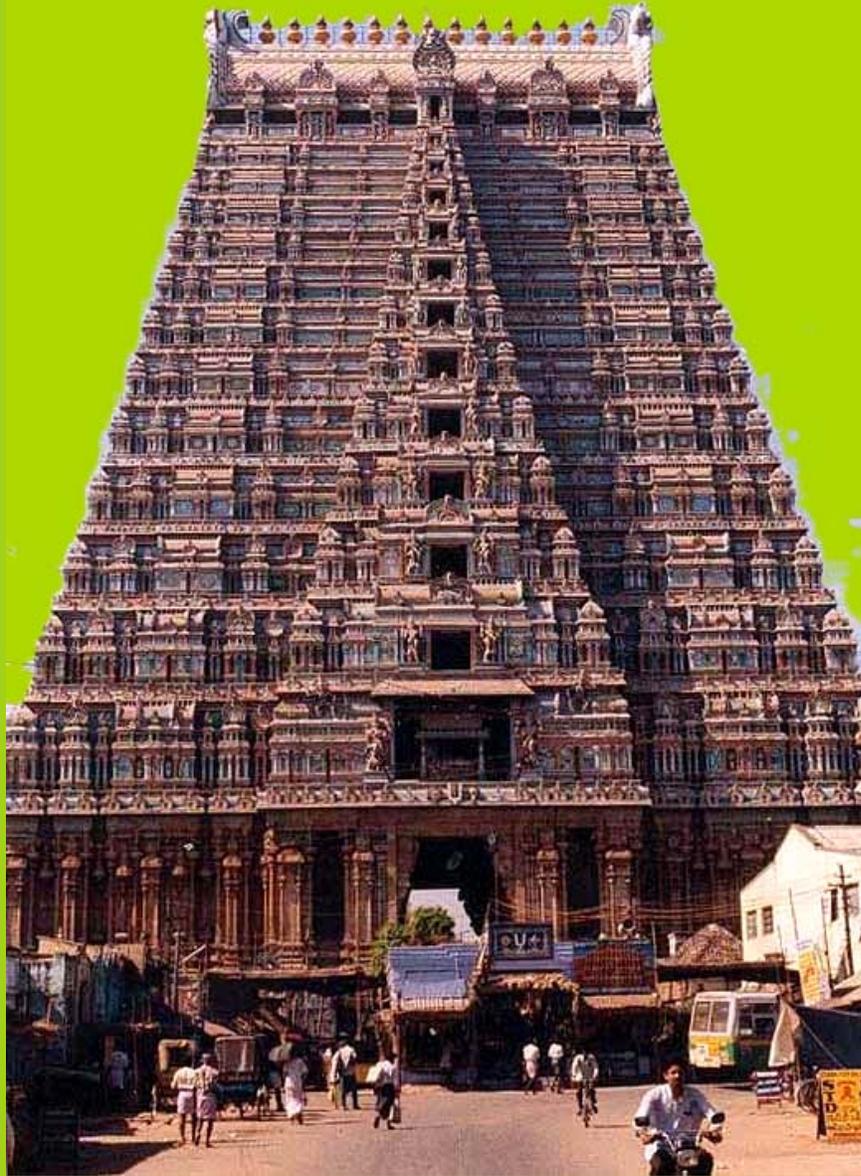


SWAMY DESIKAN'S
ABHEETHI STHAVAM



ANNOTATED COMMENTARY IN ENGLISH BY:

OPPILIAPPAN KOIL

SRI VARADACHARI SATHAKOPAN



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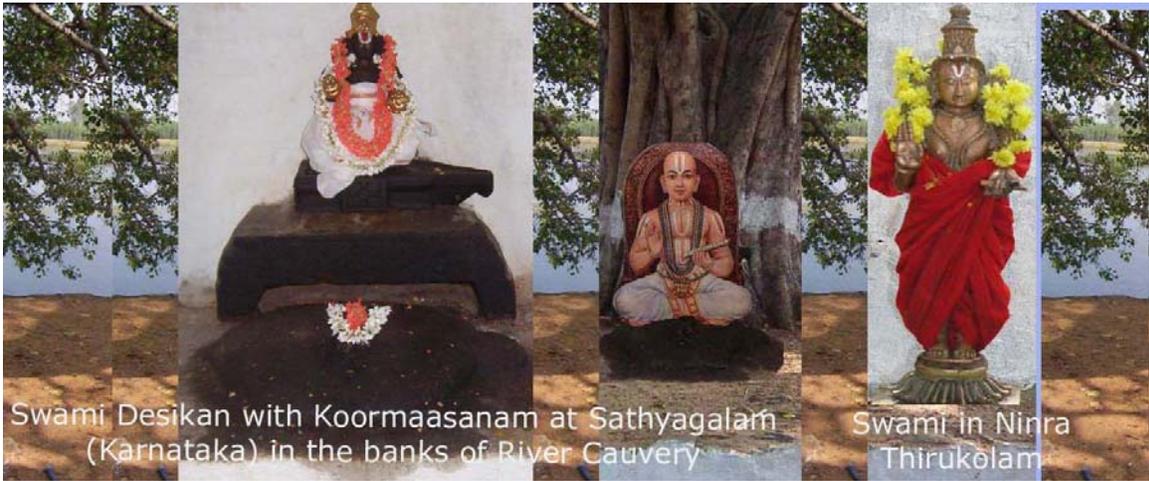
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Swami Desikan with Koormaasanam at Sathyagalam (Karnataka) in the banks of River Cauvery

Swami in Ninra Thirukolam





॥ श्रीः ॥

अभीतिस्तवः

ABHEETHI STAVAM

On this Birth day of Thirumazhisai Azhwar, I wish to share some thoughts on Abheethi Sthavam and the circumstances under which it was composed by Swami Desikan. Recent postings covered the events associated with the creation of Abheethi Stavam by Swami Desikan. I wish to add a few more information points on that topic from a different perspective. As a reference time frame, Swami Desikan's period on this earth is 1268 to 1369 AD. He lived the proverbial 100 plus Veda Praayam. He witnessed many historical events and contributed enormously to the sustenance and growth of Sri Bhagavad Ramanuja Siddhantham. One of the most important events in his life crowned with accomplishments as a "VEDANTHAACHARYA" a name given to him by Sri Ranganatha and as "Sarvatantra Swatantrar", a title bestowed on him by Sri Ranganayaki is connected with Muslim Invasion of Srirangam and the creation of Abheethi Stavam.

Muslim Invasions: The first of the invasions took place in the year 1311, when Swami was 43 years old. It was headed by Malik Kafur, who was a general in Allaudin Khilji's court. He was a converted Hindu from Gujarat and had fierce ambitions to please his master. He was feared widely. He hit hard, plundered and went back with his loot. The fear created by him lasted.

Another invasion by Ulugh Khan followed during 1323 Ad, when our Acharya was 55 Years old. He was by that time, one of the most revered Vaishnava Acharyas. He had composed many granthams at the command of Sri Ramanuja, who appeared in his dream. He was deeply absorbed in the Kaimkaryam of the Divya Dampathis and Ubhaya Vedantha Kalakshepam to advance the glorious tenets of Ramanuja.

A disturbing incident happened that had influence on his choice of Sathyamangalam as a place where he stayed during the invasion by Ulugh Khan. The background is as follows:

A learned scholar by the name of Kanthaadai Lakshmanaacchaar committed Apachara to the Swami and fell ill. It made Swami very unhappy. Few days later, Kanthaadai sincerely regretted his trespass and sought Swami's pardon. He became cured and he ingested Swami's Sri Paada Theertham and was blessed with a child. The father named



'Moving to Sathyagalam'





the child Theertha Pillai in view of the blessings caused by the Sree Paada Theertham of Swami Desikan. Our Acharya was disturbed by these events and decided to go away from Srirangam for awhile and traveled to Satyamangalam with his family and disciples and continued his Pravachanam and worship of the Divya Dampathis from a distance. After few months, he could not stay away from the Srirangam Divya dampathis and he returned to Srirangam. This was his introduction to Satyamangalam, which will again host him during the time of the second Muslim Invasion.



KAlakshEpm at Sathyagalum

The second invasion news spread as Ulug Khan torched his way south towards Srirangam. The residents of Srirangam including Swami Desikan and Sudarsana Bhattar worried about the calamities that could ensue. Sudarsana Bhattar was the author of Srutha Prakasika, the commentary on Sri Bhashyam following strictly the Sri Bhashyam of Ramanuja as preserved by his disciples. Sudarsana Bhattar had two young sons. He was also the chief priest at Srirangam temple. Both the Bhattar and the key people involved with the temple wanted to move the Archa Murthys of Srirangam away and sit out the invasion at a safe distance. They raised a stone wall to hide the Moolavar and transported Sri Ranganatha and

Sri Ranganayaki in special boxes and left at the middle of night. With difficult travel, they reached Thirumalai and conducted the daily Aradhanam for the Divine couple there without attracting too much attention. Swami Desikan could not stay behind, once The Divya Dampathis had left Srirangam. He joined Sudarsana Bhattar in Thiruppathi hills. There Sudarsana Bhattar pleaded with Swami Desikan to protect Srutha Prakasikai and his two sons and stay somewhere deep beyond reach of the Muslim invaders, who might track down those, who removed Sri Ranganatha from Srirangam. Out of his great affection for Sri Bhashyam, Swami agreed and left for the peace and quiet of Satyamangalam, where he was welcomed earlier by the residents with great affection. He gave pravachanams on Srutha Prakasika raised the two sons of the Bhattar as his own. He left from Satyamangalam for Thirunarayanapuram to offer his worship to Sri Ramanuja and Selva Pillai. There he composed Yatiraja Sapthathi; there he also suffered from the separation from Sri Ranganatha and composed Abheethi Stavam in the stavam style of Kuresa, the author of five stavams. He recited many times his stavam on Ranganatha and peace returned to Srirangam as a result of the victory of Chenji king Koppaanaayan. The Chenji king went to Thirupathi and brought Sri Ranganatha back to Srirangam after a brief sojourn at Chenji.

Swami Desikan heard about the good news and returned to Srirangam and regained his mental peace through reunion with the Dhivya Dampathis. He started the Margazhi Adhyayana Utsavam, which had been halted during the turbulent period of invasion and defeated the arguments of those, who objected to the celebration of the works of Azhwaars, who were born in different Varnaas. Through his victory in the debates, Swamy established





the holiness of the works of Azhwaars as divine works that have a status similar to the Arya Vedams. Sri Ranganatha like Sri Varadaraja before was pleased with Swami's defense and instructed that the invocatory verse "Ramanuja Dayaapathram---" be recited first by Prabhandha Ghoshtis at the beginning of their recitations of Divya Prabhandham. This Invocatory verse was composed by Brahma Tantra Swatantra Swamy (BTST), a key disciple of Swami and was the founder of the Parakala Matam, where Hayagreevan is the Araadhana Murthy. BTST had composed it during the occasion of his Acharya's pravachanam on Aaraayirappati, which later was released as Nigama Parimalam by the Acharya. There Swami Desikan covered the Vedic similarity of Azhwaar's work and showed the roots of the Azhwaar's aruLiccheyalkaL as originating from Veda Samhitas and Upanishads. That invocatory work was the one chosen by Sri Ranganatha to honor the service of Swami Desikan. Ramanuja Dayaapathram was composed in Satyamangalam (present day Sathyagalam), a place linked with Acharya's stay during the invasion of Srirangam.

SHLOKAS AND COMMENTARY

श्रीमान् वेङ्कटनाथार्यः कवितार्किक केसरी ।

वेदान्ताचार्यवर्यो मे सन्निधत्तां सदा हृदि ॥

shrImaan.h ve~NkaTa naathaaryaH kavitaarkika kesarI.

vedaantaachaaryavaryo me sannidhattaaM sadaa hR^idi.

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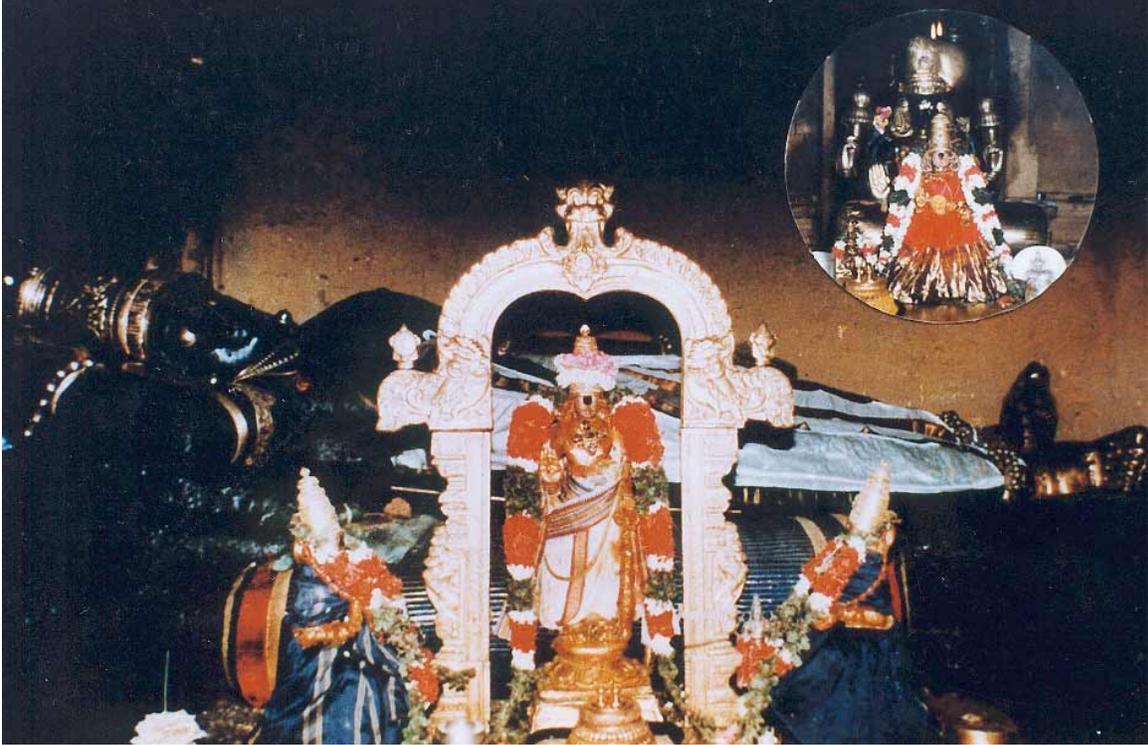
SLOKAM 1

अभीतिरिह यज्जुषां यत् अवधीरितानां भयं
 भयाभय विधायिनो जगति यन्निदेशे स्थिताः ।
 तदेतदतिलङ्घित द्रुहिण शम्भु शक्रादिकं
 रमासखम् अधीमहे किमपि रङ्गधुर्यं महः ॥ १ ॥

abheethir-ihā yajjushAm yath avadheerithanAm bhayam
 bhayAbhaya vidhAyinO jagathy yannidhEsE sTithA:
 tath yEthath athilangitha dhruhiNa Sambhu SakrAdhikam
 RamAsakham adheemahE kimapi Rangadhuryam maha:

(MEANING):

At the dhivya dEsam of Srirangam, the Supreme jyOthi with the name of Sri RanganAthan descended from Sri Vaikuntam with His divine consort and appears before us. This Supreme JyOthi carries out the activities of creation, protection and dissolution with the sheer power of



'Supreme Jyothi'



its sankalpam. When one approaches this JyOthi- svaroopam Sri Ranganathan with devotion, all the fears arising from the bonds of Samsaram will be destroyed. This Lord of Srirangam will create fear in those discarded by Him. For such unfortunate ones, the Samsara Bhayam will persist. Those chEtanams who cause fear for the people or remove the fear of the people are the servants of the Lord of Srirangam and execute His orders. This Lord of Srirangam is the Supreme Being (Para Devathai) over Brahma, Sivan and Indhran. May we meditate on this Lord of Srirangam with such Vaibhavam along with His DEvi!

SPECIAL COMMENTS ON THE WORDS OF THE SLOKAM:

The key words in this slokam are:

“**Ramaa-sakham Rangadhuryam yEthath kimapi Maha: adheemahE**”

Swamy Desikan says that there is a wondrous, indescribable JyOthi / Tejas (**Kimapi Yethath Maha:**) at Srirangam that appears before us with Sri RanganAyaki. We reflect on that Jyothi and bow before that Supreme effulgence.

This supreme JyOthi is seen with Periya PirAtti (**Ramaa-sakham**) and is the Lord of Srirangam (**Ranga dhuryam**). We meditate on this Supreme JyOthi (**yEthath Maha: adheemahE**) accompanied by Sri RanganAyaki (**Ramaa-sakham yEthath Maha:**) with its abode at Srirangam (**Rangadhuryam yEthath Maha: adheemahE**).

This Supreme JyOthi (**Svayam-PrakAsa ParamjyOthi**) creates freedom from fear of any kind for those in this world (**iha lOkE**), who seek its protection (**iha yath jushAm abheethi:**).

The JyOthir Brahma Tatthvam celebrated in ChAndOgya Upanishad and interpreted by AchArya RaamAnujA in Sri BhAshyam is referred to here as “**Kimapi Maha:**”. Mundaka Upanishad identifies this JyOthi as the shining One, everything shines after; by this JyOthi all jyOthis are illumined.

The same Supreme JyOthi creates bhayam in those, who are discarded by it (**Yath avadheerithAnAm bhayam**).

Those chEtanams, which cause fear and remove fear (**bhaya-abhaya vidhAyina:**) in this world (Jagathy) are under the control of that Supreme JyOthi (**yath nidhEsE sTithA:**).

That Supreme JyOthi at Srirangam surpasses the Vaibhavam of Brahma, Sivan and Indhran et al (**Tath athilangitha dhruhiNa- Sambhu- SakrAdhikam**). It is the Para Devathai, whose vaibhavam is not equaled or exceeded by any other Devathai.

We meditate on such a Supreme JyOthi with Its PirAtti at Srirangam and are blessed with abheethi / abhayam.

A. COMMENTS FROM GAARGYA SRI VENKATACCHAR SWAMY ON THE FIRST SLOKAM OF ABHEETHI STHAVAM:

1. Abheethi here refers to Samsara Nivrutthi (Banishment of the fears arising from being



whirled about in the ocean of SamsAram).

2. “Tath yEthath kimapi Rangadhuryam maha: adheemahE” is the key message of the first sLOkam. “That” is the Brahman experienced only through VedAnthavichAram. This can not be seen by Maamsa Chakshus (physical eyes of ours). yEthath however is the Lord in Archa form that could be seen by the human eyes here at Srirangam. This Archa Moorthy is equivalent to Para Brahman (Para VaasudEvan not seen while we are embodied; it is experienced by Muktha Jeevans and Nithya Sooris).

3. Sri VenkatAcchAr Swamy opines that the first half of this sLOkam is about the first two chapters of Brahma Soothrams (BRS) and the second half is about the third and the fourth Chapters of the Saareeraka Saasthram (BRS).

B. COMMENTS FROM SRI RANGANATHACCHAR SWAMY ON KEY WORDS & PASSAGES:

1. For those, who have taken refuge in Sri RanganAtha, there will be no fears in this and the other world. For those, who discard Him, there will be all kinds of fears in all IOkams. For AasrithAs, He is Aasritha Soulabhyan (ease of access) and for those Prathikoolars that display enmity to Him, He is dhurjayan (invincible).

2. “Ramaa sakhm”: The Supreme One, who is always found in the company of Maha Lakshmi (Sri Ranga Naayaki) and Her darling is the direct meaning. The subtle meaning is the yEkasEshithvam based on one definition of the word, “Sakhaa”. SamayOrEva sakhyam. She is equal to Him from the Bruhathva, (Jagath) KaaraNathva and Iswarathvam aspects. Therefore the Maha tEjas (vilakshaNa tEjas: tath yEthath kimapi Maha:) at Srirangam is the “Ramaa Sakhm”. Rangadhuryam Maha: is the tEjas recognized as Sri RanganAthan. He is Sadhaa Sannihithan (always near to us in the Archa form at Srirangam).

3. “yEthath Maha: adheemahE”: we perform meditation (anusandhAnam, adhyayanam) of this great Svayam JyOthi.

C. COMMENTS FROM SRI ANBIL GOPALACCHAR SWAMY ON THE FIRST SLOKAM:

1. The prayer in this sthOthram is for abhaya siddhi from Sri Ranganathan by making Him Jushtan (pleased).

2. “Kimapi Maha:”: Kimapi here stands for apramEya tEjas (maha:). This Ranga tEjas is PraNava tEjas and is fitting for anusandhAnam (hence adheemahE).

3. “Ranga dhuryam” means Sri RanganAthan, who is the bearer of the RakshaNa bharam of Sriranga Leela VibhUthi at one level. “dhurya” sabdham also means Asvam (Hayagreevan, the UpAsanaa Moorthy of Swamy Desikan). Hence it has been suggested that the resplendent JyOthi at Srirangam (Rangadhuryam maha:) also refers to the HayagrIva tEjas that appeared before Swamy Desikan on top of the OushadhAdhri at Thiruvaheendhrapuram.



SLOKAM 2

दया शिशिरिताशया मनसि मे सदा जागृयुः
श्रियाऽध्युषित वक्षसः श्रित मरुद्वृधा सैकताः ।
जगद्दुरित घस्मरा जलधि डिम्भ डम्भ स्पृशः
सकृत् प्रणत रक्षण प्रथित संविदः संविदः ॥ २ ॥

dayA SiSirthAsayaa: manasi mE sadhA jAgru:

SriyAadhyushitha vakshasa: Sritha maruddhvrudhA saikathA:

jagath dhuritha gasmarA: jaladhi Dhimbha Dambha sphrusa:

sakruth praNatha rakshaNa praTitha samvidha: samvidha:

(MEANING):

Lord RanganAtha, the Param JyOthi at Srirangam (Rangadhuryam yEthath maha:) is residing on the shoals of sand of the island between the Cauvery and Coleron rivers. Sri Devi has her abode on His chest forever to ensure that Her Lord's Dayaa never diminishes. Her heart is filled with cool compassion for the janthus. Her Lord's mind is hence filled with the dayaa for the suffering SamsAris weighed down by their huge assembly of sins. He is determined to chase away the sins of these people. His blessings can be realized through the mere meditation on the soundharyam of His divine body (SubhAsrya ThirumEni). He has asAdharaNa (uncommon) dhivya soundharyam, beautiful hue and majesty. The combination of His divine beauty, dark blue color and raaja gambheeram makes us wonder whether He appeared as the ArchA Moorthy first on this earth from Brahma IOkam; later during His vibhava avathAram as Lord Raamachandra, He declared before the whole world at the sea shore that He will never abandon anyone, who sought His protection even once. He has stated there that it was His vratham to protect those, who sought the refuge of His lotus feet. May the



'Rajagopuram'





various appearances of Lord RanganAthA's divine ThirumEni reside permanently in my (Swamy Desikan's) mind! This is the prayer of Swamy Desikan from his distant post at Sathyagalam in Karnataka longing for the sEvA of Lord RanganAtha and restoration of the nithyArAdhanams at Srirangam and for the quenching of the fears of the devotees of Sri RanganAtha caused by the ruthless Muslim invaders.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SECOND SLOKAM

In the first sIOkam Swamy Desikan stated that he reflects on and prostrates before the MahA tEjas united with Sri RanganAyaki at Srirangam (Ramaa Sakham Ranga dhuryam yEthatth kimapi Maha: adheemahE). Swamy Desikan described further that this MahA tEjas (oLip-pizhampu) generates fearlessness for those, who have sought its protection (yath jushAm abheethi:) and causes fear in those who discard it (yath avadheerithAnAm bhayam).

This thought on the dual effect of the tEjas of the Lord is similar to that expressed by Swamy KurEsar in the 56th sIOkam of His Sri Vaikunta Sthavam: "nithyAnukoolam anukoolanruNAm, parEshAm udhvEjanamcha Tava tEja udhAharanthy". For those, who are His devotees, His tEjas is eternally relishable (niranthara bhOgyam). For those who turn their face away from His rakshaNam (Aasraya parAngmukhAls), that tEjas will be fearsome (ugram) and would be like the intensely scorching Sun during the time of praLayam.

In the second sIOkam, Swamy Desikan prays for the boon of this tEja (Maha:) with MahA Lakshmi on its chest in all its forms take a permanent seat in his heart lotus (SriyA adhyushitha vakshasa: samvidha: mE manasi sadhA jaagruyu:). Swamy Desikan points out that the Sri Devi seated on the Lord's chest has a cool heart filled with intensive compassion for Her erring children (Dayaa sisiritha Aasayaa SriyA).

The Lord of SrI DEvi/Sri RanganAyaki has His home on the shoals of sand found in the island of Srirangam (Sritha maruddhvrudha saikathA:). He is the mighty One, who destroys the sins of the people of this world (Jagath dhuritha ghasmaran). He quelled the pride of the haughty king of the Oceans at ThiruppullANi (Jaladhi Dimbha Dambha sphurusa:).He has made a vow before the people of the world that He will never abandon any one, who has sought His protection even once (sagruth praNatha rakshaNa praTitha samvidha:).

Swamy Desikan revokes before his mind's eyes all these forms (samvidha:) of the Lord of Srirangam and prays for the eternal residence of these various forms stay etched in his mind (samvidha: mE manasi sadhA jAgruyu:).

In this moving prayer to Lord RanganAthA from ThirunArAyaNapuram, Swamy Desikan appealed for the removal of fear from the unsettling invasion of Srirangam by Muslim invaders and the return of normalcy to continue with the nithyArAdhanam for the Lord. Swamy Desikan used PruTvee metre here since PruTvee (BhUmi Devi) is known for Her forbearance against offenses committed by all. She is saluted as Sarvam SahA. Patiently, she clears the problems.





‘GuNadhisai paadham neetti- Eastern Gopuram’

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A. GAARGYA VENKATĀCCHAR SWAMY'S ANUBHAVAM

The second sLOkam is in the form of Dhvaya arthAnusandhAnam (elaboration of the deep meanings of Dhvaya manthram as seen from the words chosen by Swamy Desikan):

1. “**Jagaddhuritha gasmaraa**”: Vaathsalyam through the act of swallowing (annihilating) all paapams of the prapannAs.
2. “**Sritha maruthvrudhaa saikathaa**”: These words refer to Souseelya-SoulabyAdhi guNams of the Lord, who leaves the difficult to access world of Sri Vaikuntam by SamsAris and takes permanent residence (sTira vaasam) on the sandy banks of dhivya saras of Cauvery.
3. “**Dayaa SiSiritha Aasayaa**”: This refers to the Dayaa guNam as indicated by His heart being a cool fountain of dayaa. He has SeethaLa hrudhayam because of His dayaa savroopam although His heart should be boiling over the unceasing trespasses of His Saasthrams by the samsAris.
4. “**Samvidha**”: This word refers to His Jn~Ana sakthi et al.
5. “**JaladhiDimbha Dambha sprusa**”: This word touches upon the dhivya MangaLa svaroopam of the Lord. He is like a beautiful Samudhra Sisu (Beautiful blue tEjas).
6. “**Sakruth PraNatha rakshaNa praTitha**”: This refers to the SaraNAgathy anushtAnam.
7. “**Sadhaa jaagru**”: This refers to the niyamanam of the Lord to us to repeat His dhvaya manthram and His firm assurance to lead us to His Supreme abode at the appropriate time.



SLOKAM 3

यदद्यमित बुद्धिना बहुळमोह भाजामया
गुण ग्रथित काय वाङ्मनस वृत्ति वैचित्र्यतः
अतर्कित हिताहित क्रम विशेषम् आरभ्यते
तदप्युचितम् अर्चनं परिगृहाण रङ्गेश्वर ॥ ३ ॥

Yadhadhya mitha-BuddhinA BahuLa-mOha-bhAjA mayA
guNa graTitha kaaya vaangh manasa vrutthi vaichithryAtha:
atarkitha hithAjitha krama visEshamArabhyathE
tadhabhyuchitham archanam parigruhANa RangEswara!

WORD BY WORD MEANING:

RangEswara = Oh Lord of Srirangam!

Mitha BuddhinA = with the limited intellect of mine

BahuLa mOha bhAjA mayA = (and) with the huge amount of ignorance (aj~nAnam)



‘Gopura Vimana view’



possessed by adiyEn

guNa graTitha Kaaya-Vaang-manasa vrutthi vaichithrayatha: = (this worship is being done by) my body, speech and mind controlled by the many interplays of the three guNams.

Yath adhya atarkika hitha ahitha krama visEsaham aarabhyathE = This worship of mine full of blemishes commenced without much thought to the unique auspiciousness or otherwise of such AarAdhAanam of You, my Lord.

Tadhapi uchitham archanam parigruhANa = (even this imperfect AarAdhanam) please accept as appropriate and well meant.

(EXTENDED MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvarangam! adiyEn is of limited intellect. AdiyEn's lack of discriminative knowledge and nescience clouds my vision and causes problems in comprehending correctly Your MahA Tatthvams, VibhUthis and anantha kalyANa guNams. AdiyEn's body, mind and speech are pulled here and there by the three guNams of Prakruthi (Sathva-Rajas and Tamas) and commit me to perform many undesirable acts most of the time and some desirable. One such desirable act is the engagement in saluting you thru this eulogy. Even in this effort moderated by the three guNams, adiyEn does not have the vivEkam to know that acts like this are commendable and that other acts like engagement in material sukham are to be avoided. AdiyEn has not commenced this sthuthi about you with that kind of clarity of mind. Even with all these deficiencies, Oh Ranga PrabhO, Please display Your Sahaja KaruNyam and accept even this offering (ArAdhanam) with dhOshams as adiyEn's ThiruvArAdhanam for you and accept it.

INSIGHTS FROM ADDITIONAL COMMENTARIES:

1. **“adhya”:** NOW, it is the time of when my mind is agitated by the aggressive invasions by the Muslims of Your RaajadhAni; my mind is also attracted to vishaya sukham even in these terrible times. NOW, adiyEn is incapable of performing the required archanams and AarAdhanams to You.
2. adiyEn engages in various unacceptable acts due to the influence of our three GuNams. What are they? These are (a) akruthya KaraNam /Persisting in performing acts prohibited by the Bhagavth Saasthrams (b) avAchya Vaadham (speaking about forbidden / inauspicious topics), (c) vakthavya avaadham (keeping silent on topics that should be talked about), (d) asmaraneeya smaraNam (thinking about forbidden things), Smarthavya asmaraNam (not mediating on things that should be reflected upon).
3. Dr.V.N.Vedantha Desikan points out that this sLOkam deals with the plight of a pious devotee placed in a non-congenial climate for a devoted life of service to God.



SLOKAM 4

मरुत्तरणि पावक त्रिदशनाथ कालादयः
स्वकृत्यम् अधिकुर्वते त्वद् अपराधतो बिभ्यतः ।
महत् किमपि वज्रम् उद्यतमिवेति यच्छ्रूयते
तरत्यनघ तद्भयं य इह तावकः स्तावकः ॥ ४ ॥

Maruth TaraNi Paavaka thridaSanATa kaalAdhaya:
svakruthyam adhikurvathE ThvadhaparAdhathO Bibhyatha:
mahath kimapi vajram udhyathamivEthi yacchrUyathE
tarathyanaga Tadhbhayam ya iha ThAvaka: sthAvaka:

ANVAYA KRAMAM

Anaga = Oh One free of any dhOsham!

Thvath aparAdhata: Bibhyatha: = fearing about trespassing Your commands (Saasthra ullangana bheethi) and committing apachArams to You



‘Another view of the Vimanam’



Maruth = Vaayu dEvan

TaraNi = Soorya dEvan

Paavaka: = Agni dEvan

thridaSanATa: = Indhran, the lord of dEvAs

Kaala aadhaya: = Yama dharma RaajA and other dEvAs

Udhyatham vajram iva (tava) mahath bhayam = with great fear for You, who is like a mighty tall and powerful VajrAyudham

sva kruthyam adhikurvathE = they perform their assigned duties.

ithi yath kimapi SrUyathE = thus declare the Upanishads about their fears born out of reverence for You.

tath Ya: iha thAvaka: sthAvaka: = Any one in this world recognizes and eulogizes this fear of gods for You crosses the bheethi caused by SamsAric sorrows.

(EXTENDED MEANING):

Oh blemish less (hEya rahitha) Sri RanganAthA! The beings of this and the other world go about executing their duties assigned by Your SaasthrAs fearing the punishments that would be meted out for violation of Your commands. Included in this category are Vaayu, Sooryan,



'PraNavaakaara Vimanam'



Agni, Indhran, Yaman and other celestial servants of Yours. They faithfully and reverentially perform their duties assigned by You. Out of fear about incurring Your displeasure, they strive to do their duties. Their fears arising from any lapse in their duties are described by Upanishads. Any one in this world remembers these fears of DevAs and salute you with deep devotion thru their sthuthis and are not affected by these fears. You direct such lucky ones to SadAchAryAs, who help them perform Prapatthi at Your sacred feet and as a result gain MOksha Sukham. After that, where would be the reason for that SamsAri to have any fear?

One of the Upanishadic passages describing the fear of the DevAs is from the sixth chapter of KatOpanishad:

**Bhayath Asya Agni: tapathy bhayAth tapathy Soorya:
BhayAth Indhrasccha Vaayusccha Mruthyur-dhAvathy panchama:
-- KatOpanishad: 6.3**

(MEANING):

From Fear of Him fire burns; the Sun shines from the fear of Him; Indhra, Vaayu and Death, the fifth run (function).

**avyakthAtthu Para: PurushO vyApakOalinga yEva cha
yamm Jn~AthvA muchyathE amruthathvam cha gacchathy
--- KatOpanishad: 6.8**

(Meaning):

The Supreme Self is superior to that of unmanifest. He is the all pervader (VishNu/ VyApakan) and the unferrable. Knowing Him (the Parama Purushan), the creature (SamsAri bound by the three guNams) gets liberated (freed from fear) and attains immortality (abheethi maya mOksham). The muktha jeevan enjoys nithyAnandham and is freed from any kind of Bheethi.

As one overcomes the Bheethi with the anugraham of the Lord, One climbs upwards to the godhead of Truth and Bliss, where the seats of immortality are (yathRamruthAsa aasathE -- Rg Vedam: IX.15.2).

NOTES FROM OTHER COMMENTATORS:

“iha tath bhayam thAvaka: sthavaka: tarathy” is the key message here. In this world, one who eulogizes You crosses over (overcomes) the fear experienced by Your servants for trespassing your commands. That the world experiences such fears about trespassing your aj~naa is a sure sign of Your status as Brahman. Swamy Desikan asserts here that one, who is conscious that he is Yours, and who sings Your praise, need not fear even from the mighty bolt of vajra weapon.



SLOKAM 5

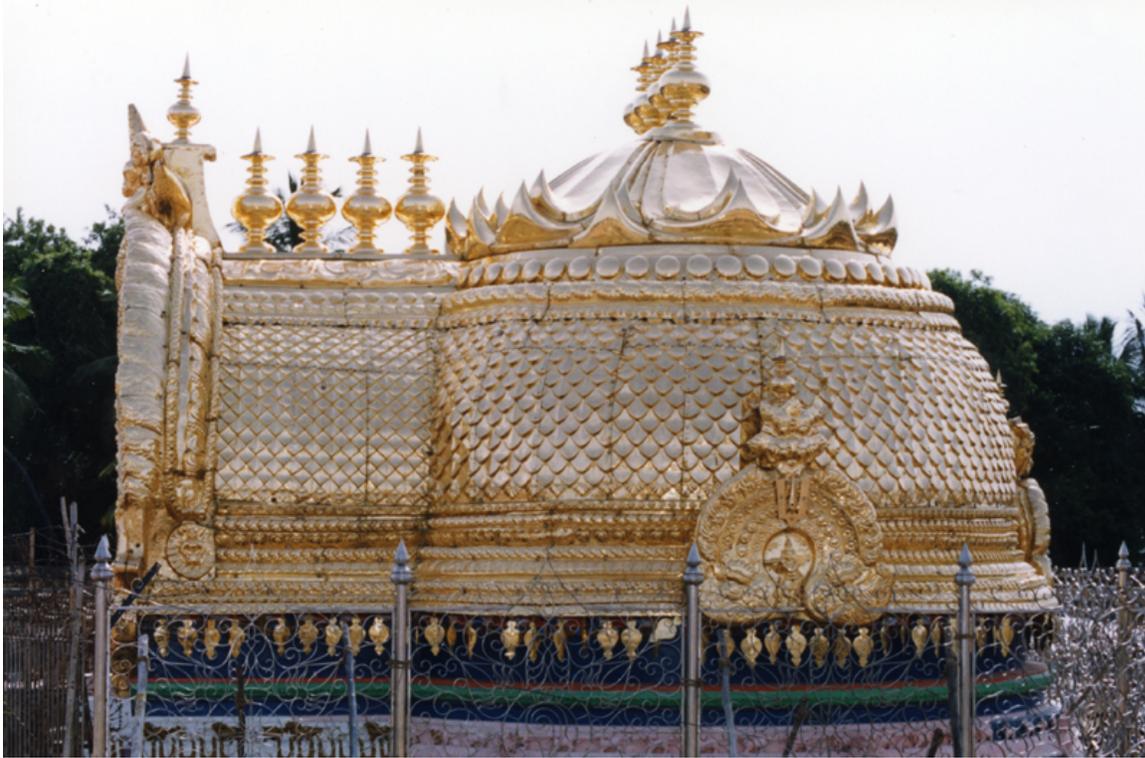
भवन्तम् इह यः स्वधी नियत चेतना चेतनं
पनायति नमस्यति स्मरति वक्ति पर्येति वा ।
गुणं कमपि वेत्ति वा तव गुणेश गोपायितुः
कदाचन कुतश्चन क्वचन तस्य न स्याद् भयम् ॥ ५ ॥

Bhavantham iha Ya: sva-dhee -niyatha chEtanAchEthanam
panAyathy namasyathy smarathy vakthi paryEti vaa
guNam kamapi vEtthi vaa Tava GuNEsa gOpAyithu:
kadAchana kuthascchana kvachana tasya na syAth bhayam

ANVYA KRAMAM AND MEANING BY PADHAMS

GuNEsa! = Oh Lord, who is the abode of all KalyANa guNams!

sva-dhee-niyatha chEthana achEthanam Bhavantham = Of You, who holds together the



‘Side view of PraNavaakaara Vimanam’



sentients and insentients of Your LeelA VibhUthi with Your mighty sankalpam

ya: iha panAyathi = whoever eulogizes You of this Vaibhavam here

(ya: iha) namasyathy samrathi vakthi paryEthi vaa = whoever prostrates before You or meditates about Yout kalyANa guNams or recites Your divine names or performs PradakshiNams at Your divine abodes

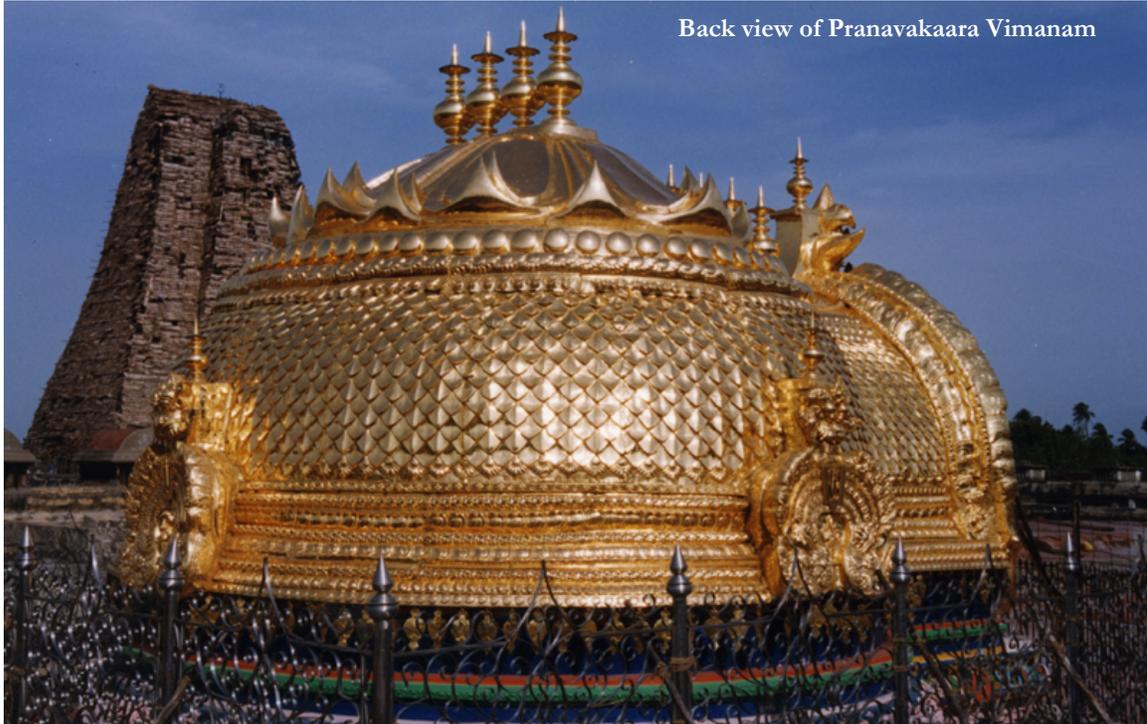
ya: GopAyithu: Tava kamapi guNam vEtthi vaa = whoever attempts to comprehend even one auspicious guNam of Yours (such as Souselyam, SouhArtham, Vaathsalyam, Maarjavam

Tasya kadhAchana bhayam na syAth= for him, there will never ever be any fears.

Tasya kudascchana kvachana bhayam na syAth = For Him, there will be no fear from anywhere or at any time.

(EXTENDED MEANING):

Oh Lord of Srirangam filled with all auspicious guNams! This universe filled with ChEtanams and achEtanams are bound together by your sankalpam and follow your commands. Any one who praises You of this infinite majesty and grace with His tongue or prostrates before You with his body or meditates on You with his mind or performs naama sankeerthanam of Your thousand names or circumambulates around your temple praakArms or delves in depth about any one of Your KalyANa guNams is blessed indeed! For such a person performing anyone of the above acts will not experience fear (bheethi) from anywhere at any time.



Back view of Pranavakaara Vimanam



VIEWS FROM OTHER COMMENTATORS:

“Ya: Bhavantham panAyathi namasyathi smarathi vakthi paryEthi vaa, tasya kadAchana kuthascchana kvachana bhayam na syAth” is the key message. Those who seek refuge in You, eulogizes You, prostrates before You, thinks of You, recites Your sacred names do not experience any fears at any place or time ever. You are Sarva Phala pradhan (yielder of all phalans), Sarva bhaya nivartakan (remover of all kinds of fears) abhimukhan (awaiting to bless His bhakthAs), sthuthyAdhi sulabhOpAyan (ease of access to those who eulogize You). Sruthi vaakyams are: “Aanandham BrahmaNO vidhvAn na BhibhEthi kuthascchana; na BhibhEthi kadhAchana”. Swamy Desikan uses these Sruthi PramANams verbatim and adds kvachana for further emphasis.



‘Achyutan’



SLOKAM 6

स्थिते मनसि विग्रहे गुणिनि धातुसाम्ये सति
स्मरेत् अखिल देहिनं य इह जातुचित् त्वामजम् ।
तयैव खलु संधया तमथ दीर्घ निद्रावशं
स्वयं विहित संस्मृतिर् नयसि धाम नैः श्रेयसम् ॥ ६ ॥

sTithE manasi vighrahE guNini dhAthusAmyE sathi
smarETh akhila-dEhinam ya iha jAthuchith ThvAmajam
tayayiva khalu sandhayA TamaTa dheerga nidhrAvasam
svayam vihitha-samsmruthir-nayasi dhAma nai: SrEyasam

This sLOkam is an echo of Sri VarAha Charama sLOkam.

WORD BY WORD MEANING

iha = here (on this earth)

Ya: manasi sTithE = One who holds his mind in a steady and good state

vighrahE guNini = and with his body in a healthy state

dhAthu SaamyE = augmented by dhAthus (Kapa, Pittha, Vaadham) in good balance (equilibrium)

Sathy = when the mind, body and dhAthus are in an optimal state of health

akhila dEhinam ajam ThVam jaathuchith smarETh = If that blessed person were to then think of You even once and were to perform Prapatthi one time at Your sacred feet,

aTa dheerga nidhrAvasam taMM = for such a person, at the end of his life, when he is in the grip of death

(tamm) tayA samdhayA yEva = by that very thought itself of You, the Lord and the power of the earlier Prapatthi done by that Mumukshu

Svayam vihitha samsmruthi: = You create out of Your own sankalpam anthima smrithi of You in that chEtanam's mind during those last moments

nai: SrEyasam dhaama nayasi khalu = and You, the Lord leads that Prapannan to Sri Vaikuntam, Your supreme abode. Moksha Sukham is enjoyed by that Muktha Jeevan as a





result of thinking of you, the Lord, when the mind, body and faculties were in tact and thru the performance of his Prapatthi at that time.

(EXTENDED MEANING):

Oh Lord of Srirangam! If a chEthanam wishes to gain MOksham, He must perform Prapatthi. He must do it once at whatever stage of life he is. It is most desirable to perform this Prapatthi, when the mind is in a healthy state, the body has strength and the controlling dhAthus (Kapam, Pittham and Vaadham) are in equipoise. In response to the Prapatthi done under the circumstances, Oh timeless Lord of Srirangam! You remember this chEthanam at the end of his life, when that chEthanam is like a log or stone and unable to think of You, You create then anthima smruthi about You in his mind and lead this jeevan to Your Supreme abode to enjoy Moksha sukham there. The chEthanam is thus freed from the fear of naraka vaasam due to the power of his earlier prapatthi done when his mind, body and dhAthus were at their state.

VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Here, Swamy Desikan constructs the sLOkam with the words that arose out of VarAha PerumAn's mouth (VarAha Charama sLOkam) and reminds us that there is nothing to fear. Swamy Desikan has elaborated on VarAha charama sLOkam in His esoteric miscellany (ChillaRai rahasyam) of Rahasya SikhAmaNi. We perform our Prapatthi to Sriman Narayanan, who is the indweller of all sentients and insentients. He is eternal (nithyan). Unlike karma-bound jeevans, He is not limited by time. He has the most adorable six guNams befitting His name as BhagavAn. He is our ultimate resort for Moksham. He is Moksha-dhAyaka Mukundan. If we are unable to think of Him in our ultimate moments (anthima smruthi), He will still remember our Prapatthi to Him and will lead the prapanna Jeevan to His supreme abode (nissrEyas) to enjoy ParipoorNa BhramAnandham there.





SLOKAM 7

रमादयित रङ्गभूरमण कृष्ण विष्णो हरे
त्रिविक्रम जनार्दन त्रियुग नाथ नारायण ।
इतीव शुभदानि यः पठति नामधेयानि ते
न तस्य यमवश्यता नरकपात भीतिः कुतः ॥ ७ ॥

Ramaa-dayitha RangabhUramaNa KrushNa VishNO HarE
Thrivikrama JanArdhana Thriyuga NaaTa NaarAyaNa
itheeva SubhadhAni Ya: paDathy nAmadhEyAni tE
na tasya YamavsyathA narakapAtha bheethi: kutha:

WORD BY WORD MEANING:

Ramaa Dayitha = Oh Lord of MahA
Lakshmi (RanganAyaki)!

RangabhUramaNa = Oh Supreme One, who
relishes your residence at Srirangam!

KrishNa = Oh KaNNaa!

HarE = Oh Lord who chases away the Sins!

Thrivikrama = Oh Lord who measured the
three worlds with your three steps!

JanArdhana = Oh Lord, who puts an end to
the cycles of births and deaths in the
Prakruthi MaNDalam!

Thriyuga NaaTa = Oh Master with six
GuNams leading to your name of Bhagavan!

NaaraayaNa = Oh NaarAyaNa who
performed manthOpadEsam to Naran at
BadrikAsramam.

itheeva tE naamadhEyAni Ya: paDathy =
When one recites such auspicious names of
Yours like the above,



‘Ananthan’





Tasya Yama vasyathA na = for him, there is no fear of being under the control of Yamadharm Raajan.

Naraka Paatha bheethi: kutha? = if that were to be so, whence arises the fear of falling in Narakam and experiencing sufferings there?

(COMMENTS):

Oh Lord of Srirangam! You have many auspicious names such as RamA Dayithan, RangabhUramaNan, KrishNan, VishNu, Hari, Thrivikraman, JanArdhanan, Thriyuga NaaTan and NaarAyaNan". These auspicious names on recitation produce MangaLams for Your bhakthAs. Those who recite such names of yours do not fall in the hands of Yama dharman. If that were to be so, then the possibility of landing in his Narakam does not arise.

VIEWS FROM ADDITIONAL COMMENTATORS:

This is a very important sLOkam that should be recited everyday by us. This has been revealed by the Lord RanganAtha Himself to a srEshta AchArya (Srimath Poundarikapuram Andavan) that this sLOkam has mantrams (BheejAksharams) pertaining to His form incorporated inside the sLOkams. He revealed to Srimath Andavan in a dream that the recitation of this sLOkam guarantees Supreme Bliss and removes fears about rebirth and Yama lOka vaasam.





SLOKAM 8

कदाचिदपि रङ्गभूरसिक यत्र देशे वशी
त्वदेक नियत आशय स्त्रिदश वन्दितो वर्तते ।
तदक्षत तपोवनं तव च राजधानी स्थिरा
सुखस्य सुखम् आस्पदं सुचरितस्य दुर्गं महत् ॥ ८ ॥

kadAchidhapi RangabhUrasika yathra dEsE vasee
ThvadhEka niyatha aaSayas-thridasa vandhithO vartatE
tadhakshatha tapOvanam Tava cha rAjadhAni sTirA
Sukhasya sukhamAspadham sucharithsya dhurgam mahat

WORD BY WORD MEANING:

RangabhUrasika = Oh Lord of Srirangam, who is enjoying Your residence at Srirangam

vasee ThvadhEka niyatha aasaya: = A bhagavathan with control over his indhriyams and living with a mind totally focused on You,



'Govindan'



thridaSa vandhitha: = That bhAgavathan is revered even by dEvAs,

Yathra dEsE kadhAchidhapi vartathE = If he lives even for a limited time at one place,

Tadhkshatha tapOvanam = That place will become a fit place for performing tapas without interruption.

Tava sTirA RaajadhAnee cha = that place sanctified by association with the BhAgavathA will transform into a firm capitol for you (RanganAthA).

Sukhasya sukham aaspadham = that place will become an abode for the quintessence of Sukham.

Sucharithasya dhurgam mahath = that place blessed by its links to the BhAgavathA will become a great fort for PuNyams.

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Rangam! Even dEvAs prostrate before a chEtanan, who controls his indhriyams and fixes his mind totally on you. He is revered by them as a BhAgavathan. When that BhAgavathan resides at one place even for a short time, that place gets elevated to a grove of penance by sages without any vignams. That place becomes fit to serve as the capitol for your kingdom. The sukham that arises from living at this place far exceeds all other sukham. This place becomes an invincible fortress for performing Bhagavath-BhAgavatha Kaimkaryam and to accumulate PuNyams.

In the next sIOkam, the role that the kalyAna guNAs of the Lord of Srirangam play in removing different kinds of fears of ours are discussed.

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS ABOUT SLOKAM 8:

In the previous sIOkam, the power of singing about the Lord's names were covered. In this sIOkam, the coverage is about the greatness of the places sanctified by the residence of Bhagavaan's dear ones (BhaagavathAs). Swamy Desikan identifies such places, where BhaagavathA's reside as "akshatha tapOvanam" (sacred penance grove, where there are no inauspiciousness). Such places are equivalent to BadrikAsramam (**BadharikAsrama tulya tapOVanam**). Swami Desikan states that such places blessed by the residence of the Lord's servants are ideal to conduct a dhaarmic way of life free from normal tension that abound everywhere else. Such places are like formidable fortress to protect the dhaarmic way of life.



'Paravaasudevan'

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SLOKAM 9

त्रिवर्ग पथ वर्तिनां त्रिगुण लङ्घन उद्योगिनां
द्विषत् प्रमथन अर्थिनाम् अपि च रङ्गदृश्योदयाः ।
स्वलत्समय कातरी हरण जागरूकाः प्रभो
कर ग्रहण दीक्षिताः क इव ते न दिव्या गुणाः ॥ ९ ॥

thrivarga-paTa-varthinAm thriguNa-langhana-udhyOginAm
dhvishath pramaTaaTinAmapi cha RangadhrusyOdhayA:
skhalath samaya kAtaree haraNa jAgarookA: PrabhO
kara-grahaNa-dheekshithA: ka iva tE na dhivyaa gunA: ?

Swamy Desikan asks a rhetoric question here and answers it: Ranga PrabhO! “Ka Iva (tava) tE divya GuNA: kAtaree haraNa dheekshithA: na?” (Which namam/name of Your KalyANa guNams has not vowed to remove our fears? None).

(EXTENDED MEANING):

Oh Lord of Srirangam!

- (1) In this world one seeks the fruits like Dharma, arTa and Kaamam thru their various efforts.
- (2) A few engage in crossing this SamsAric world admixed with the three guNams of Sathvam, Rajas and Tamas and seek Moksha Sukham. For this purpose, they commit to Bhakthi Yogam or perform SaraNAgathy (Prapatthi Yogam).
- (3) Few more are for enjoying your archA roopam here at Srirangam and pray for the removal of obstacles that stand in the way of your nithya AarAdhanam resulting from detestable invasion by the army.

These three groups of people wish to be blessed with success in their endeavors; while being engaged in the execution of these tasks, they are overcome with fear some times about realizing victory in their efforts. This is nothing but a natural reaction. In those troubling times, these saadhakAs contemplate on your auspicious guNAs. Those GuNAs respond with alacrity, when such fears raise their heads and the GuNAs extend their hands and lift the SaadhakAs out of the net of fear that had encircled them. The response of GuNAs in this





manner is due to the vows they have taken to come to the rescue of Sri RanganAtha BhakthAs, when they become fearful about the success in their efforts. The SaadhakAs succeed now with the welcome intervention of the KalyANa guNAs of the Lord of Srirangam. Oh Ranga PrabhO! In these matters of rescuing Your bhakthAs, every one of Your KalyANa GuNAs are equally potent. They all shine with matchless glory and equal splendour.

In this sLOkam, Swamy Desikan salutes the Vaathsalyam and Dayaa of Lord of Srirangam, which save the chEtanan from being lost in the temptations of SamsAric pleasures and propels him to higher goal of Moksham.

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Here, Swamy Desikan salutes the KalyANa guNams of the Lord as rakshaNa dheekshithankaL (vowed to protect) for those who experience bheethi over gaining dharmarTa-kaama purushArthams or Kaivalya sukham as their goals. Oh RanganAtha! When any skAlithyam (interruption and obstacle) are met in reaching these desired phalans, Your divine attributes (dhivya guNams) extend their hands to banish the experienced fears. Even if You appear to be sleeping (engaged in Yoga nidhraa), Your guNaas in general and the Dayaa guNaM in particular are wide awake to rush to our rescue.



‘Sri Nrusimhan Sannidhi’





SLOKAM 10

बिभेति भवभृत् प्रभो त्वदुपदेश तीव्रौषधात्
कदध्व रस दुर्विषे बलिश भक्षवत् प्रीयते ।
अपथ्य परिहारधी विमुखम् इत्थमाकस्मिकी
तमप्यवसरे क्रमादवति वत्सला त्वदया ॥ १० ॥

BhibhEth bhavabhruth PrabhO thvadhupadEsa theevroushadhAth

kadadhva rasa dhurvishE BaLisa bakshavath preeyathE

apaTya parihAra- dhee vimukham ittham Aakasmikee

tamapyavasarE kramaa dhavathi Vathsalaa Thvadh-dhayaa

Swamy Desikan says here: “Tamapi Vathsalaa aakasmikee Thvaddh Dayaa, avasarE kramAth avathy”. Even him (the samsaari lost in the enjoyment of the transient pleasures of life), Oh RanganAthA, Your avyAja karuNA saves him in due time from repeated births and deaths.

Oh Lord of Srirangam! The SamsAri (Bhavabhruth) fears (BhibEth) to take the tough medicine (theevra Oushadham) of your upadEsams in Bhagavath Saasthrams like PaancharAthram and Bhagavath Gitaa. They are the powerful medicines to cure the disease of SamsAram for the ChEtanams.

The SamsAri engages in the lowly (kadhadhva) pleasures of material life, which are like the poisonous bait (Rasa dhurvisham) that tempt the fish to feed on it (BaLisa bhakshavath) and the SamsAri is very happy (preeyathE) with that kind of enjoyment.

Being used to the tasting of such pernicious pleasures, the SamsAri is habituated (addicted) and delves deeper and deeper in such harmful activities. These acts of the SamsAri are like the fish arriving to eat the poisonous food attached to the bait of a fisherman. The fish does not realize that the biting of the bait will end its life. The SamsAri does not pay any attention to the dangers inherent in pursuit of such harmful acts of chasing after dangerous pleasures.

The SamsAri has no intention to get away from such harmful (ittham apaTyam) enjoyment and keeps on engaging in such activities without casting it aside. He becomes “ParihAra dhee vimukhan” (One who is uninterested in giving up those destructive acts). What is to become of this samsAri? Who will intervene and save him from his own destructive activities?





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The Lord of Srirangam does intervene. Even in the case of such a samsAri persisting in being mired in such harmful activities (**tamm api**), He intervenes at the appropriate time (**avasarE**) and gradually (**kramAth**) saves him (**avathy**) out of his infinite avyAja dayaa (**aakasmikee**) and affection (**vathsalaa /Dayaa**).

Sri RangaNathan's KaruNaa is without any reason and is kindled by his affection for the SamsAri. Lord's compassion admixed with His affection saves the pitiable samsAri. How is that done? The Lord's affection makes Him overlook the trespasses of the SamsAri. The Lord's Dayaa proceeds to wipe away the sufferings of the SamsAri. When the SamsAri gains a little PuNyam thru some act of his, Lord's Dayaa flows towards him (SamsAri) in a manner that is not readily comprehended by others (**aakasmikee Thvath Dayaa**). Over time (**KramAth**), it turns the chEtanan towards the performance of auspicious deeds and lands him ultimately at the sacred feet of His (Lord's) AchAryAs to perform Prapatthi and earn Moksha Sukham as a result. Sri Ranganathan's Vaathsalyam and Dayaa thus protects the erring chEtanam in a grand manner.

In the next sIOkam, Swamy Desikan wonders as to why the Lord of Srirangam, who is totally fearless from anything and anybody, carries weapons like Chakram, Sword, Mace and bow. Swamy Desikan gives next the answer to his own question.



SLOKAM 11

अपार्थ इति निश्चितः प्रहरणादि योगस्तव
स्वयं वहसि निर्भयस् तदपि रङ्गपृथ्वीश्वर ।
स्वरक्षणम् इवाभवत् प्रणत रक्षणं तावकं
यदात्थ परमार्थविन् नियतम् अन्तरात्मा इति ते ॥ ११ ॥

apArTa ithi niscchitha: praharANAdhi-yOgas-Tava
svayam vahasi nirbhayas-tadhapi RangapruTveeswara
svarakshanam ivAbhavath praNatha rakshaNam ThAvakam
yadhAttha paramArTavinniyatham antharAthmA ithi tE

(MEANING & COMMENTS):

Oh Lord of Srirangam (Ranga PruTveeswara)! It has been established (niscchitha:) that the possession of aayudhams (PraharANAdhi yOga:) is fruitless (apArTa ithi) for you. Oh Lord!



'PushkaraNi'





You are totally free of fear from anyone or any thing. The whole world and its beings are indeed afraid of trespassing your injunctions and Vidhis. In spite of this (Tadhapi), Thou who art fearless (**nirbhaya: Thvam**) bear out of your own sankalpam five weapons on your body. It may appear odd that you hold on to these weapons although you really do not need them at all. There is a sound reason however for your “strange” act. You have publicly declared in Your GithOpanishad that a Jn~Ani, who comprehends you well and has great affection for you is surely (niyatham) Your antharyAmi (**Yath ParamArTavith tE niyatham antharAthmaaiti Aattha**). When You protect these dear ones (**thAvakam PraNatha rakshaNam**), that act is equivalent to defending Yourself (**SvarakshaNam iva abhavath**). Therefore, it becomes clear that you are bearing all these weapons for your dear one's protection.

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Here Swamy Desikan appeals to Lord Ranganathan to decimate the evil forces that have invaded Srirangam and for Him to return to His abode. He reminds the Lord of Srirangam about His commitment to protect Jn~Anis, who were identified by Him as His inner soul. Swamy says: “These Jn~Anis dear to You have to be protected, which is equivalent to Your own protection. Could You not ensure that this happens?”





SLOKAM 12:

लगिष्ठ सुख सङ्गदैः स्वकृत कर्म निर्वर्तितैः
कलत्र सुत सोदरानुचर बन्धु संबन्धिभिः ।
धन प्रभृतिकैरपि प्रचुर भीति भेदोत्तरैः
न बिभ्रति धृतिम् प्रभो त्वदनुभूति भोगार्थिनः ॥ १२ ॥

lagishDa sukha-sangadhai: svakrutha karma nirvartithai:

kalathra sutha sOdharAnuchara Bhabdhu-samBhandhibhi:

dhana prabhruthikairapi prachura bheethi bhEdhOttharai:

na Bhibhrathy dhruthim PrabhO ThvadhanubhUthi bhOgArTina:

(MEANING AND COMMENTS):

Oh Lord of Thirunaranga! Those Mumukshus/ bhOga arTina: (those who desire Moksha sukham) enjoy your beauty and auspicious attributes (Thvath anubhUthi:) without stopping.



'muRRaa maamadhikOL viduthaan; yemmaan'



They do not turn their attention to alpa sukham (**laghishta sukham**) arising from their karmAs (**sva krutha karma nirvarthithai:**). In this world, human beings are linked with wife, children, brothers, sisters, servants and other relatives befitting their accumulated karmaas (Paapams and PuNyams). Similarly, they are blessed with different levels of wealth that is defined by their karmas. The joy arising from these family members and the wealth however are insignificant and perishable. Since the possession of these families and wealth leads ultimately to all kinds of anxieties and sorrows in the efforts to protect them, lot of fear (Bheethi about losing them) results. SamsAris have hence fitful enjoyment of these insignificant wealth and are always filled with fear of all kinds (**Prachura bheethi**). The Mumukshu in contrast to the SamsAri knows that all the wealth and family resulting from one's karmAs will not give lasting happiness (**sva-krutha karma nirvarthithai: prachura bheethi bhEdha uttharai: Bhandhu samBhandhibhi: dhana prabhruthibhi: dhruthim na Bhibhrathy**). Therefore, the wise Mumukshus derive their pleasure (dhruthi) by enjoying Your dhivya soundharyam, dhivyAthma roopam and anantha kalyANa guNams and seek the lasting pleasures of Moksha anugraham this way.

VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

In the previous sLOkam, Swamy Desikan referred to the Jn~Ani as the one dearest to the Lord as attested by Him in His GithOpanishad. Here, Swamy Desikan asks the Lord of Srirangam a question: "My Lord! Shouldn't you be concerned with the destruction of the enemies of those great Bhagavath anubhava rasikAs / (Jn~Anis), who are unable to enjoy You at Srirangam? You must return to Srirangam to have union (samAgamam) with the Jn~Anis dear to You.



SLOKAM 13

न वक्तुमपि शक्यते नरक गर्भ वासादिकं
वपुश्च बहुधातुकं निपुण चिन्तने तादृशम् ।
त्रिविष्टपमुखं तथा दिवि पदस्य देदीपतः
किमत्र न भयास्पदं भवति रङ्गपृथ्वीपते ॥ १३ ॥

na vaktumapi SakyathE naraka-garbha- vaasAdhikam
vapuscha Bhahu-dhAthukam nipuNa-chinthanE thAdhrusam
thrivishtapamukham taTA Tava padhasya dhEdheepatha:
kimathra na bhayAspadham bhavathy RangapruTveepathE



'Sesharaya Mandapam'



(MEANING AND COMMENTS):

Oh Emperor of Srirangam (**Ranga PruTvee PathE**)! Human beings go through the cycles of births and deaths as a result of their karmAs that they have accumulated. As a result, they experience life in narakams (**naraka vaasam**) on death and suffer stay in different wombs (**garbha vaasam**). These enforced stays are not fit to be described without invocation of fear (**na vakthumapi SakyathE naraka-garbha vaasAdhikam**). When one thinks intensively (NipuNa chinthanE), this body we celebrate is an admixture of many loathsome dhAthus (flesh, blood, fat, bones etc) and also causes disgust (**Bahu dhAdhukam vapu: cha vakthum api na SakyathE**). It is not some thing to talk about with pride.

Oh RanganAtha! Your abode at Sri Vaikuntam is JyOthirmayam and Parama Paavanam. It removes all fears. When we compare this matchless abode (**nithya VibhUthi**) with Svarga IOkam and other celebrated places of residence for the dEvAs, they all feel like Narakam. The comfort of Svarga IOkam and sukhams there can not even be spoken about in the same breath with Sri Vaikuntam. In this context, where are the sthAnams in this earth that do not contribute to fear. Emperors and their vassals are afraid of losing their sthAnams to the enemies. All these lofty sthAnams cause only fear in the minds of occupants. SamsAra bheethi only grows for occupants of these earthly sthAnams and perishable wealth.

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

This sIOkam describes the various sorrows that the embodied jeevan experiences In this world. These sorrows of SamsAric way of life cause many kinds of fears. Oh Lord! Worshipping You at the BhUIOka Vaikuntam of Srirangam is bliss to chase away these sorrows. May You grant that bliss to us!



SLOKAM 14:

भवन्ति मुख भेदतो भय निदानमेव प्रभो
शुभाशुभ विकल्पिता जगति देश कालादयः ।
इति प्रचुर साध्वसे मयि दयिष्यसे त्वं न चेत्
क इत्थमनुकम्पिता त्वद् अनुकम्पनीयश्च कः ॥ १४ ॥

bhavanthy mukhabhEdhathO bhaya-nidhAnamEva PrabhO
SubhAsubha vikalpithA: jagathy dEsa kaalAdhaya:
ithi prachura-sAdhvasE mayi dhayishyasE Thvam na chEth
ka ittham anumampithA Thvadh anumampaneyasccha Ka:

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvarangam! Wise people have classified Svarga IOkam and naraka IOkam as desirable and undesirable locations respectively to reside. Similarly, they have labeled Krutha Yugam as the golden yugam to live and Kali Yugam as the undesirable Yugam to be born in to. If one analyses deeply, svargam, Narakam, Krutha and Kali Yugams --all of them--create inauspiciousness in their own (different) ways and cause fear (Bheethi) to us. This fact makes me filled with anxiety and bheethi. Oh Lord! You must take pity on adiyEn and protect me thru abhaya pradhAnam. If you do not decide to do so, adiyEn can not think of anyone to play this role. Also, there is no one more qualified than adiyEn to be the object of your dayaa. Therefore, out of your matchless compassion, Rangaa, You should protect adiyEn and chase away all of my fears.

(COMMENTS):

Swamy Desikan describes himself as “Prachura Saadhvasan”, one who is frightened about the present and future. Swamy Desikan states that all that which have been grouped as auspicious or inauspicious based on dEsam and Kaalam (subha-asubha vikalpithA: dEsa kaala aadhaya:) generate ultimately fear only in their own ways (mukha bhEdhata: bhaya nidhAnmEva bhavanthy). Swamy Desikan prays for Lord Ranganathan's unparalleled karuNai to intervene in his most deserving case. Swamy convincingly states his case for the Lord's grace: “ittham anumampithA Ka? Thvadh anumampaneyasccha Ka:?” Who is there except you to shower such grace? Who is more fit than me to be the recipient of that (Your) grace? With such a precision logic of Swamy Desikan, Lord Ranganathan had no choice except to intervene and answer Swamy's prayer in the affirmative.





VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Here, Swamy Desikan describes his *ananyagathithvam* (having no recourse other than the Lord of Srirangam to protect him) and uses the passages of Swamy AlavanthAr's *sthOthra rathnam sIOkam* dealing with this subject: “*yadhi mE na dhayaneeyastava naaTa dhurlabha; Maasma jeehapa:*”. If You do not display compassion (Dayaa) for me, You may not secure some one needy as I am to display Your dayaa. If You do not take pity on me and help me, I will be *nATa Soonyan* (One without a protecting Master). You will become “*DayaapAthra Soonyar*” (One who is bereft of an object to shower Your Dayaa. Oh Lord, Do not miss this opportunity. If You bless me with Your Dayaa, I will become free from the various fears that grip me here. Please be compassionate and make use of this deserving object for Your dayaa. “I have no one else to solicit. Nor do You have any fitter receptacle to receive Your kindness. My total penury in respect of virtues is so famous”.





SLOKAM 15:

सकृत् प्रपदन स्पृशाम् अभयदान नित्यव्रती
न च द्विरभिभाषसे त्वमिति विश्रुतः स्वोक्तिः ।
यथोक्तकरणं विदुस्तव तु यातुधानादयः
कथं वितथमस्तु तत् कृपण सार्वभौमे मयि ॥ १५ ॥

Sakruth prapadhana sprusam abhaya-dhAna nithyavrathee
na cha dhvirabhibhAshasE Thavmithi viSrutha: svOkthitha:
yaTOkthakaraNam vidhus-tava thu yAthudhAnAdaya:
kaTam vithaTamasthu tath krupaNa-sArvabhroumE mayi

(MEANING):

Thiruvaramba PrabhO! During Your avathAram as Lord Raamachandra, You declared before the world that you will grant abhaya pradhAnam to anyone, who surrendered to You even once and sought Your rakshaNam; You also stated publicly that You will not go back on any promise made by You. These two statements are well known to the people of the world. VibhishaNan, Sugreevan and others who have benefited from seeking you as their SaraNagatha Rakshakan know that you will fulfill the promise that you made at any cost. When the situation is like that, how can your compassion become fruitless in the case of adiyEn, who is the first among the helpless? Your vow to protect the helpless one seeking Your protection can not become defunct. You must therefore come to adiyEn's rescue and chase away my fears.

(COMMENTS):

Swamy Desikan introduces himself here as “KrupaNa Saarvabhrouman”. KrupaNan means impoverished or destitute or Kaimuthal aRRavan. Akinchanathvam and ananyagathithvam are two requirements for the successful performance of SaraNagathy at the sacred feet of the Lord and to gain His favorable response. Swamy Desikan reminds us of three things here that the Lord Himself has stated in public (Sva ukthitha:)

1. Aham sakruth prapadhana sprusAm abhaya dhAna vrathee (I have taken the vow to provide freedom from fear for those, who sought My help even Once).
2. Dhvi na abhibhAshathy (I do not speak twice about my promise).





3. **Aham YathOkthakaari** (Sonna VaNNam seyyum PerumAL).

When these are standing statements from You, how can they fail in my case, which is the most deserving one asks Swamy Desikan.

In this sLOkam, Swamy Desikan prays movingly to the Lord: Oh Lord of Srirangam! You announced to the world that You are an unfailing protector of KrupaNa janthus like me. I have the distinction of being KrupaNa Saaravabhoman (Most indigent) You can not exclude me from Your protection. Your promise can not become untrue in my case.





SLOKAM 16:

अनुक्षण समुत्थिते दुरित वारिधौ दुस्तरे
यदि क्वचन निष्कृतिर् भवति साऽपि दोषाविला ।
तदित्थम् अगतौ मयि प्रतिविधानम् आधीयतां
स्वबुद्धिं परिकल्पितं किमपि रङ्गधुर्यं त्वया ॥ १६ ॥

anukshaNa samuTthithE dhuritha vaaridhou dhustarE
yadhi kvachana nishkruthir-bhavathy sAapi dhOshAvilA
tadhitham agathou mayi prathividhAnam AadheeyathAm
sva-bhuddhi parikalpitham kimapi Rangadhurya ThvayA

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvarangam! In this sorrowful samsAra MaNDalam, the sins acquired by a samsAri grow every moment like the rising waves of the gigantic Ocean. It is not possible to control their growth thru the proper control of mind and body. When it comes to the ocean of Sins, it is impossible to cross this ocean with appropriate prAyascchittham. Even the performed prAyascchittham is nullified by the accrual of additional sins or by the incorrect performance of that prAyascchittham. The samsAri does not have either the knowledge about the appropriate prAyascchittham or power to execute it correctly. AdiyEn is an ideal example of one such samsAri, who has accumulated a vast assembly of Sins and stand before you in a helpless state. You must use your sankalpam to show me a way to destroy my gigantic bundles of sins and save me.

(COMMENTS):

Swamy Desikan compares his sins to a vast ocean (**dhuritha Vaaridhi**), which is not easy to cross (**dustharam**) because its waves (the sins) are growing higher and higher every second (**anukshaNa samutthitham**). There are repentance acts (**PrAyascchittham/nishkruthi**) prescribed by Bhagavath Saasthrams to destroy these sins and to get across the forbidding ocean of SamsAram. When that prescribed prAyascchittham is improperly executed, it becomes null and void (**kavachana nishkruthi bhavathy yathi, saa api dhOsha AavilA**). That brings adiyEn back to square one and makes adiyEn without any recourse (**agathi**). Under these pitiable circumstances, your sankalpam alone can lead to an appropriate PrAyascchittham for adiyEn (**mayi vishayE Sva-Buddhi parikalpitham kimapi prathividhAnam ThvayA AadheeyathAm**). Swamy Desikan states that Lord of Srirangam





knows what PrAyaschittham (**PrathividhAnam**) is right for him and begs the Lord to prescribe it.

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

With great nirvEdham, Swamy Desikan appeals to the Lord of Srirangam in this sOkam. “Oh Lord! You bear the heavy burden of Srirangam – in a way, of the whole universe too! You ought to prescribe a unique expiatory procedure that would help Your dependent, myself, to pass the test and cross to the shore of Your feet. I have no wherewithal – intellectual or material – to devise or perform”.





SLOKAM 17:

विषाद बहुलादहं विषय वगर्तो दुर्जयात्
बिभेमि वृजिनोत्तरस् त्वदनुभूति विच्छेदतः ।
मया नियत नाथवानयमिति त्वमर्थापयन्
दयाधन जगत्पते दयित रङ्ग संरक्ष माम् ॥ १७ ॥

VishAdha BahuLAdhaham vishaya-vargathO dhurjayAth

BhibhEmi vrujinOttharas-ThvadhanubhUthi vicchEdhatha:

mayA niyatha nATavAn-ayam-ithi ThvamarTaapayan

dayAdhana JagathpathE dayitharanga samraksha maam

(MEANING):

Oh Lord who relishes His residence at Srirangam! AdiyEn is one, who continuously accumulates my sins and adds them on and on. The so called pleasures of this world are really filled with sorrow. It is not easy for adiyEn to destroy them. AdiyEn has been caught in this web of my own sins and experience excruciating pain arising from my inability to enjoy You. You are the Lord of Lords (SarvEswaran). You are reputed as the owner of the vast wealth of Dayaa. It is You alone, who can take pity on adiyEn's helplessness and extend Your compassion to protect me from all these vipareethams. No one can stand in Your way, if You decide to rescue me. You can justify Your act of rescuing adiyEn with the thought: this chetanam has considered me as his Master always and hence I am duty bound to protect him. This should be Your rationale for my rescue -- states Swamy Desikan in this sLOkam.

(COMMENTS):

Swamy Desikan addresses the Lord as: “Dayaa Dhana! Jagath PathE! and Dayitha Ranga” here while asking for the Lord's protection (Samraksha maam). Dayaa dhanan refers to Him having the abundant wealth of Compassion (Dayaa, anukampaa, KaruNai). The address of “Jagath PathE” refers to His Swamithvam or Lordship over all the Universe. “Dayitha Ranga” relates to His fondness to live in the middle of the island formed by the Cauvery river.

Swamy Desikan now introduces himself as a lowly one: “aham vriijina uttharan” (One filled with Paapams of every kind). Swamy says that these sins are interfering with his enjoyment of the Lord (Thvath anubhUthy vicchEdhanam) because these sins arising from





the involvement with material pleasures (**Vishaya vargatham**) are sorrow producing (**vishAdha- Bahulam**) and difficult to conquer (**dhurjayam**) by oneself. All of these cause great fear in me (**aham BhibhEmi**). Please remember the meaning behind adiyEn's statement that You are my Lord always (**mayA niyatha NaaTavAn ithi Thvam arTApayan**) and protect me well (**Maam samraksha**).

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

In this sIOkam, Swamy Desikan reminds the Lord of his sins, grief and destitute state. He is despondent over separation from the Lord and the power of the mighty hoard of sins that he has accumulated. He beseeches the protection of his Lord (rightful owner). Swamy Desikan salutes the Lord of Srirangam in this sIOkam as “**Dayaa dhana, JagathpathE and Dayitha Ranga**”. These three salutations stand for the Dayaavathvam (inimitable Compassion), Swamythvam (Lordship) and Soulabhyam (ease of access) of the Lord. The essence of the prayer housed in this sIOkam is “**Thvam Maam Raksha**”.



'1000 Pillar Mandapam'





SLOKAM 18

निसर्ग निरनिष्टता तव निरंहसः श्रूयते
ततस्त्रियुग सृष्टवित् भवति संहतिः क्रीडितम् ।
तथाऽपि शरणागत प्रणय भङ्गभीतो भवान्
मदिष्टमिह यद्भवेत् किमपि मा स्म तज्जीहपत् ॥ १८ ॥

nisarga niranishtathA Tava niramhasa: SrUyathE

tathas-thriyuga srushtivath bhavathy samhruthi: kireeDitham

taTAapi SaraNAGatha praNaya bhanga bheethO bhavAn

madhishDamiha yadh-bhavEth kimapi Maa sma tajjeehpath

(MEANING):

Oh Supreme Lord of Thiruvarangam with the six primary guNams (JnAna-Sakthi-Bala-Isvara -Veerya and tEjas)! Paapam has no sambhandham with you (KarmAs do not touch you). Therefore, Upanishads salute you as one who is intrinsically free from sorrow of any kind. There is no inauspiciousness even if you destroy me; that act is like a leela based on your sankalpam to create the world and its beings. You who is “fearless” have however one fear left. That fear is associated with your refusal of the wishes of one, who sought your protection thru the act of SaraNAGathy and the consequent break in relationship (friendship) between the two of you. Therefore, you have taken the vow to shower your anugraham on Your SaraNAGathan. AdiyEn is one, who has performed prapatthi to you. Therefore, please do not hesitate to identify what is good for adiyEn and bless me with that boon.

(COMMENT):

VeDas recognize you as sinless (niramahasa:) and intrinsically free from sorrows (Nisara niranishDathA). Therefore the act of creation and destruction (Srushti and SamhAram) are like a sport for you (kireeDitham bhavathy) and it does not create any sorrow for You, when You dissolve the universe. You destroy to create as part of Your leelA. Even with such disassociation from fear, you still are afraid of one thing: fear about refusal to respond to the prayer for protection by PrapannAs (TaTAapi SaraNAGatha praNaya bhanga bheetha: BhavAn). I have performed SaraNAGathy at Your sacred feet. Hence you cannot refuse to shower your anugraham on adiyEn. Therefore, please look into what may be beneficial for me during the post-prapatthi period in this world and bless me without fail.





VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

“Oh Lord! You are said to be scared by possible desertion of a surrendered soul. If that were to be so, please consider my long-cherished prayers for protection and come to my rescue. If You have in mind some else one more deserving than myself, then grant Your rewards to that person diligently. It will be very appropriate”. There are two approaches adopted by Swamy Desikan here to invite the Lord’s attention through this sLOkam: (1) reminder to Him that He is a “SaraNagatha PraNaya bhanga bheethan” (One who fears the loss of the love of and the desertion by the Prapannan) and (2) a statement in a mood of PraNaya kOpam (anger arising from the rejection by the Lord).

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‘View of the Gopurams’





SLOKAM 19:

कयाधु सुत वायस द्विरद पुङ्गव द्रौपदी
विभीषण भुजङ्गम व्रजगणाम्बरीषादयः ।
भवत् पद समाश्रिता भय विमुक्तिम् आपुर्यथा
लभेमहि तथा वयं सपदि रङ्गनाथ त्वया ॥ १९ ॥

KayAdhu-sutha Vaayasa dhviradha-pungava Dhroupadhee-
VibhIshaNa bhujangama vrajagaNa-Ambhareeshapaadhaya:
Bhavathpadha-samASrithA bhaya-vimukthymApuryaTA
labhEmahi TaTA vayam sapatthi RanganATa Thvayaa

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Srirangam! Many bhakthAs of yours got freedom from their individual fears by performing SaraNAgathy at Your sacred feet. For instance, Bhaktha PrahlAdhan's fears arising from his father, HiraNyan was destroyed by You; the crow that committed MahA aparAdhams to Your PirAtti got freedom from fears caused by Your BrahmAsthran that was chasing the crow with intent to kill; The king of elephants got freed from the fearsome jaws of the crocodile; Dhroupadhi got freedom from the fears generated by the likes of DhucchAsanan; DharmAthma VibhishaNan got relief from the fears caused by his brother RaavaNan; the snake KaaLiyan was stomped by Your sacred feet and got freedom from his sorrows; the assembly of GopAs and Gopis were saved from the anger of Indhran through Your rakshaNam with Govardhana Giri; King Ambhareeshan escaped from the fear caused by Sage DhurvAsar. There are many others, whose fears were removed, when they sought your protection. May we also follow the footsteps of these MahAthmAs, perform SaraNAgathy at Your sacred feet and live lives free from fear!

(COMMENTS):

“Vayam Sapatthi Thvayaa bhaya vimukthim labhEmahi” is the prayer of Swamy Desikan to Sri RanganAtha. Are there precedents to such an anugraham of freedom from fears by the Lord? Yes, there are many, many instances. Swamy reminds the Lord of those instances and asks Him to bless us in a similar manner.

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

In this slokam, Swamy Desikan's reaction to the assurance of the Lord about protection is recorded. His anger is gone and he lists the other PrapannAs saved by the Lord (PrahlAdhan, Gajendhran, Ambhareeshar, Droupathy et al) in thankful remembrance of the Lord's SaraNAgatha RakshaNa Tatthvam.





SLOKAM 20

भयं शमय रङ्गधाम्नि अनितर अभिलाष स्पृषां
श्रियं बहुळ्य प्रभो श्रित विपक्षम् उन्मूलय ।
स्वयम् समुदितं वपुस्तव निशामयन्तः सदा
वयं त्रिदश निर्वृतिं भुवि मुकुन्द विन्देमहि ॥ २० ॥

bhayam Samaya RangadhAmani anitara abhilAsha spruSAM
Sriyam BahuLaya PrabhO Sritha-vipaksham unmoolaya
svayam samudhitham vapustava niSAmayantha: sadhA
vayam thridaSa nirvruthim bhuvi mukunda vindhEmahi

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvaramangam! In your dhivya dEsams reside many ParamaikAnthis, who do not seek any goal other than you. Due to the Muslim invasions, there is oppressive fear in their minds about interruptions in worshipping you to their heart's content as before. Oh RanganAthA! Please remove their fears! When Sri VaishNavAs are abundant in your dhiva dEsam, it is an indescribable wealth (SrEyas) to Your raajadhAni. Please grow this assembly of BhagavathAs of Yours at Srirangam! Please cut asunder all the amangaLams that stand in the way of Your BhagavathAs enjoying Your Saanidhyam! Oh SarvEswara! You are the One who blesses us with desired phalans in this and the other world. When You grant us the boons of nithya Kaimkaryam here and in Your Supreme abode, we remain contented and tranquil. With Your chasing of our fears resulting from the foreign invaders, we will enjoy Your svayam-vyaktha Archara ThirumEni to our utmost and serve You to the fullest. As a result of this sukha anubhavam at Srirangam, we shall experience the blessed status of Your Nithya sooris (enjoying their BrahmAnanandham) in Your Supreme abode right here in the BhUIOka Vaikuntam on the banks of Cauvery.

(COMMENTS):

The prayer here is: “Vayam svayam-samudhitham Tava vapu: sadhA niSAmayantha: ThridaSa nirvruthim bhuvi vindhEmahi”. May we be blessed with the BrahmAnandham enjoyed by the nithya sooris right here at Srirangam through the sevai of Your Self-manifested archai here? To enable the realization of this desired boon, Swamy Desikan begs the Lord to remove the prevailing fears of ParamaikAnthis committed to serving and enjoying the Lord of Srirangam (anitara abhilAsha-spruSAM bhayam Samaya). Please grow the wealth of VaishNava Sri at Srirangam! (Sriyam BahuLaya) Please root out the enemies of Your BhAgavathAs (Sritha vipaksham unmoolaya).





VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

In this sLOkam, Swamy Desikan responds to the Lord's question to specify what he wishes to have as boon and gives his list of desired items to enjoy right here in Srirangam prior to the residence in Sri Vaikuntam: (1) Please remove the fear in the minds of ParamaikAnthis over the invasion by the Muslims (2) Please grow the Bhaagavatha Sri at Srirangam (3) Please remove to the root all enemies of those, who have surrendered to You and (4) Please bless us to enjoy Your self-manifested ThirumEni at all times.



'Inner Gopuram'





SLOKAM 21

श्रियः परिवृढे त्वयि श्रित जनस्य संरक्षके
सत् अद्भुत गुणोद्घाविति समर्पितोऽयं भरः ।
प्रतिक्षण मतः परं प्रथय रङ्गधामादिषु
प्रभुत्वम् अनुपाधिकं प्रथित हेतिभिर् हेतिभिः ॥ २१ ॥

Sriya: pariBhruDE Thvayi Srithajanasya samrakshakE
sadhadbhutha guNODhadhaavithi samarpithOyam bhara:
prathikshaNamatha: param praTaya RangadhAmAdhishu
Prabhuthvam anupAdhikm praTitha hEthibhir hEthibhi:

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvarangam! You shine as the husband of Periya PirAtti, who is the Mother of the Universe. You are prompted by Her to protect the bhakthAs, who seek Your sacred feet for protection and to gain freedom from their fears. You shine further as the One with no hEya guNams (blemishes) and exist as a vast ocean of KalyANa guNams. Inspired by all these divine aspects of yours, we have laid the burden of our protection at your holy feet. There is yet one thing that You have to do now (i-e). To exercise your intrinsic power (svabhAvika adhikAram) every second by using the radiant Sudarsana chakram on your hand and all the other weapons that you adorn. It is not only at this dhivya dEsam of Thiruvarangam but also at other dhivya dEsams, where You are present in Your archA form, You must use Your abundant and unlimited powers to protect us by removing all the obstacles that confront us.

(COMMENTS):

First Swamy Desikan salutes the Lord with addressing Him as “Sriya: PariBruDE (Bride groom of Periya PirAtti), Sritha Jana samrakshaka (protector of aasritha janams) and sadh-adhbhutha guNa udhadhi (Ocean of lofty and mysterious kalyANa guNams)”. Then Swamy Desikan reminds the Lord: “Thvayi ayam bhara: ithi samarpitha:”. The burden of our protection has been placed at Your feet according to Your Saasthras. The word “ithi” is important here. The Bhara SamarpaNam has been done according to Sath SampradhAyam. Afterwards, there is nothing for us to do. You however have your work cut out. From now (atha: param), it is your duty every second to be wakeful to protect us. How do you discharge your obligatory responsibility as One, who has taken the vow of SaraNagatha RakshaNam? For this purpose, please use the radiant Sudarsanam on Your hand as well as all other weapons You adorn and exercise Your sovereignty as Prapanna Jana rakshakan at Your





Sriranga KshEthram (praTitha hEthibhir-hEthibhi: anupAdhikam Prabhuthvam RangadhAmE praTaya). At the same time, please do not forget the aasritha janams at your other dhivya dEsams, who are also experiencing fear over interruptions in nithya kaimkaryams to You (RangadhAmAdheeshu Prabhuthvam praTaya). Please protect adiyOngaL at every one of your abodes, where You are present in archA roopam!

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Swamy Desikan's SaraNAgathy to Lord Ranganatha is the topic of this sLOkam.



'Mandapam'





SLOKAM 22

कलि प्रणिधि लक्षणैः कलित शाक्य लोकायतैः
तुरुष्क यवनादिभिर् जगति जृम्भमाणं भयम् ।
प्रकृष्ट निज शक्तिभिः प्रसभं आयुधैः पञ्चभिः
क्षिति त्रिदश रक्षकैः क्षपय रङ्गनाथ क्षणात् ॥ २२ ॥

Kali-praNidhi-lakshaNai: kalitha-Saakya-IOkayathai:
thurushka-yavanAdhibhir-jagathi jrumbhamANam bhayam
prakrushta-nija-Sakthibhi: prasabhamAyudhai: panchabhi:
kshthi-thridaSa-rakshakai: kashapaya RanganAtha kshaNath

(MEANING):

Oh RanganAthA! BhouddhAs and ChArvAkAs today make propaganda about their fault-ridden mathams and are set to destroy Your Parama Vaidhika Matham. The Muslims and the Greeks (YavanAs), who appear like special agents of Kali Pursushan, are causing immense injuries to all who follow your srEshta Vaidhika darsanam. The land is experiencing immense fear due to the activities of all these four groups. That fear is growing further and further. Your five weapons are very powerful in destroying the enemies of your devotees. They protect the assembly of Saadhu janangaL. Please use these powerful weapons immediately with force and chase away the fear that is enveloping this land!

(COMMENTS):

Swamy Desikan is getting restless that the damages done by the Muslim invaders and avaidhika matha vaadhis have not been chased away by Lord RanganAtha yet for whatever reasons that the Lord might have. He gets emboldened to suggest some thing even if it looks somewhat sharp. Swamy Desikan's intent is to nudge the Lord to take swift action with His five powerful weapons and forcefully destroy the enemies to the Sath SampradhAyam and restore tranquility by the removal of the fear that has gripped the people of the land. Swamy Desikan reminds the omniscient Lord impatiently that the fear among people is increasing minute by minute (Jagathy jrumbhamANam bhayam). He appeals to the Lord with forcefulness: Please use Your five powerful weapons, which have a history of protecting VaidhikAs, and destroy these foreign invaders in a second forcefully (prakrushta nija sakthibhi:, kshithi thridaSa rakshakai:, panchabhi: Aayudhai: turushaka- YavanAdheen kshaNath prasabham kshapaya). Your weapons have real power as described in the PanchAyudha SthOthram. They have prakrushta nija sakthi. They have a history of being sent with your sankalpam to protect dharmam and Saadhu Janam and accomplish dhushta





vinAsanam. They (the weapons) are five in number. Oh Lord chooses one or more or all of them but quickly put an end to these parivArAm of Kali purushan. Please RESOLVE do so with rapidity and forcefully remove them form your dhivya desam, where nithyArAdhanam for you has been interrupted.

VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

After performing SaraNagathy at the sacred feet of the Lord, Swamy Desikan appeals to the Lord to use His potent weapons to destroy the forces that invaded Srirangam and caused unbearable pain to Jn~Anis and ParamaikAnthis.



‘Jaya Vijaya’





SLOKAM 23

दिति प्रभव देहभिद् दहन सोम सूर्यात्मकं
तमः प्रमथनं प्रभो समुदितास्त्र बृन्दं स्वतः ।
स्ववृत्ति वशवर्तित त्रिदशवृत्ति चक्रं पुनः
प्रवर्तयतु धाम्नि ते महति धर्म चक्र स्थितम् ॥ २३ ॥

Didhi-prabhava-dEhibhith dahana-sOma-SooryAthmakam
tama: pramaTanam PrabhO samudhitha-asthra Bhrundham svatha:
svavrutthi vaSavarthitha thridasa-vrutthi chakram puna:
pravarthayathu dhAmni tE mahathy dharmachakra sTitham

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvarangam! The weapon of Chakram that you hold on your upper right hand is capable of splitting the bodies of the sons of asura MaathA, Dhithi, who are the enemies of dEvAs (Dhithi prabhava dEha-bhith). When one looks at the lustre of this ChakrAyudham, it appears like it has inside it the combined lustre of Agni, Chandran and Sooryan (Dahana-SOma-SooryAthmakam). This Aayudham is known for its power to remove not only external darkness but also internal darkness (tama: pramaTanam) in the form of nescience ajn~Anam). All the other Aayudhams arose out of this ChakrAyudham and derive their power from this disc weapon (samudhitha asthra Brundham). It also holds within itself the lives of the DevAs, since it protects the dEvAs, whenever there is a threat to their lives by the asurAs (sva-vrutthi vaSa varthitha thrudaSa vrutthi). May this ChakrAyudham establish Vaidhika dharmam again at your abode of Srirangam by setting right the dharmachakra (tE mahathy dhAmni dharmachakra sTitim svatha: puna: pravartayathu)!

(COMMENTS):

In the last slokam, Swamy Desikan requested the Lord to use anyone of His five weapons to destroy the enemies of ParamaikAnthis of Srirangam. Quickly, Swamy Desikan realized that there may be confusion in Lord's mind about choosing one over the other and give prominence to that chosen weapon. Swamy Desikan emboldens himself to suggest to the Lord that you do not need all the weapons. You can choose Your ChakrAyudham in place of all the others. He cites the history of ChakrathAzhwAn in previous battles of this kind and also suggests the power of all Aayudhams were derived from ChakrAyudham (BhagavAn's sankalpa sakthi). Swamy Desikan's ShodAyudha SthOthram describes how all the weapons of the Lord are residing in the 16 hands of ChakkaratthAzhwAn. He is the integrated essence of all their individual powers. The revolving of the dharmachakra has been tampered with





by miscreants at your sacred place of residence. Oh RangA! Please order Your Chakram to reestablish (puna: pravarthaya) the dynamics of the dharma chakram (dharma chakra sTithim) by itself (Svatha:).

VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

After seeking the Lord's intervention to chase away the Muslim invaders of Srirangam with any one of the five weapons of the Lord, Swamy specifically seeks the use of the powerful Sudarsana AzhwAn to be commanded to complete this task.



‘Namperumal’





SLOKAM 24

मनु प्रभृति मानिते महति रङ्गधामादिके
दनुप्रभव दारुणैर् दरम् उदीर्यमाणं परैः ।
प्रकृष्ट गुणक श्रया वसुधया च संघुक्षितः
प्रयुक्त करुणोदधिः प्रशमय स्वशक्त्या स्वयम् ॥ २४ ॥

Manu prabhruthi mAnithE mahathy RangadhAmAdhikE
dhanuprabhava dhAruNair-dharam-udheeryamANam parai:
prakrushta guNaka SriyA VasudhayA cha samdhukshitha:
prayuktha karuNOdhadhi: prasamaya svasakthayA svayam

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvarangam! You are the abode of matchless kalyANa guNams. Among them, you choose the guNam named KaruNai mostly for helping the chEtanams. Hence you are recognized as KaruNai Kadal or the ocean of Mercy. Your Sriranga VimAnam has been celebrated by Law giver Manu and King MaandhAthA and has been worshipped by them. The enemies assembled here are more ferocious than the asurAs and are causing such hardships. We fear whether this great vimAnam of yours worshipped by sages and Kings will suffer from the heartless invading Muslim army that has laid siege to Srirangam. Periya PirAtti and BhUmi Devi will be praying to you for removal of our fears about protection for the legendary Sriranga KshEthram. Oh Ranga RaajA! Please put to use your karuNai once again and with your matchless power chase away these dangers and remove our fears.

(COMMENTS):

Oh Lord with celebrated lofty guNams (Prakrushta GuNaka)! The invading army consists of fierce and heartless people, whose cruelty is worse than that of the asurAs. Being primitive marauders intent only on plundering the riches of your temple, they have no respect for Your VimAnam worshipped by great sages and kings. We are full of fear about the desecrations that would be caused to Your VimAnam and other parts of your temple. We are distraught. Knowing what we are going through, we are sure that MahA Lakshmi and BhUmi Devi will be appealing to you to intervene and use your apAra KaruNA guNam and invincible power to remove our fears and restore life back to where it was before the invasion. The heart of Swamy Desikan's prayer is "Sva sakthyA svayam dharam prasamaya". You do not need any help in destroying the bheethi we are experiencing. Please take the initiative and chase away the invaders and restore things at Srirangam to normalcy.





VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

In the previous sLOkam, Swamy Desikan suggested that Sudarsanar alone among the pentad of the Lord's weapons would be sufficient to accomplish the task at hand of destroying the invaders. In this sLOkam, Swamy Desikan suggests to the Lord to use His own radiant power to destroy the vandals and restore peace at Srirangam.



'Sertthi Sevai'





SLOKAM 25

भुजङ्गम विहङ्गम प्रवर सैन्य नाथाः प्रभो
तथैव कुमुदादयो नगर गोपुर द्वारपाः ।
अचिन्त्य बल विक्रमास् त्वमिव रङ्ग संरक्षकाः
जितंत इति वादिनो जगद् अनुग्रहे जाग्रतु ॥ २५

bhujangama vihangama pravara sainya-nATA: PrabhO
taTaiva KumudhAdhayO nagara gOpura dhvArapA:
achinthyA BalavikramAs-Thvamiva RangasamrakshakA:
jithantha ithi vAdhinO jagadhanugraE jAgrathu

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Thiruvarangam! AadhisEshan, Garudan, VishvaksEnar along with other nithya Sooris like Kumudhan (head of Lord's army units), the protectors of Your Koil ramparts, Gopuram and their entrances have valour that is beyond imagination. Their extraordinary deeds of valour in discharge of their duties have been well recorded and revered. They are all determined to defend Thiruvarangam. They have been raising the ghOsham of victory and eulogizing you. It is our prayer that these Nithyasooris protect not only Srirangam like You but also be alert to protect the whole world and its beings from such marauding vandals.

(COMMENTS):

Here Swamy Desikan salutes number of protectors of Srirangam (Ranga SamrakshakA:) They have prowess (Balam) granted by their Lord and are known for their victorious deeds in battles (VikramA:)They are AadhisEshan (Bhujangama pravaran), the head of the clan of serpents; Garudan, the head of the clan of birds; VishvaksEnar, the head of the Lord's army and Kumudhan, assistant to latter. In addition to the above nithya sooris, the other protectors of city, Gopuram, VimAnam and entrances (nagara gOpura dhvAra paa:) belong to the category of Ranga Samrakshakars. Oh Lord! They are like You intent on protecting Srirangam (Thvam iva) and are engaged in singing victory to You (jitham tE vAdhina:). Our prayer is for them to be alert in conferring auspiciousness to the world and being alert about these protective activities (Ranga SamrakshakA: Jagath anugrahe jAgrathu).

VIEWS OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

The Srirangam temple is very precious to Swamy Desikan. In previous sLOkams, he begged for protection of the Lord's city and temple by Sudarsanar and the Lord Himself. Here, our AchAryan requests the Lord to afford security to His own temple through the deployment of His Parijanams like Adhi sEshan, Garudan, VishvaksEnar and dhvAra PaalakAs.





SLOKAM 26

विधिस् त्रिपुर मर्दनस्त्रिदश पुङ्गवः पावकः
यम प्रभृतयोऽपि यद्विमत रक्षणे न क्षमाः ।
रिरक्षिषति यत्र च प्रतिभयं न किञ्चित् क्वचित्
स नः प्रतिभटान् प्रभो शमय रङ्ग धामादिषु ॥ २६ ॥

Vidhis-thripura mardhanas-thridaSa-pungava: pAvaka:
yama prabhruthayOapi yadhvimatha rakshaNE na KshamA:
rirakshipathy yathra cha prathibhayam na kimchith kvachith
Sa na: prathipaDAn PrabhO Samaya RangadhAmAdhishu

(MEANING):

Oh Ranga Prabhu! If a misled-one expresses hate towards You and stands before You as Your enemy, no one, be it Brahma, Sivan, Agni or Indhran on an individual basis or all of them united together can save that enemy from Your anger. If You decide to protect some one, there will be no harm to that fortunate one from any one at all times and places. Such is Your Vaibhavam! You must therefore chase away the enemies of ours, who are harming us at Srirangam by interrupting our worship of you.

(COMMENTS):

Oh RangarAjA! None of the DevAs are powerful to protect some one, who has declared enmity to You (yath vimatha rakshaNE na kshamA:). As in the case of BaaNAsuran, Sivan and His son, SubramaNyan chose the side of the asuran fighting against the Lord and they could not defend their client. They had to run away from the battle field. If Lord decides to protect a devotee of His like PrahlAdhan, nothing can harm him (Yathra cha rirakshithi, kvachith prathibhayam kinchith na:). Your valor is of such loftiness. Therefore, Oh Lord, Please quell the enemies attacking Srirangam.

VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Swamy Desikan presses his case for the Lord's intervention to protect Srirangam from the invading Muslim force. He seeks this boon.





SLOKAM 27

स कैटभ तमो रविर् मधुपराग झञ्झामरुत्
हिरण्य गिरि दारण स्रुटित कालनेमि द्रुमः ।
किमत्र बहुना भजद् भव पयोधिमुष्टिन्दयः
त्रिविक्रम भवत्क्रमः क्षिपतु मङ्क्षु रङ्गद्विषः ॥ २७ ॥

sa KaiDabha tamO ravir MadhupAraka janjacch-jAmaruth
HiraNya giri dhAraNas-thruDitha KaalanEmi dhroma:
kimathra BahunA bhajath bhava payOdhi mushDindhaya:
Thrivikrama bhavathkrama: kshipathu mangshu Rangadhvisha:

(MEANING):

Oh Lord who measured the worlds with Your three steps during ThrivikramAvathAram! You were the lustrous Sooryan to drive away the darkness represented by the Asuran with the name of KaiDabhan during Sri HayagrIvAvathAram. You were the cyclone for swirling the dust of the asuran called Madhu during the same HayagrIvAvathAram. You split in to two the mountain named HiraNya Kasipu during Your avathAram as Narasimhan. You broke the tree of asuran KaalnEmi like a tiny twig. In matters of your valour, there is no need to elaborate more. You are known for sipping in one breath the mighty ocean of samsAram. May this well demonstrated valour of yours come to our rescue now in destroying the enemies of Srirangam quickly!

(COMMENTS):

Your indefatigable valor has been proven in your various avathArams such as Thrivikrama, HayagrIvA, Narasimha and KrishNaa. Regarding Your matchless sakthi and veeryam, there is no need to pile up more instances (athra BahunA Kim?). In addition to the valour displayed in these Vibhava avathArams, you demonstrate every day your power to suck dry the samsAric ocean of your adiyArs (bhajath bhava payOdhi mushtindhaya:). These proven power (ParAkramam) of yours should propel you to action and result in your chasing away the enemies of Srirangam (Sa: Bhavath krama: Ranga dhvisha: mangshu kshipathu). Mangshu means rapidly and Kshipathu refers to the enemies being blown away into oblivion.

VIEW OF OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Swamy Desikan pleads his case once again for the quick destruction of the enemies of Srirangam by the Lord Himself.





SLOKAM 28

यतिप्रवर भारती रस भरेण नीतं वयः
प्रपुल्ल पलितं शिरः परमिह क्षमं प्रार्थये ।
निरस्त रिपु संभवे क्वचन रङ्गमुख्ये विभो
परस्पर हितैषिणां परिसरेषु मां वर्तय ॥ २८ ॥

Yathivarapravara bhArathy rasa bharENa neetham vaya:
prapullapalitham Sira: paramiha kshamam prArTayE
nirastha ripu sambhavE kvachana RangamukhyE vibhO
paraspara hithaishiNAm parisarEshu Maam varthaya

(MEANING):

Oh Lord of Srirangam! I have spent my youth enjoying the nectarine juice of Sri BhAshyam. Now adiyEn has arrived at old age and my hair has turned gray. Now adiyEn has only one request to You for the rest of my life here (i-e), Please bless adiyEn to live amidst Your BhagavathAs at Srirangam or other dhivya dEsams, where there are no enemies, who interfere with adiyEn's enjoyment of You.

(COMMENTS):

Swamy Desikan is arriving at the end point of this Sri Sookthi. He addresses the Lord of Srirangam from his exile at Sathyagalam. He watches the waters of Cauvery rushing to wash the sacred feet of Lord RanganAtha at Srirangam. He becomes nostalgic for the most enjoyable and quite days spent studying AchArya RaamAnuja Sri Sookthi of Sri BhAshyam and initiating his sishyAs about the intricacies and intellectual rigor of that magnum opus. This was during his youth, where he refers to have given 30 rounds of KaalakshEpams on Sri BhAshyam. He is now older and his hair is gray. He thinks of his old age and longs to spend it in a tranquil setting free from jealousy between hot headed BhagavathAs. Swamy Desikan does not mind spending the rest of his life at any dhivya dEsam as long as it is free from contentions, rancours caused by quarreling, egotistic BhaagavathAs. He also wants to be at a place, where there are no enemies for Bhagavath Sevai and Kaimkaryam. In this sIOkam, Swamy Desikan prays to Lord RanganAtha to grant him a boon to spend the remaining period of his life at such an ideal location.





VIEW OF THE OTHER COMMENTATORS:

Swamy Desikan includes a moving prayer to Lord Ranganathan in this sIokam: “May Srirangam as well as all dhivya dEsams, be completely free of the remote possibility even, of any enemy presence! May Peace prevail! May we all live in complete harmony free of hatred, jealousy, competition etc; let each be interested in the good of the other! May You Oh Lord! place adiyEn in such an enviable environment free from asooyai and hatred!

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‘Namperumal on Kalpavahanam’





SLOKAM 29- PHALA SRUTHI SLOKAM

प्रबुध्द गुरु वीक्षण प्रथित वेङ्कटेशोद्भवाम्
इमाम् अभय सिद्धये पठत रङ्गभर्तुः स्तुतिम् ।
भयं त्यजत भद्रम् इति अभिदधत् स वः केशवः
स्वयं घन घृणा निधिर् गुणगणेन गोपायति ॥ २९ ॥

PraBudhda guru veekshaNa praTitha VenkatEsOthbhavAm
imAm abhayasiddhayE paDatha Rangabharthu: sthuthim
bhayam thyajatha bhadhramithyabhidhadhath Sa Va: Kesava:
svayam ghana gruNA nidhir guNagaNEna gOpAyathi

(MEANING):

Oh Best among BhAgavathAs! AdiyEn has been blessed with the cool, nectarine glances of my AchAryAs. adiyEn is respected in this world because of the anugraham of these learned AchAryAs. adiyEn with the name of VenkatEsan has composed this Sri Sookthi of Abheethi Sthavam about the Lord of Thiruvarangam. Please recite the sLOkAs of these Sthavam. That paarAyaNam of this Sthavam will remove all of Your fears. The most merciful Lord of Srirangam will look at You and bless you with the words that He used, when dEvAs were afraid about the troubles that the asurAs were causing them. Sri RanganAthan will comfort You and say: "Please abandon Your fears. May auspiciousness shower on You!". This is exactly what He said to the DevAs in their time of distress; He destroyed their fears and showered them with Sarva MangaLams. Lord RanganAthan will protect You in every way out of His sahaja KaaruNyam and Vaathsalyam.

(COMMENTS):

This is the Phala Sruthi sLOkam of Sri Abheethi Sthavam containing the reassuring message from a MahAchAryan, Swamy Desikan. His Naama Mudhra in this Phala Sruthi sLOkam with "VenkatEsa uthbhavAm" and He recommends to us as an AchAryan to study this sthuthi about Lord RanganAtha "imAm Rangabharthu: sthuthim paDatha". He pays his praNAMams to his great AchAryAs, whose karuNA KadAksham blessed him to have the intellectual capabilities to compose this sthuthi: "PraBhuddha Guru VeekshaNa prathitha VenkatEsa uthbhavAm imAm Sthuthim paDatha". People may still ask: why should I study this sthuthi? What is the prayOjanam? Swamy Desikan gives two answers for such questions:

1. This Sthuthi is about the great Lord of Srirangam (Rangabharthu: sthuthi) and
2. You should recite this sthuthi because it will chase away any fears that you have or would





experience (**Rangabharthu: imAm sthuthim abhaya siddhaye padatha**)

The unconvinced may still ask: Has there been a precedent, where the Lord has removed the fears of others?

Swamy answers:

Yes, when dEvAs trembled with fears about RaavaNan and Kamsan and sought His rakshaNam, Our Lord, who is the abode of intense KaruNai addressed them and asked them to abandon those fears, assured them that all MangaLams would come their way. He followed up on those benedictory words by taking Raama and KrishNa avathArams to destroy the enemies of dEvAs and chased away their fears.



'Swami Desikan'

Swamy Desikan directs us to study Sri Abheethi Sthavam and gives his parting message: That Lord at Srirangam Himself known also as Kesavan with the assembly of anantha kalyANa guNams will protect those who seek His rakshaNam and chase away all their fears (**Sa Kesava: guNa gaNEna Svayam Va: gOpAyathy**).

adiyEn will now conclude this series of postings on Sri Abheethi Sthavam written during the occasion of Prakrutham Srimath Azhagiya Singar's 79th Thirunakshathra Uthsavam with words culled from this magnificent prayer of Swamy Desikan to Lord RanganAthA during a traumatic time at Srirangam. The great RanganAthA heard the prayer of His dear Bhakthan from Sathyamangalam; He chased away the invading army from His sacred dhivya dEsam. Here is the Vaarthai Maalai of prayer:





Ramaa Dayitha! RangabhUramaNa! KrishNa! VishNO! Hari!
Thrivikrama! JanArdhana! Thriyuga NaaTa! NaarAyaNa!
Sakruth PraNatha rakshaNa nithya Vrathee! PrabhO! RangEswara!
Anaga! GuNEsa! Akhila dEhin! RangabhU rasika! DayaanidhE!
Aasritha Kara grahaNa dheekshitha! Ranga PruTvee pathE!
Jagath PathE! Ranga dhurya! SaraNagatha PraNaya bhanga bheetha!
RanganAtha! Moksha DhAyaka Mukundha! Bhayam Kshapaya! Prakrushta GuNaka!
Dharam sva-sakthyA svayam prasamaya!

कवितार्किकसिंहाय कल्याणगुणशालिने ।

श्रीमते वेङ्कटेशाय वेदान्तगुरवे नमः ॥

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