized the glory of TiruvenkaTam Mountain thus:

*KaNan aDiyiNai emakkuk kaaTTum verpuk  
 Kadu vinaiyar iru vinaiyum kaDiyum Verputh  
 ThiNNam idhu veeDu enna thigazhum verputh  
 TheLinda perum theerthangaL seritha verpup  
 PuNNiyathin pugala idhu ena pugazhum verpup  
 Ponnulagil bhOgam ellaam puNarkkum verpu  
 ViNNavarum maNNavarum virumbhum verpu  
 VenkaTa verpena viLangum vEda verpE.*

Meaning:

- This is the mountain that shows us the way to the pair of lotus feet of the Lord.
- This is the mountain that banishes the strong pair of sins (*Sanchitha and Praarabda*) that refuse to go.
- This is the mountain that stands confirmed as the ultimate refuge for us.
- This is the mountain filled with bodies of water of crystal clear and cool waters.
- This is the mountain that is renowned as verily the abode of all spiritual merit.
- This is the mountain that lets us enjoy here itself all the bliss that are the exclusive domain of the golden city of God's own country.
- This is the mountain to which both the celestials and the terrestrials love to flock.
- This is the mountain of Vedas personified known as TiruvenkaTam mountain.

=====

**XII. PILLAI PERUMAL IYENGAR**

**108 Tiruppati Antaaadi**

*TaanE saraNamum aai taanE phalamum aai  
 TaanE kurai muDikkum tanmaiyaan –  
 tEn Eiy TiruvEnkaTam thozhudEn theeya  
 vibhootiikkun  
 Maruven kaDandanam iv vaazhvu*

*Lord VenkatmuDaiyaan a is himself the means and the goal. He is the one who gets rid of all our sorrows. As soon as I bowed before him, I got over all these evil influences of worldly life.*



**J: Divya DEsangaL  
J3 DD Kanchipuram**

**Location:** This is a ThONDai NaaTTu Tirupati.

**Names:** "Kancheepuram", "Atthiyur" and "Sathyavrata KshEtram" and "Perumaal Koil"

**Moolavar:** Athiyooraan, Varadarajan, pEraruLaalan, dEvaadirajan, dEvapperumaal.

**TirukkOlam:** Ninra TirukkOlam

**Facing:** West facing

**Thaayaar:** Perum dEvi Thaayaar, Mahaa dEvi (Tanikkoil)

**Theertham:** VEdavati River, Anantasaras, SEsha, Varaaha, Brahma, Padma, Anikusala and many more.

**Vimaanam:** PuNyakOti Vimaanam

**5 Praakaarams:**

- Vaiyamaalikai,
- sEnayarkOne,
- ALavandaar,
- Azhwar Triruveedi, and
- MaaDa Veedi.

**Pratyaksham:** Bhriгу, Naarada, AdisEsha, Brahma, Gajendra

**Avataara Sthalam:** Poigai Azhwart, Swami Desikan

**Specialities**

- This is the chief of the 7 Mukti KshEtras. Swami Desika says: "*Mukti tarum nagar eZhuL mukkiyamaam Kachchi Tanil*"
- The Vighram made of athi wood tree lies submerged under the waters of Anantasaras PushkaraNi. It is taken out once in 40 years and kept for Darsan for 48 days. I had the rare privilege of SEvai of this Athi Varda Perumaal 3 times in my life – 1939, 1979 and 2019.
- The GaruDa sevai of Emperumaan here during Vaikaasi Visaakam (May- June) is world famous.
- As Airaavatam elephant is said to support Emperumaan in the form of a mountain, the place is called "Hasti-giri" Hasti= Gajendra, Giri= Hill
- As Emperumaan blessed Brahma who performed a great Yaagam, he emerged from Agni kuNDam (fire) and blessed Brahma. So, is called "Varada-Raajan" (King of blessings).
- Puranas explain that the place came to be known as "Kaanchi" because it is the place where Brahma (Kha:) worshipped (anjita) to the Lord here.
- A king named Asamanjan and his wife became lizards due to some curse. Upamanyu advised them to pray to Varadaraajan here. They were relieved of the curse. To commemorate this event and to help devotees visiting the temple, the golden icons in the form of lizards stay in the Praakaaram. People who touch these icons get rid of all ailments.

**MANGALAASAASANAMS BY AZHWARS (TOTAL 7 PASURAMS)**

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**I. BHUDAT AZHWAR: (2 PASURAMS)**

**II. PEY AZHWAR: (1 PASURAM)**

**III. TIRUMANGAI AZHWAR: (4 PASURAMS)**

**IV. SWAMI VEDANTA DESIKA (4 PASURAMS)**

**V. PILLAI PRUMAL IYENGAR (1 PASURAM)**

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## I. BHUDAT AZHWAR: (2 PASURAMS)

(Irاندام Tiruvamntadi (96) 2276\*, 2277\*

*En nenjamEyaan en senniyaan - daanavanai  
Van nenjam keeNDa maNi vaNNan – munnam sEi  
Oozhiyaan oozhi peyarthaan ulagEthum  
Aazhiyaan **athiyooraan/** (95)*

Meaning:

The lord who is resident in my heart permanently is the one who cleaved the chest of the evil HiraNya for his offences against Bhakta Prahlada. He is the creator of the world who keeps all in his belly at the time of deluges. All go to the milky ocean to pray to him. He is cool like the sapphire gem. He is on my head and on top of Hastigiri

***Athiyooraan** puLLai oorvaan aNi maNiyin  
Thuthi sEr naagathin mEL thuyilvaan – muthee  
Maraiaavaan maa kaDal nanjuNDaan tanakkum  
Irai aavaan EngaL Piraan (96)*

Meaning

The Lord at Hastigiri, who rides on GaruDa, who reclines on AdisEsha with gems and shines on his numerous heads, who is the subject of Vedas emphasizing the 3 – fold fire, who propagated the Prapatti path as the sure path for mOksha, who is God to Sankara, the poison drinker- He is my dear master

---

## II. PEY AZHWAR: (1 PASURAM)

(Moonraam Tiruvantadi (26)2307\*

*Siranda en sintaiyum senkaNN aravum  
Nirainda neeL **kachchiyum** – uraindaduvum  
vEnkaTamum vehkaavum vElukkai paaDiyumE  
taam kaDavaar taNthuzhaayaar (26)*

Meaning

The abodes that the Lord of cool TuLasi garlands, does not abandon but sticks to with great attachment are my heart-room, then the AdisEsha couch, the shrines in **Sri Kaanchi**, Tirumalai, Tiru vehkaa and vElukkai

## III. TIRUMANGAI AZHWAR: (4 PASURAMS)

**(Periya Tirumozhi (10-7- 4) 1541,**

*Kallaar madhil soozh **kachchi nagarul** nachi paadakathul  
Ellaa ulagum vaNanga irunda ammaan. Ilangai kOne  
VallaaL agam villaal muninda enthai vibheedanarku  
Nallaan uDaiya naamam sollil – namO naaraayaName*

Meaning

The only good name that helped VibheeshaNa was "NamO! NaaraayaNa" who finished the Raakshasa who terrified the whole world into submitting to him. This NaaraayaNa resides in Kachchi protected by huge stone ramparts.

**(Tirukkurum Taandakam (14) 2050,**

*Pindiyaar mandai yEndi pirar mania tiritanduuNNum  
uNDiyaan saapam theertha oruvanoor, ulagam yEthum  
KaNDiyoor aranga meyyam **Kachchi** pER mallai enru  
maNDinaar uyyal allaal matrai yaarkku uyyalaamE?*

Meaning

If you wish to be redeemed, you must resort to the city of one who relieved the one who had to wander with a skull in his hand begging for food from others' houses. Where can you find him? It is in KaNdiyoor, Arangam, Meyyam, **Kachchi**, Mallai. Who else can save you?

**(Tirunedum Taandakam)**

*Vangathaal mamaNi vandundu munneer maalaiyaa! madiL **kachchiooraai!** Peraai!  
Konguthaar vaLankonrai alangal maarvan, kula varaiyan maDappaavai iDappaal koNdaan  
Pangathaai! paarkaDalaai! Paari mElaai! panivaraiyin uchiyinaai! pavaLa vaNNaa!*

*Engutraai Emperumaan unnai naaDi yEzhaiyEn inganamE uzhi taru gEnE. (9) 2060,*  
Meaning

Oh! Lord! You are known to reside in

- TirukkaDal Mallai on the shores of the sea that heaps priceless gems.
- **Tirukachchi** surrounded by tall ramparts
- TiruppEr nagar that you rule
- You hold on your rightside Rudra who holds Paarvati, the daughter of Parvata Raja on his left side
- You recline on the milky ocean
- You come down to earth with the sole purpose of blessing your devotees
- You rest on the cool crest of TiruvEnkata Mountain
- You reside in the Divya Desam called PavaLavaNnam

I am anxious to see you. Where are you?

*Kall uyarnda neDu madhil soozh **kachchi** mEya, kaLir enrum kaDal kiDanta kaniyE! Enrum  
Alliyam poo malarp poigai pazhanavEli aNi azhundur ninru uganta ammaan! Enrum  
Soll uyarnda neDu veeNai mulai mEl taangi thoo muruval nagai iraiyE tOnra nakku  
Mel viralgal sivappu eitha taDavi aangE, menkiLi pOle miga mizhatrum en pEdaiyE  
(Tirunedum Taandakam 2066)*

Meaning

My daughter with a smile on her lips pressing the lute to her breast prattles like a parrot calling you -

- ❖ You are a huge pachyderm living in the great city of Kachchi surrounded by tall ramparts made of stone
- ❖ You live in TiruppaaDagam
- ❖ You are so enchanting as you sleep on the milky ocean
- ❖ You reside in Tiruvazhundalur where large ponds contain beautiful minerals

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**ACHARYAS**

**IV. SWAMI VEDANTA DESIKA**

**Varadaraja Panchasat: 49**

**Nirantaram nirvisas tvadeeyam, asprushTa chintaa padam aabhi roopyam/  
Sathyam sapE vaaraNa saila naatha, vaikunta vaasepi na mE abhilaasha://**

"Oh! KarisailaNaatha! Your beaut is so enchanting beyond imagination that I am blessed to enjoy it incessantly here. Do you know what this experience has led me to? It has removed my desire to secure my place in *VaikumNTAm* known as "*PERinba Sthaanam*" I swear. I would like to stay put here itself enjoying the beauty of your TirumEni. I do not want even "Moksha"

---

**Vairaaghya Panchakam 5okam 5**

**Naasti pitru aarjitam kinchit, na mayaa kinchit aarjitam/**

***Asti mE Hasti sailaagrE vastu paitaamaham dhanam//***

I have amassed huge wealth. But I did not earn it nor did my father earn it. It is ancestral property acquired by my great, great, great forefather who is Lord Varadaraja of Kaanchi.

---

**Nyaasa Dasakam Slokam 9**

***Akrityaanaam cha Karanam krityaanaam varjanam cha mE/  
kshamaswa nikhilam dEva praNata aarthi hara prabhO//***

Oh! Lord Varadaraja! You are so merciful as to remove all miseries of your devotees.

I have been guilty of committing all proscribed actions ignoring all that is ought to be done. Only you must pardon me for both sins.

---

**Adaikkala Pathu": Paasuram 1**

***Pathi mudalaam avarril pati enakku kooDaamal  
Ethisaikum uzhanru ODi iLaithu vizhum Kaakam pOle  
Mukti tarum Nagar EzhuL mukkiyamaam Kachchi tanil  
Athi giri AruLaaLarkku aDikkalam pugubndEnE***

AS Bhakti and other means are not conducive in securing liberation, like the crow in Ramayana that went round the whole world and found no refuge finally fell at the feet of Rama, I have surrendered unto Per AruLaaLan of Hastigiri which is the chief among the 7 liberation granting holy cities.

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**V. Pillai Perumal Iyengar : 108 Tirupati Antadi**

*PoruL aasai maNN aasai poong Kuzhalaar bhOgathu  
IruL aana aasai sinthithu iraadE – AruLaaLan  
Kachchi Tiruppathi aam Athiyoor kaNNan  
Taan tiru aDigaLai yaam ichchithu iruppadu ennaaLO?*

When will I get rid of attachment to wealth, landed property and enjoyment of women with abundant hairs on their heads thoughts of which sink me deeper into the mire of Samsaaram and when will I crave for reaching the holy feet of PerumaaL who resides in Kaancheepuram (al so known as Athiyoor) who is himself the means and the goal?

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### **J-4 DD Tiru Anbil**

=====  
**Location: on the bus route connecting Trichy, kaLLaNai, KumbakONam**

**Perumal:**

**Moolavar:** VaDivazhagiya Nambi

**Sayanam:** Bhujanga Sayanam

**Facing:** East

**Utsavar:** Sundararajan

**Thaayaar:** Sundaravalli Nachiyar, Azhagiyavalli Nachiyar

**PushkaraNi;** Mandooka PushkaraNi

**River:** KoLLiDam

**Vimaanam:** Taaraka Vimaanam

**Pratyaksham:** Brahma, Valmiki

**MangaLaasaasanam:**

**Tirumazhisai Azhwar** (1 in Naanmukhan Tiruvantaadi)

**Pillai Perumal Iyengar** 108 Tirupati Antaadi Page 17

**Location:** 8 Kms from Lalgudi Station

**Specilities**

- **PuraaNas describe this place as "Brahmapuri"**
- **Skanda Puraana refers to how Lord Shiva was suffering from Brahmahathi dOsha on his plucking one of the heads of his own father, Brahma and how the skull that stuck to Shiva's palm would not fall off. When Shiva prayed to Anbil Perumal on his way to KaNDiyur, the sin was washed away.**
- **A Muni was performing Tapas under water. In his deep meditation, he did not notice the visit of Sage Duravaasa. Feeling slighted, Durvasa cursed the Muni to become a frog. The Muni lived under water in the form of a frog continuing his penance to Anbil Perumal who relieved him of the curse. So, the place is also called "MaNDookapuri" and the PushkaraNi as " MaNDooka PushkaraNi".**
- **Stone inscriptions show that Sage Valmiki was born here before moving north. This is also confirmed by U. Ve. Swaminatha Iyer hailed as Tamizh Thatha for his research.**

=====  
This is one of the 108 Divyadesams consecrated by Azhwars. PuraaNas describe this place as "**Brahma-puri**". Tiru Anbil is also known as **Prema-puri** and is one of the Divya Desams in Chozha Nadu. This place is regarded as a Divya Desam by both Vaishnavites and Saivites. The western part of Anbil referred to as "**mEl Anbil**", is known as Vishnu Sthalam, while the eastern part referred to as "**Keezh Anbil**" is the Siva Sthalam. This *Divya Desam* lies on the Trichy-Kumbakonam bus road, about 20 Kms from Trichy. The nearest railway station is at Lalgudi (about 5 Km from Anbil). It is one of the **Pancha-ranga KshEtrams**.

**Tirumazhisai Azhwar** has listed – *TiruPernagar - Anbil* that lie between Tanjore and Trichy sides of River Kollidam - along with *Tiruk kudandai* (Kumbakonam), *Tiru vehkaa* (near Kanchipuram) *Tiru EvvuLLur* (near Chennai), *Tiru Arangam* (Srirangam in Trichy), and *Tiru Paarkadal* (the legendary milky ocean) – as shrines featuring Lord Vishnu in a reclining position.

He calls it "**pEr-anbil**" in one breath to show that "**Per-nagar**" and "**Anbil**" are to be considered together as a single Divya Desam. **Per-nagar** and **Anbil** are on either side of **Kollidam** River and are always spoken of as twin cities (like what we have in Hyderabad - Secunderabad, Delhi - New Delhi etc.) right from the days of *Tirumazhisai Azhwar*. They are just about 2 kms apart and people used to cross the breadth of the river by foot during summer when the flow of water is at low ebb.

The *Tirup-per-nagar* part of this *Per-anbil* is called "**Kovil-aDi**" because it represents just the immediate step or entrance (*aDi*) leading devotees to reach the Periya-Kovil – known as "*BhoolOka VaikunTam*" or "*Sri Rangam*"

Though Nammazhwar surrendered his soul at Tirumalai - Tirupati, (in *akalagillEn iraiyum enru... paasuram*), it is believed that he attained liberation only in this *Divya Desam* because in the last work of his 4 works, namely, *Tiru-voi-mozhi*, this is the last *Divya Desam* mentioned by him and what follows thereafter is a description of the route to **MOKsha (Archiraadi maarga)**

Nammazhwar in Tiruvoimozhi 10.8.1 says:

*Tirumaalirum sOlai enrEn enna tirumaal vandu en nenju niraiya puguntaan*

In 10.8.2, he says

*pER uraiginra piraan inru vandu*

*pErEn enru en nenju niraiya puguntaan*

*kaarEzh kaDalEzh mala Ezh ulaguNDum*

*Aaraa vayitraanai aDanga piDithEnE//*

*As soon as I mentioned the name of Tirumaalirum Solai, this Lord of TiruppErnagar came and filled my nenju fully and refuses to leave me. I have contained the one who devoured all the 7 Worlds, 7 seas and 7 mountains. In other words, Azhwar says that the Lord has taken along Azhwar to Lord's Paramapadam.*

*You may also glean this from his Paasuram 10.8.9*

**"Inru ennai poruLaakki tannai ennuL vaithaan**

Meaning: He condescended to grant me mOksham here today

**Anrennai puram pOgap puNarthaden seivaan?**

Meaning: Why did he ignore me all these days?

**Kunru-enna Tigazh maaDangaL soozh Tirup-pEraan**

Meaning: Oh! TiruppEroor perumaaLE!

**Onru enakku aruL seyya Unarthal utrEnE//**

Meaning: Please answer this

BhaTTar says that the Lord could not give a satisfactory answer to this question and compared the Lord to a schoolboy who draws a circle on the ground when not being able to answer a question.

This *Divya Desam* is also called "**Aniruddha KshETram**"- one of the emanations of Lord Vishnu. The *Vimanam* is "**Taaraka Vimaanam**".

The *Divya Desam* is also known as "**Triveni**" as the three rivers *Kaveri*, *Savitri* and *Phalguni* are said to have merged into one and flowing near this *Divya Desam*. *Savitri* and *Phalguni* are said to be flowing underground. Hence this place is also known as **Dakshina Gaya**.

**Those who cannot go to Gaya in North India can perform the *shraddha* ceremony for their forefathers here with an equal effect.**

**"Mandooka PushkaraM"**

There is an interesting episode involving the *PushkaraNi* (tank) at this holy place. The *Mandooka PushkaraNi* is common to both Vishnu and Siva *sthalams*. *Mandookam*, in Sanskrit refers to a frog. It is said that, once upon a time, a *muni* was performing penance (*Tapas*) under water and developed strength and power. Once, Sage Durvaasa who happened to visit this place waited for a long time to meet the *Rishi*. Feeling slighted for making him wait for long, the Sage cursed the *muni* to become a frog. The *muni* wanted to regain his human form. So, he bathed every day in these holy waters, for 48 days and observed a *vrata* praying to Tiru Anbil Perumal. Lord appeared before him and redeemed him from the curse. This *PushkaraNi* is therefore known as "**Mandooka PushkaraNI**"

## H.H. Srimushnam ANDavan

Just before his Sannyaasa SweekaraNam, I took Villivalam Sri Krishnamachariar (Poorvaasrama name of 45<sup>th</sup> Azhagiya Singhar) to several Divya Desams in a van that I specially arranged for the listeners of his KaalakshEpams. When we visited Kaanchi temple, SrimushNam Swami of Periyaasramam was camping there and was sitting near the Sannidhi of Thaayaar. Villivalam swami introduced me to H.H. as "Anbil Ramaswamy". H.H. remarked "*anbutaan illai!*" I replied "Swami! Please do not say like that. Anbil means "anbin illam" meaning the very home of love". In fact, in Sanskrit, it is known as '*PrEmapuri*'. H.H. was happy to hear this.

### Birthplace of Sage *Valmiki*

This temple is incredibly old (**some say it is almost 6000 years old**). There are numerous epigraphic inscriptions on stone slabs at this temple which indicate the political and religious history of those days. **One of the inscriptions mentions that this is the birthplace of Sri *Valmiki Muni***. It is believed that Lord blessed the *Muni* before he relocated to North India, fell in bad company, and was subsequently retrieved and blessed by Sage *Naarada* to write the famous epic of "***Srimad Valmiki Ramayanam***"

### "*Aniruddha Brahma-Raayar*".

There was a pious soul in Anbil called "***Aniruddha Brahma-Raayar***". For generations, he and his family used to offer all the visitors a sumptuous food. Until recently, they used to station volunteers at the Railway station, Bus terminus and *Parisal Turai* (docking place for small boats in the form of bamboo baskets when the river was in flood) to receive the *dEsaantris* (visitors), offer them three different varieties of sumptuous food –

- Readymade food (*Kalanda Saadam*) for those in a hurry "to go",
- Sumptuous feast for those who could wait and thirdly,
- for those who were so orthodox as not to take "*para-annam*" (outside food) - groceries like rice, dhall, vegetables, curd, firewood etc to help them cook their own food.

This is specially mentioned in "*Ponniyin Selvari*" book of late writer "Kalki" (Vide Chapter 12 "*Guruvum Seedanum*" on page 573) in which he says that "*Anbil SeppEDu*" copper plate inscriptions were discovered and examined by U. Ve. Swaminatha Iyer. The "*Tamizh Thatha*" (as he was affectionately called) found that the plates contained details of lineage (*VamsaavaLi*) of ChOzha kings up to Sundara ChOzhan and that from the days of *Anbil Ananta-Azhwaan*, the great-great-grand father of *Aniruddha Brahma Raayar*, the family was carrying out this "*Anna-daanam* and *Srirangam koil kainkaryams*". He also found that the findings were corroborated by the evidence in the copper plate inscriptions discovered earlier, called "*Aanai-mangalam*" plates and "*Tiruvaalan kaaTTu*" plates.

***King Sundara ChOzhan*** who ruled the area was a devotee of this Lord and he won countless victories in wars by praying to this Lord. By way of gratitude, he donated a lot of wealth to this temple.

### **ANDAL**

Only in this Divya desam, you can see the mystic bride, Andal (of *Tiruppaavai* fame) **in a sitting posture whereas everywhere else she is seen in a standing posture.**

### **The most beautiful *Perumal***

One other fact that is acknowledged by all is that true to his name "***Soundara-raja Perumaal***" is known to be the most beautiful *Vigraham* among all the *Divya Desa Perumaals*.

## MANGALAASAASANAM:

### I. TIRUMAZHISAI AZHWAR (1 PAASURAM)

### II. PILLAI PERUMAL IYENGAR (1 PAASURAM)

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### I. TIRUMAZHISAI AZHWAR (1)

#### Naanmukhan Tiruvantaadi 36)

*NaagataNai KuDantai Vehkaa TiruvevvuL*

*NaagataNai Arangam pEranbil naagath*

*aNaip PaarkaDal kiDakkum aadi neDumaal*

*Anaippaar karuthan Aavaan*

Meaning:

The Lord of Tiru Anbil is the same

- *who reclines on AdisEsha in TirukkuDantai*
- *who reclines on AdisEsha in Tirppaaar KaDal*
- *who resides in Tiruvehkaa*
- *who resides in TiruvaLLur*
- *who lies on the serpent couch in Tiruvarangam*
- *who resides in the twin cities of TiruppER nagar and Tiru Anbil and*
- *who resides in the hearts of his devotees*

*To bless all those who resort to him*

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### II. PILLAI PERUMAL IYENGAR

#### 108 Tirupati Antaadi

*POrri seyvOre KuDAi keezh ponn naaDum inn naaDum*

*Naar disayum aaNDaalum nangu illai-*

*Torram illaa Enthaiy Anbil AadiyiNai TaamaraikkE*

*Sintaiyi anbilaadaar silar*

Those having no love towards the holy lotus feet of Tiru Anbil PerumaaL, who is the primordial Lord cannot claim to have devotion to him. There is no use for them even if they stay under the proverbial white umbrella signifying their status and even if they are praised by sycophants and even if they rule over this world and the other world known as golden world.

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## Renovation of *Dwaja Sthambam*

In 2006, I had the Bhaaghyam of renovating the flag staff (*Dwaja Sthambam*) of this temple as directed by asmad Acharyan, ParavakkoTTai Gopala Desika Maha Desikan of Poundarikapuram Swami Asramam. Photos taken on the occasion can be seen in the "Photos" section of the following website.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/srirangasri>

### **BrahmOtsavam**

Celebration of BrahmOtsavam of this temple which had been stopped (for whatever reason) for over 100 years, is now proposed to be resumed shortly. It is my earnest request to all interested Bhaagavtas to attend the same.

**For further details, you may contact Sri Amuthan Anbil (Archakar) at 129/212 B Mangammalpuram, Anbil, Trichy 621 702 90034 69591 (mobile) or E-Mail: swethamuthan2010@yahoo.com**

### **ABOUT OUR LINEAGE (PARAMPARAI)**

Though I have heard about our lineage commencing from Nadadoor, I have also heard that we belong to Kidambi family, the first of which is Kidambi Achaan. It is he who saved Bhagavad Ramanuja from being poisoned by some mischief makers. It is he who cooked and served food for Bhagavad Ramanuja till the end. He was followed by his son, Kidambi Ramanuja Pillaan, then his son, Kidambi Rangarajachar and then his son, Kidambi Appullar, the maternal uncle and Acharya of Swami Desikan. We were known as "Anbil Nadadoor Kidambi..... Iyengars" Thus, we have *Sambandam* with both Bhagavad Ramanuja and Swami Desika.

### **ABOUT THE FAMILY**

To the best of our knowledge, our forefathers have lived for generations in this village in an *agrahaaram* called "**Mangmmal-puram**" for centuries. I do not have much information about them. In fact, I have not seen even my grandparents. They had died even before I was born. My grandfather was called Anbil Ramaswamy Iyengar, after whom I was named being the only youngest male issue in the whole family. I have heard that my grandmother was called VEdavalli, better known as "*VEdi PaaTTi*" in the village. She was extremely popular for her kindness and charitable disposition. Even today, when I mention her name to some of the elders in the village, they used to remember her with awe and admiration. I have her photo in a group photo of family member

My grandparents had 3 sons and 3 daughters. But, due to educational and employment necessities, they had all moved to the cities several decades ago. The eldest two sons (Anbil Srinivasa Iyengar and Anbil Soundararaja Iyengar) were employed in the Railways in Trichy. Both had no issues. The youngest son (Anbil Krishnaswami Iyengar) moved to Madras city to serve in the High Court of Judicature. Today, none of them is alive.

I am the only son of this Anbil Krishnaswami Iyengar. I have only one sister living. She is living in Ambattur, Chennai. I have 2 daughters and 2 sons - all married and well settled in life with 2 children each. Even today, we have a house in Anbil as also some landed agricultural properties. As none of my children is interested in going back to live in the ancestral village, nor can I do so at the advanced age of 94+ years. We do not get any revenue from these properties and we are not interested in pursuing the matter by remote control, having settled in the USA!

## Anbil – Our temple

