



**Vedanta Desika Special
“Remarkable Remarks”
E book
by
Anbil Ramaswamy**

DST-Special – An Introduction

You will remember my writing under the title "Desika 750" a SamarppaNam to our Achaarya Saarvabhoulman on his 750th Tirunakshatram year, a series on "Remarkable Remarks" on Desika StOtras highlighted by Conventional and Contemporary Commentators" for a better understanding these works of Swami Desika hitherto not widely known and which, therefore, are likely to escape our attention. The purpose of this series is to bring out such commentaries to enable us to fully comprehend and appreciate the nuances that usually go unnoticed.

A casual reader in a hurry would read the Slokas in the Stotras in a mechanical manner without stopping to ponder over the subtle messages hidden beneath some expressions employed by Swami Desika. Conventional and contemporary commentators fill in the vacuum to highlight such messages for our benefit.

We have covered in this series 21 out of 28 StOtras of Swami Desika.

They are presented in alphabetical order.

Though the authorities have provided the needed commentaries wherever needed, you will find that for whatever reason, they have chosen to skip comments on some of the Slokas. Because of this, we have also not included them in this write up.

I presume that you are already aware of the texts of the StOtras, I am not giving them. Those who may not be aware, can access them in websites like www.prapatti.com. I am, however, giving a few of the beginning words to help you locate the relevant Slokas

As we go through the works of Swami Desika categorized as "Stotras", we find they fall into 3 categories described as "Stotras", "Stutis" and "Sthavams". The Monier Williams Sanskrit- English Dictionary gives the following meanings for the words as follows: (page 1259 (Columns 1 and 2) **Stava:** Praise, Eulogy, **Stotra:** Praise, eulogium, a hymn of praise, **Stuti:** Praise, Eulogy, Panegyric, commendation, Adulation.

Stava: Abeeti

Stotras: Dasavatara, Hayagriva, Shodasaayuda, Vegasetu

Stutis: Sri Stuti, Bhoo, Dehaleesa, Godha, Paramartha

Those that are based on the number of Slokas (shown in brackets) contained in them

Panchakam (5): Vairaghya,

Ashtakam (8): Ashtabuja, Kamasika, Sudarsana

Dasakam (10): Nyaasa,

Vimsati (20): Gopala, Nyaasa,

Panchasat (50): Devanayaka, Garuda, Varadaraja

Saptadi (70): Yatiraja,

Satakam (100): Achyuta, Dayaa

Those that are named on considerations other than the above like -

Dandaka: Garuda,

Deepika: Saranagati

Gadhya: Raghuvira

Sopaanam: Bhagavad Dyaana

Tilakam: Nyaasa

Abbreviations on the Commentators cited are as follows:

ASR: Prof A. Srinivasaraghavachariar in "The Life and works of Sri Nigamanta Maha Desikan"

AVG: Sri Anbil V. Gopalachariar quoted by VNVD

BVSN: B.V.S. Narsimhachariar quoted in JS/07

CRC: Chinnaamu Ranganatha Tatachariar quoted by VNVD

D/BO: Book on Desika

DPS: DevanarviLaagam Padmanabhachariar

DR: D. Ramaswamy Iyengar

ESVN: E. S. V. Narasimhachariar, Srirangam

JS/07: Desika Stotra Mala of Seva Swami

JSS: J. Sehadriyachariar Swami, Tirupati

KDC: KaaNiyambaakkam Devanathachariar Swami, Tirupati on page 205 of Desika Stotra Saara Malar of Seva Swami)

KEG: Vidwan K.E. Govindachariar Swami Tirupati -

KGTS: Kurichi Gopala Tatacharya Swami quoted by VNVD

KMR: Kidambi M. Rajagopalachariar quoted by VNVD

KPR: K.P. Rangaswami in his book on the named Stotram

KRGC: Kothimangalam Raghu Gopala Chakravarthi, Nyaaya SirOmaNi, Tamil Vidwan, Nanganallur quoted in Desika Stotra Saara Malar of Seva Swami

LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam PPA / VNVD

MKS: M.K. Srinivasan in his book on the named Stotram

MVS: Maharishi Vasudeva Chariar Swami quoted by VNVD

NK: N. Krishnamachari's "Svami Desikan's Stotram – A Learner's Review published by Sri Paduka Charities of Srirangam Srimad Andavan Asramam, Mylapore, Chennai in 2009

PSS: Pazhaveri Sadagopachariar Swami quoted by VNVD

RBS: Raghava Bhattachariar Swami quoted by VNVD

RKS: R. Kannan Swami, TirukkuTantai quoted by VNVD and Seva's Desika Stotra Malar

RPC: Raghava Paatraachariar quoted by VNVD

Seva JS: Seva Swami Desika Stotra saara Malar on the named Stotram

SVC: Sri Vatsanka Chariar

TVR: Thaiyar vankeepuram Raghava Dasan published by SVD research Centre

VAS: Vilivalam Azhagiya Singhar in his Poorva Asramam

VGR: V. G. Rangachariar, Pammal

VKRS: Diwan Bahadur V.K. Ramnujachariar Swami quoted by VNVD

VKSN: VKSN Raghavan

VLN: Venkata Lakshmi Narayanan quoted by SEva Swami

VNRD Sri V. N. Ramadesikachariar in his "Sri Desika Stotra Maalaa" on the named Stotram

VNVD: Sri V.N. Vedanta Desikan Published by Poundarikapuram Swami Asramam on the named Stotram1

VTR in Foreword: VT Rangaswami Iyengar, President Visishtadvaita Pracharini Sabha

VVR: Vidwan Veeravalli Vasudevachariar, Principal, Sri Ahobila Mutt Sanskrit College, Madurantakam in Desika Stotra Mala

VVRCS: Vidwan VaDuvoor Veera Raghava chariari Swami quoted by Seva Swam

YVT: Yagjna Varaahaachariar published by South India Publishing House, Chennai in 1981.



DS/T – 01. Abheeti Sthavam

"Remarkable Remarks" on Desika StOtras highlighted by Conventional and Contemporary Commentators" for a better understanding these works of Swami Desika hitherto not widely known and which, therefore, are likely to escape our attention. The purpose of this series is to bring out such commentaries to enable us to fully comprehend and appreciate the nuances that usually go unnoticed.

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Introduction

“Do not fear”- “*Bhayam Thayajata*” occurs in Deva *Saranaagathi* in Srimad Ramayanam. That is why Srimad Ramayanam is known as the essence of *Saranaagathi*. (JS/07/Page73 Seva’s Desika Stotra Maala)

In *Abhaya Sthaanam* (the center of fearlessness) fear arose! This Stotra was for removing that fear. (D/ST/ 2A-VLN Introduction)

In all temples, the icon of Swami Desika is in sitting posture with *Srutaprakaasika* manuscript on the left hand and chin-mudra on the right. In Sathyakaalam he is in standing posture as though he was ever ready to go back to Srirangam, the moment he heard good news from there (D/ST 2B DR Page xii)

This Stotra was composed by swami Desika while at Sathyakaalam. He recited this slokam there incessantly like a penance for nearly 4 decades to bestow peace in the citadel of Lord Ranganatha. In Sloka 22, there is only a casual mention of the sack of Srirangam by Turushkas and yavanas, though it was the main cause for composing this Stotram (ASR Page 2)

Another peculiar feature of this Stotra is that it contains 4 charama slokas that describe the value of SaraNaagati in Srivaishnavam – Varaaha, Rama, Krishna and Sita (ASR page 3)

Sloka1: Abeetiriha

The Sun’s effulgence exudes heat and scorch those who approach them. This effulgence is cool and comfortable to those who approach it (D/ST 2B DR Page 17)

For us who meditate on *Archa murthis*, any danger to the *Archa murthi* itself will be loss for our meditation. Does not Sruti say that *Dhyaana VichhEtam* is the cause of fear”? (D/ST/PPA/ 04 VNVD/Page 19)

Sloka2: dayaa sisiritaasayaa

Ranganatha’s mercy is always there. But, to ensure that at no time there occurs any diminution to his mercy, Thayaar stays on his chest without leaving it even for a split second (VNRD Page 67)

Daya Devi **inside** the heart and Lakshmi Devi **outside** (D/ST 2B DR Page 19)

In the previous Sloka Swami referred to “*TEjas*”

Here he refers to mercy (D/ST/PPA/ 04 VNVD: Page 36)

Sloka 3: yad adya

Sloka 4: marut tarani paavaka

It is natural for the guilty to fear the one who is free from guilt. No wonder wind god, Sun, Fire god are afraid of the “a-nagha” or the guiltless Bhagavaan. (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 4)

Sloka 5: bhavantam iha

Is it not Chakravarthi Tirumagan who prayed to Arangan and who declared “*abhayam sarva bhootEbhyO dadaami*”? (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 5)

Sloka 6: sthitE manasi

The Lord remembers the *Prapatti* done earlier and blesses *Anthima Smriti* to the *Prapanna* at the time of death (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 6)

"*Daatu SaamyE*" *Kapa, Vaata, Pitha* should be in proportions - not that they should be equal If they are equal, it would be perverse as per *Vaidya Saastram* (D/ST/PPA/ VNVD 04 Page 74)

Sloka 7: ramaadayita

It may be noted that there are

2 letters: 4 names: KrishNa, VishNO, HarE, Naatha

3 letters: 1 name: Triyuga

4 letters: 3 names: Trivikrama, Janaardhana, NaaraayaNa

5 letters: 1 name: Ramaadayita

6 letters: 1 name: Rangabhoo-ramaNa (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 7)

If a true Bhaagavata happens to stay in whatever place and for however short period of time, such a place becomes so dear to Perumaal as to make it his headquarters, his own fortress etc (VNRD Page 73)

Sloka 9: trivarga patha

Sloka 10: bibhEti bhavabhrit

Sloka 11: apaartha iti

The Lord must protect himself first before venturing to protect others! (D/ST/ 2A VLN: Page12)

Sloka 12: laghishTa

Sloka 13: na vaktum api

Sloka 14: bhavanti mukha

Sloka 15: sakrud

Sloka 16: anukshaNa

While trying to atone for one fault, thousands more arise and there seems to be no end to this! It is like a person who tries to cross the ocean sailing on a boat with a thousand holes! (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 16)

Sloka 17: vishaada bahuLaad aham

Sloka 18: nisarga nira nishTathaa

This sLOka confirms that Lord Ranganatha would never brook the displeasure of his devotee who has done *Prapatti* (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 18)

Sloka 19: khayaadhu suta

Sloka 20: bhayam samaya

"*Sri Ranga Sri cha vardataam*" is emphasized here (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 19)

Sloka 21: sriya: paribruTE

Sloka 22: kali praNidhi

Sloka 23: diti prabhava

Utsavamurthi of Lord Ranganatha holds in one of his right hands what is known as "*PrayOga Chakram*" about to be wielded. Desika in this Sloka prays to Lord to wield that Chakram in such a way as to restore the rule of *Dharma* in Srirangam at once (D/ST 2B DR Page 68)

Sloka 24: manu prabhruti

Sloka 25: bhujangama

Swami seems to suggest that it is not enough for Lord's servitors just to say "*Jitam tE*". They must show this in their action also." *Bhujangama*" implies protection on earth, *Vihangama* in sky and *Sainyanaatha* on the ground. (D/ST/ 2A VLN Page 23)

Sloka 26: vidhis tripura

Villivalam Swami observes "If Bhagavaan decides to punish someone, none can protect that one from punishment. Similarly, if Bhagavaan intends to reward someone, none can object to it" These have been clearly brought out in *ParadDEVataa Pamaarthaya Adhikaara* citing several examples from *Srimad Ramayana*. We should recall these. (VAS Page 6)

Sloka 27: sa kaiTabha

3 kinds of "*Vikramam*": (1) Destroying the enemies, (2) Protecting the virtuous, and (3) Protecting Sriranga kshEtram (D/ST/ 2A Page 25)

Sloka 28: yathi pravara bhaaratee

Swami Desika prays that he should be placed among like-minded people who are interested in mutual welfare.

Sloka 29: prabuddha guru veekshaNa

D/ST -02. AshTabhuja AshTakam

Introduction

When Swami Desika left Thooppul to do *Mangalaasaasanam* of Deva Perumal, the Lords of Ashtabhujam and Yatoktakaari stopped him on his way as it were, demanding *Mangalaasaasanam*. *Ashta-bhuja-karan* had only one decad from Kaliyan. May be, Desika was not satisfied with that. And Desika, being a faithful follower of Kaliyan (*kaliyanurai Kudi Konda Karuthu UdaiyOn*), he got him to compose this Stotra of 8 verses.

Why the Lord here is called "*Ashta-bhuja-karan*"?

Do not "*Bhujam*" and "*Karam*" mean the same thing?

Yes. But that is the way the Lord introduced himself to Kaliyan, when the latter threatened him to reveal who he was (Vide 2.8 of Tirumozhi).

Also, while *Bhujam* means "arm", "*Kara*" can mean "to make" or "to do". Thus, Swami Desika suggests that he "created" eight *Bhujams* (i.e. literally doubled his usual 4 arms).

Also, when two words carrying the same meaning when used together, it is known as "*iru peyaroTTup paNbu thogai*" in Tamil. Though "*Bhujam*" and "*Karam*" mean the same thing, Swami takes it as an inflection of Sanskrit words "*karam- Griham*" which means "*Kuru*" - "to do". The Lord created the doubling up of his hands (JS/07 Desika Stotra saara Malar – Seva Page138)

The Lord's "*graham*" was presumably transformed into "*Karam*" in Tamil as "*VishNu Griham*" becomes "*ViNNagaram*" (D/ST/IV- VNVD- page 153)

It is worth noting that Swami Desika did not name the Stotra as "*AshTa-bhuja- kara- AshTakam*". He named it as "***Srimad AshTa bhujA AshTakam***" (JS/07 Desika Stotra Malar – Seva Page141)

Why Eight?

Swami Desika explains that he doubled his arms with eight weapons one in each arm out of his anxiety to rush to the succor of his devotees "*Saranaagatha ThraaNa Tvaraa DviguNa Baahunaa*".

He drops the word "*kara*" when he named this *Stotra* and dedicated a *sloka* each to the eight arms.

Though as "*AshTam*", it should have only eight Slokas, Swami adds 2 more by way of *Phalasaruti* and Prayer.

The *Sthala Puranam* avers that he came down with eight arms to protect *Brahma's Yagjna* from the wrath of Saraswati in the form of *VEgavati*.

What is the reason for this?

Swami says it is because of the speed with which the Lord seeks to prevent and protect. *VEgavati* River's speed of flow may be prevented but can the speed of Lord's protection be prevented? (D/ST 3B Seva Page III)

Legend has it that the Gajendra episode also took place in this *Kshetram*. Swami Desika makes a moving appeal to the Lord to come to his rescue since he is in the grip **five** crocodiles in the form of sense-organs even as he rushed in great haste to save Gajendra from the mouth of a **single** crocodile (ASR Page 7)

Sloka 1: Gajendra Rakshaa

This has reference to the episode in which the Lord rushed to relieve Gajendra whose foot was caught by a crocodile. Swami Desika says that Gajendra was caught by only one crocodile; but he himself was caught in the vortex of several vicious creatures like *Kama, Krodha, MOha, Lobha, Madha* and *Maatsarya*. Therefore, it was even more necessary for the Lord to double up his speed in rushing to relieve him.

How can he do this?

Swami Desika answers: Because the Lord's qualities of *Jnaana* and *Daya* are limitless and he has already earned the reputation of being affectionate to *Sadhus*, he has not only to double up his **speed** but also doubled up his **weapons and arms** to hold them!

Graahairiva: The word refers to any rapacious animal living either in fresh water or the seas. AmarakOsa has the words "*GraahO avahaarah*" which means sharks which are found mainly in the ocean (*Graaha* indicating grabbing) (D/ST 3A KPR/Page 3)

Sloka 2: Tvad Eka

"I hitherto lacked the knowledge of the *Tattvas*; So, I was subject to *Agjnaana and Vipareetha jnaana*. Now that all these have been dispelled, I have come to realize that I am your *SEsha* (Servitor).

When Kaliyan did "*Manglaasaasanam*", he listed a few actions of the Lord and asked the Lord "Who did this?" "Who did this?" At the end of every query, the Lord replied every time "It is me" - "*aTTa-bhuya-KarthEn*" (JS/07 Desika StOtra Saara malar- Seva page 143)

Sloka 3: Svaroopam

"By making me realize this, you have transformed me, a worthless creature into a worthy one fit to be saved. It is you who did this and created in me a desire to seek your feet". By this, Swami Desika confirms that the Lord has *Divya Aatma Svaroopam* and *Divya Mangala Vigramam* revealing not only his *Paratvam* but also his *Soulabhyam* and mixes with common folk, dispelling the fear generated by his *Paratvam*.

Durnivaaram: Your *Divyaatma Svaroopam* and your *astra-bhooshaNas* are declared clear and loud by Sruti, Smriti etc. We can understand your "*Paratvam*" from all these statements. Perhaps, you do not want me to remind your "*Paratvam*" and you are trying to conceal it and present your "*soulabhyam*" so that we can approach you with greater confidence. But, Lo and Behold! You cannot completely conceal your "*Paratvam*" (D/ST15/PPA- VNVD Pages 73-74)

Sloka 4: Saktim:

"The fruits that you can bestow (like *Moksha*) are infinitely greater than the transient and trivial fruits that petty deities boast of conferring. So, men of discretion surrender only at your feet and you do accept them with your infinite mercy".

SantOLya: *SantOLana* means comparing by measure or weighing one thing with another (D/ST 3A KPR Page 11)

Those who claim to protect the world like *Kshudra Devatas* may not realize how much they lack the capacity to do so. But the world has understood. **They are not capable of protecting even themselves. How can they protect others?** (D/ST 3B Seva Page IX)

Sloka 5: abheeti hEtO:

In this Sloka, Swami Desika advises that we need not seek from any deity other than *Bhagavaan* for protection from fear. It would be sheer waste if we resort to other deities. (VAS Page 14)

"To get rid of my fears, I will never think of resorting to anyone other than you. When you shower your mercy on me, whom should, I fear? And, if you get angry with me, who can protect me?"

cf *Kamasika AshTakam*

Tvayi rakshati Rakshakai: kim anyai:
Tvayi cha a-rakshati rakshakai: kim anyai: //

SaanukampE: "kampa" means "trembling and shivering with distress" and "anu" as a prefix makes it a case of sympathy with a cause (D/ST 3A KPR Page 13)

If you become furious, who can come to help me? None

If you evince pity on me, who can come to threaten me? None

(D/ST15/PPA- VNVD Page 80)

Sloka 6: TvadEka Tattvam

"You have a natural obligation to protect me. Further, mother Goddess is always by your side to recommend me to you. When you can grant *Moksha* to me who has surrendered to you, why should I take any efforts to beg anything from anybody? If you decide to give me up, of what avail would it be to seek help from others?"

Sloka 7: Samaadhi

"Oh! Ashta-bhuja Lord! For those who are not able to complete *Bhakti yoga*, once they surrender to you, you are known to stand in the place of this *Bhakti yoga*. I know this.

But, in my case, I am totally incapable of even trying *Bhakti yoga*. I will be ashamed when I try to do what is impossible for me and fumble and fall at every step. I have, therefore, adopted the easy means of *Prapatti* at your feet"

Prapatti is identified with "Parama- *Bhakti*" and adopted as a direct and independent means instead of being an "anga of *Bhakti*" (D/ST 3A KPR Page 17)

"Doora AdirOham: ascending or going up to a good height ending in a steep fall to rock bottom as "*Patanam*" means dropping down. (D/ST 3A KPR Page 18 and D/ST/IV- VNVD-Page155)

If a person falls from a little height, it may not cause any great damage. But, if one climbs up too high and has steep fall from there, the damage will indeed be too serious to ignore (D/ST 3B Seva Page 6)

I feel ashamed to think of ascent and fall, by own choice and action, especially when you are there to help me - a *Prapanna*. (D/ST15/PPA- VNVD Page 85)

Sloka 8: Praapta-abhilaashaam

"Since I have surrendered myself to you, I am assured of attaining *Moksham* at the end of this life; but so long as I happen to live here, there is no greater bliss than serving the holy feet of you and *PiraaTTi*. I pray to you to grant me unsullied and incessant *kainkaryam* both here and hereafter"

Because "Atma" is eternal and indestructible, the word "Aatmaa- antha" in the context means "*Nityam*" (D/ST15/PPA- VNVD Page 87)

Sloka 9: prapanna jana

This *Stotra* is like a general provender for a traveler of a *Prapanna*; for those who want to perform *Prapatti*, it is like a "*rasaayana*" (alchemy) - an appropriate medicine that cures all ailments. It will certainly remove all sins that stand in the way, create *Maha-viswaasam* in the Lord, and make them

eligible for doing *Prapatti*. This *Stotra* was composed by me for the welfare of the entire world.
"PaathEyam": means "provender" (D/ST 3A KPR Page 21)

Sloka 10: SaraNaagata

This *Stotra* was composed by me called Sri Venkatesa. The Lord who normally has only four arms simply doubled it in his anxiety (*Tvara*) in saving those who surrender to him.

(VNRD Page 393)

May the Lord with eight arms accept this *Stotra* of eight *slokas*.

In our households we have seen womenfolk complaining that they have only 2 hands with which to prepare food for Tiruvaaraadanam, dressing up children and prepare to send them to school etc. within the limited time available. Bhagavaan got into this kind of critical situation. So, he doubled up his hands!
(D/ST15/PPA- VNVD Page 93)

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D/ST: 03. Bhagavad Dhyana SOPaanam

Introduction:

Swami Desika visualizes his mind as his daughter named "*Maneesha*" who enjoys every limb of Lord Ranganatha. We can also name our daughters says Villivalam Azhagiya Singhar in his "28 Ratna Slokangal" published by S. Krishnamachari on 22/06/1991 VAS Page 4).

He continues that she commenced touching his feet first and slowly but steadily reached and reached his head true to the famous saying "*Moorthaanam Padyu: AarurOha*" (VAS: Page 5)

As this Stotra helps in contemplating step by step on Lord Ranganatha from his feet to his crown, Swami himself named it as "*SOPAanam*" containing 12 Slokas. This was composed by Swami Desika on the lines of TiruppaaN Azhwar's "*Amalan Adipiraan*" (VNRD Page 48 and Page 45 of Desika Stotra Sara Malar Seva Swami)

Swami Desika built 2 flights of steps: one is this. The other one is "*Paramapada SOPaanam*"

Both flights have strong steps leading us to our desired goal. (Page 45 of Desika Stotra Sara malar Seva Swami)

There is a Sloka that says:

aapeeTaan mouli paryantam pasyata: purushOtamam/
paadakaanyaasu nasyanti kim punasthoopa paadakam //

(VGR - Page 47 of Desika Stotra Sara Malar Seva Swami)

Whereas the *Azhwar* stood before the Lord in Srirangam and sang his work, Swami Desika sees the same Lord through meditation and sings (ASR Page 8)

Sloka 1. Antar jyOti:

It may be noted that TiruppaaN *Azhwar's* "*Amalan Adipiraan*" starts with the letter "a' (*amalan*). Similarly, Swami Desika starts this Stotra also with the letter "a" (*antar-jyOti:*) (VNVD Page 35)

The only work in *Divya Prabandam* that acquired Swami Desika's regular commentary is this *Azhwar's* "*Amalan Adipiraan*" (VNVD Page 43)

Siddhas used to apply unguent to their eyes to enable them to see even objects not visible to physical eyes. Lord Ranganatha himself acts as the unguent to enable us to see him and enjoy beatitude both here and in *Moksha*. (VNRD Page 50)

Yogis who "see" him **within the heart** can now see him **outside also in the Sanctum Sanctorum**. (VNVD Page 44)

Lord Krishna gave "*Divya Chakshus*" to Arjuna to see Him. Here, Lord Ranganatha himself acts as "*Divya Chakshus*" for all of us to "see" him.

Is he not "*Divya Chakshus* "of *Vedas* themselves?" (VNVD Page 46)

Sloka 2. vELaateeta –

First Step: *TiruvaDi* -The feet (cf *Amalanaadipiraan 10*)

The success in the yoga practice requires the total eradication of bad smell (*durvaasana*), a memory effect of life over the past - from time immemorial. The bad smell accruing from the past sinful life is overcome and extinguished by the "*Sarva Gandha*" that the Lord is (VNVD Page 74)

Sruti parimalam: Fragrance of *Vedas*. What fragrances? Fragrances of

- *Veda Parimalam*,

- *Paaduka ParimaLam,*
- *(Nammazhwar), VaguLa ParimaLam (Saaraswatam SrOtO vakuLa mOda Vaasitam),*
- *Sarva Ganda ParimaLam,*
- *Suvaasana ParimaLam, (PiraaTTi's)*
- *Gandhadwaara ParimaLam.* (VNVD Page 74-75)

Laksmi-BhoomyO laalitam:

- The lotus feet-duet of the Lord is gently fondled by the lotus hand-palms of Lakshmi and Bhoomi.
- The Lotus- born Brahma bows.
- *Hamsas* adorn the lotuses.
- *Padma* is the resident of *Padma-vana*.
- The palms of the consorts are lotus-like.
- The heart lotus is where the Lord resides inside us.
- In this vein all are lotus-linked. (VNVD Page 78)

Sloka 3. chitraakaaraam:

Second step: (KaNAikkaal) The knee shanks:

KaalE dootya-druta-tara-gatim: Though the knee-joints of a reclining Perumal are under study, the suggestion is that he will jump into action when time demands it. Hence, "*kaale*" (VNVD Page 92)

The second step corresponds to "niyama"-

Personal purity, happy and contented mind, discipline in the form of penance, *Veda*- chanting and concerted cogitation on the Lord are the features. "*ChaarU Vritta*" imparts external purity on to us. (VNVD Page 94)

Sloka 4. kaamaaraamaa

Third Step: (Tiru thoDai) The Thighs

Yoga sutra cites, as the third step, "sthira-sukhaasanam".

The suggestion by the word "*sthira*" is obvious. Ironically, the vacillation of plantain tree in a strong wind is proverbial. But, then the utility of the thighs for securing as the pillow to the consorts implies their non-trembling; "*sthambha- sambavaaneeyam*" suggests several fanciful ideas. The thighs are stagnant, not trembling. It must be so to serve the purpose of a pillow. Otherwise, the consorts cannot sleep soundly. This is not only to be digressed but also relished in full. (VNVD Page 108)

The "*Peeta-ambaram*" covers the thighs verily likes a pillow cover. (VNVD Page 109)

This step implies "Aasana SamaadhI" (VNVD Page 110)

SIOka 5. sampreeNaati:

Fourth Step: (*Tiru undhi*) The Navel (cf Amalanaadipiraan 2)

This represents "*PraaNaayaama*"

including the three stages, *rEchaka*, *Pooraka* and *Kumbhaka*. (VNVD Page 121)

"*Sujata*" means that which gave birth beautifully. It is noteworthy that the birth-less primordial navel gave birth beautifully to not one Brahma but numerous Brahmas! (VNVD Page 119)

The lotus is rich in pollen dust. The term is "*rajas*" ironical term here, since the Lord has no chance of "*rajO guNa*" tainting him. That lotus has generated many Brahmas! (VNVD Page 122)

The Lord himself is called "*bhuvanasya Naabhi*", the generator. (VNVD Page 123)

Sloka 6.: srivatsEna:

Fifth step: (*Tiru Maarbu*) The Chest (cf Amalanaadipiraan 5)

"*SrivatsEna pratita Vibhavam*" The swirl of curly hairs on the chest that emerged when Sage Brighu Maharishi kicked and which the Lord cherished with love. Besides, there are -

- *Sri Lakshmi*, the *Koustuba* gemstone,
- the green *TuLasi* garland,
- the manifold color of *Vajjyanthi* lace and
- the cool heartening arms on either side. (VNVD Page 138)

Has he not assigned a room for the *Jiva* side by side with his consort? (VNVD Page 140)

He is the one who can ward off all heat and all defects. We wish to remove our mind's waywardness towards sinful and evil projects.

This is "*Prathyaahaara*" (VNVD Page 140)

Sloka 7. Ekam:

Sixth Step: (*TirukkaigaL*) The Arm

In this, the next stage in yOga called "*DhaaraNa*" is indicated. The two next steps are "*Dhyaana*" and "*Samaaadi*" Together they are called "*Samyamia*" according to (VNVD Page 156)

How can this uncontrollable "*Chinta Hastini*" (female mind-elephant) be controlled? It is by resorting to the two arms of the Lord (*Baahu-dwaya*) Hence, the term ": (VNVD Page 156- 159)

Sloka 8. Saabhipraaya:

Seventh Step: (*Tirumugam*) The face

This corresponds to "*Dhyaana*".

The Lord has a mild and lovely smile on his face.

When noble souls smile, they do it concealing their teeth (VNVD Page 174)

'*GaaDa Vilanganam*'- Deep cogitation called "*Dhyaana*"

He becomes one with the devotee in the heart. (VNVD Page 176)

Sloka 9. maalyairanta:

Eighth Step": (kireeTam) The diadem:

The last stage called "Samaadi".

Total and perfect absorption in the object, *Brahman*, is implied. The diadem or crown is the insignia of his being the Lord of all Worlds (VNVD Page 191)

When referring to the feet, we heard about several fragrances. In the case of hairs on his head we come across the fragrance of flower augmented by those of garlands worn by NeeLa and GOdha. This is "*Sthira ParimaLam*" (VNVD Page 189)

It is to be noted that we started with "Ratna" and end here with "Ratna" (VNVD Page 192)

Sloka 10. paada-ambhOjam:

Last Step: (Samudaaya sObhai) The whole charm of the Lord:

***Samaadi* has been reached.**

This Sloka re-capitulates

- the feet reflection in the mental pond,
- the gratification in the navel whirlpool,
- the quietude secured by mind from the lord's chest-enjoyment,
- the close binding of his two arms,
- the circumambulation of face with delectation and the quiet stationing of the mind in "*Samaadi*" at the diadem, hair- curl zone (VNVD Page 210)

Villivalam Swami says that if we recite this single Sloka before retiring to bed, we can feel having enjoyed all the limbs of Paramaatma (VAS: Page 4)

May be, we can feel that the Vedic statement "*Moordhaanaam Patyu: AarurOha*" has come true! (VAS: Page 5)

Sloka 11. kaantOdaarai:

The Net Result:

***Periya-Perumaal* with his AdisEsha couch and *Nam-Perumaal* with his consorts have all entered the heart of Swami to take a permanent abode there. (VNVD Page 227)**

Indeed, the firm standing of the Lord in one's heart is a certain evidence of "*Samaadi*" achieved by Swami (VNVD Page 228)

Sloka 12. rangasthaanE: Phala Sruti:

The chanting of this Stotra will confer deep devotion called "*Parama Bhakti*" (VNVD)

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D/ST .04. BHOO STUTI

Introduction

This is a Stotra containing 33 Slokas on Bhoo Devi. When an Asura by name HiraNyaaksha abducted her and hid her under the deep ocean. The Lord took the form of a mammoth boar, dived into the ocean and rescued her. This is about this incident (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 726)

If she is *VishNu-patni*, VishNu is *Bhoo-pati* (D/BO/ 04/ ASR – Page 9)

Though many *Achaaryas* have composed *Stotras* about *Mahalakshmi*, it is not known whether any *Achaarya* other than Swami Desika has composed one on *Bhoomidevi*. Swami Desika has filled this gap by writing this. (DP in Stotra Malar page 213)

Sloka 1: Sankalpa: Surrendering to Bhoomi PiraATTI

The patience and compassion of Bhoo Devi is praised by TiruvaLLuvar also (Tirukkural 151) as "*Agazhvaarai Taangum nilam pOla tammai / Igazhvaarai poruttal talai*" Meaning: "When someone insults you, or disrespects you, please be patient and do not take to revenge" (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 727)

Sloka 2: Tvaam Vyaahriti: Glory of Bhoomi PiraATTI being beyond praise

While reciting *Gaayatri*, we first mention the *Vyaahritis*. The very first word in it refers to "*Bhoo*" which in turn refers to *Bhoo Devi* (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 729)

Sloka 3: Nityam: Praying to her to accept his baby talk

My nature has been to get confused between what is good and what is not. I get disinterested in the former and very much attached to the latter. Hence, I fall into a sin-sea in both ways. My hope is now

that my unclear words coming as an ostensible hymn on you should be pleasing to the mother - that you are. You ought to nurture this suckling baby, notwithstanding my imperfections and my past transgressions. (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 18)

Sloka 4: Sankalpa kinkara: Lord's glory augmented by her glory

Oh! "Bhoomi" You are not *Bhoomi* for praise. You become "*a-bhoomi*" for a praise effort. The probability of our completing your praise is just NIL (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 23)

Sloka 5: Vedastrinaavadhi: Bhoo Devi nourishes the world

Sri *VishNu Sahasra naama*, the first name is "*Viswam*" which means "Earth". You are that mother earth who nourishes the world (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 26)

Sloka 6: Sarvam saHE: Her very names proclaim her glory

If the Lord is "*Viswambhara*" meaning one who bears the Universe, she is "*Viswambharai*" (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 733)

Swami Desika cites 6 names of *Bhoomi PiraaTTi* in this 6th Sloka: *Sarvamsahai, Avani, Achalai, Viswambharai, Vipulai, Vasundharai* (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 28)

Sarvamsahai: tolerating offences committed by *adiyaars*

Avani: protecting the worlds

Achalai: firm determination in protecting the worlds

Viswambharai: patience in bearing the worlds

Vipulai: one whose greatness cannot be restrained

Vasundharai ": one whose wealth is immeasurable. (VNRD Page 733)

Sloka 7: Taapaan: How Bhoodevi sustains the Lord himself

"*Harichandana*" is a boon conferring- tree of divine existence. A verse embodying a double entendre between this mystic tree and Hari shows that Hari receives sustenance from Bhoomi Devi. (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 36)

Sloka 8: smErENa: Bhoodevi is the ultimate of all Tattvas

If the Lord is visualized as the Ocean, she is the Shore which he would not transgress. (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 735)

A full-blossomed smile on your full-moon-like face enhances the joy of Lord VishNu. He is like an ocean that soars high on the full moon day. As his love waxes, his waves too wax and roar and come in arrays to the shore, perhaps to reach and rest at you. (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD–Page 40)

Sloka 9: svaabhaavikE: Like the Lord, she also has nothing to depend upon

We see on temple towers that many models made of clay and mortar and painted attractively. The proverbial purpose is that they bear the tier of the tower, so to say. As a matter of fact, the tower tier only bears, upholds, and keeps as decorative pieces, the dolls and not vice versa. Likewise, one should not interpret the *Dig-gajas, Dig-naagaas* etc. as bearing the burden since they have deposited their

burden on you. Oh! Bhoomi! - even as showpieces like dolls on the temple tower! (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 44 and VNRD page 737)

Sloka 10: Sambhaavayan: This is how the Lord respects Bhoo Devi

Sambhaavayan Madhuripu: The Lord bears Goddess Lakshmi on his **chest** but he bears Goddess Bhoodevi on his **head** in the form of Adhi-sEsha (D/St/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page xxviii)

Can there be a greater slave to his wife (*PeNDaaTTi daasan*) than your husband?

It is strange that "Supreme *Purusha*" (*Parama-purusha*) behaves like this. That is probably why he acquired the name of "*sEsha*" – "I beg to remain!" (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 47-49)

Sloka 11: kreeDaa Varaaha: Bhoodevi as spouse of Lord Varaaha blesses Devas

Indra who makes enemies to cry in grief, Manu, Maandaata who are great rulers – all of them hold centers of power because they fall flat at your feet, Oh! Spouse of Lord Varaaha! Particles of dust from your feet fall on their heads as a spray of dust. This very dust empowers them. (D/ST/21/ PPA/ VNVD – Page 53)

Sloka 12: BhootEshu: The whole earth flourishes by her grace She has all the 5 natural elements of Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Ether. (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 739)

By a process called '*Panchee-karaNa*' (quintuplicating) God creates the Universe. Hence, it is called '***pra-pancha***' - the dimensions of which spread from the SatyaLOka of Brahma through BhulOka, the world we live in up to the PaataaLa IOka, the nethermost space in the Universe.

The formation of the gross elements from the subtle elements is described as follows. "By dividing each subtle element into two equal parts and subdividing the first half of each into 4 equal parts and then adding to the undivided half of each element"

These compounds constitute the gross elements. They are named according to the element 'preponderant' in each. Since ether is experienced as sound (*Sabda*), Air as touch (*Sparsa*) fire as color and shape (*Rupa*), water as flavor (*Rasa*) and earth as smell (*Gandha*) - each gross element (being a compound of all the five) affects all the senses. (AR: "Hinduism Rediscovered" by Anbil Ramaswamy – Chapter 7 "Who is God?")

Sloka 13: kaanthastavaisha: Bhoodevi takes even sinners to Lord's grace

Why did Bhoodevi act as if she were abducted and kept under the ocean? Though she can protect and release herself from the clutches of the *Asura*, she did not do so but waited for the Lord to rescue her. This she did- to show to the people of the world that if they seek the help of the Lord, he will rush help to them also. (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 741)

Sloka 14: Aaswaasanaaya: The real reason why the earth sank in the sea.

Your disappearance is not due to anyone abducting you. How can anyone abduct you? It is all mere acting! Oh! You are a woman. **May be due to domestic feud, you went to your parent's house of Ocean. "Piranda VeeDu". "Adbhya; prithvee" means that earth was born from water. So, water (ocean) is the mother of Earth.** (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page xxix and 65)

Sloka 15: Poorvam Varaaha vapushaa: How the Lord located Bhoo devi in PaataaLa IOkaa

"*udvaahaa*" means "rising up" and "auspicious wedding". The Lord not only raised but also married Bhoodevi. (VNRD Page 742)

Sloka 16: *vyOmaatilanghini: Bhoodevi casts her benign glance on Varaaha*

The ocean that surrounds the earth is like her dress. During the deluge, the waves of the ocean rise to the skies. When Varaaha PerumaL takes the form of a mammoth boar, the high tides appear as if they are just a small pond before his huge form. When he rescued you, you became so happy and looked at him with awe and wonder. This was as if you submerged him in a different kind of waters, namely your ocean of happiness. (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 743)

Sloka 17: *damshTraa: The Lord hugged Bhoodevi*

When the Lord in the form of a large boar killed the *Asura*, his body was smeared with *Asura's* blood and when the Lord embraced you, the smeared blood gave you a kind of sandalwood paste smear on your body and thus became your maid-servant to give you a make-up! (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 75)

Sloka 18: *anyOnya Samvalana: The Lord kept Bhoodevi on his shoulders*

When *Bhoodevi* was lifted by the Lord, she seemed to be seated majestically on his shoulder as the throne and is now being crowned! (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 78)

Sloka 19: *bhartus tamaala: And Lord embraced Bhoodevi with his shoulders*

When the Lord lifted you from the ocean, drops of water on your body looked like pearly stars shining on the blue azure sky (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 81)

Sloka 20: *Aasakta vAasava: Coronation of Bhoodevi as the Empress of the World*

When the sky damsel seeks to crown you as the consort of the Universal Lord, she takes up the rainbow as the tender mango leaves with which to crown a traditional water-pot for auspiciousness. She fastens all around the pots with threads using lightning streaks. The clouds gather water from the ocean and come in arrays as if each were a "*PoorNa Kalasa*". All for the fertile growth of green vegetation for surfeit of crops and for wellbeing of all the creatures. (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 85)

Sloka 21: *Aavirmadai: Great men recognize Bhoodevi as the Empress*

You are the mother of the three worlds. In this sense, Mother Earth is the "*karma Bhoomi*". We humans are free to do good deeds and deserve heaven or commit sins and go to hell. We may then be reborn on earth. Thus, earth grants us the possibility of one of the three worlds. (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 89-90)

Sloka 22: *NishkaNTaka: Bhoodevi leads both here and hereafter*

We can adhere to Bhoomi Devi. She will guide us to *Swarga* or *Moksha* as per our choice. (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 94)

Sloka 23: *GaNDOjwalaam: Bhoo devi takes dual roles*

- Oh! Earth! You have prominent rocks all around.
- the forests that abound with green vegetation would merit a connotation that it is like your locks of hair.
- The mountain chains that abound are indeed like your breasts.
- Streams of rivers that flow on you all around are perhaps garlands to you.

- You look naturally greenish dark because of overwhelming vegetation.(D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 9)

Sloka 24: Nissamsayaair: Bhoodevi is the object of devotion of sages

Only great Sages can think of you without vacillation and enjoy this state of meditative enjoyment. They see you with yogic vision, not physical "seeing" and they saw your super-godliness called "*paratva*" (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 102)

Sloka 25: sanchOdita: Bhoodevi is pleased by Bhakti

You are known to be the esoteric meaning and explicit import of your devotees who harbor your form **within** their hearts and visually enjoy your *Archa* form from **without**. (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 106)

Sloka 26: kreeDaa griheeta: Bhoodevi grants KubEra's wealth to her devotees

Like Lakshmi, Bhoomi Devi sports lotus and *NeelOtpala* flowers on her two hands. "Like Lakshmi, she eradicates our penury totally and makes us like KubEra the God of wealth. (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 111)

Sloka 27: udvEla kalmasha: Bhoodevi takes even sinners near the Lord

The volume of sins committed by the *Chetanas* knows no bounds. This makes the Lord wrathful and he wants to punish. Now, they are scared and beg of the Lord to excuse them. Even if they fold their palms over their heads and plead, they are unable to reach him. At this juncture, you take over and out of mercy you plead on their behalf. His anger subsides and the *Chetanas* are spared. (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 755)

Sloka 28 pratyEka mabda: For the scared sinners Bhoodevi is the refuge

Our propensity to commit sins is enormous. We do not even ponder about the consequences at that time. But, when we realize, we resort to "*Parihaaram*", but it might take several births to wipe out our stock of sins. As mother, you are forgiveness personified and at the same time influential with the Lord. You alone can intervene on behalf of your children. (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 120)

Sloka 29: traanaabhisandhi: Bhoodevi resolves to save Jeevas

Would anyone do evil acts if one has insight into the spiritual fundamentals? I am a dunce in this sense. It makes me a bad sinner. Oh! Mother! You alone can commend me to the Lord's forgiveness. (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 124)

Sloka 30: Dharnadruham: Bhoodevi gives refuge to even sinners

Oh! Spouse of Yagjna Varaaha Swami! I have never done any meritorious deeds. On the other hand, I have dissuaded others also from doing any meritorious actions. I do not know my *Svaroopam* as a *Jeeva* or about those of *Paramaatma*. Even after coming to realize about my sins, I do not regret. When such is my condition, only with your mercy you can save me and make me reach the feet of the Lord. (D/ST/I/ VNRD/ Page 757)

Sloka 31: Taapatrayeem: Praying to Bhoodevi to save us

May your kindly glances full of *karuNa* cool appropriate to the summer of that we are suffering, showering as it were sweet ambrosia on us (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 131)

Sloka 32: Dhyaana SIOka of Bhoodevi

This is the *Dhyaana Sloka* of Bhoo devi. (Seva/ JS/07/page 211)

With her lotus feet placed on the lotus-like right hand of her consort, Varaaha, and gracefully reclining as on a couch on his left arm which is like the body of AdhisEsha. Her cheeks shine with the pleasing touch of the face of Varaaha and eyes like full blown lotus. May all-forgiving Bhoomi devi bless me with all auspiciousness. (VAS Page 28)

Sloka 33: asyEsaanaam: The fruit of reciting this Stotra

Bhoomi Devi is praised in *Vedic* sayings. This hymn was composed by Venkatesa as an amalgam of faith and devotion. Anyone who recites this gains all mundane and other worldly benefits immediately (D/ST/PPA 21/ VNVD/ Page 141)

In conclusion, Sri Desika declares that a devout study of the Stotra will help one to realize all dreams. (ASR) – Page 9

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D/ST – 05. Dasavatara Stotram

Introduction

There are 13 Slokas in this Stotra. Swami Desika says that the Lord took 10 + 3 =13 *Avataras* including (Andal, Madhurakavi and Amudanaar). To indicate this, he composed 13 Slokas (JS/07 Desika Stotra Malar Page 65 Seva).

What is the purpose of these *Avataras*? The only objective of all these Avataras is Lord's mercy (D/ST/4A –Seva Page3)

The Lord emerges in *Archa* form from his *Vibhava*. That is how *Sannidhis* for the Lord in *Archa* form arose. It is during *Vibhava* that we find interesting events happening. That is why, when we pray before *Archa moorthis*, we are reminded of such events (D/ST/4A –Seva Page1)

Varaha Mihira indicates that these 10 Avataras may relate to the different *Grahas* (planets) and can be used for seeking to please the *Navagrahas*. When it will suffice if we pray to Lord Narayana, why should we seek to please these *Grahas*? True. **But the mischief of the *Grahas* is also equally true.** To ward off the mischief of the various *Grahas*, we appeal to Lord Narayana himself through this *Dasaavatara Stotra*. **When the combined mischief of more than one *Graha* attack us, chanting of this Stotra would be highly effective** (D/ST/4A –Seva Page14 and 29)

Sloka 1: DevO na: Subham aatanOtu

In the very first Sloka, Swami does "*Vastu nirdesam*" meaning a hint at the contents to follow (D/ST/PPA3VNVD Page 45 and VKSN Page 67)

Normally, we enjoy on **seeing** a scene, but Swami brings the same effect by bringing before our mental picture through our **hearing**! (D/ST/PPA3 VNVD Page 467)

Through the words "*DevO na: Subham aatanOtu*" at the beginning, Swami brings out the most important Srivaishnava concept of how *PerumaaL* and *Thaayaar* are always together in all the *Avataras* "*DevatvE dEvatEhEyam manushyatvE cha Maanushee/ VisNOOr dEva anuroopaam vai KarOti yEshaa aatmana: sthanum*" (JS/07 Desika Stotra Malar Page 67 VKSN Raghavan)

It may be noted that there is no mention of Prahlada or Mahabali or Ravana or Kamsa, Setu or Bhagavad Gita in this Stotra though the epics describe them in detail. (D/BO/04: ASR Page10)

The poet's love for this Stotra can be seen from the fact that all the Slokas excepting the last find a place in Act VII of his drama, which is a picture gallery where all the 10 Avataras and their exploits have been painted (D/BO/04: ASR: Page11)

Sloka 2: Matsya: nirmagna sruti:

We enjoy doing *dolotsavam* here in this world. The Lord has his own in this – Where?

Under-sea *dolotsavam*! (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 63)

He has nurtured a veritable lotus garden under water! (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 67)

The Lord searches intensely without even blinking his eyes (D/ST/4A – Seva Page43)

There is no destruction of *Asuras* in this Sloka. And, in which both the divine and the devils are treated alike! (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 75)

The Swirl in the ocean was not because of the churning. It was because of the inhaling and exhaling of his breath which are none other than the *Vedas* themselves! (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 76)

We now enjoy his *paryanka-aasanam yoga nidra* (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 77)

Sloka 3: Koorma: avyaasur bhuvana

In *Matsyaavataara*, he took delight with **Mahalakshmi**. Here he is taking delight in his association with **Bhoodevi** (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 89)

In *Matsyaavatara*, *Rakshanam* was through his **sight**, here it is through his **nose** (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 90)

What all happened during this *Avataara*?

- He took the form of tortoise to hold firmly the huge *Mantara* mountain on his back.
- When the mountain swirled during the churning, he enjoyed it as comforting his itching sensation
- Because of this, he even felt sleepy to such an extent as to snore. This also acted as a cradle gently rocking to comfort and lull him to sleep.
- His very breath seemed to pervade the entire ocean as to appear like the successive formation of waves.
- The entire ambience served to provide him occasion to enjoy the company of Periya *PiraaTTi* (VNRD Page 33)

Sloka 4: Varaaha: gOpaayEt anisam

If Bhoodevi is *viswam-bara*, the Lord is *Viswam-bara-dhara* the boar 'bore' one who bears all from Brahma downwards (D/ST/PPA 3 VNVD Page 91-92)

The Lord took a *Maha-Varaaha* (Great boar) form for a pretext when he kept in his fang-clamp the whole universe even as an animal would keep a "musta" tuber ball (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page page 14)

It may be noted that in the 3 verses (2, 3 and 4), there is a reference to the waters of the ocean as seen from the use of "*Tarangam, Oormi* and *PraLayOrmi*" respectively (D/ST/4A –Seva Page 47)

Sloka 5: Nrisimha: pratyadishTa puraataana

The weapons begged the Lord to use them for killing the enemy. But the Lord preferred to give them temporary "leave of absence" momentarily and preferred to utilize his nails as weapon (*PaaNijai*) to cleave the demon (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page103, 107)

"Because these weapons had become old, the Lord rejected their request" says Seva Swami (D/ST/4A – Seva Page 48)

The word "*Vedasaam*" is in plural suggesting that the Lord became the great grandfather of **NOT one but very many Brahmas** (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 106)

Sloka 6: Vamana: VreeDa viddava:

The Lord himself is the greatest benefactor who could grant whatever one desires. It is strange that such a one would beg Mahaabali for 3 sods of earth! Why did he do this? It was to trumpet the glory of

Mahabali. He did not intend to do this in the first place. But he became a slave to the generosity of Mahaabali (*Bali Mahatmyam*) that he decided to act as his call boy or errand boy to propagate the glory of Mahaabali (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 120-124)

Sloka 7: Parasurama: krOdaagnim

Parasurama's father's name itself was "Agni"- "**Jamad-agni**".

Parasurama is a Chiramjeevi. So also, is his anger! (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 134)

Even if a Brahmin wins a whole empire, he is not supposed to rule over his empire. That is why, he gave away what he won to Sage Kasyapa. **He knew only anger and had no other desire.** (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 135)

"A-brahmaNyam" means "Inauspiciousness". This is an incarnation, not total, but an entry of *Bhagavaan* in a human body (*AavEsa or anu-pravEsa Avataara*) (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 136)

Sloka 8: Rama: Paaraavaara

"Sarvaaavasta sakrut Prapanna": We do *SaraNagati*. Yet we continue commit to actions that go against the very *Saranagati* we made. This expression suggests that the Lord protects us even then because Rama is "*DharamO Vighrahaan*" (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 138)

In Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says "*Raama: sastrabrutaam aham*" meaning "Among the wielders of weapons, I am Rama" (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 149)

Sloka 9: Balarama: Pakkat Kourava

When Parasurama dragged Yamuna River, she cried and wailed saying -

*"Rama Rama Mahaa-baahO na JaanE tava Vikramam/
Yasyaika amsEna vidrutaa jagatee jagata: patE//
Param Bhaavam BhagavatO Bhagavan! Maam ajaanateem/
mOktum arhsai Viswaatman! Prapannaam Bhakta vatsala//* (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 158)

Sloka 10: Krishna: Naathaayaiva nama:

We see that when an actor dances on a stage, several lights flash their beams on him / her. So also, when Krishna danced on the hoods of Kalinga, gems on its heads spread lights everywhere (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 172)

In Yadavabhudaya Sloka IV.119 Swami says that Krishna was just practicing because he must dance on our hoods that are darker and more poisonous than those of Kaliyan (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 174)

Krishna's dancing amounted to leveling the different hoods to a level plane as the road workers do (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 176)

Anbil V. Gopalachariar says that the Lord's dancing on Kalingan's hoods is equivalent to repeated prostrations by Kaliya; his total surrender and the Lord's granting him his protection (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 178)

Sloka 11: Kalki: Bhaavinyaa dasadhaa

The first *Avataara* was "*VeLLai Parimugar*" – "*Hayagriva*"; the last - *Kalki* riding on a *Kalkam*. "*Kalkam*" means a white horse. It has now become his vehicle. (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 185)

"Vishnuyasa suta: "When **Vishnu's yasas** was fading, he will be born as the son of **Vishnu-yasas** to restore his glory (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 186)

Jalpanta: Even if they are uttered without understanding their meanings or without *bhaava, mana anubhavam* etc, the Lord will bless (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 201)

Sloka 12: All Avataras: Ichchaa meena

This is *Sarva Avataara sangraha slokam*.

Swami's niyamanam is that we should recite at least this sloka daily (D/ST/4A –Seva Page 59)

Sloka 13: Phalasaruti: vidhyOdanvati

If we approach such blessed persons, we can secure whatever we desire (VAS: Page 3)

Even when one desires to recite these naamas, one can reap all the benefits (D/ST/IV - VNVD Page 211)

Swami says that those who recite this Stotra purify not only themselves but also the entire world.

It may be noted that when mentioning *Vamana* Avataara, Swami said that the Lord went all over the 8 directions to spread the glory of Mahaabali (*ashtasu disaa soudeshu dodhooyate*). Here he says that even on a mere wish to recite Lord's *naamas*, the Lord would spread our glory (not in 8) but all the 10 directions (*disaasu dasasu khyaatii subhaa jimbate*) (Anbil Ramaswamy)

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D/ST 06. DAYA SATAKAM

Introduction

This StOtra was sung on TiruvenktamuDaiyaan of Tirumalai. If he were to say that it is on TiruvenkatamuDaiyaan, it may be misconstrued as a StOtra on himself, Swami Desika sang on his unique GuNa that shed luster on all the Kalyaana GuNas of the Lord. It is appropriate that Swami gives 7 illustrations (3 from RamayaNam and 4 from Sri KrishNa story) (Page 489-490 of Sri Vedanta Desika 7th centenary commemoration volume published on 2nd October 1968)

It is interesting to note that Paramaatma subordinates himself to his mercy. He willingly puts himself at the mercy of those who have surrendered to him and those who are their daasas of such surrendered souls. Thus, Daya Devi makes the super Paramaatma equal even to the worst jeeva! (AVG in VNVD's Avataarikai Page 73)

Daya is the root. KaaruNyam, karuNai, anukampa, anukrosam etc. are synonyms. (AVG in VNVD's Avataarikai Page 76 and 101)

1st Dasakam

1. prapadyE tam girim...

In the very first SIOkta, Swami describes the TiruvEnkaTa Malai as the sweet personification of his Daya that has flown out and solidified in the form the hills (NK)

2. VigaahE theertha bahuLaam...

It would not be possible to reach the running water for bathing if there are no ghats. Similarly, it would not be possible for us to secure the mercy of Emperumaan if we do not have the guidance of Achaaryas. (VNRD Page 98 and 109) Every Achaarya is a step into this reservoir that is his Daya (NK)

3. Kritina: ...

Perhaps the most important attribute of the prabandam is described through the words 'Sarva YOghyatvam' unlike Vedas which have constraints on svara (exact way of chanting), VarNa (caste restrictions) etc. in addition to the limitations of the knowledge of the Vedas which are more limited than the language of the Prabandam (NK)

5. AsEsha vignasamana...

Even punishing an offence is an aspect of Lord's mercy. This is to remove obstacles to God-realization. This is the role of ViswaksEnar. That is why we propitiate him before beginning any action. (VNRD page 100). It is this ViswaksEna with his disciplining rod in his hands who was born as Bhagavad Ramanuja with his TridaNDa. (VNRD Page 131)

7. vandE vrisha gireesasya...

bhoo devi bears the whole universe with a forbearance. Tirukkural 151 says "akazhwaarai Thaangum nilam pOle igazhwaarai poruttal talai". (VNRD Page 142)

8. nisaamayitu... The leelas of Nappinnai PiraaTTi impart defects to Lord's vision thereby he is made to turn a blind eye to the defects in us. Therefore, we are beholden to her. (VNRD page 102)

The word "bhaavitam" has the suggestive meaning that the Lord deigns a visual incapacity in being unable to witness the faults of Jeevas, thanks to her "bhOga mayakkugal" (VNRD 149)

10. akinchana nidhim...

There is a beauty in referring to the hill of the lord as "Anjana-adri" Why? The Lord is pictured as a treasure trove. Due to human weakness, they do not recognize the treasure for the helpless hidden under one's feet, walking over it, never discovering it – till a "mai" an unguent or "anjanam" is applied on one's eyes. Daya is the treasure needing an "anjanam" application to discover it. (VNRD 166-167 and NK)

The word "Sooti" indicates that Daya Devi not only give what is already existing and available but she will also generate, produce, create etc. whatever we ask for. (VNRD 167)

2nd Dasakam

11. Svaadeena...

His description of Princess Daya in grand procession with Jnaana bearing the torch in front and the collection of the other GuNas following behind and thus Daya being the principal center of attention and attraction is beautiful. Even the Lord just follows whatever is dictated by Daya which is nothing but the good of the devotee (NK)

13. Bhagavati dayE...

Daya Devi! You have submerged in your flood of mercy even the Lord who sits on top of the lofty mountain of Tirumalai. No wonder that thoughts of my sins weighing heavily in his heart would also be submerged along with him. (VNRD Page 106)

15. Vrishagiri grihamedhi guNaa...

Oh! Daya Devi! The Lord has infinite qualities, the more fundamental ones being Jnaanam, Balam, Aiswaryam, Veeryam, Sakti, TEjas etc. Though depicted as "GuNas" or virtues, they will turn out to be mere stigmas, "DOshas" and faults had it not been for your presence. (VNVD 210 and NK)

16. Aasrishti santanaanaam...

If the Lord is full of mercy, how come there can be deluge which spells destruction? SVD answers this as follows. When children misbehave, mothers would put them to sleep and the kids would forget their mischiefs in deep sleep. When they awake after some time, they might not remember to continue their pranks. Similarly, Daya Devi by resorting to periodical deluges, gives us respite from our propensity to commit sins. Thus, deluges also serve the purpose of mercy in saving us. (VNRD Page109 and VNVD Page 214)

18. AnuguNa DasaarpitEna...

The role of Daya Devi continues from PraLaya. SrishTi etc. by providing the lamp of hoary Saastras that never go off as perennial guidebooks to us to behave in the right direction. (VNVD Page 230 and NK)

19. RooDaa vrishaachala patE... Bhagavaan's Daya starts as soon as a devotee surrenders to him. It grows in the sweet and inviting smile of his face when he sees a devotee who has sought his feet and it thrives in the form of his kaTaaksham says Seva Swami (NK/ page 50)

3rd Dasakam

21. samayopanatais tava...

No doubt, Daya Devi helps us achieve our benefit of moksha through prapatti at the appropriate moment. But do you know who is the prime beneficiary? It is none other than PerumaaL. So, Daya Devi is the benefactor even for PerumaaL! (VNVD Page 268)

22. kalasodati sampado...

When the milky ocean was churned, arose Chandran (moon). When Daya was churned arose the moon called Srinivasan (VNVD Page 276)

23. jaladEriva seethataa...

Daya Devi takes pity on the plight of souls that have been put to sleep and again creates the world to give another lease of life for them in the hope that they would turn a new leaf at least in their new life. Thus, the re-creation is also an aspect of Lord's mercy. (VNRD Page 116).

Her hope and wish are that the soul should make use of the new stock of body and wit and reach salvation. In her motherly fondness, she wishes and works for everybody's liberation. It is like a dancer depicting ferocious side called "Uddhata NaaTya" who instantly switches over to present a fine, delicate, gentle emotion in what is called "Lasya NaaTya" (VNVD Page 286-287)

24. praNata pratikoola...

Clearing the weeds would help in protecting the plants. Similarly, the Lord also gets angry sometimes. When? When someone troubles his devotees. Destroying such forces is also another aspect of Lord's mercy. (VNRD Page 117)

The primary purpose of this protection of the crops and not the destruction of the weeds (NK)

As Kamadhenu would only provide delicious nutritious milk, whatever its feed be, Daya quality would yield only unalloyed blessing and pure kindness even when we feed her with sins. (VNVD Page 300)

26. kamala nilakayas tvayaa...

Swami Desika's fame as "Kavi Taarkika Kesari" is evident when he presents Daya or Mercy as merciless (NK)

Daya Devi invests the quality of mercy on others. Even she becomes merciless towards sins committed by her devotees which are not afraid of even PerumaaL run from her out of fear for her! (VNRD Page 119 and VNVD Page 306-307)

27. ati langita saasaneshu...

Daya Devi has causeless mercy that is million times greater than the Vaatsalyam of an ordinary mother because sometimes an ordinary mother might show greater affection towards a son who earns more than her other sons! (VNVD Page 314)

28. karuNE duritEshu...

The Lord decided to quell my innumerable unpardonable sins. So, he wore you as a protective shield and holding his Saarangam bow as weapon was looking for the best vantage spot and found it in Tiruvenkata mountain. Daya Devi! You acted as this protective shield. (VNRD Page 121)

29. mayi tishTati....

Daya Devi! You are terribly hungry. What is your food? It is the sins committed by souls. Here, I am the greatest sinner and can offer you enough food. Even if you collect all the food from all others, that cannot be enough to sate your hunger. I can only pity you if ignoring me, you seek sustenance elsewhere! (VNRD Page121-122)

The rest of the world together will not have committed enough sins for her to take care of her hunger (NK/p.56)

Daya Devi! What is the use of searching for sinners who are weak, incapable, imperfect? If you devour their sins, your appetite is sure not be satisfied. You will then become weak, infirm, and unattractive becoming an object of contempt even for your co-consorts, Lakshmi, and the like. This will make your "ChakkaLathis" happy. Can you tolerate this ignominy? (VNVD Pp 332-333)

30. ahamapi aparaada chakravarthi...

I am the emperor of criminals. You are the empress of compassion and other GuNas. We are of equal rank I challenge you to defeat me, take me prisoner and lay me at the feet of the Lord TiruvenkatamuDaiyaan. (VNRD Page 122)

"Tvam cha" suggests that her 'Saavabhoomitvam' of Daya Devi is a tad lower than his own position as Emperor! (VNVD Page 340)

4th Dasakam

31. asithilakarane...

We cannot miss Swami's subtle reference to the fact that the cool waterfalls are reminiscent of the cool glow of Daya (VNVD Page 351)

Swami expresses his longing to live in the corridors of this punya kshEtra (Vrishagiri katakEshu vaasam asaadayEyam) (NK)

32. avideeta nijayOgakshEma...

I am the lowest of the lowly without any knowledge of my own incapacity. This being so, you cleverly manipulated and brought your spouse round to save me. Periya PiraaTTi and Bhoo Devi are also inclined to help me. They are not jealous of your achievement. On the other hand, they are happy that you could accomplish what they could not and appreciate your success (VNRD Page 125)

His Daya is wanting to protect us who do not have the slightest good in us "GuNa lava rahitam maam gOptukaamaa dayE" (NK /P.56)

33. phala vitarana...

In the most supreme court, the lord is the chief justice sitting with Periya PiraaTTi on the bench. I stand before them as the accused. My enormous sins by being impartial are the prosecutors who argue that I am guilty and deserve severest punishment. I am completely lost. But hark! Here comes Daya Devi as defense lawyer and argues quoting Prapatti Saastras that by dint of my Prapatti once performed, all my sins have already been pardoned and successfully shattered the arguments of the prosecution and won the case for me. (VNRD Page 126-127 and NK)

35. avataraNa visEshai...

Lord's taking incarnations is said to out of his "Leela". I do not agree with this view. Only you have commanded him to take several births. The Himalayan heap of sins committed by the souls can never be obliterated even if they take innumerable births. You do not wish to make them go through this tedious process, you made Srinivasa to take all these births on their behalf. Can he disobey you? He has taken all these births so that the poor souls might resort to him and surrender to him and secure liberation. This, I believe, is the real reason for Bhagavaan's Avataaras. (VNRD Page 130-131) He is a slave to his quality of sympathy (VNVD Page 406)

37. vrishagirisavidEshu...

No one remembers the one who has surrendered except Daya Devi. Like a PA, it is Daya Devi who reminds the Lord at the critical moment of his plighted promise held out by him in Varaaha Avataara (VNVD Page 423) It is pointed out that living even in the vicinity of the puNya kshEtra is enough for his Daya to be showered on us at the time of our final moments (KaraNa vilaya kale) (NK)

5th Dasakam

43. nabhee padma spuraNa...

It is not an exaggeration to assert that the Lord of SrivaikunTam has come down to earth at Tirumalai – only because of his "Daya" (VNVD Page 502)

44. Yasmin drishTE...

All entities other than Brahmam are subject to triple limitations of space, time, and object whereas Brahmam is not bound by such limitations. (VNVD Page 517)

45. saaram labdvaa...

The distilled essence of the Lord's ocean of GuNas is Daya. Others are mere brackishness, husk, and rejectable stuff (VNVD Page 533)

48. deivaath praapte...

Anyone who has even accidentally gone to the vicinity of Vrishagiri (daivaat Vrishagiri taTam praptE) will be blessed in his final moments by the Lord's Daya and will involuntarily chant his nama in the final breath. This would impel the Lord to appear before this dying devotee and will result in protection in the form of Moksha (NK)

50. divyaapaangam...

Even the greatest sinners such as kshatrabandhu could attain moksham by the guidance of an Achaarya, because in our tradition they are the embodiment of his Daya or mercy. In other words, Bhagavaan appears in the form of our Achaarya and gives us the instruction to lead us in the right path so that even those who are otherwise undeserving can realize him. (NK)

6th Dasakam

51. atikripanOti...

This is like the central pendant in the garland of Daya Satakam like 6th Pathu of Tiruvoimozhi. Of Nammaazhwar. In this Azhwar surrendered to TiruvEnkaTamuDaiyaan. Here, Swami Desika surrenders to "Srinivasa Daya" (VNVD Page 621)

52. abhimukha bhaava...

We are reminded that even the sufferings that we undergo in this life are but acts of his Daya, just to help us get back on track when we go off-track and commit sins. This is referred to as 'the hidden act of Daya' (abhaangura guDhaa gatih) to help us think of him, since it is not obvious that we will be made to suffer as part of his act of helping us. (NK)

53. Api KaruNE....

SVD says that Daya Devi, if one desires to become Siva, she grants it. If one desires to become Brahma, she grants it. But, if one desires to become Paramaatma, she does not grant that. Why? The position of Siva and Brahma can be attained by anyone but the position of Paramaatma is the sole and exclusive privilege of Paramaatma and none would like to become Paramaatma because their only wish would be to remain forever rendering service to him (Ozhivil Kaalamellaam uDanaai manni Vazhuvilaa aDimai seyya vENDum) **(28 Ratna SIokangal by 45th Pattam Villivalam Azhagiya Singhar)**

60. mridu hridayE...

The responsibility for guiding the devotees in the path of saraNaagati has been invested by him in the Achaarya (vibhudha budhEshu vitata Atma dhurE) (NK)

7th Dasakam

64. apaam patyu: ...

Oh! Daya Devi! You have transformed PerumaaL's Nigraham into Kripaa Kaaryam! He challenged to dry up the ocean. He broke the chain of PuNyam of Parasurama. He spared the life of the evil crow by inflicting the minor punishment of plucking his eyesight in one eye. He could have finished all the above. Why he did not do it? it is all because of you.

65. nishadaanaam netaa...

Oh! Daya Devi! You brought out the exalted status of Bhagavaan to the level of the lowliest of the lowly: examples: Guha, the hunter, Sugriva, the monkey, Sabari, the forest dweller, Kuchela, the poor old brahmin, Kubja, the hunchback old lady, unlettered Gopis, Malaakaan, the flower man etc. How did they become so close and dear to PerumaaL as to move with him like peers, if it were not for your grace?

70. khilam chEtO vritte...

The Prapanna offers Bharanyaasam which is like a cloth covering all his sins that he offers. What else does he have to offer? You made Bhagavaan to accept even this offering and grant the Prapanna what he wanted, namely moksham. IF we take one step towards her through Prapatti, she will take 3 steps towards us (VNVD P.837) She voids our sins, not that she relishes our sins! (VNVD P.841)

8th Dasakam

74. hitamiti jagad drishtyaa...

Knowing that I will not acquire even the desire to adopt the proper means and at same time unwilling to help me with partiality, you somehow search for any and every small good deeds done even without my volition (like praasangika Sukritam, Aanushangika Sukrutam, A-buddhi poorvaka Sukritam, Yaadrichika Sukritam, Saamaanya buddhi moolaadi Sukritam) and make that a pretext to help me, you create in me that desire and induce me to adopt the said means to make me fit for moksha! After doing this, you appear as if you have not done anything for me! (VNVD P.879)

77. anitarajushaam...

Even after doing Prapatti, I indulge in sins. Still, you will not let me fall into hells by inducing me to do "Praayaschitta Prapatti". May be, there will be delay in securing moksha, bodily discomfort, loss of peace of mind etc. but no denial of Moksha. (NK)

80. anihitasdhiyaam...

The Prapanna is like a chaataka bird that will not drink the water from any source other than the rainwater that falls straight from the clouds (nibruta garutah sthiraasaya chaatakah nidhyaayanti) NK

9th Dasakam

81. kripE vigatavElayaa...

Why the lord descends to this earth through his various Avataaras? It is because of Daya Devi's effort to save us. He comes down with Nityasooris like GaruDa, Azhwaaras, Achaaryas and such others who can shine only spiritual sustenance and blessings. (VNVD P.951-952)

85. prasaktamadunaa...

Swami talks about "anjanaadreswara" subtly referring to Trivikrama who stamped all the beings in the three worlds with the mark of his feet. "anjana" also means ink (NK)

10th Dasakam

94. maasaahasOkti...

I am a cunning person. Advising everyone to act righteously, I indulge in all evil ways like the Kulinga bird that advises other animals not to fall a prey to the lion but when the lion seems to be sleeping, it dares to pick up the piece of meat sticking in its teeth. Only you should save me from such a situation. (VNVD P.1108)

96. santanyamaana...

My plight is like that of an idiot, who happened to master Garuda mantra. He had the sinister habit of playing with venomous snakes. He would catch one. It would bite him. Only Garuda chanting saves him. Then relying on his mastery over the mantra, he reverts to snake catching. (VNVD P.1133)

100. naata; param... In this SIOkam, 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)

Uparitana ashtaslokee (Epilogue)

Why these extra 8 SIOkas?

It is the tradition of authors of PuraaNas, Azhwars etc. to conclude their works mentioning the name of the author, the specialty of the work and the Phalasruti. Swami Desika uses these 8 Slokas for this purpose.

103. praayO DayE...

Afraid of fathoming the depths of your mercy, great rishis stop at the seashores without venturing. But see what I am doing. I am foolhardy and get into the waves that drag me into the bottom of the sea where I unsuccessfully struggle to find a way out. I have become a laughingstock for you! (NK P.51)

104. Vedanta dEsika patE:

SVD reveals that the merciful lord proclaimed a mere urchin (baala) to be Vedanta Desika (the upanishadic preceptor) and sung the sweet-sounding StOtra through him as though playing upon veena through Daya. (Page 13 of "The Life and works of Sri Nigamantha Maha Desikan" by Prof. A. Srinivasaraghavachariar)

Swami says that he is equal to an insentient thing like the musical instrument, Veena. Will anyone praise an instrument. The honor goes to the musician who plays the instrument (VNVD P. 1239)

107. viswaanugraha...

SVD says that in fact it is Lord Venkatesa who really sang the song as if he was shy to praise his own GuNa directly used Venkatesa kavi as the means to put forth this Stotram (page 52 of "Svami Desikan's Stotrams- A Learner's Review" by Sri N. Krishnamachari)

Swami seems to say Bhakti was mine, Authorship was His! (VNVD P. 1279)

Conclusion

Sri VaikunTA doors are kept open for the Prapanna to enter when he leaves the mortal coil. Vedas, Azhwars, Ramanuja – all vouchsafe to this truth. However, till he lives in this world, the Prapanna enjoys all good, because he is so dear to God. Not that he loves God, but that God loves him most because he is a Prapanna. (Back cover page of volume II of VNVD)



D/ST- 07. Dehaleesa Stuti

Introduction

This is a hymn in praise of the Lord of the "threshold" where he got cramped in the company of 3 Azhwars where they stood huddled together. (VTR in Foreword Page iii)

- Of the "*Trimoortis*", one lifted his feet to the farthest. Another was happy to give a shower-bath to it with *Vedic Mantras*. Yet another adorned his head with the holy waters. Who is the greatest of the three? Determine who the protector of the worlds is and surrender unto him.
- The one who gave shower became the Brahma.
- The one who bore the waters on his head became Siva.

All these happened by your action as you grew up from Vaamana to Trivikrama. This is what this Stuti explains says Swami Desika. (VAS Page 24-25)

Swami Desikan himself named this as "*DEhaLeesa Stuti*" (Vide: the last Sloka)

This is the holy place where the first 3 Azhwars sang the earliest 3 *Stotras* of 4000 Divya Prabandam.

This is the holy place whereas desired by Sage MrigaNDu, the Lord is seen holding his *Chakram* on his left hand and the conch on his right hand unlike in other *Divya desams* (VNRD Page 658-659).

The 3 Azhwars are known as *SarayOgi, Bhoota yOgi and VetaaLa yOgi*.

- When the first one sang his fist set of 100 songs, by lighting a lamp with the entire world as the basin, the waters of the ocean as ghee and the blazing Sun as the wick, the **external darkness** was dispelled.
- When the second one sang his set of 100 songs lighting the lamp with love as the basin, ardor as ghee and joyful thought as the wick, the **internal darkness** in the heart was dispelled.
- With both darkness driven away, the 3rd one sang in ecstasy "Seen Mahalakshmi with the golden bodied Lord "*Vaamana*", the *Brahmachari* was hiding Lakshmi with his deer skin worn as sacred thread. (ASR Page 18)

As the 3 songs were in the form of music, Swami refers to them as "*VENkaTEsEna Geeta*" (Page 203 of Desika Stotra Saara Malar of Seva Swami)

How to conclude that *Bhagavaan* can grant what his devotees desire? The fact that he has proved his prowess in his Trivikrama role is enough proof. "*Vikramya yEva vijitaani jaganti*" (KDC page 205 of Desika Stotra Saara Malar of Seva Swami)

TirukkOvalur is one of the Pancha *KrishnaaraNya KshEtrams* (H.H. Paravakkottai Gopala Desika Maha Desikan in his introduction (Page I of VNVD)

This PerumaaL is also known as "*GOPa-pureesan*", "*BhaktOpa-mardha Rasikari*" and "*Bhaktopa-sahan*"

Sloka 1: Vikramya yEna: Glory of the Lord who measured the worlds

This is *MangaLa Slokam* (VNVD Page 36)

Sloka 2. DEhaLyadheeswara: How the poet took bold to praise

The *Paratvam* of the Lord is described (CRC in VNVD page 55)

Sloka 3. tvat chakravat: How both the divine and demoniac were blessed alike

The *Soulabhyam* of the Lord is described in this (CRC in VNVD page 55)

If Lord's *Paratvam* induces *mounam*, on the part of his devotees his *soulabhyam* makes the devotee talkative, even garrulous (DR page 5)

Sloka 4. aakalpa pushpa: Comparing the Lord with greenery

The *Divya MangaLa Vigramam of PerumaaL* is compared to the cool *Tamaala* tree that provides fruits at its feet and therefore easily accessible. The fruit here is "*Moksha*" (VNVD Page 72)

Tamaala tree is also known as "*Taapincha*" tree in Sanskrit and "*Pachilai maram*" in Tamil (DR page 7)

Sloka 5. chakrasya daitya: The disc and conch are held in a different way

As Chakram is terrific (*Vaamam*), he holds it on his left hand (*Vaama*). As Conch is in consonance with the wishes of devotees (*DakshiNa*), he holds it on his right hand (*DakshiNam*) (NRD Page 665)

Sloka 6. deepEna kEnachid: How the first Azhwars saw the Lord?

The *Azhwars* are referred to as *kaveendrah*, (Princes among poets) *suchayah* (pure persons uncontaminated by contact with the world) and *svaadhyaaya yoga nayanaah* (with vedas and yoga as their eyes) (DR Page 10)

Sloka 7. kasaarapoorva: How Lord's Souseelyam was revealed to the Azhwars?

Comparing the Lord to sugarcane that yields sugar candy, Swami says it is not sugarcane in the ordinary sense. Its candy is of a special category delectable to *Paramaikantins* (VNVD Page 100)

To this day the river flowing through south Arcot district is famous for sugar cane fields on its banks (DR Page 13)

Sloka 8. vairOchanE: How Vaamana grew up as Trivikrama?

Swami wonders how the Lord could present himself in a tiny space and at the same time also as a mammoth figure (VNVD Page 107)

Sloka 9. chitram na tath: How the Lord contained himself in a small space?

The root letter "ma" means "Limitless: cf Andala's "*Maanam-illaa-panri*" (VNVD Page 112)

Sloka 10. Bhaktapriya: Describing the growth as Trivikrama

Swami Desika wonders:

- ✓ When Trivikrama started growing, at first the star-studded skies looked like a canopy of pearls.
- ✓ When he grew up further, it looked like a pearl necklace adorning his neck,
- ✓ When he grew up still further, it appeared as a pearl waistband.
- ✓ When finally, he grew up to the maximum, it appeared as tiny bells adorning his feet.

It is a wonder how when he grew up to this massive size, he could squeeze himself into the tiny space between the front door and next of the house (*IDaikazhi*) where the 3 *Mudal Azhwars* had taken shelter" (VNRD Page 670)

The measuring instrument far exceeded in quantum the object sought to be measured. All the worlds put together were not able to measure up to your size! Says Swami (VNVD Page 113)

Sloka 11. bhiksOchitam: How piraaTTi did not leave Vaamana?

Sloka 12. satkurvataam: How Trivikrama became visible to all?

The Lord might have concealed Mahalakshmi on his chest with the deer skin that he as *Brahmachari* knotted round his *YagjnOpaveeta (PooNool)*. But when he grew up to be Trivikrama all the worlds would have identified him as Vishnu because by then Mahalakshmi would have become available to the sight of all! (VNVD Page 125)

Sloka 13. bhaktOparOdha: Ganges flowing from Lord's feet

Sloka 14. vikraanti: How Ganges came down to earth

Sri Tatachiar says, "Ganges known as "*Mandaagini*" in *Swarga* came down to TirukkOvalur as "*PeNNaiyaaru*" (VNVD Page 136)

Sloka 15. vEdha: kamaNDalu: The greatness of "PeNNaiyaaru"

When you lifted your feet, River Ganga appeared in 3 streams as *Tripatakaa* and flowed through 3 worlds of celestial, human and *PaaTaaLa IOkas* and transformed as the *Sri Sooktis* of the 3 Azhwars in the form of 3 *antaadis* and reached and rested back at your feet. In other words, like the 3 streams of Ganga, the *Srisuktis* of the *Azhwars* originated from and reached the feet of *Emperuman*. (VNRD Page 676-677)

The frothing white waters of Ganga flow. That flowed through the stellar constellation called Ursa Major (*Saptarishi*), the pole star, the moon's region, the solar system, the so called *mEru* Mountain, the abode of Lord Siva and then fell down on earth like the Lord's victory banner!" (VNVD Page 142)

Sloka 16. swachchanda vikrama: The birth of the 3 Tiruvantaadis

Sloka 17. kreeDaa parENa: How the Lord took the 3 Azhwars to Paramapadam?

Having got what he wanted, namely sweet Tamil poetry that would elevate people at large, make them resort to the sane path of deliverance, flowed from their intellectual tongues and having achieved a great positive result, he desired that they too should not be left to come by the congested *Deavayaana* path carved out for *Muktas*. He therefore created through his left thumb a golden yellow illumination that directly elevated them to Sri VaikunTA in a star-lighted upward path called "*Swasthi Maarga*", preferring it to the conventional "*Archiraadi Maarga*" hallowed as the traditional choice path for *Muktas* (VNVD Page 161)

Sloka 18. kaamaavilEpi: Lord's mercy rids Samsaara

Sloka 19. neeDOdaraan: Praying to save him from Samsaara

Swami Desika's plea in this verse is to the effect that Lord must treat him as a parrot-kid fallen from the nest on a tree top, must nurse, fondle and use for his own happiness, as a great emperor would do (VNVD Page 180)

Sloka 20. Leelaa chakuntam iva: Saving us would be pleasing to PiraaTTi

Sloka 21. vaatoola kalpa: Praying to save us from the results of our sins

Sloka 22. ekasvineemiti: Lord cannot bear to see our plight

Swami seems to say:

- ❖ A *Nitya* with enormous power but without mercy is no good.
- ❖ So also, mercy of a powerless person will be of no use.
- ❖ The Lord has both Power and Mercy.
- ❖ He is also the Master whose duty is to protect the supplicant. (VNVD Page 203)

Sloka 23. aatmOnitim: Prayer to lift us from the ocean of ignorance

Sloka 24. aksheeNa kalmasha: Do whatever is good for me

Sloka 25. manyE dayaaardra: Due to our helplessness, the Lord must help.

Swami seems to say: "I have a large treasure that can never suffer destruction. It is the eternal wealth. It is my total destituteness - no knowledge, no discernment, no physical stamina, no strength to adopt any means of salvation" (VNVD Page 220)

Sloka 26. durvaarateevra: It is his grace that saves us

We moderns, in general, worship all our shrines as a ritual, as a hurried program, with thoughts mundane and prayers money centered. Swami Desika and the savants like him saw in the live Lord, with tender feelings and gracious glances. If we take to the habit of reciting hymns of ALavandaar, Azhwaan, BhaTTar, Desika and the like – not to speak of Azhwaars' hymns – the icons in our shrines will become talking gods to those who have ears to hear. (VNVD Page 228)

Sloka 27. ayamanava: Blessings on those who have had Pancha Samskaaram

The final invocation to Lord DEhaleesa: Save us all in the world from inauspiciousness. Confer good and auspicious benefits on one and all (VNVD Page 230)

Sloka 28. iyamavitata: How this Stotra confers all that one desires?

The Stotra began by referring to the Lord as the bestower of boons on his votaries. It ends with the sentiment that this Stotra itself is capable of conferring on us all desired fruits. (DR page 44)



D/ST 08. Garuda Dandakam

Introduction

Paramaikaantins do not bow to anyone other than *Emperumaan*. But there is another whom they bow to. That is *Sudarsana Azhwaan* because he represents *Emperuman's* will power. Can there be anyone else to enjoy this honor? "Yes" says Swami Desika. Who is that?

It is "*Periya TiruvaDi*" This Stotra is about him. (Page 38 of VAS)

"***Vaikunta Vasa Varthi***" can be interpreted in 2 ways. He endears himself to *Bhagavaan* by sensing his wishes. By his sincere service, he has earned the confidence of *Emperumaan* (Page 39 of VAS)

GaruDa is not only *Bhagavaan's* vehicle. He is also on *Bhagavaan's* banner of victory. GaruDa is an aspect of *SamkarshaNa*, one of the *Vyooha* emanations of *Bhagavaan*. By the strength of his wings, he can enter *PaataaLa IOka* and display his power to control them. He is the master of *Adhyaatma Vidya* and can be pleased by prayer to bestow that knowledge and to do service to him. (Page 21 ASR)

The name "*GaruDa DaNDaka*" is given by Swami Desika himself

DaNDaka is a meter of 4 quarters called "*CharaNa*" also known as "*Paada*" or "feet". In Sanskrit prosody, the maximum number of syllables in one quarter is 26. Such a sIOka is called "*Vritta*" or "If the number of letters in a foot exceeds 26 as 27, 30, 33 and so on, by multiples of three they go by the name of "*GaNas*" or groups. There is no limit to the number of *GaNas*. *GaruDa DaNDaka* has 36 *GaNas* as Sri Desika himself declares in the last two *Phala Srutis* slokas. (Page 21 -22 ASR)

He was the swiftest vehicle for *Parama Purusha* when he rushed to save Gajendra from the hold of the crocodile. He was the friend who helped Rama to regain his consciousness when he lay on the ground bound by *Naagaastra* of Indrajit. He was the devoted servant who brought back the crown of VishNu which was stolen by VirOChana (son of Prahlada) when VishNu was in *YOga Nidra* (Mystic sleep) in the milky ocean and adorned with it Sri Krishna, the cowherd boy (*BaalagOpaala*) in *Gokula* (Page 23 ASR)

Swami Desika's *Achaarya* was AppuLLaar. Like Periyaaazhwar, he was an *amsam* of GaruDa. The Mantram that he administered to Swami Desika was also "*GaruDa Mantram*" (Page 35 of "Desika Stotra Saara Malar" of Seva Swami). Pleased with Swami Desika who recited *GaruDa Mantra*, GaruDa initiated Swami into *Hayagriva Mantra*. Therefore, GaruDa is also an *Achaarya* for Swami Desika. (VVRC on Page 37 of "Desika Stotra Saara Malar" of Seva Swami)

Sloka 1: Namah pannaganaddhaaya:

The words remind us of *Mantara* Mountain and Vaasuki who were involved in the churning of the Milky Ocean and how *Bhagavaan* supported the mountain when it wobbled. (PPA/ VNVD Page 8) The serpents rendered an auspicious *MangaLa Aarati* as it were with their gem studded hoods spreading out bright luster. (PPA/VNVD Page 20)

When GaruDa brought *Amrutam* from the celestial world, Indra got angry and struck him with his thunderbolt. GaruDa shed one of his small feathers and saved himself. When this feather was revived, the celestials wondered and named him "*Su-parNa*" which means "One with beautiful feathers" (PPA/VNVD Page 26)

He presides over the five *Maruts* (of *PraaNa, Apaana, Vyaana, Udaana and Samaana*) and controls them. (PPA/ VNRD Page 927)

Sloka 2: garuDam-akhila

Nrityat Bhujanga BhruvE: When in anger, he assumes a fearful appearance, his eyebrows would appear as if snakes were dancing on his face. (PPA/ VNVD Page 35)

Sloka 3: Jaya garuDa

Vaalakilyas were a group of 60,000 *Maharishis* who go in front of Sun's car. They were too short in stature as not exceeding just an inch. When Kasyapa did a *Yaaga*, they were going to attend the same. On their way, they came across a small pit filled with water and they could not cross it. Indra who was also on his way, scornfully laughed at their predicament. The sages got angry and prayed to *Bhagavaan* to grant them someone who would be strong enough to overcome Indra. *Bhagavaan* accepted their prayer and ordered GaruDa to quell Indra. (PPA/ VNVD Page 42)

Sloka 4: Nama ida

Sloka 5: manuranugata

Sloka 6: shaD-trimsa

Sloka 7: vichitra

Slokas 6 - 7 are Phala Srutis

This GaruDa DaNDakam, potent to procure for the reader prolific rewards of varied nature, was composed by Poet Venkatesa, for pleasure of the Lord to whom GaruDa is on the banner-insignia. (PPA/ VNVD Page 52)

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D/ST – 09. Godha Stuti

Introduction

There is a difference of opinion as to where Godha Stuti was sung by Swami Desika. There is some propriety in saying that it was sung in Srirangam. The poem begins and ends with a reference to *Sri Ranganatha* (Slokas 18, 21, 24 and 26). When we read the words "*Ranganatha- yEshaa*" meaning "**This Ranganatha before us**", we feel standing before Lord of Srirangam.

When Swami came to Srivilliputtur, the Stuti flowed out of him even without his conscious effort and Sri AndAL commanded the institution of a festival every year known as "*Goda Stuti Utsava*" by name. It is conducted in a special pavilion even now when *Godha Stuti* is sung (ASR - Page 30).

Swami Desika described this as "*BahuguNa RamaNeeyaam*" (Desika Stotra Mala Seva Page 231)

Swami Desika brings out in his works: The inner meanings of *Vedanta Saastras*, Bhakti and Poetic imagery. In this *Stuti*, he combines all these in a delectable manner proving that he is a "*Kavi Simham*" (VVR in Desika Stotra Mala - page 233)

Among swami's Stotras only two begin with the word "Sri". One is Paramartha Stuti on Lord Rama and the other in this Godha Stuti on Andaal (D/ST/5B KPR page 3)

The hymns of the masculine Azhwars in bridal form may be said to be a facsimile of the songs of Andaal - the real bride (ASR Page 29)

Sloka 1: Sree Visnu Chiita kula nandana kalpavalleem

- In the 1st quarter of this sloka, the glory of her father is brought out.
- In the 2nd quarter, the pulchritude accruing to her through the hug of her husband is stated.
- In the 3rd quarter, Swami avers that she is the reincarnation of Bhoo Devi and equals Mahalakshmi in her mercy.
- In the 4th quarter, Swami Advises that we should take refuge at her feet. (VAS Page 29)

There was too much of a time gap between Swami's predecessors. Except for *Tiruppaavai* and *Nachiyaar Tirumozhi*, with which they were familiar, they remained satisfied. This was probably a deficiency for Swami and so he composed this wonderful Stotra.

This is the first Divya Prabandam for AndAL. (D/ST/5C /Seva Page VI)

Visnu Chiita kula nandana kalpavalleem: This may mean that Vishnu was always on his mind and he was always in the mind of Vishnu. Though various *Azhwars* belonged to different "*kulas*", it is customary to call all of them as belonging to "*Vishnu kulam*". **Is she not known as "*Anju kuDikku oru Santadi*"?** (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 6-7)

The one who offered both **garland of Poetry** and **garland of flowers** to *PerumaaL* is AndAL. No other spouse of *PerumaaL* had this *Bhaaghyam* or any of the other *Azhwars*. That is why AndAL is different from others as much as Maharishis and *Azhwars* were different from each other. (D/ST/PPA 5/ DR Page (vi)

Swami has already done *SaraNagati* at the feet of Deva PerumAL and Perundevi Thaayaar.

Why should he do it again to GODha?

This is not for *MOksha* but for acquiring rare poetic power that the great poetic genius *GOdha* grants. (D/ST/PPA 5 / AVG page 5).

Swami's Bhakti to AndaL is equal to AndaL's Bhakti to Rangaraja. (D/ST/PPA 5 / AVG page 9).

Sloka 2: vaidEsika: *Upanishads* declare that the qualities of Lord are so much that one who starts to catalogue them would soon find muted since they could not exhaust enumerating them.

In the case of AndaL, her qualities would make even a mute person open his mouth to praise her! (D/ST/PPA 5/ AVG Page19)

Sloka 3: Tvat prEyasa: srvaNayO:

Tvat prEyasa: srvaNayO: amrutaayamaanaam: Why instead of asking AndaL to grant him power to praise, Swami asks for what would please her loving spouse? **It is because any praise to her Lord would be pleasing to her.** (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 17)

Tulyaam tvadeeya maNi noopura sinjitaanaam: It seems the Lord was yearning for the sound emanating from her anklet that he used to enjoy when as small girl she used to adorn when visiting the temple of *VaDap perum koil uDaiyaan.* (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 18)

Tvameva jananee: ... mama samvidEhi: Instead of "*dEhi*" Swami uses the word "*Samvi-dEhi*" to indicate "I am not ashamed to beg of you. After all, you are my mother who gave birth to me. Do not *Brahmachari* kids ask their mother "*bhavati Bikshaam dEhi*"? If you grant me my wish, I can compose hymns (*GOdha KarNaamrutam*) that will be pleasing to the ears of your Lord. (D/ST/PPA 5/ KMR / page 25)

In this Sloka, Swami compares AndaL to several rivers like Godavari, Yamuna and Saraswati (D/ST/PPA/ 5/ VNVD/ Page37)

Sloka 5: Asmaadrusaam apakritou

Asmaadrusaam apakritou chira deekshitaanaam: "*kriti*" is of two kinds. "*Upa-kriti*" is that we will not be able to recognize; "*apa-kriti*" is always with us and our attachment to it is immense. We do not have interest in what we should do (*Kritya a-karaNam*) while we have irresistible interest in what should not be done "*a-kritya KaraNam*" and cling to it as if we have taken a vow to adhere to it. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 23)

There may be disturbances in performing "*Up- karmas*" but never in doing "*apa-karmas*" or "*apa-kritis*" (D/ST/5B/MKS Page 106)

"*Apa-krit*" means malicious and wrong acts. "*Chira Deekshitaanaam*" means "consecrated and initiated into something as a regular practice" (D/ST/5B KPR – Page 27)

karma-tannischitam niyamita: tava mouLi daamnaa: "*daamnaa*" means string or rope. The string of garland was tied to his head. **By this, one who bonds the whole world was bound!** YasOda bound him at Krishna's waist and so he became "*daama+udaran*"

AndaL bound him at his head! (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 25)

Sloka 6: soNaadharEpi....Vaachaam pravaaha nivahE api saraswatee tvam: Saraswati has speed. She is known as "*Vegavati*" Instead of saying that AndaL's speech is **like** Saraswati, Swami identifies her as Saraswati **herself!** (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 27)

Here also, Swami identifies AndAL with several rivers: *SONaa*, *Tunga-Badra*, *Saraswati*, *Virajaa*, *GOdaavari*

- *sONaa*. She is *SONaa* as her lips are red.
- She is *Tunga-Badra* in terms of her breasts being prominent and adding charm to her.
- She is *Saraswati* in word-power because like that river her inner thought too flows underneath in your poetry.
- She is literally *Vi-rajaa* that flows in *VaikunTa*.
- She is *Narmada* in the sense of providing a giggle to your libidinous consort. Thus, she embodies all rivers. (D/ST/PPA/ 5/ VNVD/ Page 50)

Sloka 7: Valmeekata; sravaNayO:

Valmeekata; sravaNayO: vasutaatmanas tE: "SravaNayO:" is in dual number (a unique usage in Sanskrit). This is to denote the 2 ears. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 31)

- Vaalmiki arose from the anthills which are considered the ears of earth (yourself),
- Ganga came out of the ears of Jahnu Maharishi and came to be known *Jaahnavee*.
- Bhagavad Gita flowed from the mouth of Lord Krishna (*yaa svayam padmanaabhasya mukha padmaath vinisruta:* (D/ST/PPA 5/ KMR: page 56)
- **vaktra aravinda makaranda nibhaa:** What came out of your mouth will surely be fragrant like nectar. (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 56)

JaatO babhoova sa muni kavi Saarvabouma: See how" Muni "became a" Kavi *Saarvabouma*" (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 32)

Sloka 8: bhOktum tava priyatamam

bhOktum tava priyatamam bhavateeva GOdhE: What is strange is that knowing that your own (*bhavateeva*) husband has extraordinary love towards you, your father and other *Azhwars* wished to enjoy your husband also as their husband! Is it fair? Nay. You have yourself taught them how to love him. Though they failed in their efforts, it is also enjoyable as the saying goes "*Sishyaath ichEth paraajayam*" "The Guru will deem it a kind of victory to get defeated at the hands of his disciple" (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 34-36)

Did your father look out for a bridegroom for you or did he look out for a bridegroom for himself? Or did he look out for the entire world? Did he not say "Vandhu maNNum maNamum koNmeen?" (D/ST/PPA 5 KMR page 63-66)

Sloka 9: maata: samuthita

ViswOpajeevyam amrutam vachasaa duhaanaam: In Lakshmi occasion, nectar was distributed, it was "*DEvOpajeevyam*" (only for celestials); others did not benefit by it. So, to make nectar available to one and all, AndAL distributed nectar through her honey-dipped *Sri Sooktis*. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 37)

Sloka 10: taatas tu tE

IEbhE mahattara padaanuguNam prasaadam:

In Lakshmi kalyaaNam, Samudra Raja became "Mahan". In Sita kalyaaNam, Janaka became "Mahan". In Rukmini KalyaaNam, Vidarbha King became "Mahan" says Sukha. In AndaL KalyaaNam, Periyazhwar becomes "Mahan" **and in fact "Mahat-tara"** (D/ST/5 C /Seva P.42)

Sloka 11: dik dakshiNaapi

When Seva Swami was doing *Upanyaasam* in North India, someone said that as Perumaal appeared only in North India in all his *Avataaras*, North was great. Seva Swami replied that Lord Krishna who was born in the North, himself declared that wherever *Dharma* declined and *Adharma* rose, he incarnated.

Obviously, Adharma rose only in the North! (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 44)

It may be noted that the Lord had the highest regard for AndaL as evidenced by his looking constantly at the South – the birthplace of AndaL! (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 46)

If by your birth in the South that direction became "*Sarva- Uttamam*", your father becoming "*Mahat-tara*" is no big deal! (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 87)

An English saying says that if you travel far from east, it will become west. But North and South would never become the other. They are so opposed to each other. But wait. Your birth in South (*dakshiNa*) has transformed it into North (*Uttara*)! (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 88)

Tava avataaraath nihitaa: kaTaakshaa: The moment you were born in the South (Srivilliputtur) Lord Ranganatha started looking at that South eagerly waiting for your arrival (D/ST/PPA 5/AVG page 90)

Sloka 12: praayENa devi

Yasyaam samEtya samayEshu chiram nivaasaath: It has been laid down in the *Sastras* that by taking a dip in a holy river, one's sins get washed off.

Where do the sins go? They go to sully the rivers. How do rivers get rid of sins so acquired?

It is by taking a dip at *Godaavari* on special occasions like *dvi-pushkaram* and *tri-pushkaram* etc. The question arises how *Godavari* gets rid of such accumulated sins.

The answer is that by assuming the name of "GOdaa", Godavari gets the power to get purified D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 49-50)

It is a fact that the one who chooses to call oneself by the name of "another" becomes a slave to that "another". Similarly, River "*GOda*" has become your slave by taking your name. (D/ST/I/ VNRD page 775)

At least the South direction had your connection due to your birth there. This *Godaavari* had no such connection. **It became famous because of its association with your very name.** (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 93)

Sloka 13: Naagesaya: sutanu pakshi-ratha:

Naagesaya: sutanu pakshi-ratha: katham tE jaata: svayamvara pati; purusha: puraaNa':

The girl's side make fun of AndaL's choice for husband. He has no better bed than a serpent. Even a snake charmer will not lie beside a snake. **This boy, however, will not get sleep if he does not have a serpent as bed!** Did he not fold his bed when *Azhwar* asked him to do so and follow him? But you are used to sleep on "*Pancha Sayanam*".

But does he have a proper vehicle? He has a bird for his vehicle. **When it flies high at great speed, what would happen, if you slip and fall?**

Is he a young lad to be an eligible bachelor? **He himself does not know when he was born. He is so old. How did you choose him?** (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 50-55)

Normally, during any matrimonial proposal, people would look for compatibility. Did not Valmiki say of Sri Rama and Sri Sita as "*Tulya seela vayo vrittaa?*" There is no compatibility between you and your chosen spouse. (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 100)

It is significant that the word "*Sutanu*" is placed between "*NaagEsaya*" and "*Pakshitatha:*" (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 102)

Sloka 14: tvat bhukta maalya

At the time of *Janavaasam*, the girl's side would buy a new umbrella for the groom to hold. Swami describes how a natural and divine umbrella was presented to the bridegroom (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 55)

Normally in marriages, someone will hold an umbrella over the head of the bridegroom.

Who held an umbrella to the Lord? It was the swarm of bees circling around Lord's head that formed an umbrella for him (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 108)

Sloka 15: aamodavatya api

aamOdavat api, sada hridayagam api, raagaanvit api, lalita api, guNOttara api:

Swami uses the word "*api*" 5 times in this Sloka to bring out the greatness of Vaijayanti garland.

- ❖ Even though, it has a special fragrance,
- ❖ Even though it adorns Lord's chest always,
- ❖ Even though it is with great pleasing quality,
- ❖ Even though it is light,
- ❖ Even though it is unlike the garland presented by ToNDaraDippoDI Azhwar or Periyazhwar,

the garland offered by AndaL was preferred by the Lord. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 58 – 61)

The crown that adorns the head of *PerumaaL* lends him charm. The garland worn by AndaL and given to him is now adorning the very crown itself and lends charm to it (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 62)

mouLi sraja: *Vaijayanti* garland did not adorn Lord's head nor of the head of GOdha. But the garland that AndaL wore on her head had the good fortune of adorning the heads of both AndaL and the Lord. (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 118)

GOdha's flower garland surround Lord's lock of hairs. The bees that gave up *Vaijayanti* rushed to GOdha's garland in droves and started freely to taste the honey together. They became inebriated and started singing and dancing freely. Their cumulative music turned out to be an orchestra for the great marital union of GOdha with Lord Ranganatha. (D/ST/PPA 5/VNVD/ Page125-126)

Sloka 17: viswaayamaana

The Lord had to bend before AndaL to secure the garland offered by her because he stands tall. Also, he had to bend before AndaL as a humble recipient for the bestowal! (D/ST/PPA 5/VNVD/ Page132)

Sloka 18: Choodapadena parigrihya

Choodapadena parigrihya tava uttareyam, Maalaam api tvad alakai: adhivaasya dattaam: She offered her garland and he took her upper garment. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Pp 50-71)

Sowbhaaghya sampad abhishEka mahaa adikaaram: "gOpee Vastra apaharaNam" was for "Siksha" punishment. "Goda uttareeya apa haraNam" is for "Raksha" (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 72)

Sloka 19: tungai

sOpi tvadeeya kuti laalaka vaasitabhi: The Lord is already "Sarva Gandan" Now, because of AndaL's fragrant garland, he has become "SarvOttama Gandan" (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 75)

Sloka 20: dhanyE

Pitu: The Lord is the "Father of the whole world". By garlanding him, at that very instant, you have become the "Mother of the whole world". (D/ST/PPA 5/VNVD/ Page145)

Sloka 21: rangEswarasya

There is a beautiful lyric in Telugu called "Amukta Malyadaya" by *Krisnadeva Raaya* on Goda's wedding with the Lord at Srivilliputtur and their returning to Srirangam for eternal stay. (D/ST/5B/MKS page 131)

This Sloka describes the "exchange of garlands" (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 79)

Sloka 22: doorvaadaLa

After the exchange of garlands, Swami describes the color combination of the newlyweds. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 83)

- *Thaayaar's* color is **reddish yellow**.
- The Lord who stands in the middle is of **sapphire blue color**.
- On his other side stands AndaL who is of **green color**.

When this color combination takes place, the color of becomes **multicolor**.

Seva Swami humorously observes, what would the boy's mother say on seeing this transformation of the color of her son? She would complain how the girl has changed her son's color. Thank God. The boy does not have a mother to complain! (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 84)

Sloka 23: archhyam

Natham tvayaa kamalayaa cha samEyivaamsam: "With you and also Mahalakshmi" He is Sriya:-Pati and Bhoo-Pati. But, why say Bhoo first and Lakshmi in the second place? It is because this is a hymn on AndaL who is Bhoodevi herself. Even *Purusha Sooktam* does this and says "Hrees Cha tE lakshmees Cha patnyou"

Swami seems to remind us of this Sruti Vaakhyam by using this "Cha-kaaram" here. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 87)

Sloka 24: Aardra aparaadhini janEpi

Aardra aparaadhini janEpi abhirakshaNaartham: We continue to commit sins non-stop every single moment but also offend those who seek to help us out. The *Raakshasis* in *Ashoka vana* who tortured Sri Sita fall into this category. Yet, Sri Sita never gave up helping them and assuring them of her protection. This means not only helping in the general sense but helping wholeheartedly which the word "abhi-rakshaNam" means. (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 91)

Sloka 25: gOdhe guNair Bhrookshepa eva tava bhoga rasa anukoola: The power exercised by the gesture of your eyebrows enjoying which the Lord's very power to punish gets abandoned by him.

Thus, you struck at the very root of his *Swatantra*. It is enjoyment "**bOgam**" for *Perumaal*, for us, it is "**yOgam**" good fortune (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 94-95)

Sloka 26: range taTit

Santa: prapadhya samayanti achirENa taapaan: Here Swami arouses a wonderful imagery of lightning (*idyullEkEva Bhaaswara*). The Lord represents cloud (*neela mEga syaamaLan*); their mercy represents copious rains. The flow caused by the river. AndAL is that river. Come. Let us have a dip in the cool waters of this river of mercy. (D/ST/5C/Seva Page 99)

The question arises whether AndAL as "*Saha- dharma chari*" she should not join him in **punishing**. The Lord is father. It is his *Dharmam* to punish as appropriate.

But she has "Vaatsalyam"

What is "*Vaatsalyam*"?

It is showering uninhibited love unmindful of even heinous faults committed by her child. This is a **Mother's "Dharma"** that she cannot and will not give up under any circumstances. (D/ST/PPA 5/KMR page 185)

Sloka 27; jaataaparaadhamapi

You are my mother. When the mother breastfeeds her child, sometimes it may bite her breast. But the mother does not stop feeding the child. Such is her "**Vaatsalyam**"

Sloka 28: sathamakha maNi neelaa

This may be called "**Dhyaana Sloka**" for our meditation. (D/ST/5B /KPR Page 96)

Sloka 29: iti vikasita

Bahu guNa ramaneeyaam vakti gOdhaa stutim ya: means one who just chants this *Stotra* even without understanding the meanings, gets all the benefits (D/ST/5 C /Seva Page 107)



D/ST – 10. Gopala Vimsati

We know that there are any number of commentaries called "Bhaashyam", but it is Bhagavad Ramanuja's commentary that is hailed by Goddess Saraswati herself as "Sri Bhaashyam" Similarly, there may be any number of Jayanthis (birthdays) but the one that takes the pride of place is this "Sri Jayanthi" - the birthday of Lord Krishna. We take pleasure in bringing out "**Remarkable Remarks**" by conventional and contemporary commentators" in this series of "DESIKA -750" on **Gopala Vimsati** today. Hope you will enjoy the comments.

Sloka 01: VandE Brindaavana Charam

VandE: At the very outset, Swami refers to his "*Daasatvam*" by saying "*VandE*" - like Lakshmana saying "*Gunair daasyam Upaagata:*" (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 8)

He might crave for my "*Anjali*" (*anjalinim yaachamaa* :). But even before he asks me, I will offer my "*Anjali*" because he is my "*naatha*" (*Naataayaiva nama: padam – Dasavataara Stotram*) (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page23)

Brindaavana-charam: This is to show that except for his birth in Tiru Madura, his other "*Sanchaarams*" were in *Brindaavanam*. Like Lord Rama except for his birth in Ayodhya, all his "*Sanchaarams*" were among hunters in the forests. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 6)

Though Krishna would visit several placers in his action filled life later, he is called "*Brindaavana-chara*" because of the intensity of love he generated among the people of this village. No one calls him "*Dwarakaa-chara*" or "*Maduraa-chara*" (MKS: Page 7)

Vaijayantee VibhooshaNam: *Vaijayantee* is *Vanamaala*. Swami does not mention his weapons like *Sanku*, *Chakra*, *Kaanchee*, *KankaNa* etc.

Why?

This is because he had already withdrawn all of them in deference to the request of his mother. He wore only this garland in *Brindavanam*. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 25)

The poet's use of "*Brinda*", "*Vallavi*", "*Jayanthi*" and "*Vaijayanthi*" one in each quarter of the *Sloka* is significant. All are in feminine gender and the names of girls.

- ✓ At his feet is *Brinda*.
- ✓ Around him is *Vallavi*.
- ✓ His advent is in *Jayanthi*.
- ✓ On his chest is *Vaijayanthi*.

May be, the poet intended to convey in the very first verse that his boyhood which he is going to describe will be mostly among womenfolk. (MKS Page 10)

Sloka 02: vaacham

This *Sloka* contains the "*Gopaala Mantra*" which is said to be highly efficacious. (VNRD Page 639 and ASR Page 31)

There is a lotus with 8 petals. At the center is a seat (*Aasanam*). There is a triangular *yantra* in the middle. In all the three angles the *Gopala Mantram* is inscribed. Krishna is seated there. *Vaak dEvee* rests on his lap. Some say that she is *Mahalakshmi* herself. (VAS Page 23)

When Krishna was a baby lying in a cradle he was fed with milk through a conch. When Krishna was sitting on Arjuna's chariot, he used the conch to herald the commencement of the war. So, the connection of Krishna with conch was a continuous one! (D/ST 6B/ Seva page 10)

Vallava chakravarthi: Unlike Rama who came to be known as "*Chakravarthi Tirumagan*", well past his *Avataara*, Krishna became a "*Chakravarthi*" even as a boy! (D/ST 6B/ Seva page 11 and MKS Page 13)

Sloka 03: aamnaayagandhi

There is a saying "*Baalaanaam rOdanam Balam*" meaning "Children can get things done by merely crying" Krishna's crying is his *vEdam* and this *vEdam* is his strength. Even his crying would be full of fragrance of *vEdam* (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 52)

Aasraa vilEkshaNam: To convince Pootana that he really wanted to drink milk, he appeared with tears in his eyes.

AnukshaNa: The very next moment, he smiles

Why?

To make Pootana believe that he had believed her to be his real mother! She showed her smiling face to beguile Krishna. In turn, Krishna showed her his smiling face to beguile her into believing that he really thought of her to be his real mother! **What a drama?** (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC page 47)

What is the work of a *Chakravarthi*? It is "*DushTa Nigraham*". This started with the killing of "*ThaaTaka*" while he accompanied Sage Viswamitra in *Rama Avataara*. This created a debate as to the propriety in killing of a woman. In Krishna's case also, it started with the killing of a woman "even as he was lying in his cradle. This, however, did not create any controversy. (D/ST 6B/ Seva page 12)

Those who read how Pootana got emancipation by being killed by Krishna - will not be reborn. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 54)

Rama had 3 mothers, *Kousalya*, *Sumitra* and *KaikEyi* - all dotting on him. Krishna also had 3 mothers *Devaki*, *YasOda* and *Pootana*. Of all these 3, it is odd that she was the one who was reported to have secured a quick passage to Heaven! (MKS Page 15) DR Page 10)

Kuhanaa janyaa: A real mother would not have the mind to kill her own child. Pootana was not a real mother. She came in the garb of a mother. How can milk flow from the breast of a fake mother? So, she tried to feed Krishna with poison. If she was "**Kuhanaa Janya**", Krishna was "**Goplala Dimba Vapusha**" as he was draped in the body of a child! (D/ST 6B/ Seva page 13)

When Arjuna wailed he drank "Gitaamrutam" milk.

When Krishna wailed, he drank "*Pootnaa PraaNa paanam*" (D/ST 6B/ Seva page 14)

Sloka 04: aavirbhavat

Navaneeta NaaTyam: Though he was *Bhagavaan*, he longed for the beaten rice (*ava*) brought to him by KuchEla; similarly, he had a longing for the butter globs churned out by the *Gopis*. (D/ST/PPA/RPC page 58)

The words "**Navaneeta NaaTyam** may also mean "a new kind of dance" (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 64)

Which mother will not yield to the dancing appeal of her child? (MKS Page 17)

"ViswagOPTaa" becomes "**Mithyaa gOPTaa**"

He was the protector of the world "*Viswa gOPTaa*". He was not born as a cowherd boy but assumed it for the same purpose. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC page 69)

Sloka 05: hartum kumbhE

Elders used to offer two explanations as to why Krishna did not try to run away and why he closed his eyes when YasOda rushed to punish him.

- As "*Viswa-gOpta*" protector of the world, he wanted to fulfill the wish of his mother and did not run, to avoid giving her the trouble of running after him.
- As he was having beautiful eyes, if he kept them open, YasOda's eyes will see them and bewitched by the beauty, she might give up her intention to punish him and so, to help fulfilling her desire to punish him, he closed his eyes" (KRGc quoted in Desika StOtra Saara Malar of Seva Swami – Page 83)

Naathasya Nanda BhavanE: can also mean Sri Naathamuni.

Nibaddha taaLam would convey the meaning that he set the *Divya Prabandam* to music while *Nandabhavanam* would mean tradition of bliss. (Seva Page 19)

Sloka 06: vraja yOshida

VasudEva vadhoo Stanandhayam: Why Swami mentions here the names of vasudEva and dEvaki? Krishna was born to dEvaki and had a right to suck the milk from the breast of dEvaki but what happened to him? He was chased and bound by GOpis. **Was it for this that VasudEva brought him to YasOda's place? Swami asks.** (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC: page 85)

Maduraabhaaghyam:

The Lord left his *Naaga Paryankam* and came down to Madura. It is the good fortune of Madura. (Seva Page 23) It was the fortune of Madura that Krishna took birth there. But this can be split into "*Maduaa+ a-bhaaghyam*" in the sense that he was not destined to enjoy life in his birthplace but had to go to *GOkulam*. So, that was the misfortune of Madura. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC– Page 90)

Sloka 07: parivartita

Parivartita kandharam bhayEna: He looked back to see whether his mother had seen dragging the mortar and feared that she may come again to punish him for making a mockery of her punishment! (MKS Page 25)

For ingesting butter, he had to face this punishment. What would happen if YasOda comes to know how he broke the tall trees? (Seva Page 28)

vipulOlooka karshakam: It was a huge mortar. YasOda could not lift and take it to where Krishna was. So, she dragged him to the mortar to tie him to it. But Krishna dragged the mortar and that without hurting himself. Krishna, the small boy took it between the two trees that broke down. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 100)

He smiled when he remembered how YasOda thought that he could not drag the huge mortar and how he had proved that he could! (Seva Page 27)

How strange! YasOda was tying Krishna to the mortar.
Which Krishna?
The one who will be lifting a huge mountain itself. (Seva Page 27)

Sloka 08: nikaTEshu

NikaTEshwapi: What the *Vedantas* could not discover till date and what YasOda and others who were otherwise busy could not notice and enjoy the way Krishna crawled between the trees dragging the mortar, these two trees could see with their own eyes and enjoyed the sight of Krishna. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC page 104-105)

Nityam nisaamayaami: If a poor person gains suddenly an enormous treasure, he will forget his earlier existence of penury. Similarly, the pangs of earlier separation from *Bhagavaan (VisEsham)* will be forgotten by one who stumbled on his association with *Bhagavaan (PPA/ 02 RPC: page 106)*

Yamunaa Saakshika Yuvaanam: Even *Sukha-brahmam* had not seen and enjoyed the various games that Krishna played with the *Gopis*. River Yamuna enjoyed all of them by actively witnessing them. Even earlier, it was she who parted and gave way for Vasudeva to cross her on his journey to *Gokulam*. She has been a constant witness to all that Krishna did as a baby and as a youth. **Which other river had this good fortune?** (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC page 111-112)

Sloka 09: padavee madaveeyaseem

karNaam bhajaami: I am seeing with my own eyes the form of Lord Krishna who is a personification of his infinite mercy. When even *Vedantas* are unable to comprehend *Bhagavaan*, how can Swami Desika claim to see him with his own eyes? The answer is that while *Vedantas* go in search of *Bhagavaan* through some route, Swami approaches him directly (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC page 121-122)

The word "*Bhajaami*" does not merely imply *bhajana* or prayer or homage. It means 'clinging, resorting, reaching' etc. We reach him and cling to him as the prop and path. This evidently is "*Prapatti*" (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 125)

Sloka 10: animEsha

animEsha nishEvaNeeyam akshNO: Krishna's beauty must be enjoyed constantly without ever batting an eyelid. In the earlier Sloka, Swami was talking about doing "*Gopaala bhajanam*" through the **tongue**. Here, he says that it must be enjoyed by **sight** also.

Who can do this? *Nityasooris* do it in *Paramapadam*.

We are trying to reach *Paramapadam*.

But what Bhagavaan does?

He gives up his residence in Paramapadam and comes all the way down to stand before us. We yearn for SaalOkhya, Saaroopya, Saameepya etc. But he prefers to take a human form in our company here as if it is his greatest fortune! (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 135)

Kalahaayita KuntaLam kalaapai: Youth is ground for incitement and fight. Krishna is young, he is the Lord and he is "*Srimaan*"- enough reasons to incite! There was a conflict between the peacock feathers and his lock of hairs! In this conflict, who is the winner?

The winner is his very youth and none of them! Says Swami. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 136)

Sloka 11: anuyaayi

Gopala's flute and his glance are both love-inciting. Both are faultless and cool. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 148)

Sloka 12: adharaahita

What Swami Desika's wished to see in his last moments?

He wished to see the Lord as VeNugOpaala (VNRD Page 648)

Adharaahita chaaru vamsa naaLa: Though it is our philosophy that the thought of the Lord is not necessary for a Prapanna at the time of departure, due to his extreme desire Swami prays for Krishna appearing before him with flute in his lips, the peacock plumes on his head and the split blue gem like luster and native hue of his body." (KRGK quoted in Desika StOtra Saara Malar of Seva Swami – Page 84) Swami seems to say "The mellifluous music of the flute is also the music of the divine bell. I am also the incarnation of the divine bell. So, for the sake of one who belongs to it, the flute can speak for me" (D/ST/PPA/ 02 AVG: page 158)

Sloka 13: akhilaan avalOkayaami

mahiLa adheena bhujantarasya yoona: In Srimad Bhaagavatam, we find the three PaTTamahishees (*Sri, Bhoo and NeeLaa*) feeling that on going to Madura, Krishna will be so enamored by the sweet words of *Gopis* and will not return to *Gokulam* and so, they decided to make his chest their space and came along with him. Similarly, they felt that if he goes to Vedanta Desika, he will be enamored by his sweet speech and so, they decided to accompany him to Swami Desika's place also. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 (D/ST/PPA/ 02 RPC page 163)

Sloka 14: hridi mugda

The human heart is known to be with flirting and fleeting emotions but with the beatific form of the youthful Lord is etched firmly in his heart who else could draw such a picture except the Lord himself? (MKS Page 38)

Who is Kannan? **He is Sooryan who was born in Chandra Vamsam.** (Seva Page 43)

Sloka 15: mahasE mahitaaya

VinatEna mouLinaa anjalim anjana dwishE Kalayaami: This is not to be taken as a "Vote of thanks" Is it not said that we can never thank enough as compensation for the great help rendered to us by our *Achaaryas*. So, how much more this is true in the case of *Bhagavaan* himself? It is only by way of overwhelming gratitude that Swami Desika offers his obeisance. (D/ST/PPA/ 02/ VNVD page 186)

Sloka 16: jayati laLita

Hasta TaaLai: For keeping the beats synchronizing with the music of Krishna's flute only the jingling of bangles and palm-strokes will be available and not any percussion instrument like drum (*Mridangam*) or lute (*VeeNa*). (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 198-199)

Adhara maNi sudhaayaam amsavaan vamsa naaLa: How many contenders are there for contact with his lips-

- the conch,
- the flute and
- the gopis in hundreds, nay thousands!

In Swami Desika's view, ultimately it is the flute that triumphs in the end (MKS Page 41)

Krishna is Vishnu. Instead of conch, he is now holding flute. The Conch can drink the lives of enemies. This flute can drink and at the same time appear victorious.

Conch can show victory. Flute can achieve victory! (Seva Page 48)

Sloka 17: chitraakalpa:

Kunjaabaddhaam urasi lalitaam dhaarayan haara yashTim: "Lalita" means that which will overpower mind. It is also one of the names of Mahaalakshmi. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 209)

Sloka 18: leelaa yashTim

In this verse, Swami Desika introduces Sri Radha, also known as Nappinnai, the most beloved among the Gopis, his left hand gently rests on her shoulders and even this light touch sends her into raptures with horripilation. (MKS Page 44)

Sloka 19: pratyaleeDa

pratyaleeDa: This posture of keeping right foot in front and left foot at back is said to be adopted by warriors in battle (VNRD Page 655)

Bhaktaa jeevaatu: *Bhagavaan* gives sustenance to the *Jeevas*. And *Bhagavaan* cannot exist without the *Jeevas* which means that it is the *Bhakta* who gives sustenance to *Bhagavaan* himself! Thus, the act of sustenance is mutual. (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 231)

Sloka 20: VaasO Hritvaa:

VaasO Hritvaa: Swami brings out the importance of *Anjali*. Did not AnjanEya tell Sugreeva that the only way to mollify the wrath of LakshmaNa was to approach LakshmaNa with "Anjali? *Anjali Paramaa mudraa kshipram dEva prasaadinee*" by witnessing Krishna (KRGc in Desika StOtra Saara Malar of Seva Swami – Page 84-85)

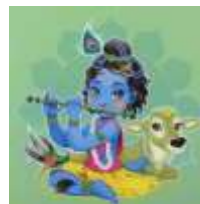
VaasO hritvaa dinakara sutaa sannidhou: The *Gopi vastra apaharaNam* happened right in front of Yamuna who is daughter of Sun God. In other words, all these happened in broad daylight! (D/ST/PPA/ 02 VNVD page 244)

In no other Stotra has Swami mentioned about directly ogling *Bhagavaan*. This shows how intensely Swami felt his being engrossed (KRGc" in Desika StOtra Saara Malar of Seva Swami – Page 85)

It looks as if because the Lord took his seat on the branch of the tree, the tree produced a plethora of sarees! (Seva Page 62)

The one who stole Sarees of Gopis on the riverside compensated it by profusely offering sarees to Draupati in the hall as if giving back capital with interest (Seva Page 65)

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D/ST – 11. Hayagriva Stotram

Introduction

There is a Sloka that says anyone who chants the name of Lord three times, a wealth of knowledge would flow from his mouth like the holy Ganga that flowed incessantly from the ears of Sage Jahnu Maharishi: "*Hayagriva Hayagriva Hayagriva iti yO bhrooyaat/ Tasya nisravatE vanee Gangaa pravaahvat//*" (H.H. Parvakkottai Gopala Desika Maha Desikan in his Introduction to Hayagriva Stotram book by VNVD released on 19/09/2005)

The devotion of Sri Desika to *Hayagriva* was so great that this *Hayagriva Stotra* is the very first of his lyrics. (ASR Page 33)

In *Prapanna Paarijaata*, Sri NaDaadur Ammaal eulogizes Lord *Hayagriva* as follows: "Salutations to the equine-faced Lord and munificent donor who has gifted things of eternal value" (MKS in Introduction Page xx)

Sloka 1: Jnaanaanada mayam dEvam

This verse is popular invocation, short, simple, and holy like a *Mantra*. For this reason, it is immensely popular among all pupils, commentaries, and religious speakers (VNVD Page 51)

The word "*Jnaana*" is normally a broad term to cover all domains of knowledge. It includes knowledge of the supreme and of the means of salvation. "*Vijnaana*" is special knowledge and occupies a prime place of importance in religion and life. All special arts like painting, music, dance, computer science etc. can be reckoned too! (VNVD Page 56)

The horse is a noble and discerning animal, a friend of a man too. It has no destructive tendencies like most other animals. But, when the demons came to attack the Lord after he had retrieved the Vedas, he had no option but to destroy the demons (MKS in Special Comments page 2)

Sloka 2: swata: siddham

There is peculiarity in neighing sound, which is a continuous "*Ha-la, Ha-la*". When repeated for some time, it turns out to be "*La-ha, La-ha*" conveying the meaning "Lakshmi-Hayagriva", also, the inseparable Goddess and the Lord. (MKS in Special comments page 7)

Sloka 3: samaahaara:

The word "*Ha-la, Ha-la*" should not be confused with the neighing of an ordinary horse. It is "*hEshaa-Hala-hala*". It denotes the sound of the *Vedas*. The term "*kala-kala*" denotes the loud and boisterous noise usually heard during arguments! (VNVD Pages 60-62)

It is said that the "*Hayagriva Mantra*" is encased in this verse (MKS in Special comments page 9)

Sloka 4: Praachee Sandhyaa

***Vasudevasya Moorthi:* declares that this Lord *Hayagriva* is the same Lord "*VaasudEva*" – NOT any *Devataantra* like "*Gajavadanan*" (VNVD Page 73)**

Sloka 5: visuddha vigjnaana

Hayagriva is the sole refuge of every animate body, be it animal, bird, human or celestial. Hence, the use of the word "*dEhabhrutaam*" (MKS in Special comments p.12)

Sloka 6: apourusheyair

Sloka 7: daaksiNya ramyaa

Will anyone beg of a beggar? Asks (VAS Page 1)

Siva once sat under a banyan tree and taught 4 Rishis namely *Agastyar, Pulastyar, Dakdhar* and *MaarkaNDEyar*. He was such a great teacher that he could teach even such erudite Rishis. How he rose to that eminent position? It was because of a millionth fraction of the grace of Lord *Hayagriva*. (VNRD Page 8)

"**SarOja aasana Dharma Patni**": Why use this expression instead of saying directly "Saraswati Devi"? This indicates that though she is the "*AdhishTaana Devata*" of "*Vaak*" she bestows her grace only as per the wishes of her spouse, Lord Brahma – as can be seen from the words of Brahma to Valmiki "*math chintaadEva tE Brahman PravittOham Saraswati*" (MVS in VNVD Page 89)

That brilliance of others lasts for a split second compared to the *Jnaana Prakaasam of Bhagavaan*, the shine of *Rudra* and others like the light of fireflies (MVS in VNVD P. 89)

Sloka 8: mandO bhavishyan

Sloka 9: vitarka DOlaam:

Vitarkam is of 3 kinds.

- ❖ *Agjnaanam* = not knowing what is.
- ❖ *Samsayam* = not being able to decide and
- ❖ *vipryayam* = imagining the color of conch as yellow. *Vipareeta Jnaanam* is like imagining pearl as silver (MVS in VNVD P.104)

Sloka 10: agnou:

In performing *Yagjna*, we use one or other material – flour, rice, ghee etc. chanting appropriate Mantras dedicating it to deity say, *agni*. *Hayagriva* who resides in the *Mantras* receives it and distributes it to the respective deity- as can be seen from Brahma's own words in *Srimad Bhaagavatam* 2.7.11 (VNVD Page 112)

Sloka 11: yanmoolam:

The word "*Akshara Maatrukai*" refers to "*PraNavam*" (Seva Page 27)

Sloka 12: avyaakrutaad;

Hayagriva is not only the source of all but is also the ultimate end of any word in terms of its import. If we refer to a material object or person by name **Devadatta**, it is not his body externally visible. It is not only his soul but the soul of his soul that is the Supreme soul that is pleased. In a way, the meaning of every visible, concrete object therefore ends only in the supreme soul (VNVD Page 125)

Sloka 13: mugdEndu In this, Swami says that it is Lord *Hayagriva* who confers all *purusha arthas* (MVS in VNVD P. 128)

Sloka 14: manOgatam

For those who meditate on Lord *Hayagriva* without any other desires, the words automatically and effortlessly fall in place (KGTS in VNVD page 134)

Maanasa Raja Hamsam: In the Himalayas there is a lake with pure water. There royal swans enjoy. *Jnaanīs* in their mind-lake meditate on Lord *Hayagriva* incessantly (VNVD Page 136)

Sloka 15: api kshaNaadham:

What about those who cannot meditate so incessantly? Even if one were to meditate for a split second one would derive immeasurable grace of Lord *Hayagriva* (VNVD Page37)

Mandaagineem manDayitum; *Ganga's* floods flow with utmost speed. By Lord *Hayagriva's* grace words of *Jnaanīs* who meditate on him would flow faster than the flow of *Ganga* (VNVD Page 140)

Sloka 16: Swamin bhavad Dhyaana

Sloka 17: swamin prateechaa

The banks are breached. The flood runs across the two channels implying eyes. The *upaasaka* remains with eyes filled with tears of joy that is an indication of his blissful experience (VNVD Page 152)

Sloka 18: swairanubhavah

Sloka 19; praang nirmitam

Even doing to the lord can happen only by the grace of lord Before long, the seed of *Bhakti* sown by the Lord will bear fruit says (RBS in VNVD page 165). The previous *Sloka* speaks about *Jnaanīs*. This speaks about *Prapannas* (VNVD Page 165)

Sloka 20: vilupta moordhaNya

Even if *Brahma* had written on the forehead of an individual any misfortunes, the dust at the feet of Lord *Hayagriva* would change it to be good fortune (VNVD Page 172)

Sri Desika puns on the word '*Rajas*'. Normally, "*rajas*" is one of the 3 *guNas* that make up *Prakriti* and is the cause of a person's worldly inclinations which prevent him from striving for liberation. The *rajas* at the lotus feet of the Lord are vehicles of his grace and when they encounter a person's head leads him to liberation. (MKS in Special comments page .37)

Sloka 21: Parisphuran

Sloka 22: tvat kinkara

In the previous *Sloka*, swami alluded to the **light** emanating from the ornament (*noopura*) at the feet of the lord *Hayagriva*. In this, he speaks about the **sound** it makes (VNVD Page 182)

Sloka 23: sanchintayaami The Lord is pictured here as the knowledge-yielding tree (*Vigijnana Kalpa dhrama*) (MKS in Special comments page 41)

The "chinmudra" of the Lord makes it easy for us to understand even those *Siddhaanta* matters that were hitherto beyond our comprehension (Seva page 44)

Sloka 24: chittE karOmi

Swami refers here to the glittering *akshamaala* garland of rosary on the right hand of the Lord (VKSN Page 41)

Sloka 25: prabOdha SindhO

Sloka 26: tamaamsi bhitvaa

Just as the fabled *chakOra* bird that sustains itself only on the moonbeams, learned people live on the rays of wisdom emanating from Lord *Hayagriva*.

Sloka 27: disantu mE

Sloka 28: visEshavit

Swami prays in this Sloka "Oh! Lord! Pray grant me a blessing – that you will occupy the tongue-tip of mine as if it were your coveted throne. With your guidance and direction, I will be able to expound our *siddhaanta* in learned assemblies of eminent scholars, defeat the rival contestants, and place our system on a firm foundation (VNVD Page 212)

Sloka 29: tvaam chintayan,

Sloka 30: naanaavidaanaam

Sloka 31: akampaneeya,

Sloka 32: vyaakhyaa mudraam

In this *Dhyaana Sloka*, Swami prays that the figure of Lord *Hayagriva* should always rest in his heart (VNRD Page 27 and VNVD Page 230)

Sloka 33: vaagartha siddhi hEtO:

kaaLidaasa said "*Vagartha prati pathayE*". In this *PhlaSruti*, Swami modifies it by saying "*vaagartha siddhi hEtO:*" (VNVD Page 236)

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DST / 12. Kaamaasikaa AshTakam

Introduction:

VEL, VETTAI, Venduvadu – these mean “Desire”. The Lord took his abode here by his own liking. So, *Kaama –Aasika* is corresponding to *VEL- irukkai*, (which has been corrupted as *vELukkai*) (D/ST/IV/ VNVD Page157)

Azhwars named this kshEtram as “vELukkai” *vEL*= desire =resting place. (D/ST/ I Sri Desika Stotra Mala-VNRD- Page 394)

This Stotra on Sri Narasimha is in 8 slokas with the 9th as a colophon. The unique feature of Narasimha is that at the same time he manifests two mutually opposite sentiments - to HiraNyakasipu, Narasimha appears with frightening blazing eyes and terrific peals of laughter; to his son Prahlada he appears with cool and affectionate eyes and a captivating lovely smile (D/BO/04 - ASR: Page 35)

The fact that *Bhagavaan* quelled the pride of VEGavati who rushed to obstruct Brahma’s Yagjna, and now stands on the banks of the same VEGavati. It reminds us of the words “*bhayakrit, Bhayanaasana*” occurring in Sri VishNu Sahasranaamam (JS/07/ PSS Page112)

SIOkam 1: sruteenaam

The word “*Sruteenaam*” is feminine plural and “*vEgavatyaa*” is also feminine but in singular shows that the Lord is flanked on either side by women and is suggestive of the fact that the Lord rest here with so much relish and liking (D/ST/ I Sri Desika Stotra Malar- VNRD- Page 396)

It is strange that for the one who has all his wishes fulfilled “*avaapta samastha kaamaan*”, had one more wish still to be fulfilled! Did not Sruti say “*Aikashta Bahusyaam prajaayEya*” which means desire with a longing to become many.

What that wish is?

It is his desire to rest in *Kaanchi KshETram*.

- It was wrathful presence in the Asura’s house.
- Here, it is his eager wish to rest. (D/ST 7/ Seva Page 8)

Though in this *Vibhava Avataara* the Lord took his appearance suddenly (*yadruchaa HarEh*) and only for an infinitesimal short duration (unlike Rama who ruled for 11,000 years (*dasa varusha SahasraaNi dasa Varusha Sataani cha*), he obviously wanted to remain permanently in *Archaa* form and chose this spot for the purpose. (D/ST 7 Seva Page 9)

SIOkam 2: tapana indu agni

It is interesting to note that Swami prays to the Lord that with his 3 eyes, he should remove our 3 distresses of *Adhya Aatmikam, Adhi Bhoutikam* and *Adi Deivikaam* (D/ST/ I Sri Desika Stotra Mala- VNRD- Page 396)

Nrisimha Dhyaana SIOka specifically mentions “*Tri-nayanam*” (D/ST 7 Seva Page II)

It is Narasimha who is really “three-eyed”. Because in the case of one popularly known as three – eyed, **the third eye would always remain closed**. It is said that if it opened, it would burn the object looked at by it. Thus, one with a closed eye will be of no use and when it is open! The lotus eyes of the

Lord are always open, and the look is benign with a cool glance. *Bhagavaan's* eyes represent "*JyOti Tattvam*". So, even with the third eye we can determine his "*Paratvam*" (D/ST 7 Seva Page 12)

The foe's name contains a reference to gold (*HiraNyam*). Only when gold is subject to heat, it can become pure. So, *Nrisimha Taapaneeyam* indicates this aspect. (D/ST 7 Seva Page 14)

SIOkam 3: aakhanTam

It is strange that when we are advised and some of us adopt *Prapatti* in our wish to shed our connection with this mundane world and *Samsaaram* in our quest to reach *Parampadam*, *Bhagavaan* wishes to abandon his own in his quest to stay with us on in our mundane world! (Anbil Ramaswamy in "Hinduism Rediscovered" and D/ST 7 Seva Page 18)

What kind of human + lion is this? To show that it no ordinary human or ordinary lion. Swami uses the expression "*Aadhi Purusha*" to describe the human body of the Lord. Though he appeared as an ordinary man to the eyes of the *Asura*, he was indeed the primordial man (*Aadhi Purusha*) (D/ST 7 Seva Page 16)

SIOkam 4: bhandum akhilasya

The way the Lord is seated here in "*Paryanka-bhandam*" posture shows as if he wants to teach us how we should do yoga. (D/ST/ I Sri Desika Stotra Mala- VNRD- Page 400)

Because he has 3 eyes it is *Vishama-akshan*. In *ViraaT swaroopam*, he is *Sahasra-akshan*. (D/ST 7 Seva Page 22)

KELee Narasimham: Sportive lion (D/ST 7 Seva Page 23)

Sruti says "*sarvEshaam Eva IOkaanaam pitaa maataa cha maadhava*" Unfortunately, we do not recognize this "That is why we face problems. If we understand this and do what we ought to do, how would we face any problem at all?" D/ST/PPA /VNVD/14 / PSS and MVC Page 22)

SIOkam 5: svasthaanEshu:

Paryanka sthira dhaaraNa:

When lower legs (*Muzham-kaal*) are fastened with a cloth to the back of a person, it is called "*Paryanka Bhandam*". The lord appears here in this posture (D/ST 7 Seva Page 25)

He seems to teach us. He is the one who practices what he preaches! (D/ST/PPA 14 VNVD Page 33)

SIOkam 6: vikaswara nakhasvaru

Lions do not have hands. Yet *Azhwars* are carried away by describing the nails on the fingers of the Lord in this *Avataaram*! Probably, this is because he is a wonderful lion (*Adbuta Simham*) (D/ST 7 Seva Page III)

SIOkam 7: saTaapaTAla bheeshaNE

Your face, ferocious with matted manes, with a fast and fiery wrath, with brows throbbing in anger as it were – all these you showed – yet, on the other side, at the same time, I can visualize your grace with your lotus-like eyes, bestowing a benign look, on the *Asura* boy (Prahlaada) as if a mother were to let him suckle her breast – thus, that vision in a two-fold fashion unfolds itself to my mental perception, says Swami Desika. (D/ST/IV/ VNVD Page159)

Sarasa aTTa haasOth paTE: The majesty of the Lord that made a non-entity of the one who called Bhagavaan a non-entity (*Tannai illai enru sonnavanai illai aakkiya Gaambheeryam*) (D/ST 7 Seva Page 34)

KapaTa kEsarin: Lord who is mercy incarnate assumed the role of an angry lion. His *Daya* is natural and real. His assuming anger is false. Hence, Kesari-tvam was false. (D/ST 7 Seva Page 35)

Danuja dimbhadatta sthanaa: means "one who fed the son of the *Asura* with milk. A father who instead of feeding his son with milk fed him with poison. The Lord here reversed it by assuming the role of an affectionate mother! (D/ST 7 Seva Page 36)

SIOkam 8: tvayi rakshati

It is Lord as Nrisimha appeared instantly to save Prahlaada at precisely the time and place desired by his devotee. Who else can do such a feat? (VAS Page15)

Bhagavaan is the protector of even those who trumpet themselves as protectors! (D/ST 7 Seva Page 39)

SIOkam 9: ittham stuta:

DuritadviratEndra: Our enormous sins are like huge elephants. By calling *Bhagavaan* "*narahari*" the implication is that *Bhagavaan* as lion should decimate all our sins (D/ST/PPA 14 VNVD Page 52)

The Phala Sruti of this Stotra is unique. Unlike other Stotras in which a special prayer is submitted, this Stotra says "*Sarvaan Kaamaan*". (D/ST 7 Seva Page 43)

The Stotra starts with the word "*Sruteenaam*" and ends with "*vitano tu kaamaan*". This indicates that it can fulfill the desires of *Srutis* also. (D/ST 7 Seva Page 43)

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D/ST- 13. Nyasa Dasakam (Song of Surrender)

Introduction

It is significant to note that the Stotram begins with `aham` and ends with `nirbhara:´(JS / 07/Page 163)

- Saranagati Deepikai relates to Deepaprakaasar Sannidi
- Nyasa Tilakam was composed in Srirangam Sannidi
- Nyasa Vimsati, Nyasa Dasakam and Adaikklap Patthu were composed in Kanchi Devaperumaal Sannidi. (JS/07/163)

It may be noted that this Stotra does not have the name of the composer unlike all other StOtras (D/BO/04)

It is Swami Desika who gave the world the basics of "SaraNaagati Vidya"

Sri Venataadwari Swami refers to Swami Desika as "Prapadana kalaa janma jaladi", it is no exaggeration to say that there is no greater Mantram or Rahasyam that brings out the nuances of SaraNaagati at the time of "AnushTaanam" (YVT Page 2)

Generally, Sri Desika makes mention of himself as the composer of the Stotra and of the fruit of its recitation in colophon. This Stotra does not have it. (ASR Page 36)

SIOka 1: aham madraakshaNa bharO

"Aanukoola sankalpam" is of 2 kinds. One, towards *Emperumaan* and the second towards all that are created by him because they are also bodies of God (D/ST/ PPA /09/ VNVD page 356))

The following contain all the 5 *Angas* (composite properties)

1. *Deva saranagati*
2. *Bharata saranagati*
3. *DanDaka araNya vaasa Rishi saranagati*
4. *TrijaTa saranagati*
5. *Vibheeshana saranagati*
6. *Droupati saranagati*
7. *Nammazhwar saranagati*

SIOka 2: nyasyaami akinchana:

Anya varjita:

Instead of his giving up these "Praatikulyam", SVD says that they had given up on him (DS/07/ Page 166)

SIOka 3: Swamin SvasEsham

The particle "Swa" means one's own occurs not less than 8 times in this (D/ST/15B/ Page 3 and DR Page 5)

This *SIOka* shows

- *kartrutva thyaagam,*
- *mamathaa thyaagam and*
- *phala thyaagam"*

This is known as "*Saatveeka Thyaagam*" (VNRD Page796)

Prapatti is "Nivritti Dharmam"

Abandoning all association with family, money, occupation, politics, entertainments which are all "*Pravritti Dharmas*" and coming under the shelter of *Bhagavaan* (D/ST/PPA 09/VNVD Page 391)

It may be noted that

- **In Sloka 1 a general statement is made as to how a man of learning should surrender to the Lord (*nikshipEt budha:*).**
- **In Sloka 2, Swami refers to his fact of surrendering (*nyasyaami*).**
- **In Sloka 3, says that even this surrender is to dispel the thought that surrender was an act of one's own volition but that it was caused by the Lord. (*nyasyasi*) (DR Page 6)**

SIOka 4: Sreeman AbheeshTa varada

SVD does Prapatti to Kanchi Varadaraja. (D/ST 15B/page 7)

In the 6 words that Tirukkachi Nambigal got from Kanchi Vardan, one of them is "*SareeraantE mOksham*". As an *Aartha*, he should have asked for instant grant of mOksha, but he has also said "*samsaara yEsha Bhagavan! apavarga yEva*", "*VaikunTa VaasEpi na mE abhilaasha:*" and "*archaavataara sEva kaalakshEpa-ruchyaadi*" meaning that he is prepared to wait till final fall of the body. (JS/07/Page 167 and D/ST/PPA 9/VNVD Page 397, 400)

From 5 to 9, SVD deals with "*Uttara krityas*"

SIOka 5: tvat sEshatvE sthiradhiyam

Prapanna cannot run away with the idea that once *Prapatti* is performed, there is no need to observe any rules of righteousness thereafter (DR page 8)

For sins knowingly committed after *Prapatti* (*buddhi poorvakam*) the *Prapanna* should do "*Praayschitha Prapatti*".

The *Prapanna* should pray that he should be unflinching in his faith in his surrender not only at the time of *Prapatti* but also forever till death and should have no desire other than serving the Lord (YVT Page 6)

SIOka 6: dEvee bhooshaNa

Though *bhooshanNs* like *koustuba mani*, umbrella etc. are *achEtanas*, the terms denote the presiding deities over them.

The word "*Devi*" refers not only *Lakshmi Mahadevi* but also the *Devi* in *Archa* form. *Mantram* says "*mahaadevyai cha VidmahE*" (JS/07/Page 167)

If one tries to serve the Lord ignoring the *Bhaagavatas* or acting disrespectfully or discourteously towards them, it is *kainkarya* which is fraught with *apachaara* or fault (DR Page 9)

IMPORTANT

For *apachaaras* committed towards a *Bhaagavata*, excuse should be sought from such *Bhaagavata*. IF such a *Bhaagavata* is unavailable for any reason, "*aparaada kshamaapaNam*" can be obtained from *Emperumaan* himself. (vide D/ST/PPA 09/VNVD Page 409 of *Nyaasa Trayee* published by PPA VNVD in 2006)

SIOka 7: maam madeeyam cha

The word "*Swayam*" meaning by your self refers to the Lord and is incredibly significant. My long association with the body and the earthly pleasures are apt to prevent me from giving up my earthly possessions and take me away from your service. So, do not give me occasion to misappropriate them for myself. Pray, of your own accord, accept myself and all my possessions and utilize them in your service. **Even those that are normally understood as belonging to me, belong to you only. So, take everything** (JS 07/Page 168 and DR Page 10-11)

Cf. *DadhipaNDa* Story in which the pot belonging to him also got *mOksham*

SIOka 8: tvadeka rakshyas cha

This SIOka contains an appeal to the Lord to save the *Prapanna* from committing sins and to wipe out sins, if any, that may be committed **in future**. In other words, from the moment of performing *Prapatti* to the moment of actual casting off the body, the *Prapanna* goes on acting and it is highly likely that his acts involve sins also. Moreover, he has accepted the functioning of certain *karmas* which had begun to yield fruit till the date of his death. If, perchance, any of these *karmas* are of such a nature as to involve the *Prapanna* in the commission of further sins, that will be very deplorable. **SVD, therefore, prays that such occasions should not be allowed to taint him (both commission and omission)** (JS 07/ Page 168 and DR Page 11))

SIOka 9: akriya karaNm krityaanaam varjanam

- Whatever is prohibited and in we indulge in unabated is "*akriya karaNam*".
- Whatever has been prescribed in the *Saastras* that we scrupulously avoid doing is "*anishTa nivritti*"

Swami Desika prays for pardon for both crimes (VAS Page 31)

"*Ishta praapti*" and "*anishTa nivritti*" are requested in *Slokas 8 and 9*

The word "*Pranata aarthi hara*" is another peculiar name of lord Varadaraja of Kanchi. This SIOka is a prayer to forgive lapses due to weakness rendered by sins of commission and omission (D/ST 15B/page 13, DR Page 12 and *Seva's Stotra malar* Page 168)

Apachaaras are of 3 kinds:

- *Bhagavad Apachaara*,
- *Bhaagavata Apachaara*, and
- *Achaarya Apachaara*.

The last one denotes "*Achaarya drOham*" that Bhagavad Ramanuja is scared even to mention. So, he uses the expression "*Asahya Apachaara*" (Intolerable offence)

SIOka 10: sriman niyata panchaangam

"*Bhagavaan* himself has completed my *Prapatti* with all the 5 *Angas*. So, I do not have any misgiving" says Swami Desika (JS/07/page 169)

- The ***Saatvika*** mentality that precedes any action is called ***Saatvika Sankalpa***.
- That same mentality when it follows the fulfilment of the act is called ***Saatvika Thyaga*** (DR Page 14)



D/ST – 14. NYASA TILAKAM

Introduction

Like *Nyasa Dasakam* and *Nyasa Vimsati*, this also explains *Prapatti*.

Swami himself named this as such as can be seen from the last Sloka where he speaks of "*spurad-varNam-vaktrO-nyaasa-tilakam*" with an obvious pun on words.

If poetry is warp, philosophy is the woof and if poetry is the warp philosophy is the woof in Desika's works (*Odam-prOdam*) especially in *Nyasa Tilakam* (DR page (iv) in Introduction)

The Slokas are in different meters (as given by DR) are shown in Parenthesis.

"*Nyaasa Tilakam*" is the only Stotra of Swami Desika for which his son and disciple Nainaar Acharya has written a commentary (ASR Page 32)

***Sloka 1. Gurubhya: (AnushTup):* Offering salutations to the lineage of preceptors (VNRD Page 851)**

Desika has time and again in his numerous works emphasized that Narayana ALONE or Lakshmi ALONE is NOT the ultimate Godhead but the TWO of them TOGETHER are "*yuvaam Dampatee deivatam naha*". That is that they are -

***Divya Dampati =the Tattva, SaraNya Dampati =the Hita or Upaaya and SEshi Dampati =the Purushaartha.* (DR page 3)**

***Sloka 1. Praaya: prapadanE (AnushTup):* What the "*Abhaya Mudra*" of Lord Ranganatha shows (VNRD Page 852)**

His right hand with *Abhaya mudra* also seems to declare "enough" (DR page 4)

***Sloka 3. anaadE (SikhariNee):* (VNRD Page 852-854)**

"*Sree Prapatti*" precedes *Prapatti* at the Lord's feet. (DR page 4)

She has *Vallabhyam* or influence with the Lord to whom she is recommending and *Vaatsalyam* or fondness towards the person who seeks recommendation (DR page 6)

***Sloka 4. mahendraagnaa (SikhariNee):* Lakshmi is also having *Saranyatva* aspect of the Lord "*aasrayaNa veLaiyODu bhOga veLaiyODu Vaasiyara oru mithunamE uddEsyam*" (DR Page 7)**

***Sloka 5: svata: siddha: (SikhariNee):* Surrendering at the feet of *Emperumaan* (VNRD Page 855 - 857)**

***Sloka 6: brindaani (vasantha-tilaka):* Lord Ranganatha rests in Tiruvarangam for redeeming the *ChEtanas* (VNRD Page 857 -858)**

This Sloka stresses a great truth about *Archaa* forms (inclusive of *Saligraama* forms) being proper forum for our observance of *Prapatti* (DR Page 11)

Bhujanga means a serpent, Here, AdhisEsha. "*Mahaa-bhujanga bhujanga-sayane*" is an enjoyable expression. If the bed is "*bhujanga*" - he who lies on it is a "*Maha-bhujanga*" (JS/07/Page 55 and DR Page 11)

Sloka 7: rangaasteerNa (Saardoola VikreeDita): The Lord would allow one who recites *Dwaya Mantra* while doing *Prapatti*, to climb up to his serpent bed and grant his absolute grace (VAS P 34)

Srirangam Divya Dampatis are our refuge (VNRD Page 858-859)

Sloka 8: ghana-karuNaa (Nardhataka): (VNRD Page 859-860)

Sloka 9. DurmO chOdbhaTa (Saardoola VikreeDita) mahaanasikO mahan mahaanasa (kitchen) refers to *Aachaan* (*yativaranaar madaippaLLi vanda maNam engaL vaarthaiyuL manniyatE*) (DR Page 15)

Sloka 10. aarthEshu (Saardoola VikreeDita) (VNRD Page 862-864)

Sloka 11. tvyyaachaaryair (Mandaakraanta) as "purushaartha: Praying for our relishing the company of *Prapannas* (VNRD Page 864-865)

Like released souls (*muktas*) persons for whom their *Achaaryas* have performed *SaraNaagati* will no longer look upon the Lord as a "Saadhana" or refuge. That stage has passed. If they worship the Lord or prostrate before him, is all as *Purushaartha*. (DR Page 19)

Pleasures for which they have no taste when they come to them from the Lord as his *Prasaada* or bounty, they relish them. *VibheeshaNa* who had renounced Lanka, accepted its kingship at the behest of Sri Rama (DR Page 19)

Sloka 12. Kalpa-sthoma (Sragdaara): Post *Prapatti* situation (VNRD 865-867)

The *Prapanna* will not commit any act interdicted by the Lord (DR Page 20)

Sloka 13. tyaktOpaaya (Sragdaara): *Prapannas* do not transgress the dictates of *Saastras* (VNRD Page 865-868)

To wash away the effect of any such transgressions, he will at once do "Praayas-chittam" (atonement or expiation) by way of "Praayas-chitta *Prapatti*."

This must be distinguished from "Puna: Prapatti" or second Prapatti which has been ruled out already. (JS/07/ESVN Page 55 and DR Page 22)

Sloka 14. sOkooaspadaamsa (vasantha-tilaka) Why even *Prapannas* suffer?

If *Prapannas* do not undergo sufferings and enjoy only the pleasurable experiences, they may start having a taste for such pleasures and totally forget the Lord. Only when pleasure and pain are together for the lot of *Prapannas* - they will not forget *Perumaal* (VNRD Page 869-870) and (DR page 24)

Sloka 15. hEturvaidhE (Sragdaara): How *Bhakti* and *Prapatti* represent different *Upaayams* (VNRD Page 870-872)

This can be known from the use of "vidhi vaakhyas" like "upaaseeta" for *Bhakti* and "SaraNam vraja" for *Prapatti* (DR Page 25)

Sloka 16. bhaktou (Saardoola VikreeDita) How different expressions mean the same *Prapatti*? (VNRD Page 872-873)

Sloka 17. Viswaasayaasa (Sragdaara) (VNRD Page 873-875)

This *Sloka* stresses the existence of grief in a *mumukshu* over his lack of *Sakti* as a condition for *Prapatti*. In fact, it is a qualification (*adhikaaram*) and its *anusantaanam* is also an *anga* (DR Page 28)

Sloka 18. Dhruvam-adhikriti (maalinee) Prapatti can bestow all benefits (VNRD Page 8767-877)

Sloka 19. Karthavyam (Saardoola VikreeDita) Clearing doubts arising regarding Prapatti (VNRD Page 877-879)

Sloka 20. Dhee karma (vasantha-tilaka) Importance of Achaarya's blessings (VNRD Page 879-880)

Sloka 21. andhOnandha (MandOkraantaa) How Achaarya helps? (VNRD Page 880-881)

A fine *Sloka* praising *Achaarya's* grace that secures *moksha* to us. Desika gives 3 examples.

- A blind man led by a man with good eyesight moves fearlessly
- A lame man desirous of crossing a stream puts himself in the hands of a boatman who lifts the lame man and puts him in his boat, the lame man reaches the other shore, a feat which he cannot achieve by his own strength and capacity,
- A true and faithful servant of the king is loaded with presents by the king who is pleased with his services. The servant takes those presents home and enjoys them along with his wife and children who however know nothing about the king. (ESV Narasimhachariar JS/07/Page 59)

Sloka 22. Uktyaa (vasantha-tilaka) What Lord Ranganatha promised to Sri Bhaashyakaarar? (VNRD Page 881-883)

Sloka 23. Sakrudapi (vasantha-tilaka) Regretting our indulgence in mundane affairs (VNRD Page 883-884)

Sloka 24. Yaavajjeevam (Mandaakraanta) (VNRD Page 884-885)

Knowing that after *prapatti* our very existence till death is governed by our *karma* about which we can do nothing, we should not worry about the same "*dEha yaatrai karmaadeenam aagaiyaal atarkku karaindaan aaagil naastikanaam*" (DR page 39)

Sloka 25. Api muhur (Maalinee) Avoiding company of undesirable persons (VNRD Page 885-886)

Sloka 26. Maatabharati (Saardoola VikreeTita) Advice to the 3 sensory organs of mind, speech, and body (VNRD Page 886 – 888)

Sloka 27. Daasyam (Saardoola VikreeTita) It is said that serving someone is mean. It all depends on whom you serve. Is it demeaning for a son to serve his aged parents or wife to serve her husband? Swamy Kumara varada observes *bhagavad daasasya swamikatvaat na duhka hEtutvam*. **He adds that statements like *sarvam paravasam duhkam* relate only to mundane masters and for some extraneous reasons.** Regarding our relationship as *SEsha* to the Lord who is *sEshi*, we have only to remind ourselves that it is eternal and natural, and we get back our "*klnkaratvaadi raajyam*" or kingdom of service and our minds should feel elated and dance with joy. (DR Page 44)

Sloka 28. tvayyEva (Saardoola VikreeTita) When Lord Ranganatha is prepared to bestow his grace, be ashamed to appeal to lesser ones? (VNRD Page 889-890)

Sloka 29. *Tvayi sati (Nardhatakam)* When Lord Ranganatha is there, why run after demigods? (VNRD Page 890-891)

***Sloka 30. Om iti (Saardoola VikreeTita)* Advice to serve *Divya Dampati* only. (VNRD Page 892-893)**

***Sloka 31. Aachaaryaad (sragdaara)* Praying for eternal service in *Paramapadam* (VNRD Page 893-894)**

***Sloka 32. Vidhaanam (sragdaara)* The benefit of reading this *Stotra* both here and hereafter (VNRD Page 894-896)**



D/ST- 15. Nyasa Vimsati

Introduction

This explains *Prapatti* in 22 *Slokas*.

The importance of this Stotra can be understood from the fact that Swami Desika himself wrote a commentary in Sanskrit for this Stotra. (ASR Page 38, MKS /JS/07/Page 149 and VNRD Page 801)

Sloka 1. Siddham (Achaarya LakshaNam)

This catalogues as many as 14 disciplines that an *Achaarya* should observe to deserve being accepted as an *Achaarya* (VNRD Page 802-804)

They are mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive (DR page 4)

SatsampradaayE: What is *Satsampradaayam*?

Blemish less advice given by the *Achaarya* to his *Sishya* that has been followed scrupulously by the "*Sam PradheeyatE iti Sampradaayam*" (DST /PPA 9/ VNVD page 7)

Sthira dhiyam: That unless the preceptor is sure and certain of what he imparts to his disciple, the disciple will fumble and flounder about what is taught to him (DR page 5)

ShrOtriyam: A *ShrOtriya* is one well versed and proficient in the (DR page 5)

Dhambha asooyaadi muktam: Humility must be the hallmark of an *Achaarya*. There will be no place in his mind for *darpa* (jealousy or envy) towards others or *kuhana* (deceit) or *Lobha* (covetousness) and so on. (DR page 7)

This *Sloka* does not purport to direct anyone to seek an *Achaarya*. For, it is up to everyone to seek an *Achaarya* under whom to study and obtain knowledge. It only lays down the qualifications that must exist in the *Achaarya* whom the disciple desires to adopt as such (DR page 8)

Sloka 2. Agjnaana (Why Achaarya should be venerated like Bhagavaan?)

This explains 8 reasons why a disciple should venerate his *Achaarya* like *Bhagavaan* himself. (VNRD Page 804-806)

This *Sloka* provides a bridge between the qualifications of *Achaarya* (in *SIOkam 1*) and those of *Sishya* (*Slokam 3*) (MKS in JS/07/Page152)

Sloka 3. sadbuddhi: (Sishya LakshaNam)

This catalogue as many as 15 duties and requirements for the disciple to be accepted as a disciple (VNRD Page 806-808)

Sadhu sEvi: he must be intent on revering *sadhus* – persons who are God-minded and Good-minded (DR Page 15)

Sloka 4. Svaadheena: This explains the important messages the preceptor gives to his disciple (VNRD Page 808-810)

Swami Desika advises that a disciple should clearly understand the advice of his preceptor on *Tattva, Hita and Purusharthas* and strictly adhere to the discipline enjoined on him by the preceptor. (VAS Page 33)

The *UpadEsam* given by the ideal *Achaarya* to his ideal *Sishya* should be correctly understood and treasured by the *Sishya* for life (DR page 17)

Sloka 5. mOkshOpaaya: (Difference between Bhakti and Prapatti)

One may feel that after age-long connection with *samsaric* world they have no chance of obtaining release from the same. However, good fortune can and does descend on some which makes them long for redemption. By divine dispensation, some people obtain an insuppressible urge to get rid of the age long cycle of life and death. Did not Krishna say: "*Bahoonam janmanaam ante jnaanavaan maam prapadyatE*" (DR page 19)

Vikalpa; one can go from one city to another distant city by car or train or flight. These are "alternate" modes of transport. This is called "*vikalpam*"- Not the way the term is understood nowadays. (DST/ PPA 9/ VNVD page 32)

Sloka 6. SaanukrOsE: This explains the importance of Prapatti (VNRD Page 811-812)

The greatness and glory of *SaraNaagati* and its efficacy as an unfailing and immediate means for obtaining redemption from *samsara* form the topic of this (DR page20)

Sloka 7. Saastra: This explains the importance of Mahaa-viswaasam (Absolute and intense faith) (VNRD Page 813 - 816)

One who understands among others the fact that unlike other deities, *Emperumaan* does not grant other fruits in a great hurry and that even if he might delay those other fruits, he is quick to give *Moksham* precisely at the time the *Prapanna* desires. This emphasizes the importance of "Great faith- *Mahaa Viswaasam*" (VNRD Page 815).

An utter pauper this moment and a millionaire next moment! Strong maladies need strong medicines. Only *Mahaa-viswaasam* can help to dissolve that great gnawing doubt! (DR page23)

Sankhaa Panchakam: 5 kinds of doubts arise regarding *Mahaa-viswaasam*. They are:

1. For a sinner who has committed unpardonable heinous crimes, how can he be redeemed?
2. Small rewards could be conceded, but how may the Lord concede the highest reward of *Moksha*?
3. It is also inconceivable that such an act of a trivial, brief, and non-*Tapas* based nature can secure the infinite bliss of *Moksha*?
4. The reward accrues rather early may be immediately or at the end of this lifetime. *Bhakti*, strenuous, continuous, and demanding discipline and austerity does itself take much longer periods even when the person is wise, learned and karma qualified. How can one without any of these qualifications become eligible for *Moksha*?
5. How can a procedure as *Upaaya* be common to all irrespective of *VarNa*, training, knowledge acquired by him?
6. The answer lies in the Lord's power and his grace. So, he can grant *Moksha* if he is satisfied. *Mahaa-viswaasam* secures his satisfaction and the consequent benefit (DST/PPA 09/ VNVD page 45-46)

Sloka 8. Na iha abhikraanti: This explains how Mantram results in liberation through Prapatti.

While acquiring *Mahaa Viswaasam* seems difficult, it should be remembered that once a qualified *Achaarya* administers the *Prapatti Mantra* to a deserving disciple, it would augment this "Great faith" and in due course would grant the desired result of *MOKsham* (VNRD Page 816-818)

A cultivator sows seeds in his land, in due course – after a lapse of sometime the seeds sprout and grow. Just like that the *Achaarya* sows the *Praapatti mantra* in the *Shishya's* mind. That sprouts there and gets firmly rooted and ultimately yields the desired fruit, sooner or later. In the same way *UpadEsam* will never go in vain but will take effect at the proper time (DR page 24)

Sloka 9. Nyaasa: prOkto: This explains how *Prapatti* is the direct means to *Moksham*. When *Prapatti* is to be done pronouncing "*PraNavam*", the question arises how those not qualified can do this. Swami seeks to dispel this doubt saying that such people can still do *Prapatti* with the help of "*Dvaya Mantram*" that does not require "*PraNavam*" (VNRD Page 818-820)

Sloka 10. Naanaa sabdaadi: This explains how *Prapatti* is the special means to attain *Moksham* (VNRD Page 820--823)

This *SIOka* has been sung for the definite purpose of establishing on the authority of the *Brahma Sutras* that *Prapatti* is an INDEPENDENT AND STRAUGHT means for attaining *moksha* and NOT AN AUXILARY or aid to *Bhakti yoga*. (DR page 29)

Sloka 11. Yat kinchit: This explains the limbs of *Prapatti* (VNRD Page 823 --825)

Sloka 12. Panchaapi: This dispels doubts on the differences between the body and its limbs with regards *Prapatti*.

It dispels doubts whether one should be careful by avoiding all pernicious conduct after *Prapatti*, because such conduct might neutralize *Prapatti* itself. **Any misconduct AFTER DOING *Prapatti* WILL NOT nullify the *Prapatti* done earlier. But, as such conduct would trigger displeasure of the Lord, adequate resort to atonement should be adopted** (known as "*Praayaschitta Prapatti*" which if not done, the consequences will have to be borne by the *Prapanna*. **The *Prapatti* done earlier will not go waste.** (VNRD Page 825 -828)

All the 5 *angas* must be present in full measure AT THE TIME OF performance of *Prapatti*, though thereafter one or another of them may be absent (DR page 31)

Mahaa-viswaasam must be there AT THE TIME of *Prapatti* or else *Prapaatī* will not bear fruit. **Absence or continuation of *Mahaa-viswaasam* after *Prapatti* is irrelevant. (DR page 32)**

Sloka 13. rakshaapEkshaa: A research on the Characteristics of *Prapatti* (VNRD Page 829-831)

If I seek some one's aid, I pray for his help and protection. That by itself is NOT *SaraNaagati*. Again, I entrust my servant with the responsibility of doing something for me, it will NOT by ITSELF be *SaraNaagati*. But, where both the above exist while performing *Prapatti* at the feet of the Lord, *SaraNaagati* comes into play, Entrustment, and prayer for protection both must exist in *SaraNaagati* (DR page 33)

Sloka 14. Aatmaatmeeya: Subservience to Lord's will continues in all stages (VNRD Page 831 - 833)

Sloka 15. nyaasaadEshu: Meanings of the words "*Sarva Dharma Parithyaagam*" (VNRD Page 833 -835)

Sloka 16. aadEshTum: Refuting the view that *Prapatti* cannot be a means.

Explains the meaning of the word "*Ekam*" (VNRD Page 835 -838)

The word negates the feeling that *Prapattī* performed is the real *Upaaya*. it is only a *saadhyOpaaya* which evokes the mercy of the Lord who is *SiddhOpaaya* (DR page 37)

Sloka 17. *svaabheeshTa*: Explaining the differences between "SiddhOpaayam" and "SaadhyOpaayam" (VNRD Page 838 -839)

Sloka 18. *Atyanta akinchana*: Observing *Prapatti* along with its limbs (VNRD Page 840 - 841)

Sloka 19. *tyaktvOpaaya*: Explaining how *Prapanna* should conduct himself (VNRD Page 841 - 843)

Sloka 20. *Aagjnaa kainkarya*: Explaining how *Prapanna* gets *mOksham* at a time he desires (VNRD Page 844 - 845)

Sloka 21. *Srutyaa smrityaa*: Explaining the benefits of reciting this *Stotra* (VNRD Page 845 - 847)

Sloka 22. *Samsaaraavarta*: Explaining the procedures to be adopted by *Prapanna* (VNRD Page 847 - 849)

It may be noted that by detailing the qualifications of both *Achaarya* and *Sishya*, Swami Desika has provided guidelines for one an all of us how we can also become free from burden (*nirbharO*) and from all fear (*nirbhayO*) (MKS in JS 07 / Page 152)

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D/ST – 16. Paramaartha Stuti

Introduction

Swami Desika himself named it as "*Paramaartha stuti*"

This is a "SankshEpa RamayaNam" (JS/07/Seva Page 155)

In just 10 Slokas, the inner meanings of Srimad Ramayana are brought out in a succinct manner. (Sri Desika Stotra Saara Malar – Seva / Pager155)

SIOka 1: Srimad ghridra

Tungair-atungai cha:

Whether of high caste or low caste, this refers to how JaTaayu got *Moksham*. He was just a bird. **He got what even Dasaratha could not get** - His last rites were performed by Lord Rama himself. That is why the place is called "*Tiru-puLL- Kuzhi*" (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 157)

The 4 objectives in life: *Dharma, Artha, Kaama* and *MOKsha*. They are called "*Purushaarthas*" Can there be a 5th one? Yes. Rejecting the above 4, JaTaayu had *Paramaatma* as his sole objective and gave up his dear life for that *Paramaatma*.

While there 4 are just "*Arthas*", his was "*Parama- Artha*". So, this *StOtra* is called "**Parama-Aartha-Stuti**". How to get this "*Parama- Artha*"? Only one thing is needed. An eligibility called "Surrender" or "*Prapatti*" (D/ST/ PPA/17 VNVD p. 158)

"**PraNata**" means " – bent low in reverence" It is generally taken to imply "*Prapanna* or *SaraNaagata*" meaning one who has surrendered. The verse assures that the high and the low can both reap the desired fruit. The conjunction "*Cha*" in the latter half emphasizes that the lowly too can reap the desired fruit as easily as the high or tall ones. (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 160)

On the banks of *JaTaayu Pushkarani* stands a very tall tree (called Lord Vijaya Raghavan) that grants whatever is sought. Whereas other trees would enable only those who are tall enough to pluck its fruits, this tree allows all tall and short, irrespective of caste, creed, quality, wealth, knowledge etc. to be able to pluck its fruits. Is this not something unique? (D/ST/I / VNRD/ Page 407)

As the Lord spent 14 years in the forest full of trees, plants and creepers, poets have begun to see him as verily a tree. Varadaraja is described as "*Hastisaila SikaharOjwala Paarijaatam*" (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 9-10)

Parijaata tree is known for its flowers, not for its fruits. But this Parijaata yields fruits also". What is more, anyone tall or short can pluck its fruits. (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 11)

Dwarfs cannot reach the higher branches to pluck the fruits in trees like *Paarijaata*. But this tree has branched all over from heights to the lowest levels so that even dwarfs can pluck the fruits with absolute ease (VNRD Page 407)

This is said to suggest the **Deva SaraNaagati** of *Bala KhaaNDam*

SIOka 2: gurubhis

I was trying to follow the example set by my *Achaaryas* wholly immersed in your auspicious qualities who were therefore able to successfully cross over *Samsaara*. But, unfortunately, I am drowned in *Samsaara*

as my involvement is not as sincere and deep as those of them. Only you should help me out (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 163)

Gurubhi: implies that only through *Achaaryas*, one should commence praying for reaching *Bhagavaan*. The word "*Gurubhi*:" can be taken to mean his immediate *Achaarya* - namely, Vaadi -hamsa-ambuvaahar, Bhagavad Ramanuja who composed *SaraNaagati Gadhya*, Adhi Kulapati Nammazhwar or even Adhikavi Vaalmiki who revealed who is *GuNavaan*. It can also be said to refer to Sage Viswamitra who started his hymn with the words "*Kousalyaa Suprajaa Raama*" and who was also Swami Desika's *Gotra Pravartakar* (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 13-15)

This is said to deal with **Vibhava Avataaram** of the Lord ((D/ST/ 8A MKS Page 8)

SIOka 3: bhuvanaasraya

The word "*Aahava*" means not only war but also *Yagjna*. The Lord is doing a great *Yagjna* of saving us. Swami prays to *Bhagavaan* to fill his mind-temple (*Manak-koil*) with his *Divya MangaLa Vighram*. (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 168)

This is said to deal with *Vibhava* form of the Lord as Sri Rama who was the cynosure of the ladies in Mithila to which he went for marrying Sri Sita. (**Sita-Rama KalyaaNam**) (D/ST/ 8A MKS Page 12)

SIOka 4: abhirakshitum

"**Abhirakshitum Agrata:**" The word indicates that *Bhagavaan* not only stands first in the *PraNavam* (*AkaaraarthO VishNu:*) but he is also in the forefront in protecting the *Jeevas* (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 172)

This is said to deal with surrender of the Sages (**Rishi SaraNaagati**) and their protection promised by Lord Rama. (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 19)

SIOka 5: kamala nirapaaya

"**Kamala nirapaaya Dharmapatni:**" When Janaka made *Kanyaadaanam* of Sri Sita to Sri Rama, he specifically mentioned "*Saha Dahrma chareee Tava*". Here Swami refers to this as '*Kamala nirapaaya Dhrarma Patnee*' to suggest the "**Sita apaharaNa**" episode. (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 23)

"**Aheenam:**" The word occurring in the 3rd line of this *SIOka* requires an explanation.

The "*Aheend*" means blemish-less. That is what the term signifies. Its character is understandable from the purpose. The protection of *Prapanna* from all ills, dangers, evil effects, sins etc (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 179)

- "*Sutyaa*" is a *Yagjna* that is done with the juice of "*Soma* plant".
- "*Sutya-ahas*" is done 3 times.
- If done with one *hOmam*, it is called "*Ekaaham*"
- If done for 2 to 11 days, it is called "*Aheenam*"
- If done for 12 days, it is called "*Dvaadasa-aham*"
- If done for more than 12 days, it is called "*Satram*"

In "*aheenam*" there is only one *Yajamaana* with 16 *Ritviks* to whom *Yajamaana* would give *DakshiNai*.

In *Satram*, there may be many *Yajamaanaas* but there will be no payment of *dakshiNai* (Excerpts from "Sroutram" by Sri Diwan Bahadur V. K. Ramanujacharya Swami (1928) (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 180)

SIOka 6: kripanaa

Kripaa sahaayam: This *sIOka* is said to suggest "**Sugreeva saraNaagati**".

This is significant. It may be doubted how this *SaraNaagati* could be effective in the absence of *Dharmapatni Sita*. Swami suggests that Lord's "itself acted as Rama's *Dharma patni* in the protection to Sugreeva (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 25)

SIOka 7: avadheerya

Did JaTaayu seek any *Purushartas*?

No. He did *Bhagavad Kaaryam* and derived pleasure in doing it.

He never even thought that by doing this, he would get *moksham* like what we expect.

The only objective was to render service to *Bhagavaan* even if it meant giving up one's life! Only this is the **Parama-Artham** that goes beyond the traditional *Purushaarthas*.

This is the message and moral for all of us. It is this that gives the title of this StOtram (VNRD Page 412 and D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 185-186)

JaTaayu never asked for any boons from Lord Rama (D/ST/I / VNRD/ Page 412)

Valmiki uses the words "*Parishvajya Janakaatmajaa*" – Sita embraced JaTaayu considering that he was Janaka, her own father and that shows her as his daughter (*Aatmajaa*). According to Valmiki Ramayana, the JaTaayu episode takes place in *PanchavaTi*. Sri Rama, realizing the dedicated service of JaTaayu bathes in Godavari and performs the funeral obsequies to the dead bird as a son would do to his deceased father. In *VaishNava* parlance, JaTaayu is designated as "*Periya Udaiyaar*" (The great parent) (ASR Page 39)

This *Sloka* is said to refer to **JaTaayu Moksham** and how Sri Rama did his funeral rites which even Dasaratha could not get. This verse is interpreted as "*MangaLa Aasaasanam*" to JaTaayu in the shrine of Vijayaraghavan at TiruppuTkuzhi (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 29)

SIOka 8. SaraNaagata

Swami Desika reminds *Bhagavaan* about his pledge granted on the seashore that he would unconditionally protect those who surrender at his feet ignoring all their faults and foibles. (VAS Page 17)

When Ravana had not made any amends for his sin- of the extreme variety – when he had not returned Sri Sita, when he was still an accused in jurisprudential parlance, with no extenuating circumstances, Lord Rama could give his graceful succor to him too. Can anyone else do so? Now, you cannot leave me out says Swami. **Had you ruled me out as ineligible – even after my Prapatti, that dishonor to a Prapanna will only taint your good name.** It cannot suit your reputation as "Prapanna- *Rakshaka-Vratee*! The whole world has known your assurance" (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 189)

This *SIOka* is said to refer to **VibheeshaNa SaraNaagati in Yuddha KhaaNDam** in which Sri Rama offers protection to anyone who surrenders to him saying "*VibheeshaNO yathi Vaa RaavaNa iti udeeritam*" (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 31)

SIOka 9: bhujagEndra

We may do our service as a matter of duty. There is no guarantee that such service would yield happiness. But service in *Paramapadam* is not just duty but a source of joy forever. While we cannot compete with *Nityasooris* like Anantha, GaruDa and others who have been allotted respective roles, even witnessing them and the Lord would give us immense pleasure. (D/ST/ PPA/ 17 VNVD page 192) Did not the poet say "They also serve who stand and stare"

This *SIOkla* is said to refer to "***Sri Vijaya Raghava PaTTabhishEkam***" (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 33)

SIOka 10: vimalaasaya

Vimalaasaya VENkatEsa: When Valmiki started his Ramayana, his mind was very much agitated due to the hunter shooting the *Krouncha* bird. In the case of Swami Desika, he had a calm mind when he wrote this *Stotra*. Here this *Sloka* contains what is known as "***Vaktru VailakshsNyam***", the specialty of the author. This is the concluding verse of this *StOtra* (D/ST 8B Seva Pages 35)



Swami Desikan

DST- 17. Shodasaayudha StOtram

Introduction

When swami Desika was in Kanchi, the people in the nearby TiruppuTkuzhi were afflicted with a rare kind of fever. On hearing about this, Swami is said to have composed this *Stotram* on the 16 weapons wielded by *Bhagavaan*. And the people got relief mysteriously. (ASR Page 46 and VNRD Page 908)

It may be noted that because it was composed for the benefit of those affected, Swami Desika uses the word meaning you, your instead of "na:" meaning for us. (JS/07/Page 243)

- *Bhagavaan* wields 5 weapons (*Panchaayudha*).
- He wields 8 weapons (in *AshTabhuja* in *AshTabhujaashTaka*. In this, he is shown as wielding 8 weapons.
- Similarly, in other *StOtras*, the number of weapons goes on increasing.
- Finally, *Sri Vishnu Sahasra naamam* ends with "*Sarva PraharaNaayuda:*" being unable to keep a count of his weapons.

Azhwars have performed *MangaLaasaasanams* for these weapons. Swami Desika in *Abheeti Sthavam* says that these weapons per se are of no use for him but are meant to protect his devotees. In a sense, they are for his own self-protection because he has said in *Bhagavad Gita* that *Jnaanias* are his own Atma. Protecting them is tantamount to protecting himself. (JS/07/JSS/Page 245)

The 8 starting from *Chakram* to *Sakti* adorn the right side of *Charathaazhwar* (VNVD Page 308)

Sloka 1 Chakram: Disc: svasankalapa and Sloka 2 yadayatham

Bhagavaan's very will power has taken the shape of his "*Chakram*"wielding 16 different weapons (VNRD Page 909). When the crocodile caught the feet of Gajendra, it is this *Chakram* that saved the elephant by speedily cutting asunder the throat of the crocodile (VNVD page 287). He is said to have wielded this to annihilate generations of kings (VNVD Page 292)

Sloka 4. Kunda: Spear: hElayaa

Is it not the weapon of Subhramanya? The answer is that *a* can wield the spear also as seen from Tiruppavai verse "*Koor vEl KoDum thozhilan: NandagOpari*" and "*Venru Pagai keDukkum ninn Kayil vEl POtri*" (JS/07/Page 246)

Sloka 5. DaNDA: Punishing rod: daityadaanava

Sloka 6. Ankusa: Goad: ananyaanvaya

Sloka 7. Agni: Fire: sambhooya

Sloka 9. Sakti: Missile: kriyaa sakti guNO (VEI)

Sloka 10. Sanku: Paancha-janyam: Conch taaratvam

The conch has the shape of "*PraNavam*"(VNRD Page 915) We learn that when the Lord just touched the cheek of Dhruva, the unlettered boy who sprang into a rhapsody and started his psalms praising the Lord. (VNVD Page 311) It is this *Sanku* that Andaal refers to as always tasting the lips of Lord Krishna (VNVD Page 312)

Sloka 13. Halam: Plough: vihaarO yEna

This is what Balarama wielded (VNVD Page 320)

Sloka 14. Vajram: Thunderbolt: aayudaanaam aham

Lord Krishna Says that among weapons, he is verily this "Vajra Aayudam"(VNVD Page 322)

This is what was obtained from the backbone of Dadeechi Maharishi used for annihilating Vritraasura (VNVD Page 323)

Sloka 15. Gada: Mace: Viswa-samhriti

Sloka 16. Musala yaatyati. pestle

In Mahabharata, we find how the Yaadhavas powdered a pestle and dissolved the powders into the ocean and how these powders grew up into sharp weapons with which they attacked one another whereby the entire got annihilated (VNVD Page 331)

Sloka 17. Soolam: Trident: soolidrishTa

This is the weapon of Lord Siva (VNVD Page 333)

Sloka 18. astra graamasya A Summary of prayer: (VNVD Page 336)

The word "Viswam" is very significant in this *Sloka*. When Swami Desika uses the word "Viswam" meaning the World and prays for protection, it is obvious that the World is facing some danger. As per grammar "Ulagam enbatu UyarndOr maaTTE" the word "World" denotes those who are great devotees. Here, it refers to devotees who are facing a peculiar fever and Swami prays on their behalf (VAS Page 38)

Sloka 19. Srimad vEnkaTanathEna: Concluding remarks by the Author of hymn (VNVD Page 340)



D/ST -18. SRI STUTI

Introduction

The Divine couple create, protect, and bless the world.

- As creators they are known as *Divya Dampati*,
- As saviors as *SaraNya Dampati* and
- As rulers as *Sesha Dampati*.
- Lakhmi is worshipped as
 - *Kaamyaa archa*,
 - *BhOga archa* and
 - *Laya archa*. (D/BO/04 ASR Page 47)

Of the 25 slokas in this Stotra, in first 12 and last 12, Swami Desika speaks of the glories of Mahaalakshmi and in the middle Sloka, he describes how as per *VishNu Puraana Periya PiraaTTi* coronates as "*SarvalOkEswari*" (VNRD Page 689 and JSS Page 225)

Swami Desika has named this as "*Sarasija Nilayaayaa: StOtram*" (Desika StOtra Malar Page 221)

As there are some difficulties in chanting *Japa Mantras*, many are scared to engage in such. Swami Desika has shown an easy way for such people to secure the benefits of *Japa* etc without performing them by including in his StOtras the seed letters (*Bheejaaksharas*) of the *Mantras* relating to the respective deities in a concealed manner. (YVT Page 223,224)

There are two views as to where Swami Desika composed this *StOtra*.

1. Some scholars say that it was composed before Sri Perundevi Thaayaar Sannidhi at Kancheepuram. (D/ST/PPA 6/ VNVD page 2) and
2. Prof. A. Srinivasa Raghavacharirar in "The Life and works of Sri Nigmanta Maha Desikan" Page 42 (D/BO/4) and others hold that it was composed before Sri Ranganayaki Thaayaar at Srirangam (D/ST/I Sri Desika Stotra Mala – VNRD (page 27).

However, it be, the *Stotram* is a delectable experience in glorifying the greatness of Mahalakshmi.

Great *Achaaryas* have composed *Stotras* on Lakshmi: (D/ST/9A: VKSN Raghavan in his foreword)

- ALavandaar (yaamunaachaarya): *Chatus SIOkee*
- Bhagavad Ramanuja: *SaraNaagati Gadhyam*
- Koorathaazhwaan: *Sri Sthavam*
- Paraasara BhaTTar: *Sri GuNa Ratna kOsa*
- Swami Desika: *Sri Stuti*.

This is also known as "*Kanakadhaaraa StOtram*" in North India. (D/ST/9A: MKS in his "Translator's Preface")

Lakshmi has a quality that the Lord does not have.

What is that?

It is her role as the mediatrix (*Purushaakaaram*) (D/ST/9C: ASR in his Preface – Page 2)

Special Sloka:

Eesaanaam jagadOsya VenkaTa patE: vishNO: paraam prEyaseem

Tadh Vaksha sthala nithya vaasa rasikaam Tadh Kshaanti samvardhineem/

Padma alankrita paaNi pallava yugaam, Padmaa sanastaam Sriyam

Vaatsalyaadi guNOjwalaam bhagavateem vandE jagan maataram //

Some people hold that this *Sloka* was not composed by Swami Desika and is not included in some compilations) (D/ST/9C: ASR in Preface – Page 7)

Sloka1: maanaateeta pratita: Surrendering at the feet of PiraATTi

MangaLam MangaLaanaam: Goddess Mahalakshmi lends auspiciousness to all auspicious things. Is not Bhagavaan called "*Sriya: pati*" because of Goddess? (D/ST/9C: ASR in his Preface – Page 11)

A-saraNa: No other refuge. Anbil V. Gopalachariar holds that this includes Perumaal and Thaayaar. No refuge other than these (D/ST/PPA 6 VNVD page 23)

Sloka2: aavirbhaava: PiraATTi's glory beyond description

Having begun his composition, Sri Desika suddenly hesitates to go further when he remembers how supremely great, she is by her very birth, her places of residence and finally her wealth. She was not born of mortals but simply arose from the milky ocean when it was churned to produce nectar. Again, as Sri Sita, she was found in a furrow of a ploughshare when the ground was being made ready for a sacrificial rite by King Janaka. By these words, Swami implies that Lakshmi is superior to Lord VishNu who took birth from human parents occasionally as a Vaamana, Parasurama, Rama and Krishna. She was "*AyOnija*" (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 3)

Sloka3: stOtavyastvam: One who praises gets praised

Soon, Swami gains confidence about his success because due to the benignity of *Thaayaar*, she will be pleased and even allow him to be extolled by others (*slaaghaneeyO bhavEyam*). Which mother does not like to see her son praised? (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 5)

Swami says that despite his incapacity to compose a panegyric on *Thaayaar*, his very desire would enable success for his effort (VNRD Page 695)

TaamEva Tvaam: Who did this magic? It is *Thaayaar* herself. Who is she? "*Eeswareem Sarva bhootaanaam*". She is the one praiseworthy by the entire world. (D/ST/PPA 6 VNVD page 37)

DEhibhi: Sthooyamaana: Those who have a body. The body is given to them only for rendering service to Goddess Lakshmi. (D/ST/9C: ASR page 20)

Sloka4: yatsankalpaad: PiraAAAATTi proves Emperumaan as ParadEvata

StOtra starts here (D/ST/PPA 6 VNVD page 47)

Though the Lord has his glories through creation, sustenance, and dissolution, it is his special qualification as "*Sriya: Pati*" that distinguishes him as "*Para-dEvata*" (D/ST/9B Seva Page 3)

Sloka5: nishpratyooha: how piraATTi proves that Emperuman is Supreme Godhead

AnyOnya lakshyam: Lord and Lakshmi are identified with reference to each other. He is "*Sriya: pati*" She is "*VishNu Patni*" (D/ST/9C: ASR – Page 31)

Tulya seela vayO vrittaam tulya abhijana lakshaNaam (VR Sundara 16.5 (D/ST/PPA 6 VNVD page 59)

Several descriptions are made in the Scriptures, but they are applicable to Lord VishNu and other deities also. What distinguishes as uniquely pertaining to Lord VishNu is the red-colored marks of Lakshmi's feet on the Lord's chest that confirms how he is the one whom all the *Vedas* adore as the Supreme Godhead. Not only does she identify him, but she also glorifies the Lord's complexion by her red prints on his sapphire-blue form. A subtle way of hinting that Goddess Lakshmi is indeed superior to Lord VishNu! (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 6)

They have these in common; bed in the form of AadhisEsha; Hearts of Rishis.

Sloka 6: uddEsyatvam: Both Perumaaal and Thaayaar constitute Divya Dampati

UjjitOpaadhigandham: In ordinary sacrifices even though the deities are the apparent recipients of the offerings, it is Lord Narayana who as the indweller of these deities accepts the oblations. Whereas in the extraordinary sacrifice of offering our body and soul as happens in total surrender, there is no intermediate deity but Lord Narayana together with Goddess Sri accepts the offering directly without a third party. (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 8 and (D/ST/9C: ASR: Page 36)

Sloka7: pasyanteeshu: the game that they play

No game is complete without spectators. Since it takes place within the four walls of the private quarters of Goddess Lakshmi, only ladies are allowed inside. Since the *Vedas* are incessantly speaking about Lord VishNu and Goddess Lakshmi, they are considered as spectators. The poet uses the feminine gender "*Sruti*" to indicate the *Vedas* here. (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 11)

Soori brindEna-saardham: Besides there are the eternally free (*Nitya Sooris*) who are of indeterminate sex, neither male nor female. So, they also are spectators. (D/ST/9C: ASR P. 41)

Sloka 8: asyEsaanaa: PiraATTi's names show the way to mOksham

Samsrayantee Mukundam: "*Mu*" means "*moksham*" and "*ku*" means "*Prithvi*"

Because he gives both, he is called "*Mukundan*". The idea here is as Lakshmi is inseparably with this *Mukundan*, she also is granting both as "*sarvEswari*" (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 47)

While the names of Lord VishNu found in *VishNU Sahasranaamam* are but a compilation by Bheeshma from the sayings of Sages (*Rishibhih Parigeetaani*), those of Goddess Lakshmi are really culled out from the hoary *Vedas* and are therefore at a higher level. (D/ST/9A: MKS Pages. 12-13)

The *Vedas* both inherently and expressly declare the Lord and *Thaayaar* together as Supreme and should be propitiated together (VNRD Page 704)

As Lakshmi's names are like the reserve capital which are not used for day to day needs, the Vedas do not draw on them and speak only about the Lord who is like the current amount in the actual transaction. (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 44)

Sloka 9: tvaamEva-aahuh: Both together are Param-porUL

Some called you as LOkanaatha. Some others leave you out and claim that only the Lord is LOkanaatha. Yet others argue that if both of you are taken as LOkanaatha, it will amount to have 2 LOkanathas and so left you aside even from the "Eeswara GoshTi". Thus, all of them have destroyed themselves through mutual rivalry and discord. For us, however, both of you together are our "Deivatam"(D/ST/9B Seva Page 5-6)

Sloka10: aapannarthi prasamana: Both have their ideas in unison

Baddha Deekshasya VishNO: A person engaged in doing a *Yagjna* undertakes a vow (*Deeksha*) and he is called a "Deekshita". The Lord has taken a vow of removing the distress of the suffering humanity. This *Yagjna* has no end. It should be done non-stop without end. As no *yagjna* can be done without the wife, she is called "Dharma patri" – and as "Saha DharmiNi" she is also engaged continuously in this *yagjna* (VNRD Page 706 and D/ST/9C: ASR Page 62)

- When the Lord is in *Parama-padam*, Lakshmi is with him.
- When he made his advent as Sri Rama, she appeared as Sri Sita.
- When he manifested as Krishna, she followed him as Rukmini.
- Even when the Lord appeared before the *Mudal Azhwars* and *Tirumangai Azhwar*, Goddess Lakshmi accompanied Lord VishNu. (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 15)

When the waves of the milky ocean splatter to reach far off places, the sweetness of milk is never left behind. Likewise, Goddess Lakshmi's presence is inseparable from that of the Lord. (D/ST/9B Seva Page 6)

Sloka11: dattE sObhaam: How PiraaTTi takes forms in sync with those of Perumaal

Udaya Vilayai: In her form which is like an ocean of bliss, the origination and reabsorption of all her manifestations take place eternally caused by the force of her will like the waves that rise and vanish on the surface of the ocean (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 72)

The Lord's complexion is described variously as sapphire-blue or emerald green. Lakshmi's complexion is like molten gold. By her presence on his chest she enhances his beauty. **For, no gem can shine without the addition of yellow gold.** (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 16)

Sloka12: aasamsaaram: Greatness of PiraaTTi's Sankalpam

The 3 Devis, namely Saraswati, Paarvati and Sachi have existed from the time of creation only whereas Goddess Lakshmi has been referred to in the *Vedas* as existing forever. Viewed from this angle also, it stands to reason that they derive their powers from Goddess Lakshmi's will (*Bhaava*) (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 17)

All these three have brought their spouses under their control and influence due to the grace of Sri. Indirectly, Swami Desika suggests that among males we should propitiate only MahavishNu and among females, Goddess Mahalakshmi and NO ONE ELSE. (VAS Page 26)

While referring about Lord Siva he is described as "MERu Dhanvaa" – one who could bend mountain MERu and make it his bow. He was conquered by Manmatha who wields a bow of flowers (*kusuma danushO*) with the help of Paarvati's knitting of her eyebrows, (D/ST/9C: ASR: Page 78)

Sloka13: agrE bhartuh: Coronation of PiraATTi as sarvEswari

This verse is the crowning piece of the entire hymn and vividly portrays the coronation of Goddess Lakshmi in exalted surroundings. (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 18)

As Lakshmi's coronation took place right in front of the **Lord who was just a witness**. This shows how her "*Saamraajya PaTTaabhishEkam*" is more breathtaking than *Rama PaTTaabhishEkam* where his coronation was with Sri Sita (*Saha seetaam*) (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 82)

"*Saha*" indicates subordinate indication. Here, it is not. Here she is the most important one. She has her coronation as the Lord is watching! (D/ST/PPA 6 VNVD page 120)

Sloka14: aalOkhya: Celestials redeeming their lost glory

Here, the commentators make a fine distinction. To obtain the grace of *Bhagavaan* one must ask for it. But, in the case of Lakshmi, we see in Sri Sita- no such appeal is ever needed. Refer to cases of Kaakaasura, the Raakshasis who surrounded her in *Ashoka Vana* (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 21)

Indra IOka that had lost its luster due to the curse of Durvaasa, regained its lost glory the moment Goddess Lakshmi's glance fell on it (D/ST/9B Seva Page 8)

For the fault of Indra all Devas had to suffer and seek relief by surrendering to Mahalakshmi. Similarly, **for atoning their fault of Airaavata, all elephant joined in giving AbhishEkam to Thaayaar** (VNRD Page711)

Sloka15: aartha traana vratibhi: The power of PiraATTi's grace

Aartha traana Vratibhi: As stated in Sloka 10 "*Baddha Deekshasya VishNO:*" repeats the idea of *Divya Damapati* undertaking a vow to protect the distressed, in this sloka he goes one step further to say that Mother Goddess would be terribly upset if any being is found in distress **as if that has disgraced her vow itself!** (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 89)

Commentators describe her as showering her gifts without any preconditions or expecting any gratitude. Such is her generous nature. On the other hand, see what the Lord said: *yasya anugraham Ichaami tasya vitham haraami aham*" meaning "When I want to bless someone, first I take away his / her wealth" (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 22)

aham ahamikaam tanvatE sampadOghaa: Goddess Lakshmi did not specify which kind of wealth to confer. All kinds of wealth and prosperity vied with one another in presenting themselves to the devotee (VNRD page 713)

Sloka16: yOgaaramba tvarita manasa: wealth accumulates from all sources

yOgaaramba tvarita manasa: ...Prathamam Danaayaam dhaarayantE: Those who commence doing *Karma Yoga* etc also need some wealth to take up that task. So, Initially, they also desire some funds for sustaining themselves for doing it and for a limited time and limited purpose – **Not because that they are after money. That is why "Prathamam"**. After that, they do not have any desire to accumulate or hoard wealth. (D/ST/9C: ASR page 93)

How is wealth or prosperity got?

- From the earth as a hidden treasure (*Pudaiya*) as was available to Tirumangai Azhwar,
- from the sky as happened to KuchEla, or
- from KubEra's treasury when King Raghu wanted to help the student Kantsa, disciple of Sage Varatantri or
- from the waters of the sea itself. (VNRD Page 714 and D/ST/9A: MKS Page 23)
- Bhoomi is Piraatti's mother. She can shower on behalf of her daughter.
- Thaayaar conferred on KubEra trusteeship of wealth. He can shower at her bidding.
- *Ambaram* is sky also known as "VishNu Padam". Lord VishNu can shower on behalf of his spouse.
- *Mahaalakshmi emerged* from the ocean, thus it becomes her father. He can shower on behalf of his daughter. (VNRD Page 714)

Such inflow occurs to surfeit. The seeker might like to arrest it for reasons of satisfaction, but the overflow is impossible of being arrested (D/ST/PPA 6 VNVD page 140)

Sloka17: srEyas kaamaa: Power and position accrue by her grace

"*SrEyas*" means blessedness, supreme felicity, and final beatitude. "*PrEyas*" means worldly pleasures, mundane welfare, creature comforts etc. That the seekers of "*Shreyas*" get best of both is stressed here. (D/ST/9A: MKS: M.K. Srinivasan Page 25)

For the one who seeks only *Bhagavaan*, wealth would accrue automatically unasked for. "*NinnaiyE taan vENDi neel selvam vENDAataan tannaiyE taan vENDum selvam*" (D/ST/9C: ASR: Page 99)

Sloka18: ooreekartum: Her grace in sin-qua-non for obtaining mOksham

"***Amba!***" Scared on confronting powerful enemies, Swami seems to let out a distress call to Mother Goddess to shower her "*Vaatsalyam*" (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 106)

VishNu kaantE: The suggestion is that Lord looks at her face and understanding her intention (*Ingitam*) he acts accordingly. (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 108)

Sloka19: jaataakaankshaa Prapannas do not transgress Sastraic injunctions

mAAyaa leeDAM vibhavam akhilam manyamaana truNaayaam... vaidikam dharma sEtum: If the Lord out of his immeasurable mercy grants any wealth to those desiring *mOksham*, they do not either feel overjoyed or reject it but accept it as a gift from the Lord that they have to utilize to exhaust their *karma* while on earth but go on doing their duties as laid down in *VarNaasrama Dharma* **not as a means to *moksha* but as a measure to please *Bhagavaan*.** (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 112-114)

Sloka 20: sEvE dEvee: How her devotees obtain mOksham

Sloka 21: saanupraasa; Praying for PiraATTi's grace

Saandra Vaatsalya digdai: Her maternal affection

What is "*Vatsalyam*"?

It is pure affection unmindful of any defects or deficiencies in the recipient and without expecting any return (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 125)

Sloka 22: sampadhyantE: attaining higher mental state by her grace

Sloka 23: maataa dEvee: Thanking Divya Dampatis for their anugraham

Kimbhooya; priyam iti khila smEra vaktraa vibhaasi:

When I look at your smile, you seem to ask me what else do you desire (D/ST/I/ VNRD page 723)

Acquiring a qualified *Achaarya* is not easy. It is only after several births one can come across an *Achaarya* fit to lead him further in the spiritual journey. (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 33)

Sloka 24: kalyaaNaam avikala nidhi

This is the *Dhyaana Sloka* of this hymn. (D/ST/9B Seva Page 13)

That Goddess Lakshmi is only one of her kind is stressed using the word "*Kaapi*" meaning Unique or rare. (D/ST/9A: MKS Page 34)

No one else can have this limitless mercy (D/ST/PPA 6 VNVD page 189)

yEshaa: Here, she is! *Dhruva* was keeping the Lord in his meditation and did not open his eyes to see the Lord who appeared before him. To make him see, the Lord disappeared from his mental eye and *Dhruva* saw him in front and started composing his hymn. This is the picture Swami wants us to visualize by using the word "*yEshaa*" (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 146)

Sloka 25: upchita guru bhaktE: Gains acquired by reciting this Stotram

PaTanta: If one were to just read even without understanding the meanings of this hymn, that would suffice (D/ST/9C: ASR Page 151)



D/ST – 19. SUDARSANA ASHTAKAM

Introduction

The 8 *Slokas* indicate the idea of the Lord's being decked with 8 weapons and so 8 different aspects of the Heti-rajya are being revealed. (D/ST/04B/B KPR/ Page 2)

SVD who hailed Lord Rama in Raghuvēera Gadhya with the words "*Jaya Jaya Mahaaveera*" now hails Lord Sudarsana with the same victory wishes as "*Jaya Jaya Sri Sudarsana*" (D/ST/ 04A Page 61 Seva)

As Sudarsana shows the way to VishNu, he is called "*Su-darsana*"

In the Dhyana SIOka we say: "*Sudarsana Mahhaa-jwaala! KOTi soorya samaprabha! Agjnaana andhasya mE dEa! VishNOr maargam pradarsaya*".

Another reason is that he grants the eyes of *Jnaana* (JS/07/Page237 and 242 Seva Desika StOtra malar)

"Reciting this *StOtra* is more beneficial than doing 1000 *Sudarsana Homams*" Therefore, Swami uses the words "*Prabhoota Saaram*" (JS/07/Page237Seva Desika StOtra malar)

Sloka 1: *pratibhaTa srENi; this sloka relates to Lord's conch.* (D/ST/9B Seva Page 13)

This can scare enemies and destroy the sins of devotees (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam VNVD)

The Avataara Tirunakshatram of Sudarsanar is Aani Chittirai.

Next day is Swati, the birth-star of Lord Nrisimha (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam / VNVD)

It is this conch that bestowed on Dhruva a new birth (*Jnaana Pirappu*) when the Lord touched his cheek with *Sanku* (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam VNVD)

"*BheesahaNa*", "*DhaaraNa*" and "*Karsana*" at the end of each *Paada* are really beautiful and have lot of connections. That is why, SVD employs 6 welcome messages in every sIOka (D/ST/ 04 A/ Page 64/ Seva and JS/07/Page237 Seva Desika StOtra malar Page 239)

Unlike Siva's 3rd eye, which is generally closed, all the 3 eyes of Sudarasana are always blazing! (D/ST/04B/B Page 4 KPR)

Sloka 2 *subha-jagad-roopa* This SIOka relates to Lord's *chakram*

In the string "*ANi Attigiri baddhar Vinai tottu ara arukkum aNi Ath-tigiriY*" the first "*Attigiri*" refers to *Kaanchi Hastigiri*. The second *Attigiri* refers to the beautiful *Chakram* (*Tigiri= Chakram*) (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam VNVD)

Sudarsana removes the darkness of inner ignorance. In the *Dhyaana Sloka* of Sudarsana, we pray "*agnana andhasya mE dEva! VishNOR maargam pradarsaya*" requesting him to remove our ignorance (D/ST/04A/ Page 68/Seva)

That even the one who performed a hundred *Yaagas* bows at your feet adds luster to your glory, says SVD (D/ST/ 04 A/ Page 65 /Seva)

Sloka 3: *sphuTa-thaTith-jaala*: This SIOka relates to Lord's Lord's *Saaranga* bow (LSS: VNVD)

The word "*Hari-haya*" refers to one who has golden colored horses. This was "Indra". The bow destroyed the enemies of Indra (LSS: VNVD)

Sloka 4: nija pada preeta sad gaNa: This SIOka relates to Lord's Ulakkai (pestle) known in Sanskrit as "musala"

Hari haya dveshi dhaarana: Harihaya is an epithet of Indra as having "gold colored horses" as per Amara kOsa (D/ST/04B/B Page 15 KPR and D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam/Page 248)

The 6 auspicious qualities of the Lord are natural to him. (VAS Page 35) and were not acquired by him. So also, he rests on a 6-pointed *Chakra* represented by 6 *aksharas* (D/ST/04A/ Page67/ Seva)

"*Hara-puram*" is that which was burnt down in Krishna's war with Poundra-vaasudevan. (Vide Sri VISHNU PuraaNam 5 and 34 and in *Hari-vamsam Bhavishya Parva* Chapters 92-101)

Some hold that it relates to *Tripura Samhaaram* in which Siva is defeated (vide Sudarsana Satakam Sloka 11 (LSS: VNVD)

It is he who destroyed *Tripuram* (tri-city) by being on tip of the arrow of Siva. People who do not know this fact may be thinking that Siva destroyed *Tripuram* (VAS Page 36)

Sloka 5: danuja vistaara: This SIOka relates to Lord's Lord's noose (Paaskkayiru) (LSS: VNVD)

"*Sva-Vikrama*" Ahirbudnya Samhita (Chapter 50) says that an occasion arose when the Sudarsana Chakra was ranged against the *Devas* themselves! It is a Sub-story relating to one Keertimaalin. He was imparted the *Sudrasana Mahamantra* by a great sage. He then started his depredations all over the worlds and having disposed of all the *Daityas, Daanavas* and others, he directed his attention to the *Devas* themselves. Indra's armies failed completely and even Airavata, the elephant was stunned. "When Indra hurled his Vajra Aayuda, Keertimaalin spread over himself under a canopy containing the Sudarsana Yantra written on it and the Vajra failed! It was absorbed in VishNu Chakra! Peace was then declared and Keertimaalin retired after making friends with Indra and explaining why the Vajra failed. (D/ST/04 B/B page 19 KPR)

Who are we to bind him? He has bound himself in a six-pointed *yantra* for our sake like Krishna's "*kaTTuNna PaNNiya Perumaayan*"

It is because of his *Daya* towards his devotees that he binds himself like this (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam Page 264 VNVD)

Sloka 6. Prati-mukhaa-leeDa: This relates to Lord's Lord's goad (ankusam).

The following alliteration may be noted (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam VNVD)

Kalp = to think, to imagine.

Sankalpa= will, desire. a program and

Kalpaka= a potent fruit –furnishing tree

In *ShODasa Aayuda Stotra*, SVD employs the words "*Aayudai: AayudEswara:*" (D/ST/04A/ Page 69/Seva)

Sloka 7: mahita sampath: This SIOka relates to Lord's Lord's mace (Gadaayuda) (LSS: VNVD)

"ShaDara Chakra pratishTita" He is positioned inside a mystic symbol of a wheel's hexagon made of 2 triangles, one of them inverted over the other with 6 spokes. (D/ST/04 B/B page 23 KPR and D/BO/04 page 48)

With the left foot in front and the right foot at the back and slightly bending forward the Lord aims at his target. This is known as "*Prathyaa leeDa stithi*" (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam Page 263 VNVD)

Sloka 8: bhuvana nEtra: This SIOka relates to Lord's holding a tender flower bud of lotus.

Even such a delicate article like a flower bud can become a weapon in the hands of the Lord! This is deemed as removing the darkness of ignorance that plagues the whole world and make us revolve in the never-ending merry-go-round of births and deaths (D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam Page 268 VNVD)

It may be noted that only after getting "*SamaasrayaNa*" one becomes a "*Vaideeka*" (D/ST/04A/ Page 71/Seva)

Sloka 9: dvi-chatushkam: Though this is a small Stotra, it contains a lot of interesting and significant thought-provoking details (LSS: VNVD)

We have known such numbers as 5, 8 and 16. *Sri Vishnu Sahasranama* sums up saying "*Sarva PraharaNaayuda:*" (D/ST/ PPA/LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam Page 271 VNVD)

When a cart must ride on a rough surface with potholes on an uneven terrain, it is likely to get topsy-turvy. If the wheels are strong and have adequate grip, the danger is averted. Like this if one gets the protection of *Sudrasana-azhwaan*, one will never have to face any danger and cross with ease even a high, inaccessible and intractable path (D/ST/04A/ Page 72/Seva and D/ST/ PPA/ LSS: Laghu Stotra Sthapakam Page 272 VNVN and ASR Page 48)



DST –20. VAIRAAGHYA PANCHAKAM

Introduction

This is not mainly a hymn on devotion to any deity and so strictly speaking, it does not come under the category of a *Stotra*. But there is the fragrance of devotion to Sri Krishna in an indirect way and shows the preference of Sri Desika for a simpler and contented life devoid of pomp and glamour. (ASR Page 49)

Swami Desika had a friend in VidyaraNya of Sri Vidyanagar who was a minister in Vijayanagara kingdom. He came to know of the utter penury of Swami and wanted to help him using his influence with the king. He invited Swami to come to Vijayanagara and accept a lucrative job in the court. Swami declined saying that he was not interested in worldly wealth.

When VidyaraNya insisted, Swami sent a reply in 5 *Slokas* called "*Vairaaghya Panchakam*". (D/ST 11A Srivatsankachariar Page (iii).

{Incidentally, Sri Srivatsankachariar swami indicates that he was born in Rangaraja Veedi of Kancheepuram) (D/ST 11A Srivatsankachariar Page (iv)}

VidyaaraNya showed how Swami Desika is indeed the reincarnation of *MahavishNu* "*VidyaaraNyO vividam VenkaTEswarEr visOdhya vairaaghyam Vishnu avataaram mEnE tam Aagamaanta gurum*" (SEva's Stotra Malar page 115)

The dedicatory verse (*Taniyan*) says that Swami Desika's ornaments are his knowledge (*Jnaana*) and freedom from worldly desires (*Vairaaghya*). This work is ample proof of this fact (JS/07/ Desika Stotra Malar R. Kannan Swami, TirukkuTantai Page117)

It is not necessary for a householder to live by begging alms (*Uncha Vritti*). But it is because of Swami's dislike for worldly desires that he undertook such a practice (D/ST/ PPA 18 VNVD Page 206)

Sloka 1. KshONee kONa sataamsa paalana kalaa durvaara garvaanala: There is no one who can claim to rule over the entire world. May be, one can rule over an infinitesimal fraction of land. But his pride in doing so is immeasurable and he becomes arrogant. (D/ST/I /VNRD Page 296)

When Lord is available to fulfill all our desires, why would we go to petty folks asks Swami. With Ganga near at hand would anyone go after a mirage? (D/ST 11A SVC Page 7)

DEvam Sevitur: When we pray to the Lord, wealth would automatically accrue to us without even asking for it. "*NinnaiyEtaan vENDi neel Selvam vENDaataan tannaiyE taan vENDum selvam pOle*" (D/ST 11A SVC: Srivatsankachariar Page 8)

Swami seems to say, "They may have wealth "*danam*", but I have "*Pulamai*" (Spiritual Knowledge) I cannot barter my knowledge for their wealth" (D/ST/ PPA 18 VNVD Page 207)

Daanaa mushTi muchE: When going to meet a king, Guru, or a deity, one should not go empty handed. "*Rikta hastEna nOPEyaath raajaanam deivatam gurum*" So, KuchEla took a handful of beaten rice to Krishna. **KuchEla went to Krishna not for receiving anything but to give. Having got that, Krishna felt that it would not be proper to send away KuchEla empty-handed too!** (D/ST 11A SVC Page 9)

"*Daanam*" was returned with "*Danam*" (D/ST/ PPA 18 VNVD Page 209)

Sloka 2: Silam khilam analam

Prasruti poorakam saarasam paya: kimu na taarakam:

Swami asks:

- Will not grains that lie scattered in the fields after harvest be enough to satisfy our hunger?
- Will not a palm-full of water from the tank be enough to quench our thirst?
- Will not a piece of torn cloth be enough to cover our private parts?
- Why should we go to such petty folks for these? (DS/T I/ VNRD Page 298)

Prasruti means palmful. (D/ST 11A SVC: Srivatsankachariar Page 12)

Mala-mallakam: Koupeenam. As per *NigaNtu*, it is said to control excreta (D/ST/ PPA 18 VNVD Page 213)

Vibhitaa: It is strange that even great learned men go after these petty folks for a morsel of food (D/ST 11A SVC: Page 14)

Sloka 3: jwalatu

Deep inside the ocean there is mare called *BaDavaa* which spouts fire and consumes all the excess waters that fall into the sea from rivers and springs so that the Ocean does not breach the shores.

People with insatiable appetite are derided as "BaDavaa"! Similarly, deep inside our tummy there is a fire called "*JaaTara-agni*" that causes hunger and thirst in us. (D/ST 11A SVC Srivatsankachariar Page 15)

Fire that encounters firewood eats the firewood itself. (D/ST 11A SVC: Page 28)

Sloka 4: dureeswara

There are 4 claimants for one's wealth. *Dharmam*, fire, ruler, and thief. If wealth is not used for *dharma*, it will be taken away by the other three. (D/ST 11A SVC Page 22)

I will not wait at the pial of such petty folks, says Swami Desika (D/ST/ PPA 18 VNVD Page 219)

Sloka 5: sareera patanaavadhi

Swami who has a distaste for wealth ("danam") uses the word "danam" 11 times in this Sloka. (D/ST/I /VNRD Page 301)

There is no fault of tautology, but it has different meanings when taken with the preceding or succeeding syllable or word. (ASR Page 50)

One can never put more food into one's stomach after the digestive fire has been fully satisfied. If put, one would simply vomit out (D/ST/ PPA 18 VNVD Page 224 **and ASR Page 50**)

Sloka 6: naasti

This is a crisp Sloka which crowns the pentad-hymn. (D/ST/ PPA 18 VNVD Page 228)

*Pitra Aasrjitam danam mE na asti,
uttamam Swaarjitam Vittam,
Madhyamam pituraarjitam,
Adamam Maathru vittam Syaath,*

Stree vittam, adamaadhamam.

- Wealth earned by one is the best.
- Wealth inherited from father is next best.
- Mother's wealth is worse because it belongs to siblings.
- Wife's wealth is the worst.
- I have not earned anything for myself is what **Bhagavaan** has declared.

Yasya Anugraham Icchaami danam tasya haraami –

meaning,

"When I want to bless someone, I take away his wealth". (D/ST 11A SVC Page 45-47)

A father's wealth is shared by all his sons. A grandfather's wealth goes only to the grandson. So, the wealth that *Brahma*, the grandfather has earned and left it at Hastigiri belongs to me. (D/ST 11A SVC Page 51-53)

The word "*pitaamahan*" means both Grandfather and *Brahma* (D/ST/I /VNRD Page 302)

Villivalam Swami observes "Elders used to say that this reveals Swami Desika's knowledge of law" (VAS Page 10)



D/ST – 21. VEGA SETU STOTRAM

Introduction:

The Lord has been given another appellation in Tamil as "*Sonna VaNNam seita Perumaal*" when translated to Sanskrit became "*YathOkta Kaari*" and therefore this hymn is also known as *YathOkta Kaari StOtra* (D/ ST /3A KPR Page 27)

When the Lord was about to lay himself in his original posture, resting his head on the right arm, the *Azhwar* requested him to change the posture and rest on the left arm instead. He did so (D/ ST /3A KPR Page 28) The Lord rolled his serpent-couch and followed the *Azhwar* and his disciple carrying their couches as ordered (D/BO/04 ASR: Page 54)

It looks as though it is an evidence that the Lord was away from the city for one night and came back. The village where *Bhagavaan* and his devotees stayed for one night is now well known by the popular name of "*Ore Irukkai*" ASR - Page 55)

Azhwars named this place as "The Lord is "*YatOkta kaari*" and "*Sonna VaNNam seitha*" in Tamil. As he acted as a dam to contain the force of *VEgavati* river, he is called "*VEgaa-SEtu*" (D/ST I VNVD Page 371, 376-377)

SIOka 1: ekam vEgavatee madhyE

Svayam Vyaktam: appearing by Himself (at *Brahma's* request) (D/ ST /3AKPR: K.P. Rangaswami Page 29)

DrisyatE: The Lord appears. The *Varthamaana Kaala* (present tense) is important (D/ ST /3A KPR Page 29)

Upaaya-phala bhaavEna:

- As *Upaayam* he is in the middle of *VEgavati*.
- As *Phalam* he stands atop (D/ST/3B Seva Page VI)

A doubt may arise whether there are two *Vigrahams* one as *Upaayam* and another as *UpEyam*. It is clarified that both are the same. They are just different forms as indicated in "*Maam Ekam SaraNam Vraja*".

This is not polytheism. It is just as these are of different forms like *Param, Vyooham, Vibhavam* etc. (D/ST/ PPA VNVD Page 105 and 107)

- On the South of *VEgavati*, we have *AaLari*.
- Near *VEgavati* we have *ViLakkoLi*.
- In the middle of *VEgavati* we have *Sonna VaNNam Seida Perumaal*.
- What a combination! ((D/ST/3B Seva Page Viand Seva's Stotra Malar Pge129)

This is the Lord who does as required by his devotees. He is the one who does as he himself has said. (D/ST/3B Seva Page IX)

SIOka 2: eeshTe gamayitum

Kallolan: Waves and billows and surges on the waters. (D/ ST /3A KPR Page 33)

Rama's "*NaLa SEtu*" helped people to cross over to Lanka. But this is "***VishNU SEtu***" (D/ST/ PPA VNVD Page 110)

In the north, Saraswati River became incognito flowing underneath whereas here in the South she is visible to the naked eyes clearly! (JS/07 / Desika Stotra Malar / Page127)

SIOka 3: Jayati

The actual sea can never exhibit a stoppage of the wave-array. We have heard of the parable which speaks of a man who stood at the seashore waiting for the waves to subside for taking his dip. He would never be able to take a bath! Similarly, the waves of sorrow, suffering and the causative sin – that plague our world existence would also never subside. But *YatOKta Kaari* stands as our hope. He will allay the array! (D/ST/ PPA VNVD Page 116)

Sloka 4: vibhaatu

Even the four-faced Brahma could not protect his *Yagjna*. The Lord had to come to his rescue for this purpose.

- In Ramayana, we see the Lord protecting the *Yagjna* of Viswamitra.
- Here he helped Brahma to protect his *yagjna* (D/ST/3B Seva Page 4)

You may think that *Bhagavaan* helped Brahma because Brahma was his son. Swami uses the word "***Pumsaan***" in plural to indicate that as we are also his children he would help us also, provided we surrender to him through *Bhakti or Prapatti* like a teacher conducting a promotion test for a pupil helping him to write the test in the examination hall! (D/ST/ PPA VNVD P. 121)

SIOka 5: chaturaanana

Villivalam Swami observes "If one intent on propitiating *Bhagavaan* does "*Vihita Karmas*" (prescribed duties) the Lord would prevent the advance of *Kalipurusha* in his attempt to destroy such *karmas*" (VAS Page 13)

The peculiar fact here is that he has his head in the South, feet towards the north and facing West towards Kanchi which was the site of the Yagjna. The only other *KshEtra* in which the Lord is similarly positioned is in Kerala as Adikesava. This is also the *Avataara Sthalam* of Sri Poigai Azhwar who appeared from a lake there (D/ ST /3A /KPR Page 36-37)

It is in our minds that the waves bang us with terrific speed more than *VEgavati*. We should pray to the Lord to save us from these waves. (D/ST/3B Seva Page 5, 6)

SIOka 6: sreemaan

Gataa gataani: If we remember the story of *Bhagavaan* going with Azhwar and returning with Azhwar, we get a hope that he would also relieve us of our "going and coming" through births and deaths. (D/ST/ PPA VNVD Page 128)

SIOka 7: prasamita

Unlike the *Rama Sethu* that was built with stones, here the Lord himself became an emerald gem dam and therefore permanent for all time. (D/ST/3B Seva Page 8)

SIOka 8: saraNaanam-upagataam

Swami Desika says that it is because the Lord first helped by transforming himself as a dam and saved *Brahma's Yagjna* from which Kanchi Varadan emerged to grant boons to his devotees, **this Perumaal is the one who enhanced the powers of Varada himself!** (D/ST/I/ VNRD Page 390)

Swami dares to say that the boon-granting power of Lord Varada stands 100-fold enhanced only because of the proximate presence of YatOKta kaari! (D/ST/ PPA VNVD Page 137)

The implication is that had not YatOKta Kaari helped on that crucial day, we would today not have Varadaraja at all! (D/ST/IV/ VNVD/I/ Page 151)

Another important point here is that the right arm being free is positioned in the form of *Abhaya Mudra*. There is also a mention of how the Lord Sri Aravamudan (Sarangapani) at Tirulkkudandai (Kumbakonam) was also in *Sayana* pose when the Azhwar requested him by the words "*kiDantavaaru ezhundu irundu pEsu*" (Rise up and speak even in the pose you are now in a prone form). This the Lord immediately did! The shocked Azhwar then exclaimed and the Lord stood frozen in the form of being half-seated and half-prone *Uttaana Sayanam* (D/S/3 KPR P.44)

SIOka 9: kaanchee bhaaghyam

"KOpi KaaruNya Raasi": is a significant use. It means that this mercy is unique and one of its kind that cannot be compared with any other. (D/ST/ PPA VNVD Page141)

This is a beautiful *Dhyaana Sloka* of *YatOKta kaari* (D/ST/3B Seva Page 10)

SIOka 10: VEgaasetOr idam

The specialty of this Stotra is that the Lord will do whatever one reciting this Stotra desires. (D/ST/3B Seva Page 11)



D/ST – 22. Inbattil Irainjutallil

(Anbil Ramaswamy)

"Remarkable Remarks" on Desika StOtras highlighted by Conventional and Contemporary Commentators" for a better understanding these works of Swami Desika hitherto not widely known and which, therefore, are likely to escape our attention. The purpose of this series is to bring out such commentaries to enable us to fully comprehend and appreciate the nuances that usually go unnoticed.

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"Inbattil Irainjutalil" explanation with reference to Madura kavi Azhwar's slokam

SWAMI DESIKAN'S TAMIL VERSE "INBATTIL..." - AS AN EXPLANATION OF MADHURAKAVI ALWAR'S "KANNINUN SIRUTHAAMBU" PRABANDHAM

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Of the two Tamil verses in his Guru Parampara Saaram of the Rahasya Traya Saaram dedicated to Alwars, Swami Sri Vedanta Desika grouped together all other Alwars (including Nammalwar!) in one verse and dedicated the whole of the 2nd verse exclusively to Madhurakavi Alwar whom he calls as "Thunbatra Madhurakavi" (Blemishless)

This obviously shows how he considered Acharya Bhakti to be of utmost importance as exemplified by Madhura Kavi Alwar who composed paeans of praise of the Prapanna Jana koodasthar, Nammalwar (who is known as "Vedam Tamizh Seitha Maaran")

It is the "Sishta Aachaaram" of the devout Srivaishnavas customarily to study this Prabandham first before commencing the study of Tiruvoimozhi, because it was Madhurakavi Alwar, the first Sishya of Satakopan. who introduced us into the great Tamizh Vedam of Nammalwar.

Swami Desika's Pasuram runs as follows:

**"Inbathil - Irainjuthalil - Isaiyum Petril
Igazhaatha Palluravil - Iraagam maatril
Than Patril - Vinai Vilakkil - Thagavokkathil
Tattuvathai Unarthuthathil - Thanmaiyaakkil
Anbarke Avatharikkum Maayan Nirka
Arumaraigal Tamizh Seithaan Thaale Kondu
Thunbatra Madhuravi Thonrak Kaattum
Thol Vazhiye Nalvazhigal Thunivaarkatke"**

(meaning)

' To those who venture to attain release from the bondage of Samsara, the ancient path indicated to us by the spotless Madhurakavi by his own example is the only safe path because while there is Sri Krishna, the great cowherd, who incarnated solely for the sake of his devotees - to confer bliss on them, - to be their refuge, - to be their final goal, - to stand in relation to them as mother, father, brother and so on, - to change their desire for the pleasures of the world - into a desire for Himself, - to remove all their sins, - to show them infinite compassion, - to reveal the truth and so also - to bring about in them a likeness to Himself---while there is Sri Krishna ever ready to do all this, he sought only the feet of the

Sage Satakopa (Nammalwar) who rendered in Tamil the truths contained in the Vedas which are otherwise hard to understand".

(Vide the English translation of Srimad Rahasya Traya Saaram by Sri M.R.Rajagopala Ayyangar)

In fact, Madhurakavi Alwar makes only a passing reference to Sri Krishna in the first line of his work saying "Kanninun Siruthaambinaal Kattunnap Panniya Peru Maayan". This is just because his own Acharya was reputed to be the very personification of the thirst for Sri Krishna (Krishna Thrishnaa Tattvamiva Udhitham). Out of respect for his Acharya, he had to make at least this casual reference to Sri Krishna. It will be seen that from the very next line, he leaves aside Sri Krishna and switches over to describe the glories of Nammalwar.

Let us see how the Swami Desika's verse relates to the various aspects enshrined in "Kanninun Siru Thaambhu". Swami Desika's verse lists the following 10 benefits which Lord Krishna is said to confer but which were obtainable not necessarily through Bhagavad Bhakti but through sheer Acharya Bhakti itself.

(1) INBATHIL - IN CONFERRING BLISS

**kaNNi nuNsiRuth thaampinaal kattuNNap
paNNi yaperu maayan,en Nnappanil,
naNNith then_kuru koorn^ampi yenRakkaal,
aNNik kum_amu thooRum en naavukke. (1)**

(meaning)

The Lord wonderfully submitted himself to tied by means of the tiny knotted but short and hurtful string. He may be my master but leave him alone; Come, Recite the holy names of Nambi of the Southern Tirukkurugoor. The very utterance of his names taste like the nectar to the tongue that utters them.

Kanni=Knots. Annikkum= Sweet Tasting

(2) IRAINJUTHALIL - IN BEING THE REFUGE

**naavi Nnaaln^aviR Rinpa meythinEn,
mEvi NnEn avan ponnadi meymmaiE,
thEvu maRRaRi yEn_kuru koorn^ampi,
paavi Nninnisai paadith thirivanE. (2)**

(meaning)

"I enjoyed praising the Alwar by my tongue; Truly did I attain the proximate contact with Alwar's golden feet; I do not know any God other than the Alwar; I still spend my time singing the mellifluous songs of the Alwar". Here, Madhurakavi explains how he has dedicated himself absolutely to Nammalwar in thought, word and deed.

(3) ISAIYUM PETRIL - IN BEING THE FINAL GOAL

**thirithan^ thaakilum thEva piraanudai,
kariya kOlath thiruvuruk kaaNpann^aan,
periya vaNkuru koorn^akar nampikkaal
uriya Nnaay,adi yEn peRRa nanmaiE. (3)**

(meaning)

" I see only through the Alwar the divine azure blue form of the Lord of Nityasuris. The greatest blessing of life I have achieved is the opportunity to serve the great and merciful Alwar"

(4) IGAZHAATHA PALLURAVIL - STANDING AS MY SARVA VIDHA BANDHU

**nanmai yaalmikka naanmaRai yaaLar_kaL,
punmai yaakak karuthuva raathalin,
annai yaayaththa Nnaayennai yaaNdidum
thanmai yaan,sada kOpanen nampiyE. (4)**

(meaning)

"When I had been ignored as worthless by the great scholars renowned for their knowledge of the Vedas and conduct - it was Satakopa who gave me refuge and offered affectionate parental care as father and mother. Indeed, he is my master"

What is the Uravu that is blemisless (Igazhaada) Uravu?

We should learn this from King Dileepan who said the same thing.

He promised to his subjects who might have lost their near and dear ones not to grieve because he would stand in their place and offer solace, except for one relationship. While all other relationships may be harmless, the one that would be blemish full will be that of a widow who had lost her husband!

Also, this shows how Swami Desika had inbuilt in both "Aanukoolya Sankalpam" and "Praatikoola varjanam" or putting it differently as "Pravritti Dharmam" and "Nivritti Dharmam" in this single Paasuram"

(5) IRAAGAM MAATRIL - IN CHANGING MY DESIRES FOR EARTHLY PLEASURES

**nampi NnEnpiRar nanporuL thannaiyum,
nampi NnEnmada vaaraiyum munnellaam,
sempon maadath thirukkuru koorn^ampik
kanpa Nnaay,adi yEnsathirth thEninRE. (5)**

(meaning)

" Before the Alwar Chastened me, I used to desire whatever others possessed, desired to enjoy their womenfolk. But, now, I am fortunate to get rid of all these evil desires and be a Bhakta of the great master of Tirukkurugoor, the city with numerous golden ramparts"
Nambinen = desired

(6) THAN PATRIL - IN MAKING ME DESIRE HIM ONLY

**inRu thottum ezhumaiyum empiraan,
ninRu thanpuka zhEththa varuLinaan,
kunRa maadath thirukku koorn^ampi,
enRu mennai yikazhvilan kaaNminE. (6)**

(meaning)

" My master, the Alwar has showed his grace on me so that from today onwards and for the rest of my life, I shall resolutely praise the glorious qualities of the Alwar. This Alwar who is the lord of the elevated mansions of Tirukkurugoor will never forsake me. You can see it for yourself "

ezhumai = lifetime KaaNminE = See for yourself

(7) VINAI VILAKKIL - IN REMOVING ALL MY SINS

**kaNdu koNdennaik kaarimaa Rappiraan,
paNdai valvinai paaRRi yarulinaan,
eNdi saiYu maRiya iyampukEn,
oNda mizhchhada kOpa NnaruLaiyE. (7)**

(meaning)

" The illustrious and merciful son of Porkaariyaar, Nammalwar has extinguished by his graceful glance all my sins committed by me from beginningless time. I will. Therefore, gratefully publicize his mercy to all those who live in all the eight directions"

(8) THAGAVOKKATHIL - IN SHOWERING INFINITE COMPASSION

**aruLkoN daadu madiyava rinpuRa,
aruLi Nnaanav varumaRai yinporuL,
aruLkoN daayira min_thamizh paadinaan,
aruLkaN deer iv vulakinil mikkathE. (8)**

(meaning)

" There is only one wonderful thing in this world; the thousand and odd Tiruvoimozhi in Tamil composed by the Alwar bringing out the esoteric meanings contained in the Vedas - a work he published out of his infinite and incomparable compassion for the pleasure and enjoyment of the true devotees of the Lord"

(9) TATTUVATHAI UNARTHUTHATHIL - IN REVEALING THE ETERNAL TRUTHS

**mikka vEthiyar vEthaththi NnutporuL
niRkap paadiy en nenchuL niRuththinaan,
thakka seerchhada kOpanen nampikku,aat
pukka kaatha ladimaip payananRE? (9)**

(meaning)

" The Alwar firmly established in my heart the esoteric meaning of the Vedas (recited by great orthodox Aasthikaas) through hi Tiruvoimozhi. The Alwar is the seat of all auspicious qualities. My only desire is to serve at the holy feet of the Alwar"

(10) THANMAIYAAKKIL - IN BRINGING ABOUT A LIKENESS OF HIMSELF

**payanan Raakilum paankala raakilum
seyaln^an Raakath thiruththip paNikoLvaan,
kuyiln^in Raarpozhil soozhkuru koorn^ampi,
muyalkin RENunRan moykazhaR kanbaiyE. (10)**

(meaning)

" Though he gains nothing by reforming others, though they are not fit enough to be reformed, the Alwar who lives in a grove filled with the sweet music of the cuckoos in Tirukkurugoor, endeavors to correct them in the service of the Lord. Oh! Alwar! I am also trying my very best to be worthy of your holy feet"

(11) PHALA SRUTHI- THE FRUIT OF RECITING 'KANNI NUNN SIRUTHAAMBHU

**anban thannai yadainthavar katkellaam
anban, then_kuru koorn^akar nampikku,
anba Nnaaymathu rakavi sonnasol
nambu vaarpathi, vaikundham kaaNminE. (11)**

(meaning)

"Oh! You who seek refuge in this Prabandham of the sweet poet (Madhura =Sweet; Kavi = Poet) who is himself a devotee of Nammalwar, the one who invoked Bhakti in the hearts of men for Bhagavaan and Bhaagavataas - You are assured a place in Paramapadam"

sri madhukaviyaazhvaar Thiruvadigale SaraNam



◆ திருக்கோனார்-திருநெல்வேலி
புரீ மதுரகவியாழ்வார்



கவிதார்க்கிக சிம்ஹம் கவிலோக திவாகரர்