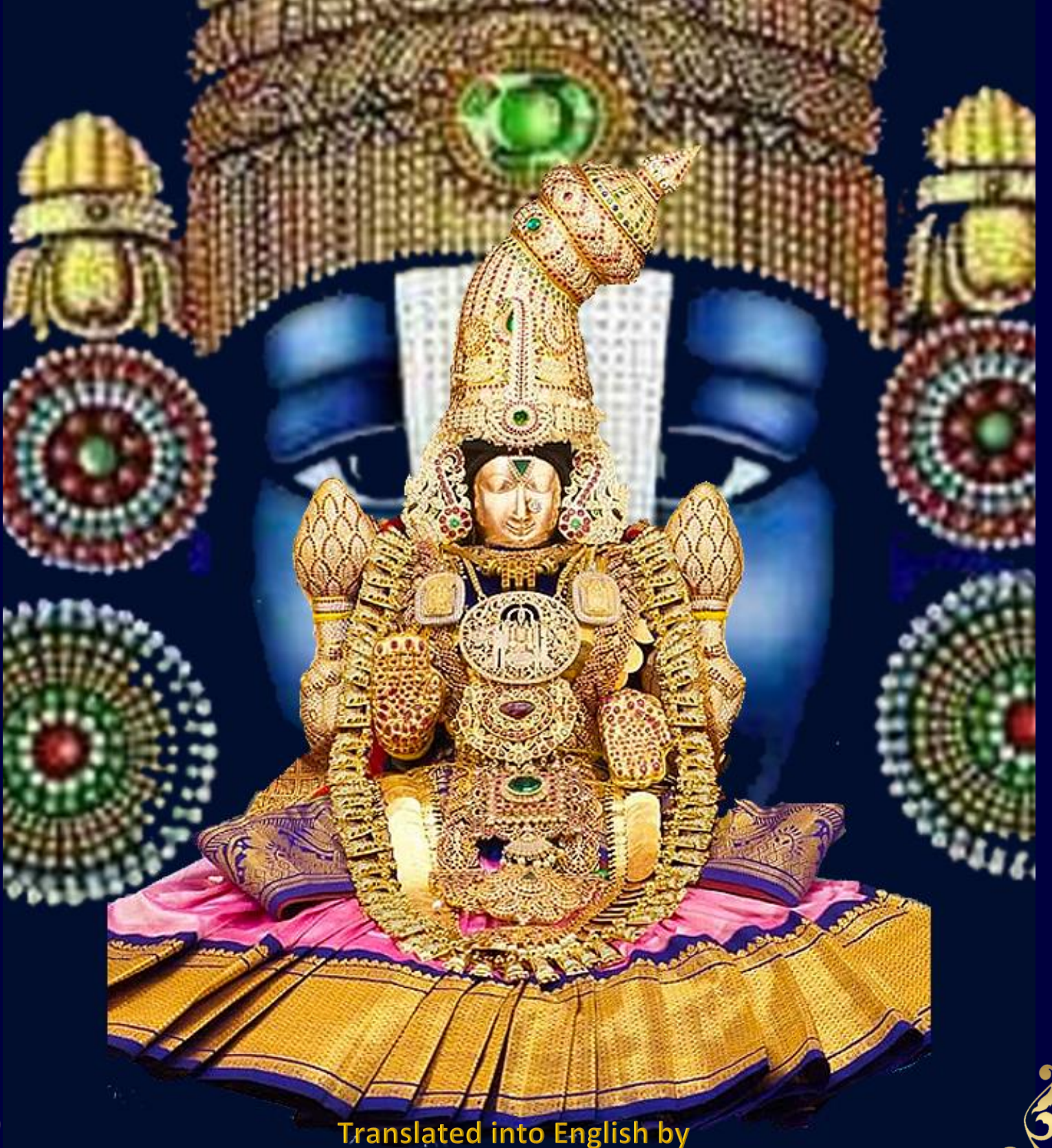


SvAmi NigamAnta MahAdeSikan's  
**Dayaa Satakam**  
(SlokaH 1 – 10)



Translated into English by  
Ammangi Thandalam Muralidhar Rangaswamy

**A humble samarpanam to AcAryAs on the grand occasion of**

**SATAMANA MAHOTSAVAM**

**for**

**HH SrImad PaRavAkkOTTai PeriyANDavan**

**SrI GopAladeSika MahAdeSikan**

**(Sarvari samvatsara Panguni-Rohini)**



Sri:



SvAmi Nigamanta MahaDesikan's

# DAYAA SATAKAM



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## *Preface*



**Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar SvAmi**

**Kalau Venkatanayaka** (Venkatanayaka is the Lord for Kaliyugam) is a glorification of the Lord of Tiruvenkatam. Without discrimination, he graces all equally regardless of who comes out to seek him. The 33 crore Devas, who inhabit the upper regions come down to the Tiruvenkatam Hill to seek the blessings of Lord Srinivasa, while inhabitants of the earth climb up the seven hills to receive his anugraham and are blessed with all they seek. He is known as Srinivasa, since Sri Mahalakshmi Thayar resides in his chest (**Vakshasthalam**). Due to Mahalakshmi taking residence here, he is known as Srinivasa - one who is constantly residing with Sri. If a fitting form were to be assigned to the Daya gunam of Lord Srinivasa, it would unmistakably be Mahalakshmi Thayar as evidenced by Swami Desikan's Daya Shatakam tribute. In fact the sacred Seven Hills themselves are a manifestation of the Lord's Daya. One who bears Mahalakshmi Thayar, the embodiment of anugraham and in whose dictionary the term punishment is non-existent, and one who stands on top of the Hill that is a manifestation of the Daya gunam, as a consequence predominantly exhibits this quality among his numerous kalyana gunams. Therefore, it is important to note that the singular characteristic for Lord Srinivasa is the Daya gunam. Therefore, Swami Desikan rather than glorifying Lord Srinivasa decided to glorify the Daya gunam, which is the cause for His loftiness in the Daya Satakam tribute. There are a lot of connections between Swami Desikan and Lord Srinivasa upon close examination. Swami Desikan was himself an avataram of Lord Srinivasa as evidenced by the salutations "**venkateshAvataroyam tat ghaNTam sotavAbhavet**" and "**TiruvenkatanAthanin guruvAi**" as enunciated by Swami Kumara Varadachariar. If one examines the avatara charithram and instances in the life of Swami Desikan one cannot find even a trace of nigrham (destruction of evil). Instead it is replete with anugraham born out of compassion. Because, he was verily a daya svarupi, if one examines the slokams of Daya Satakam in detail, it becomes apparent that Swami Desikan himself was a manifestation of Daya Devi. Therefore,

Swami Desikan is considered an avataram of Daya Devi herself. Daya Shatakam is a majestic tribute and can be considered a masterpiece of Swami Desikan. It is replete with extraordinary usages, content, and messages (soR cheRivum poruL cheRivum adangya migavum uyarnda stotram). It is not easy to expound upon the meanings of the individual slokams of this beautiful work by Swami Desikan. “Due to the munificent grace of Acharyas, adiyen was blessed to undertake the upanyasam of Daya Satakam during the month of Margazhi. At that time a great Mahan arrived and asked adiyen what did you do during the Margazhi month? Adiyen replied that due to Acharya anugraham adiyen had the bhagyam of undertaking Daya Satakam upanyasam to which he remarked “Daya Satakam. You?”. This was meant to illustrate the loftiness of Daya Satakam and one’s inability to fully bring out the purport of the individual verses. This is an appropriate statement. However, even so for vAksAphalyam and due to Acharya anugraham, adiyen undertook this task. This is adiyen’s state even today. However, due to the grace of the Mahan, Sri Gopaladesika Mahadesikan (Paravakottai Andavan Swamy), the foremost among those endowed with virakthi, one of his sishtyas Sri Veeravalli Raghunathachar Swami, who had great bhakthi for the Acharya requested adiyen to undertake the upanyasam of the individual verses of the Daya Satakam. Bhagavata’s request became a command for adiyen. If anything worthy exists in the content of these upanyasams it is entirely due to Acharya anugraham and the blessings of adiyen’s parents. This was the main reason for adiyen undertaking this commitment. Swami Desikan ensured a successful completion of this kaimkaryam. Using adiyen’s upanyasam as the source, Sri Muralidharachar submitted the request for producing an English e-book version, which remained true to the purport of adiyen’s exposition with the addition of viseshams from other Mahan’s vyakhyanam mostly succinct encapsulation of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Swami’s anubhavam. Sri Muralidharachar is a devout follower, bhakta, and sishtya of H.H. Srimad Paravakottai Andavan Swami, Sri Gopaladesika Mahadesikan. Therefore, starting with the Sathamana Mahotsavam of this great saint, it is planned to release one Slokam every Saturday. Due to the anugraham of his Acharya, this kaimkaryam will be successful. He is ably supported by Smt. Jayashree Desikachari, who provided superb pictorial illustrations for the e-book, which greatly enhances the presentation. Adiyen conveys his Dhanyavadam to Smt. Jayashree Desikachari and Sri Muralidharachar. It is adiyen’s prayer that all readers should beget the kataksham of Swami Desikan, Daya Devi, and Acharya with growth of Kaimkarya Sri.



## *foreword*



At the command of **Sri U.Ve. Sadagopan SvAmin** (who is an AchAryan for aDiyEn), aDiyEn is sharing a few reflections on Dayaa Devi from source commentaries on the Dayaa Satakam. aDiyEn is extremely grateful to **Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Swamin** for graciously granting permission to use his upanyasams as source material for this e-book as well as his yeoman efforts in carefully reading the summary of each verse and suggesting changes to the narrative. aDiyEn is also extremely thankful for Acharya anugraham from **H.H. Srimad Paravakottai Andavan (Prakrutham Acharyan) of Srimad Poundarikapuram Andavan Swami Ashramam** for permission to use material from U.Ve. Sri Shaili Patrachariar Swamin's original commentary. aDiyEn realizes that he is most unfit for this gargantuan task and therefore requests forbearance from all readers for the numerous shortcomings of this narrative.







SrImad venkaTanAthArya tvadIya caraNadvayam |  
bhavatvatra paratrApi madIyam SaraNam sadaa | |

Srimate NigamAnta MahadesikAya namaH | |

Srimate Gopaladesika MahadesikAya namaH | |



Sri:



SvAmi Nigamanta MahaDesikan's

# DAYAA SATAKAM



## *AvatArikai:*

Dayaa is the most important kalyANa guNam (auspicious quality) of Lord NArAyaNa. Therefore SvAmi NigamAnta Desikan has chosen to glorify this attribute of the Lord of Seven Hills in his Dayaa Satakam. Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar SvAmin eloquently notes in his upanyasam "In all of SvAmi Desikan's works, the title itself contains the subject of his tribute. For example, MahAveera Vaibhavam glorifies the valor of Lord Rama through salutations such as *asahAya shoora* and *anapAya sAhasa*. DevanAyaka PanchAshat conveys key messages about the Lord of Tiruvaheendrapuram through glorification such as *tridashaikanAtha*, *vibhudhaikanAtha*, *amarthyanaAtha*, and *suparvanAtha*, while Sri Stuti eulogizes Mahalakshmi ThAyAr through salutations such as *lakShmIH padmaa jaladi tanayaa viShNupatnIndireti*. Going by this logic, Dayaa Satakam should have been titled SrInivAsa Dayaa Satakam. However, SvAmi Desikan intentionally used the title Dayaa Satakam to reflect the combined mercy of the Divine Couple as evidenced in the concluding verse of this majestic stotram: *dInAlambana divya dampati dayaa kallola kolAhala:*"

SvAmi Desikan's genius comes through in that his glorification of Dayaa, an auspicious quality of Lord SrInivAsa, is given a concrete form, namely, ThAyAr. It may be helpful to note that SvAmi Desikan spent very little time at Tirumalai and hence there is only one stotram in praise of the Lord of Seven Hills. Here too the reference to Lord SrInivAsa is not direct and comes about through Dayaa Devi. The reason for this becomes apparent from the Desika mangaLam tribute "*venkateshAvataroyam tat ghantAm sotavAbhavet*". Since SvAmi Desikan was an

incarnation of the Lord SrInivAsa, he chose not to glorify Himself and instead focused his eulogies on Sri RanganAtha, Sri DevanAyaka, and Sri VaradarAja.

How did the composition then come about? SvAmi Desikan authored commentaries on the Divya Prabandham such as **TAtparya RatnAvali**, **DramiDopanishat sAram**, and **nigama parimaLam**. SvAmi's disciples submitted that a Sanskrit work in stotram form would be extremely valuable for nitya pArayaNam and therefore SvAmi composed the **Dayaa Satakam**. This stotram can be enjoyed in several ways: (1) A prima facie tribute to the auspicious quality of Dayaa (2) A tribute to SvAmi NammAzhvAr (3) An encapsulation of TiruvAimozhi in 108 majestic verses. The last facet becomes readily apparent while examining the structure of the stotram, which has ten themes:

1. **Slokams 1-10**: Lord SrInivAsa is the only one who can grant the boon of moksham resulting in eternal kaimkaryam to the divya dampatis
2. **Slokams 11-20**: He is the omniscient one
3. **Slokams 21-30**: He removes all obstacles that come in the way of sharaNagataas desirous of moksham
4. **Slokams 31-40**: He is the object of all worthwhile endeavors
5. **Slokams 41-50**: He is the fruit of these endeavors
6. **Slokams 51-60**: He is readily accessed by the path of SharaNagati
7. **Slokams 61-70**: He rushes to the succor of his supplicants with the same anxiety regardless of whether they are the smallest of the small or greatest of the great emperors
8. **Slokams 71-80**: He is the supreme principle residing on top of the VenkatAchalam hill
9. **Slokams 81-90**: He takes his principal avataras to demonstrate his easy accessibility
10. **Slokams 91-100**: He is capable of granting the bliss arising from eternal kaimkaryam in SriVaikuntam in this leela vibhuti itself

**Slokams 101-108** constitute the Phala Shruthi to bring the number of shlokams to an auspicious number corresponding to the number of SriVaishnava Divya Desams.

This construct closely mirrors the 10 themes that are contained in the Tiruvaimozhi of SvAmi NammAzhwar. In the process SvAmi Desikan follows the



path trodden by great masters such as BhAshyakArar and SvAmi AlavandAr in bringing out insights from their Sri Suktis bearing eloquent testimony to Sri Andar's TiruppAvai declaration "mElayAr seyvanagal".

Sri U.Ve. Valaypettai Ramachar SvAmin's superb anubhavam is quoted again "Vedam connection to Dayaa Satakam avatArikai can be seen from the tribute "Anando brahme divya jAnAt AnandAdhyeva khalvimAni bhUtAni jAyante Anandena jAtAni jeevanti Anandam prayantyabhisam vishantIti, which glorifies Brahman in terms of Ananda gunam. The inner meaning is that the gunam itself is not Brahman, but Brahman is replete with Anandam. In a like manner, the Lord of Seven Hills replete with Dayaa gunam is saluted by SvAmi Desikan. We may also note the equivalence to Ramayanam in the sense that SvAmi Desikan was equally capable as Valmiki Maharishi in terms of poetic skills. Just as Valmiki instructed Lava and Kusha in the Ramayana and made them render it in the Sabha of Rama, SvAmi Desikan too conceived the Sabha consisting of great sages, Nitya Suris such as Ananta and Vishvaksena, supported by Nachiyars Sri Devi, BhU Devi and Neela Devi. The fitting venue for this Sabha is the seven hills of Venkatachalam delivered in the presence of the Lord himself!



This stotram is replete with Vishaya vailakshaNyam (majesty of the subject), vaktru vailakshaNyam (exalted stature of the author), Prabandha vailakshaNyam (multiple perspectives woven in from Arya and Dravida Vedam) and Phala vailakshaNyam (the benefit of reciting the stotram)" It is also helpful to recall the anubhavam of H.H. Srimad Paravakottai Andavan SvAmi, who blessed us with the upanyasam "pirAttiumpirAnum seidha upakAram" wherein he notes "Our sampradayam is graced with the presence of 5 Devis - Sri Devi, BhU Devi, Neela Devi, Dayaa Devi, and Padukaa Devi. One may ask

who is Dayaa Devi? The answer is unmistakably ThAyAr with the pramANam coming from the Sri Stuti salutation VishNu kAntE dayAm tE"





prapadhye taM giriM



## Sloka 1

प्रपद्ये तं गिरिं प्रायः श्रीनिवासानुकम्पया ।

इक्षु सार स्रवन्त्येव यन्मूर्त्या शर्करायितम् ॥ १ ॥

prapadhye taM giriM praayaH shrInivaasaanukampayaa |  
ikshu saara sravantyeva yanmuurtyaa sharkaraayitam || 1



In the first verse, SvAmi Desikan conveys the essence of his tribute. The opening statement “**Prapadye**” (*prathama purusha Ekavachana*) unmistakably points to the path of unconditional total surrender. It may be helpful to note that several Desika Stotrams employ the usage prapadye such as “**devam hayagrivamaham prapadye**”, “**tvAm sharaNyAm prapadye**”, “**vishvambarAma sharaNa: sharaNam prapadye**”, and “**GodAmananya sharaNa: sharaNam prapadye**”. We may remember that **prapannajana santAna kUtasthar**, SvAmi NammAzhwar, performed his formal SaraNagati to the Lord of Seven Hills in the famous **ahala illEn** pasuram. Also SvAmi Alavandar declares in the Siddhi trayam that among the 3 Rahasyas, the Lord of Seven Hills denotes the Charma Slokam, which is the most straightforward advocacy of the doctrine of SaraNagati. In keeping with these declarations, SvAmi Desikan commences the Dayaa Satakam tribute with the statement prapadye.

Next it may be asked to whom is SvAmi performing the surrender? This answered in the very next statement “**tam girim**”. The Hill referred to here is the Venkatam hill.

Adiyen quotes from the anubhavam of Sri Mukkur Lakshminarasimhachariar SvAmin here “It may be remembered that when Lord Narayana decided to incarnate as SrInivAsa, the 7 Khandams of the Yajur vedam and the 7 swarams of the Saman submitted their appeal to the Lord to incarnate as mountains that would bear the Lord’s Lotus Feet. The Lord immediately granted their request and hence the seven hills are known as Vedagiri. SvAmi Desikan salutes this in his Tamil prabandham as “**veda verpE**.” In keeping with the sacredness of the seven Hills, we may also note that SvAmi Sri Bhashyakarar, refused to climb up to the top.

Instead after repeated pleas from his shishyas, Sri Bhashyakarar climbed up the hills using his knees.

The Venkatam hill is elaborated upon by Sri Valayapettai Ramachar SvAmin in his anubhavam as “Venkatam means that which burns up one’s sins. Therefore, the SaraNagati is interpreted as **pApa nivrutti**. It also means **venkAram** (*Amrutha Bhljam*) while **katam** denotes the Wealth. This lends itself to the interpretation of bliss arising from uninterrupted kaimkaryam to the Divine Couple. Therefore, the opening statement is a condensed version of the subject of the tribute as well as the benefit arising from the act. SvAmi Desikan does not stop here. He further glorifies the hill as the solidified crystalline sugar candy form arising from the torrential flow of the Lord’s Dayaa, which is like sweet tasting sugarcane juice. This gives a concrete form to the Hill.”



SvAmi NammAzhvar and Sri LakshmiHayagrivar –  
SriMad Andavan Poundarikapuram SvAmi Asramam, SriRangam

It is also important to recall the anubhavam of H.H. Srimad Paravakottai Andavan SvAmi “This Slokam documents the supremacy of archAvataram over all other forms. Why? It is impossible to behold Lord Narayana in SriVaikuntam by pratyaksham. In order to provide sevai for devatas such as Brahma, Rudra, and Indra, he takes VyUha avatars such as Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. However, is it possible to fill a kalasam with milk from the milky ocean where He is reclining on His serpent bed? No. In a like manner, he takes on Vibhava avatars, which can only be enjoyed by those who were fortunate to be born at the time of these avatars.

This is akin to the rain waters being available only during the rainy season but making way for parched land during the summer. HARda form of the Lord is



extremely difficult to behold due to extraordinary requirements of upAsana. This is like trying to dig a well not knowing when water will surface. Therefore, these avatarams of the Lord while delectable are like the hard-to-obtain sweet tasting sugarcane juice. On the other hand, behold the glorious archa form of Lord SrlnivAsa, which is like the ready to partake sugar candy.” Again, aDiyEn quotes from the anubhavam of Sri Mukkur Lakshminarasimhachariar SvAmin “Lord Rama went from one place to another to grace his Bhaktas and is therefore glorified as **jangama pArijAta** in the Mahaveera Vaibhavam. However, Lord SrlnivAsa is forever located in the same place offering the instruction “come seeking me at your convenience, I am always here for you” and therefore is suitable for glorification as **sthAvara pArijAta**”.

The padam **anukampa** is elaborated upon again by Sri Valayapettai Ramachar SvAmin as “In keeping with the vedam salutation **bhIshAsmAd vAtah pavate, bhIshodeti sUryah**, other deities like vAyu, Surya, Agni, Indra, and Yama tremble with fear of the awe-inspiring emperuman, and carry out their prescribed duties. However, does something cause EmperumAn to tremble? Indeed it is the suffering of those that have surrendered to him. This is seen from his anxiety to rush to the help of Gajendra. At that time, the Lord was in the company of his consorts, resting on his serpent bed. However, upon hearing the cry of the elephant, He rose in a fit, disregarded the query of Vishvaksena, and set out without his Padukas to mount Garuda and rush to the rescue of Gajendra. Here too finding the speed of Garuda to be inadequate, he used the Sudarshana Chakra to provide immediate relief to Gajendra. This trembling caused by the difficulties encountered by his SaraNagatas is defined to be **anukampa**.” It may also be noted that SvAmi Desikan quotes verbatim from Srimad Bhagavatam, where Veda Vyasa employs the salutation “**SrinivasAnukampayA**”.



## Sloka 2

विगाहे तीर्थ बहुलां शीतलां गुरु सन्ततिम् ।

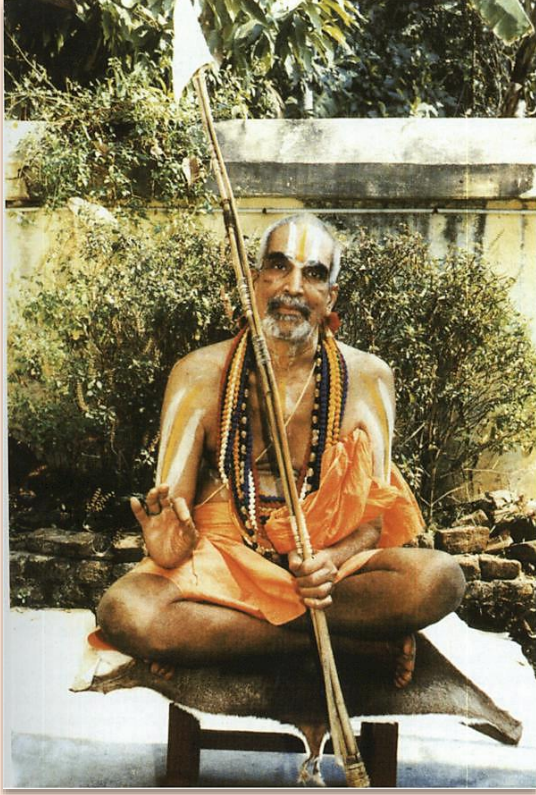
श्रीनिवास दयाम्भोधि परीवाह परम्पराम् ॥२॥

vigaahē tīrtha bahulaaM shītalaaM guru santatim |  
shrInivaasa dayaambhodhi parIvaaha paramparaam || 2



Anubhavam of Sri Valayapettai Ramachar SvAmin “In the previous verse SvAmi Desikan chose the venue (Sabha) for delivering his tribute as the Venkatam Hill and offered a salutation to the place. This could very well be viewed as the arena or stage for Rangapravesam/arangEtram of Dayaa Satakam. In such an occasion, it is customary to invite parama Aptas first before inviting all others. In this case SvAmi Desikan deems the Azhvars and Acharyas to be the first ones to invite through a salutation. The inner meaning here is that in order to approach Emperuman it is important to first seek the anugraham of Acharyas. For example in daily tiruvaradhanam, during AdhAra shakti, one seeks the blessings of Acharyas before engaging in aradhanam. In the NyAsa Vimshati opening verse, SvAmi Desikan salutes Acharyas as **dlrghabandhum dayALum**, instructing us in the fact that Acharyas have a lasting bond with their Sishyas. This bond is not merely valid as long as the Acharyas inhabit leela vibhUti but also prevails after the Acharyan attains Nitya vibhUti. How so? Through the Acharya Sri Suktis, which last way beyond their lifetime, just as we are enjoying the meanings of the individual padams of the Dayaa Satakam slokams more than 650 years after the incarnation of SvAmi Desikan concluded and SvAmi ascended Paramapadam. This bond also prevails in SrIvaikuntam, where the liberated jivan recognizes the Acharyan and upon offering salutations to the Acharyan engages in uninterrupted kaimkaryam for the Divya Dampatis. In this context, it is important to note that there are many kinds of relationships most of which are fleeting. For example, while traveling in a train or a bus one forms associations with fellow travelers and engage in small talk for the duration of the travel. Perhaps after a perfunctory exchange of contact information prior to travel completion, these associations are mostly forgotten. However, unlike these the association with one’s Acharyan is long-lasting/permanent. The fact that Acharyas are most compassionate towards their shishyas is reflected in the **dayALum** salutation.





SrImad ParavAkkOTTai Periya Andavan  
SrImad Gopala Mahadesikan SvAmi

Acharyas have performed **avagAha snAnam** (deep immersion). In this context, the reference is to Azhvars (Azhndavar), who had dived deeply in the path of Bhakti for Lord Narayana. Their Sri Suktis are the cool waters arising from the ocean of mercy known as SrlnivAsa Dayaa. Such Acharya Parampara is respectfully saluted in this verse. A key idea from Srimad Rahasya TrayasAram embedded in this verse is also captured eloquently in the Devanayaka Panchasat salutation:

**devAdhinAtha kamalaa prutanesha  
pUrvAm dIptAntarAm vakuLabhUShaNa  
nAtha mukhyaiH | rAmAnuja  
prabhurutibhiH paribhUShitAgrAm goptrIm  
jaganti gurupanktim aham prapadye ||**

Surrender to the guru parampara originating from Lord Narayana, including Sri, Vishvaksena, NammAzhvar, Sri

Nathamuni Acharya, Sri YamunAcharya, and Sri Bhashyakarar, capable of protecting the entire universe is advocated here. This verse establishes the centrality of Sri Bhashyakara to the Sampradayam in that if the guru parampara originating from Lord Narayana to present day Acharyas is viewed as a garland, Sri Bhashyakarar becomes the central dollar. The inner meaning is that Acharyas preceding him became distinguished on account of his Tirumudi Sambandam, whereas Acharyas that followed him became sanctified on account of his Tiruvadi Sambandam.

The mahopakaram rendered by the Acharyas is that the torrential flow of Dayaa Devi containing powerful currents is capable of sweeping away anyone in its wake. On the other hand, Azhvars and Acharyas absorb this gushing flow of Dayaa and make it suitable for bathing by creating gentle outlets of cool and soothing water bodies rendering them fit for immersion by shishyas. The inner meaning is that EmperumAn's Dayaa may be difficult to comprehend/absorb on one's own accord. However, Azhvars and Acharyas through their compassion make this Dayaa stream readily available to their shishyas through their Sri Suktis."







Sri Shaili Patrachariar SvAmin's anubhavam is also mentioned here

"I now descend into the stream-flow coming from the large overflowing pond of Dayaa of Lord SrlnivAsa. This stream has many bathing ghats so to say, corresponding to the various Acharyas in our Guru parampara. The inner meaning is that I pay homage to our great Acharya lineage of Nathamuni, Yamunamuni, Ramanujacharya, and others prior to them. The stream has cool water. It is a great service to hold the Dayaa flow in status quo without overflowing and being dissipated. There are many such convenient bathing spots (another interpretation of **avagAha snAnam**) as in the Ganga and Kaveri river. These are convenient descent spots for us. Since the stream is pure, cool, holy, and sanctified due to being the Dayaa flow of Lord SrlnivAsa, these bathing spots (Acharyas) too are helpful, cool, sweet, and holy to redeem me, purify me, and elevate me. A number of ideas central to the sampradayam are embedded in this verse through a careful selection of words.

1. We are enabled to taste the elevating Dayaa of Lord SrlnivAsa that will emancipate us. This is possible only by resorting to the sacred works of holy Acharyas like Nathamuni, Alavandar, and Sri Bhashyakarar.

2. Rivers such as the Ganga are known for their torrential flow and strong currents. Since it is risky to attempt a bath, when the river is in spate, one depends on bathing ghats. In a similar manner to avoid being overwhelmed by the pravAham of SrlnivAsa Dayaa, kind Acharyas have provided bathing ghats for our safe descent and comfortable immersion.

3. The term parivAha suggests overflow, while parampara suggests steps, or a series of ghats.

4. The equivalence between the Dayaa-Parampara and Acharya-Parampara is made in this verse. The compassion of Acharyas is enormous. That alone will guarantee to us the Lord's Dayaa"

It may be helpful to note that in the context of **ArchirAdi mArgam** described through the prapadye salutation from the previous verse, the reference to Acharyas in this verse seems to allude to the Chandogya Upanishad salutations "**AchAryaddhaiva vidyaa viditaa sAdhiShTham prApati iti**" (In a conversation with his Guru Gautama, Satyakama-Jabala remarks that knowledge gained from an Acharya alone leads one to ultimate good) and "**AchAryastu tE gatim vakta**" (Upakosala had mastered Agni upasanam. Please with his dedication, the three agnis, **AhavanIyam**, **gArhapatyam**, and **dakshiNAgni**, offered him a boon.

Upakosala requested that he be instructed in ArchirAdi margam. The three agnis declined this request and advised him to seek this instruction from an Acharyan).





### Sloka 3

कृतिनः कमलावास कारुण्यैकान्तिनो भजे ।

धत्ते यत्सूक्ति रूपेण त्रिवेदी सर्वयोग्यताम् ॥ ३ ॥

krutinaH kamalaavaasa kaaruNyai kaantino bhaje |  
dhatte yatsUkti rUpeNa trivedI sarvayogyataam ||3



In this verse the glory of the Azhvars is brought out further. The anubhavam of Sri Valayapettai Ramachar SvAmin is quoted first “In the Rama avataram, the Lord upon killing Ravana instructed Lakshmana to enter Lanka and perform the Pattabhishekam of Vibhishana. Upon completion of this task, when Lakshmana returned to Rama’s side, the Lord remarked, “I have now completed the task that I had set out to accomplish and the purpose of my coming here crossing the sea has been served”. This is the import of the padam **kruti**, namely completing that which one sets out to accomplish. In a like manner or perhaps even better, the Azhvars exceed the Lord in this regard.

Why is this true? The Lord has provided us with Sastras to lead our lives properly. Among the Sastras, the Vedas reign supreme in keeping with the statement “**veda shAstrAt param nAsti na daivam keshavAt param**—there is no Sastram greater than the Vedas and there is no deity greater than Keshava”. In this regard, the affection that is displayed by the Vedas is thousand times greater than the combined affection of parents for their children and is therefore meant for their well-being. When it comes to a mother, there is no question of discriminating between her children. All of them are privy to motherly love equally. However, in the case of the Vedas exuding their motherly love, although they would like to grace everyone equally, they are bound by restrictions on who can and who cannot recite the Vedas. In particular, women and those belonging to the fourth caste are not privy to the Vedas. Therefore, exclusions inevitably arise. Here is where the Azhvars come to the rescue by rendering their Sri Suktis, which contain the messages from the Vedas in chaste Tamil, which is suitable for all, regardless of caste, creed, sex, or affiliation. Therefore, entire humanity can receive the benefit of following the instructions from the Vedam and gain elevation. Due to this mahopakaram, the Azhvars can lay claim to accomplishing what even the Lord was

unable to do in his numerous avatarams. Therefore, they are superior to the Lord with respect to **Kruti**.

When Emperuman decided to incarnate as SrlnivAsa, Dayaa Devi sent out the Nityasuris such as Anantha, Garuda, Vishvaksena et al under the pretext of performing mangalAsasanam to the Lord. These Nitya Suris were in the form of Azhvars, whose singular purpose was to bring out the esoteric messages of the Vedam in simple-to-understand tamil. It must also be remembered that the Vedam functions as the life breath of Lord Narayana as glorified through the salutation **nishvAsitam veda**: If he incarnated as Rama, the Vedam took the form of Ramayanam as evidenced by the salutation **veda prAcetasAdAslth sAkshAt rAmAyaNAAtmanaH vedAtma vihageshvaraH** is the salutation of SvAmi Alavandar. GarutmAn is saluted as **Veda svarUpi**. When it comes to the Azhvars, SvAmi Alavandar salutes them through the tribute **matApitAyuvatastanayAvibhUtiH** which goes to show that SvAmi NammAzhvar's Feet are the mother, father and everything for me and my followers, which includes sishya paramparai and everyone associated with me. SvAmi NammAzhvar's pasurams contained the essence of the Vedam in a manner suitable for use by all. This anugraham coming about due to the grace of Dayaa Devi is saluted by SvAmi Desikan as **yat sUktirUpENa trivedi sarvayogyatAm dhatte** in this verse. The enormity of SvAmi NammAzhvar's anugraham is best illustrated by the KaNNinun SiruttAmbu tribute of Madhurakavi Azhvar

**AruLkoNDaDum aDiyavar inbura**—Bhagavatas gain delight from the outpourings of SvAmi NammAzhvar

**AruLinAn avvaru maRayin poruL**—He blessed us with the inner meanings of the Vedam

**AruL konu Ayiram intamizh pADinAn**—His grace came in the form of 1000 pasurams in chaste Tamil

**AruL kanDir ivvulaginil mikkadE**—Can there be any greater blessing conferred upon us? This illustrates the importance of SvAmi NammAzhvar to the sampradayam, which enabled the upliftment of all. In this context, NammAzhvar is used as the upalakshaNam for all the Azhvar outpourings and thus praises the contribution of all the Azhvars as kruti.

Next the focus turns to **kArUnyaikAntinobhaje**. Various purushArthas can be gained by worshipping various deities as outlined by the Slokam "**Arogyam bhAskarAt icchet shrimyamtu hutAshanAt**" namely Surya confers good health,



while worship of Agni confers wealth. Rudran grants knowledge, while Janardhana grants moksham. All deities except LORD Narayana can only confer limited benefits. However, Lord Narayana is the one-stop shopping convenience for getting all benefits earthly and beyond. Therefore, an **ekAnti** is one who seeks all of these purushArthas exclusively from Lord Narayana by offering prayers to Him alone (jnAnam from Hayagrivar, wealth from ThAyAr, and moksham itself from the Divine Couple). However, a **paramaikantin** is one who is only desirous of uninterrupted kaimkaryam for the Divine Couple-even Moksham becomes a mere by-product of this singular goal. In this context, the Azhvars are matchless paramaikantins.



**Vishvaksena incarnated as SvAmi NammAzhvAr to perform kaimkaryams to the Lord in Leela Vibhuti!**

This is evidenced from SvAmi NammAzhvar's tribute "**emmAveTTu thiramum cheppam**". SvAmi NammAzhvar was enjoying a communion with Lord.

Lord Narayana was extremely pleased with the Azhvar's tribute and asked the Azhvar why don't you come with me? I shall grant you moksham. To this SvAmi NammAzhvar asks, what is it that I gain by moksham? To this the Lord answers freedom from the pangs of thirst, hunger, sleep, karma, and the unending cycle of births and deaths. There will be no bodily ills afflicting you and you will be replete with the 8 gunams characterizing the Brahman as expounded upon in the Chandogya Upanishad. To this the Azhvar replies if this is all I get in moksham, I do not want moksham. Here a question arises, namely why is the Azhvar discarding the parama purushArtham being offered directly by the Lord. This is because of the kaimkarya ruchi of the Azhvar for uninterrupted kaimkaryam for the Divine Couple. The Azhvar says can moksham confer me this benefit? If yes, I shall gleefully accept it. If not nothing is lost, and the kaimkaryam for the Divine Couple in leela vibhuti continues. This attitude of the Azhvar renders him as a Paramaikantin par excellence.

Next, it is helpful to examine the slokam from the standpoint of the fundamental sampradayaic tenets of **kAraNa avastai** and **kArya avastai**. For example, clay can be transformed by capable hands into a pot. Clay by itself has little use. On the other hand the pot has multiple uses. However, the clay is the material cause for the pot. Similarly a bar of gold, while valuable has little use. On the other hand if it is made into an ornament such as a ring, bangle, or necklace it becomes useful. The clay or the gold bar are **kAraNa avastai**, whereas the pot or the ornaments are **kArya avastai**. In the context of this slokam it is helpful to refer to an ancient maNipravALam commentary by the great Acharyan, Sri. U.Ve. TiruvahIndrapuram SvAmin, who eloquently notes that the Vedam replete with difficult-to-understand passages is like the gold bar. On the other hand the genius of the Azhvars has transformed the Vedam into a beautiful ornament through their aruLicheyal suitable for use by all. Therefore, the Sri Suktis of the Azhvars are a matchless treasure."

The anubhavam of Sri Shaili Patrachariar SvAmin is reproduced next

"I now pay obeisance to the great fortunate seers, who were singularly attached to the receipt of SrInivAsa's Karunya shower-who had no other interest, no activity, no hope, no agenda other than this. They became achievers of what one ought to achieve in this world. Their "Divine Poetic Works" attained the reputation of being resorted to by all men and women, indiscriminately, without regard to their level of birth or intellectual attainment. The virtue of universality cannot be claimed by the three Sanskrit Vedas. However, their mapping into



delectable Tamil verses through the Azhwar Sri Suktis made the otherwise intractable Vedic content accessible in Tamil to all men and women. These Azhvars are denoted by the term **krutinaH** meaning great fortunate achievers. We routinely hear about individuals receiving honors and accolades for a lifetime of achievement. In the case of Azhvars they were masterly achievers, who need to be glorified for a multitude of lifetime achievements. Their achievements are briefly summarized below:

1. They made the otherwise intractable Sanskrit Vedas and their tenets, mandates and philosophical content available to all in the Tamil language. It is to be noted that this is not a mere translation of the Arya Vedam into Tamil, but a majestic outpouring conforming to the tenets of Ashu kavi, Chitrakavi, Madhura kavi etc in terms of poetic excellence.

2. Azhvar's works are original wisdom. They were irrefutably born into this world because SrInivAsa Dayaa wished to help humanity.

3. They were not only recipients of the Lord's Dayaa in abundance, but also instructed the world that people's only hope of salvation lay in the Lord's Dayaa.

4. They claimed no virtue as composers. They were led to poetic composition by the Lord on account of his Dayaa

5. They were forever immersed in the enjoyment of the Lord's majesty, magnificence, mammoth qualities of charming pre-possessiveness.

6. They are truly Azhvars (Azhndavar)-the immersed ones

7. Their works are appropriately entitled "**aruLicheyalgal**"-rendered out of their grace or Dayaa guNam.

8. We recite and contemplate on these works. If we have a heart with tenderness, we are moved even to tears of joy of mystic experience. We become immersed in the ocean of beatitude. So much was never achieved by anyone in a lifetime. Therefore, they are great achievers, truly fortunate seers. SrImad Bhagavatam praises them as propagators of Vishnu Bhakti in Kali yugam citing the river basins where most of them were born.

9. What the Azhvars preached in Tamil was the distilled wisdom of the Sanskrit Vedas and Upanishads. Their philosophy is no different from Vedic wisdom as expounded by Sri Ramanujacharya. This fact led to the new terminology of "**Ubhaya Vedanta**" (Twin-Vedanta)-a singular virtue of Srivaishnavam."

### Sloka 4

पराशर मुखान् वन्दे भगीरथ नये स्थितान् ।

कमला कान्त कारुण्य गङ्गाप्लावित मद्विधान् ॥४॥

paraashara mukhaan.h vande bhaglratha naye sthitaan |

kamalaa kaanta kaaruNya ga~Ngaaplaavita madvidhaan | |4



Anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin “In this verse the role of great maharishis such as Parasara is saluted by Svami Desikan. In this instance it may be asked why are the Azhvars saluted before the Maharishis? The reason is that this stotram is devoted to the tenet of Saranagati to invoke the Dayaa of Lord SrlnivAsa. Maharishis mention the Dayaa Gunam along with other kalyana gunams of Lord Narayana, whereas the Azhvars have the Dayaa gunam as their singular focus. Hence they are praised first and then the glorification of Maharishis follows. In this context, Parasara Rishi is glorified first.” As a side note it is helpful to bear in mind that Rishi Parasara had undertaken the performance of a yajnam to destroy all the rakshasas. Due to the power of his tapas, all the rakshasas started falling into the yajnakundam and were destroyed by the fire. Pulastya Rishi, the progenitor of the Rakshasa clan appealed to Vasishta, the grandfather of Parasara Rishi, to intercede on his behalf and rescue the rakshasa clan. Vasishta appeared before Parasara and instructed him to cease from performing this yajnam. Parasara immediately complied with the wish of his grandfather and thus the entire Rakshasa clan was saved from destruction. Pleased with this act, Pulastya Rishi blessed Rishi Parasara with the boon of immense knowledge such that all his compositions would reflect the inner meanings of the Vedas. Therefore, there arose the grand work Vishnu Puranam from Rishi Parasara, which is entirely consistent with the messages contained in the Vedas. Due to this feature, the Vishnu Puranam is hailed as Purana Ratnam (crown jewel among the puranas). We now return to the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin. “Why is Parasara so great? His greatness can be seen from the Vedam tribute “*sahovAca vyAsa pArAsharyaH*” namely Vyasa’s claim to fame comes about on account of being the son of Rishi Parasara. Now Vyasa was the grand editor of the Vedas, composer of the 18 puranas, and the epic Mahabharata. He also blessed us with the Vedanta sutras and outlined various relationships inherent therein through the

sharIra-sharIri bhAvam, AdhAra-Adheya bhAvam. If his greatness is linked to that of Parasara, how much greater should Parasara be is the rhetorical question, which requires no answer. Svami Alavandar salutes Parasara Rishi in the Stotra Ratnam as

“tattvena yascidacidIsvaratatsvabhAvabhogApavargatadupAyagatirudAraH

Asamdarsayan niramimIta purANaratnam

tasmai namo munivarAya parAsharAya”

**Chit-Achit-Ishvara tattvam** was first revealed to us by Sri Parasara Rishi. He expounded on their essential nature (**svarUpam**) in the Vishnu purAnam. What is meant by purAnam? Something that exists already but is made enjoyable in increasingly newer forms is known as purAnam. For example, each time one reads the Ramayanam Lord Rama can be enjoyed from a new perspective. It is this inexhaustible delight arising from repeated anubhavam of the Lord that characterizes the purAnam. Each year, one can enjoy the Garuda Sevai for Lord Varadaraja. The anubhavam remains unchanged each year and is identically replicated. However, one is never satisfied with the feeling that “I witnessed this sevai last year. Therefore, there is nothing new to be gained. Instead, if one is unable to attend the sevai, a great deal of regret follows”. This is the manner of enjoying the Lord repeatedly as advocated in the purAnam. What was Parasara Rishi’s mahopakaram to mankind? Svami Desikan glorifies him as verily Bhagiratha. To understand this, let us briefly dwell upon the charitram of Bhaglratha as expounded by the Ramayana. There was a king in the Ikshvaku dynasty known as Sagara, who had 60,000 sons. King Sagara undertook the performance of the Asvamedha yajnam. The sacrificial horse was allowed to roam. However, Indra fearful of losing his status as the performer of an unprecedented number of Asvamedha yajnas, stole the horse and hid it in Patala lokam near the Asramam of sage Kapila. The sons of Sagara came in search of the horse and arrived at the Asramam of Kapila, where they incurred apacharam towards the great sage Kapila. Therefore, they were reduced to ashes. Bhagiratha was the son of the great-grandson of Sagara, who undertook the task of redeeming his ancestors. The importance of Pitru karyam is highlighted here. Progress of one’s progeny is critically dependent on discharging one’s obligations to the ancestors through the performance of tarpanams and Sraddhams. In this context the sons of Sagara had been reduced to ashes and had no one to undertake Pitru Karyam for them. Bhagiratha realized that by bringing the Ganga down to the nether regions and washing the ashes of his ancestors, they would be redeemed and that there would be no blackmark in the IkshvAku race. Therefore, he undertook intense tapas to



Brahma. Pleased with his austerity, Brahma consented to releasing the Ganga from the upper regions to help Bhagiratha. Just as Bhagiratha undertook yeoman effort to get the Ganga to redeem his ancestor Parasara redeemed suffering beings in the world. How so? All beings in the world were not in the burnt state of the Sagara-Putras. Here is where one needs to be aware of the **dagdha pata nyAyam**, i.e., a burnt cloth exists in an inert form incapable of anything. In a like manner baddha jivans engaged in a plethora of apacharams have the same plight as the Sagara-Putras. Sage Parasara's works were verily the Ganga, by resorting to which the sins arising from these apacharams could be effortlessly washed away. This then grants the jnanam to perform Saranagati and open up the flow of Lord SrInivAsa's Dayaa, the Ganga flow to redeem the baddha jivans. **anagha tattvavannigrahaH** Therefore, he acquires a stature similar to BhagIratha."



We then turn to the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachar SvAmin "I now hail the glory of sages like Parasara. I bow unto all of them. It is they who brought the purifying Ganga onto us to save our souls. In effect their works such as

Parasara's Vishnu purAnam, Vyasa's Mahabharata, Suka Brahman's Srimad Bhagavatam, and Valmiki Ramayana serve to instill Bhakti in us. So they stand like Bhaglratha in this regard.

1. The reference to our "immersion in the Ganga-flow of their works" is to complete the analogy with Bhaglratha. His Ganga immersed the ashes of his forefathers and resurrected them to able to go to the Svarga domain.

The purifying flow, the figurative Ganga, that the holy epics and purAnas constitute will drown the sinners that we are; we today remain like ashes without life and proper activity. That we have a mind, a conscience, a power of perception would not make a difference without real realization, without a correct vision, and with sensual knowledge and sensual experience alone as our activity, we are no better than the sons of Sagara.

2. Svami Alavandar pays obeisance in the Stotra Ratnam in ascending order to Nathamuni, Parasara Muni, then Satakopa (Azhvar) and then the Lord. However, Svami Desikan's order is not distinct although ascending. Verse 2 for Acharyas, verse 3 for Azhvars. They all occupy a place in our guru-parampara. When coming to the sages, it is additional. Hence this obeisance comes here."





## Sloka 5

अशेष विघ्न शमनम् अनीकेश्वरमाश्रये ।

श्रीमतः करुणाम्भोधौ शिक्षा स्रोत इवोत्थितम् ॥ ५ ॥

asheSha vighna shamanam anikeshvaram aashraye |  
shrImataH karuNaambhodhau shikshaa srota ivotthitam | 5



We commence with the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin

“So far Svami Desikan has saluted Azhvars, Maharishis, and Acharyas. Now in the Guru Parampara reckoned in ascending order after Svami Nammazhvar comes Vishvaksena, the remover of all obstacles. When commencing any auspicious activity, it is customary to begin with Vishvaksena Aradhanam. In this instance Svami Desikan is undertaking the most auspicious task of glorifying Dayaa Devi. To ensure an obstacle free conclusion of this tribute, Svami Desikan salutes Vishvaksena and invokes his blessings. “shreyAmsi bahuVighnAni” is the salutation that describes the increased obstacles for any auspicious task. To ensure success from start to finish it is necessary to invoke the grace of Vishvaksena. For instance let us consider the Ramayanam where King Dasaratha desired to perform the pattabhishekam for Lord Rama. There can be no greater joyous occasion than this. However, this was replete with obstacles. First the hunch-back Manthara poisons Kaikeyi’s mind about the crowning ceremony of Rama. Kaikeyi could have resisted the urge to yield to Manthara’s ill-conceived notions and scheme. However, she did not and instead succumbed to this. King Dasaratha had the power to stop the injustice to Rama, but he was helpless. Lord Rama too could have asserted his right as the jyeshta putran of Dasaratha and claimed the throne. However, he was bound to the vow of Pitru-vachana palanam. Vasishtar, the kula guru for the Ikshvaku dynasty was an expert in all Sastras including jyotisham. However, he too could not have foreseen the stoppage of the Pattabhishekam. In this instance Svami Desikan is commencing his tribute to Dayaa Devi and the torrential flow of Slokams like Ganga-pravaham is about to ensue. Svami Desikan is fearful of obstacles that could stop this and therefore offers salutations to Vishvaksena. What is the significance? Vishvak means all directions, while sena means army. Therefore, Vishvaksena drives away all obstacles from all directions with this army.





Vishvakshenar is Svami Nammazhvar



Vishvaksena has 3 lieutenants guarding the various directions. They ensure that no obstacles ensue. This Vishvaksena is saluted by Svami Desikan as a result of the Divya Dampati dayaa manifesting as two streams-one to bless all Saranagatas and the other to correct the errant Saranagatas. The second stream manifests as Vishvaksena, who holds a wand as if to indicate "Beware of the Lord's command. Otherwise stern punishment awaits" In this instance it may be asked, how is the threat of punishment consistent with Dayaa? Svami Desikan answers this by saying that Vishvaksena is an Acharya. The role of an Acharya is itself to correct errant sishyas on account of his extreme compassion for the sishyas. Therefore even correcting the errant jivans is an act of Dayaa. For example, if a shishya goes to an Acharyan seeking Samashrayanam, the first question that is asked is "Do you do your Sandhyavandanam?" The intent is to ensure that the sishyan acts in conformance with the dictates of the Lord and does not engage in any violation, which incurs the displeasure of the Lord. It is customary of elders serving food to males to ask if they had performed Sandhyavandanam prior to partaking of food. The intent is to ensure that the sishya conforms to the Lord's mandates and is a fitting receptacle for the Lord's grace. Therefore, such a correction of errors is very much an act of Dayaa. We can further understand this from the Kakasura incident. Kakasura committed a grave apacharam towards Sita Piratti and therefore was deserving of serious punishment. However, upon realizing the might of the BrahmAstra of Rama, Kakasura performed Saranagati to Lord Rama and received the light punishment of losing one eye. This was therefore an anugraham rather than nigrham. Similarly, in the Vamana avataram, the Lord in the form of a Brahmin sought 3 paces of land from Bali Chakravarti. The asura guru Sukracharya cautioned Bali that the Brahmachari was Lord Vishnu himself. Bali replied that it was an honor for him that the Lord of the universe was seeking a gift from him. Sukracharya despite cursing Bali for violating his command had at his heart the best interest of Bali and therefore, tried to obstruct the flow of the Sankalpa water from the Kamandalu opening by taking the form of an insect. The Lord realizing this cleared the opening of the Kamandalu using a blade of darbha grass. As a result Sukracharya lost one eye. The Azhvar pasuram salutes this incident as opening the eyes of Sukracharya. One may ask how is removing the eye equivalent to eye-opening. The answer comes in the form of the Sastram - one who prevents the performance of noble act acquires sin of enormous proportion condemning them to reside in hell. In this case Bali Chakravarti was performing an extremely noble kaimkaryam of danam to the Lord Himself. Therefore, by this light punishment the Lord made Sukracharya aware of this SAstraic prescription and corrected him. Thus

it was an eye-opener for Sukracharya. Returning to Vishvaksena, Svami Desikan salutes him as waving the wand as if to warn errant jivans of the graveness of their sins as a way of instructing them to desist. This is captured by the salutation **shikShAsrota ivotthitam.**”

Next we turn to the anubhavam of Sri Shaili Patrachariar Svamin

“1. Vishvaksena is popularly known as Senai Mudaliar in Tamil. He is one of the 3 popular nityasuris - Ananta, Garuda and Vishvaksena. There is no specific protocol among the three. Each though has a specific role.

2. Vishvaksena holds a tree-twigg in his hand. He disciplines the Lord’s large army, so to say. Svami Desika has a love to describe that he incarnated as Ramanuja, when the tree-twigg became the tridandam, perennially associated with ascetics.

3. Tradition is that he is the Acharya for Svami Nammazhvar. Who else can instruct the greatest saint-poet? The Acharya parampara that we cherish has therefore, the transcendental linkage between the Azhvar (Satakopa) and Vishvaksena

4. It may seem odd that Svami Desikan considers in the midst of the Dayaa-paeen-this attendant of the Lord, who is apparently a disciplinarian. In this context it must be understood that a kind mother has to apply a little strictness and mild discipline to correct a small child. The child does not like this. Nor do we - claiming great maturity, wisdom, and common-sense- relish law mandates of the Lord. However, a little discipline has to be enforced on everyone to ensure proper behavior. This corrective action comes from the tree twig of Vishvaksena. Therefore, he is indeed the most Dayaa-filled attendant of the Lord.

5. A popular allusion now. This hymn is on Dayaa Devi. We go to worship the Lord at the Hill. We witness Vishvaksena’s role being taken up by the Temple attendant. He regulates us; our queue; our progress and also our worship-bliss! He has a twig and lashes it on us. Thanks to his kindness!

6. Svami Desika lists the characteristics for a spiritual guru in the Nyasa Vimsati. In it there is mentioned a pre-requisite quality for being a good preceptor. What is it? One who disciplines, admonishes, and corrects, when the disciple errs, deviates, and does sinful things. Therefore, by this dictum, Vishvaksena is an ideal Acharyan!”





Vishvaksenar is Sri Ramanujar!



## Sloka 6

समस्त जननीं वन्दे चैतन्य स्तन्य दायिनीम् ।

श्रेयसीं श्रीनिवासस्य करुणामिव रूपिणीम् ॥ ६ ॥

samasta jananIM vande caitanya stanya dAyinIm |  
shreyasIM shrInivAsasya karuNAmiva rUpiNIm || 6



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Valaypettai Ramachar Svami:

“After Vishvaksena in the Acharya parampara comes Mahalakshmi. What is the unique distinguishing characteristic of Mahalakshmi? It is the vatsalyam that she exudes for Her children. It is helpful to remember that Svami Desikan follows closely the path laid down by his purvacharyas. Accordingly, *samastajananIm*—mother of all chetanams in the universe is the salutation used to describe her greatness in the manner of Svami Nammazhvar’s tribute of “*akalakiEn*” denoting inseparability from Lord Narayana. This is also consistent with the Vishnu puranam tribute of Parashara Rishi *namAmi sarvalokAnAm jananIm abdhisambhavAm* (I salute the Mother of the Universe, Mahalakshmi, who arose from the milky ocean) *tvam mAtaa sarvalokanAm devo devo hariH pitaa tvayaitad viShNunA cAmba jagatvyAptam carAcaram* (You are the mother for all beings movable and immovable in the Universe and Lord Narayana is their father. The essential nature of you both is to pervade everything in the universe). This is captured through the salutation “*samasta jananIm*” Additionally, it is consistent with Sri Bhashyakarar’s tribute of *akhila jagan mAtaram asman mAtaram*. What is the need for the *asman mAtaram* tribute when *akhila jagan mAtaram* is in place? This is to denote the personal connection with Thayar for Bhashyakarar just as a little child hugs its mother and declares “this is my mother”, while the *akhila jagan mAtaram* is meant as a common tribute as mother of all. This is also a reflection of the connection to Svami Alavandar, who was popularly known as Lakshmi Kumarar - the son of Lakshmi. Hence, Sri Bhashyakarar seeks refuge at the feet of Mahalakshmi through his Acharyan, Svami Alavandar. It is also important to note that Svami Desikan after saluting Mahalakshmi in the Acharya Parampara now has a special request for her. Here he is composing the tribute *Daya shatakam*, which needs to be heard by Lord

Srinivasa. The best way to accomplish this is to submit the appeal to Mahalakshmi Thayar. This is captured in the **Devanayaka Panchasat** salutation:

“mAtastvamamburuhavAsini kincidetat  
vij~nyApyate mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam |  
AkarNayiShyati yathA vibhudesvaraste  
preyAnasau pruthuka jalpita vanmaduktim ||”

**Meaning:** “Ammma I need a special favor from you! To this Thayar says “What is it you need? I am happy to grant.” In response Svami Desikan implores “I am about to begin glorifying Lord Devanatha. You need to help by making sure that He hears this in the manner of a father delighting in the lisping talk of his child.”

In a like manner, here the tribute is for Daya gunam of Lord Srinivasa and Svami Desikan requests Thayar’s help to ensure that the lord hears this tribute. Another noteworthy point is that Thayar plays a dual role here. One as the mother of the universe and the other as an Acharya. In her Acharya role, she confers the boon of j~nanam on all sentient beings in the universe as evidenced by **caitanya stanyadAyini** tribute. What is the knowledge that Thayar bestows? 1. Jivatma svarupam (2) paramatma svarupam (3) upaya svarupam (4) phala svarupam (5) phala virodhi. These are known as **Artha panchakam**. Mahalakshmi most graciously bestows this upon the sentient beings.

In the Raghuvamsam, Kalidasa declares – **prajAnAM vinayAdhAnAd rakShaNAd bharaNAdapi | sa pitA pitarastAsAM kevalaM janmahetavaH ||**

**Meaning:** It is the duty of one’s father to impart good practices to their children. Otherwise, it is a failure on the part of the father. It is the duty of the father to perform poshaNam (protection) of his children in times of trouble. King Dileepa performed these functions to perfection.

In the Ramayanam, when Sita Piratti was in captivity, Ravana approached her during the last part of the night and threatened her with dire consequences if she did not accept his overture and offer of being the empress of his many wives. At that time, Sita Piratti places a blade of grass between her and Ravana to ensure separation and advises him “Go and be-friend Rama. This will ensure your well-being.” She deliberately avoided the use of Saranagati to Rama since it would hurt Ravana’s ego. Therefore, in her role as the mother of the universe she only had Ravana’s well-being at heart even though he was committing grave apacharam through his words and deeds. Hence, she epitomizes **karuNa**.





Thayar plays dual role of Mother of the Universe and as an Acharya!

Svami Desikan in Nacchiyar Thirukkolam



The salutation of **samasta janani** can also be appreciated from Sri Parashara Bhattar's **Gunaratnakosham** salutation

“**piteva tvatpreya** **janani** **paripUrna** **Agasi** **jane**  
**hitasroto** **vrittya** **bhavati** **ca** **kadAcit** **kaluShadhi** **H |**  
**kimetannir** **doSha** **H ka** **iha** **jagatIti** **tvamucitai** **H**  
**upAyairvi** **sma** **Arya** **svajanayasi** **mAta** **tadasi** **na** **H | |**”

Sambodhanam here is **Janani** - progenitor. Your husband, Lord Narayana is the father of the universe, who only has in mind what is good for his children in the long run (**hitam**). If corrective disciplinary action is needed, he would administer it. For the father, if the child arrives replete with a mountain-pile of sins/flaws, the Lord himself begins to wonder about the appropriate course of corrective disciplinary actions to reform the child. At this juncture Thayar intervenes and asks of the Lord “What is the problem? Why are you worried about punishing this jivan? Is there anyone that has not sinned? Some may have committed more sins than others? However, the fact remains that all of them have sinned! Therefore, there is no point in administering light punishments. Instead the jivan needs to be forgiven and graced.” In this manner Thayar causes the Lord to ignore the faults of his bhaktas. It must be noted that the omniscient Lord is fully aware of the faults committed but Thayar ensures through her pleading that the Lord ignores these transgressions. Instead She makes the Lord utter the statement “This is Our Child. We need to protect him.” Hence the tribute of **samasta janani** **vande**. In this context, it becomes immaterial whether the Lord declares us to be His Child. On the other-hand through **prati bhakthi** to Svami Desikan, if Svami declares that this is *My Child*, it will automatically invoke the grace of the Divine Couple for they definitely will not ignore the recommendation of *Their Favorite Child*. The inner meaning is that Acharya anugraham is an unfailing means to obtaining Perumal anugraham. Vande is due to trikaraNam as well as several salient characteristics of Thayar. For example if an ailing child is given a choice between doctors - one offering bitter tasting medicine and painful injections as cure and another offering sweet tasting medicine, the child inevitably chooses the latter. Therefore She is glorified by all. Svami Desikan salutes her as **shreyasIm shrInivAsasya** **karuNA** **miva** **rUpi** **Nim**. She brings **shreyas** to the Lord Himself! Here it must be appreciated that a gunam or rasam can be appreciated only in a life form or a thing that contains the rasam. In this instance Daya is a gunam. If this is to be captured in a live form it is absolutely Thayar. It may be asked, the Lord too is compassionate so why not the Lord's KaruNa? Svami Desikan answers this beautifully in the statement, **nigraham**

(punishment) and **anugraham** (daya) are **samAnAdhikaraNam** (equally present) in the Lord. However, nigrham is non-existent when it comes to Thayar, who exclusively exudes compassion. Therefore, if a live form were to be provided to the Daya guNam, it is exclusively Thayar.”

Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachar Svamin’s anubhavam is quoted next:

This and the succeeding two verses salute the three consorts of the Lord, namely Sri Devi, BhU Devi, and Neela Devi.

If one personifies Goddess as a mother, the elementary duty of a mother is made apparent. She breast-feeds the baby. It is a unique relationship of closeness, affection, and mutual love. Here Thayar has to breast-feed. She is glorified here as feeding the baby with the milk of sentient wisdom.

She is the hallmark of affluence, auspices, and superiority to Srinivasa. Without Her He loses his stature! This is implied by the **shreyasIm shrInivasasya** tribute.

The roles of the three consorts is specific. Mahalakshmi is verily the embodiment of Karuna quality.”



## Sloka 7

वन्दे वृषगिरीशस्य महिषीं विश्व धारिणीम् ।

तत्कृपा प्रतिघातानां क्षमया वारणं यया ॥७॥

vande vR^iShagiriShasya mahiShIM vishva dhaariNI |  
tat krupaa pratighaataanaaM kShamayaa vaaraNaM yayaa || 7

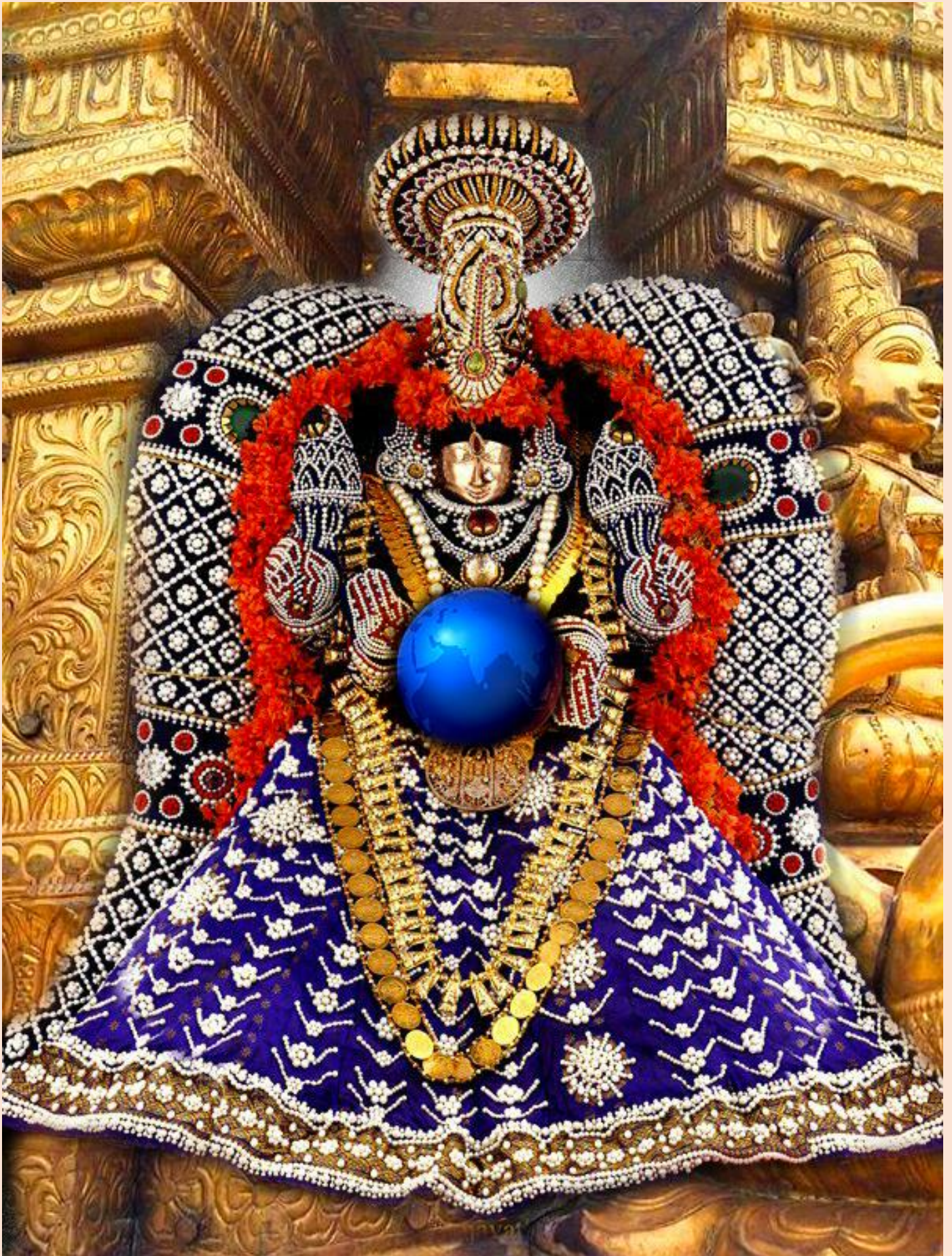


We begin with the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin “In the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> verses Svami Desikan glorifies Bhumi Devi and Neela Devi in the spirit of Sri Bhashyakarar’s Saranagati Gadyam salutation “*evam bhUta bhUminILaa nAyaka!*”. First the glorification is for Bhumi Devi. *hriScate lakShmiIsca patnyau aho rAtre pArshve nakShatrANi rUpam* is the Vedam salutation that glorifies the role of Bhumi Piratti as the consort of Lord Narayana. Svami Desikan salutes Bhumi Piratti here as *vande vriShagiriShasya mahiShIm vishvadhAriNI*. First of she is the consort of the Lord Srinivasa. Next she supports/bears the entire universe. In the *Bhu stuti*, Svami Desikan outlines the many names that are used to salute Bhumi Piratti-

*sarvaM sahyavaniritya caleti mAtaH  
vishvambaretivipuletivasundhareti |  
anyAni cAnyA vimukhAnyabhidhAna vruttyA  
nAmAnyamUni kathayanti tavAnubhAvam | |*

*VishvadhAriNI* is the usage picked by Svami Desikan in this verse among the many names. What is the mahopakaram performed by Bhumi Devi? It is one of extreme compassion. We may remember that Svami Desikan is inviting an elite audience in the Sabha for delivery of the Daya Satakam tribute. Since Bhumi Piratti is an epitome of compassion, she is a fitting guest of honor in this Sabha. The Daya-flow of Lord Srinivasa could encounter obstacles in its path. The recipient may not then get the Daya of the Lord. In this context the role of Bhumi Piratti is to ensure the removal of these obstacles and facilitate the unimpeded flow of Srinivasa-Daya. Lord Srinivasa is looking for an excuse to confer his Daya-flow on all. He is constantly wondering “why is this jivan not offering salutations with folded hands to seek me and be the beneficiary of the Daya-flow?” The only thing that is coming in the way of the jivan receiving the Daya-flow is the accumulated sin-pile over countless births, which resembles a mountain.





She bears the entire universe with a forbearance



Once this sin-pile is destroyed the grace of Srinivasa-Daya is automatically conferred. Here is where Bhumi Devi comes to the rescue. She is known as Kshama-forbearance. She intercedes on behalf of the jivan and requests the Lord to forgive the sins of the jivan and ensures the obstruction-free flow of Srinivasa-Daya. **yayA kshamayA tat krupA pratighAtAnAm vAraNam** (That Kshama, which removes the cause of obstruction of the Srinivasa-Daya flow is expounded upon here) is the key salutation, which glorifies this role of Bhumi Piratti.”

Anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svami is quoted next “I pay obeisance to the Consort Bhumi Devi, of Lord Srinivasa. She bears the entire universe with a forbearance. The favor she confers upon us is that she removes the obstacles that may be placed in the flow-path of Karuna from the Lord. How could these obstacles arise? We commit offenses now and then.

The Lord grins and throbs the brows in disapproval. We then may not secure his grace. Then Bhumi Devi-very appropriately referred to as Kshama/forbearance intercedes and pleads with Him to ensure that He ignores our offense.

1. To see this in proper context, it is helpful to also read the **Bhu Stuti** commentary by the celebrated author.
2. She is by nature forbearing. Hence, she is a good pleader to persuade the Lord to forgive our offenses.
3. Incidentally, this is not meant to take the verse to mean liberal licentiousness! Surely Bhumi devi will help when we deserve.”





## Sloka 8

निशामयतु मां नीला यद्भोग पटलैर्ध्रुवम् ।

भावितं श्रीनिवासस्य भक्त दोषेष्वदर्शनम् ॥ ८ ॥

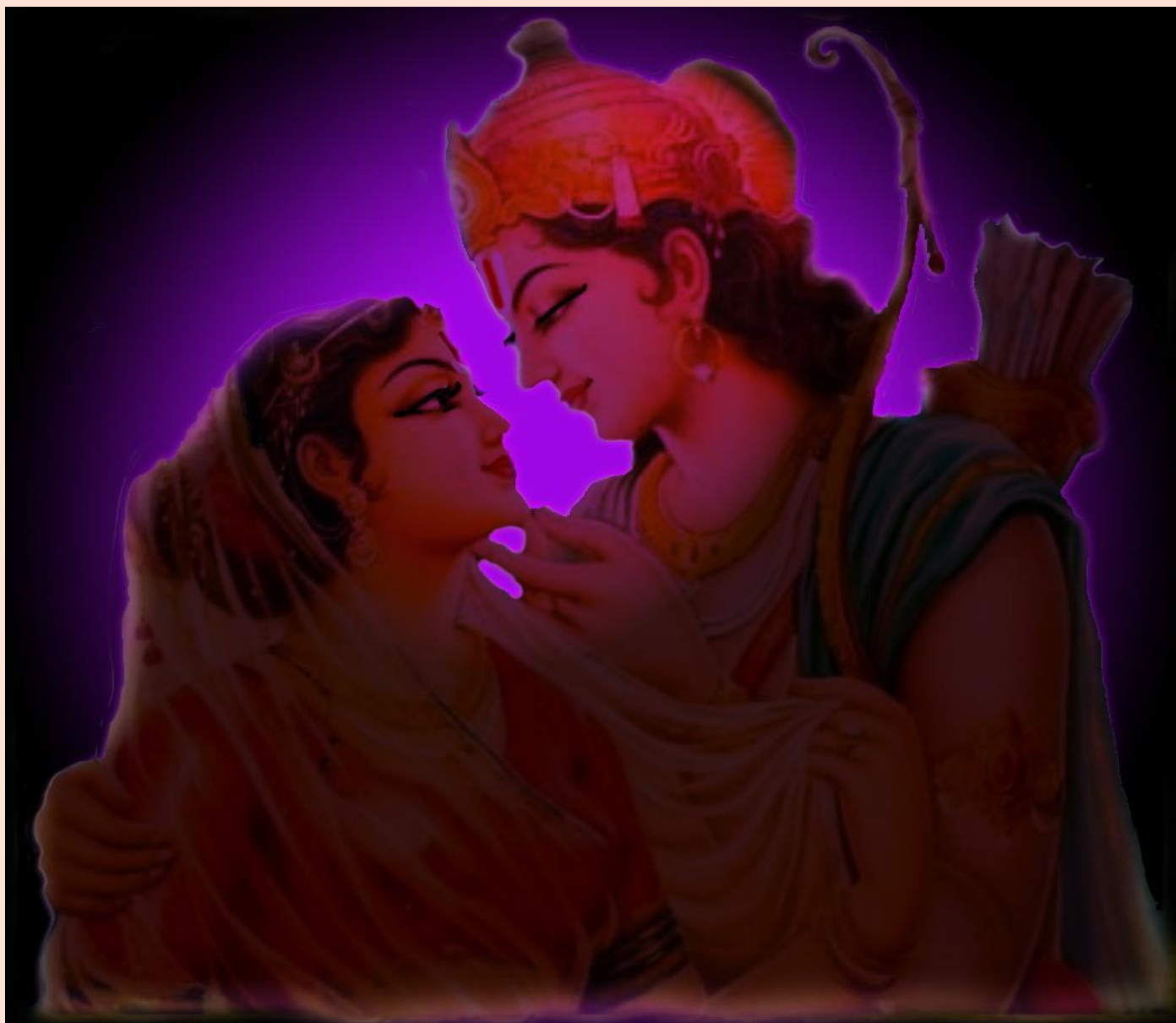
nishAmayatu mAM nILA yadbhoga paTalaiH dhruvam |  
bhAvitaM shrInivAsasya bhakta doSheShvadarshanam || 8



Next the glorification of Neela Devi follows. Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin notes “Each one among Sri Devi, Bhu Devi and Neela Devi has a specific role. The sambodhanam is mAM nILa nishAmayatu. Why is Svami Desikan specifically requesting the merciful glances of NeeLa Devi? It is with the sole purpose of making sure the NeeLa Devi intercedes on behalf of the baddha jivan to obscure the faults of the jivan from the view of Lord Srinivasa. It is entirely for bhaktadoShEShu adarshanam bhAvitam shrinivAsasya. If an item is forbidden from viewing, it will invariably be seen. For example, in the Srirangam Temple upon exiting Thayar Sannidhi, there is an icon of Jyeshta Lakshmi or MuDevi, who is regarded as the older sister of Mahalakshmi and stands for everything inauspicious. The aideeham is that if one views this Jyeshta Lakshmi after a darsanam of Thayar, all benefits from Thayar darsanam become nullified. Therefore, this must be avoided at all costs.” Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin notes that he himself upon becoming aware of this fact found alternate exit points so that the darsanam of Jyeshta Lakshmi after Thayar darsanam is entirely avoided. Svami continued “In a like manner, when it comes to Lord Srinivasa, his gaze is bound to fall on the forbidden item, i.e., the sin-pile of the supplicant. He is glorified in the Purusha Suktam Rk as sahasrashIrShA puruShaH sahasrAkSha sahasrapAt. Therefore, having these many (1000) eyes, it is impossible for the sin-pile to stay hidden from his view. Here is where the salutation yadbhogapaTalaiH comes into play. Vaidya Shastram (Science of medicine) declares that if one is engaged in bhogam, eye trouble inevitably follows. Here is where Svami Desikan requests Neela Devi, that the Lord engaged in bhogam with NeeLa Devi should develop a cataract of sorts causing him to ignore the sin-pile.

nILA-tunga sthanagiri-taTI suptam udbodhya kR^iShNam  
pArArthyam svaM shruti-sata-shiras-siddham adhyApayanti

svocchishTAyAm sraji nigaLitam yA balAtkrutya bhunkte  
godA tasyai nama idamidam bhUya evAstu bhUyaH



Due to NeeLa Devi's bhoga mayam, she makes EmperumAn ignore the sin-pile of the suppliant. The Lord being the omniscient one, has a namam in the Vishnu Sahasranamam as **avijnAta**, i.e., the ignorant one. This does not mean that he truly is ignorant. He merely displays this ignorance due to the persuasion of Nappinai or NeeLa Piratti. She alone is capable of effecting this transformation. Lord KrishNa took the avataram itself to win the hand of Nappinai Piratti. In this context, it is helpful to quote Periya Azhwar's svarasya anubhavam –



pooNith thozhuviniL pukkup puzhudhi aLaintha ponmEni,  
kaaNap peridhum ugakkum aagilum kaNdaar pazhippar,  
naaNeththanaiyum ilaadhaai nappinnai kaaNil sirikkum,  
maaNikkamE en maNiyE manjanam aada nee vaaraai



Sri, BhUmi, NeeLa Devi sameta Sri AkkArakkani PerumAL - TirukkaDikai

Here Periya Azhwar enjoys Kannan in the manner of Yashoda enjoying Krishna. The Azhwar declares “Your body covered in dirt is **PonmEni (Golden body)**. However, others may chide the child for being dirty therefore, please come for your ceremonial snAnam. Let alone others who may chide you Nappinai will laugh at you in ridicule. For this reason alone, please come and engage in your ceremonial bath.” Kannan is delighted with this argument of the Azhwar and engages in the ceremonial bath. The inner meaning is that Lord KrishNa will do anything for the

pleasure of Nappinai (NeeLa devi). Therefore, he is bound to ignore the sin-pile of the supplicant due to the grace of NeeLa devi.”

Next, we enjoy the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachar Svamin “May NeeLa shed Her gracious glance on me! That would help me survive and secure the Lord’s forgiveness and grace. As in the mundane world, a mother’s plea, intervention and impact will help the child receive forgiveness and encouragement; there being three mothers to us in Mahalakshmi, Bhumi and NeeLa, we have added benefit.

NeeLa has a special virtue; she takes liberties with Him and sports many delectable activities. These delight the Lord; a layer of screen-a tear-film-spreads on His eyes so to say. He perhaps feigns such a visual defect!

I have to pay homage to NeeLa who thus makes me acceptable to the Lord.

1. May she bless me with Her Daya look-then He will not see my faults.
2. Bhavitam has the suggestive meaning that the Lord feigns a visual incapacity.
3. All ethos in these verses are of the nature of Daya-praise. One ought not to develop a serious impression about the Lord’s indulgence, the sportfulness of consorts, the Lord becoming blind to our sins, etc.
4. All in all, the entire hymn is to tickle our heart with regard to the Daya Gunam of the Lord.
5. It is helpful to recall the tribute of KoorathAzhvAn on NeeLa Devi in the Sri VaikunTasthava verse 82

bhAvairudAra madhuraiH vividhair vilAsaiH

bhrU-vibhrama-smita kaTAKSha-nirIkShaNaiH ca |

yA tvanmayI, tvamapi yanmaya yeva,

sA mAm nILA nitAntaM urarIkurutAm udAraa || 62

May Neela engage me in Her service, She who by Her majestic and sweet disposition, by Her various passions displayed by Her love-play, by brow-raising, gentle smile, seductive eye-glance is equal to You. This Neela Devi is no different from You and from whom You are no different, that bounteous consort of Yours agree to engage me in Her service in the Vaikunta world.

6. It may also be helpful to recall the Tiruppavai taniyan in this regard.

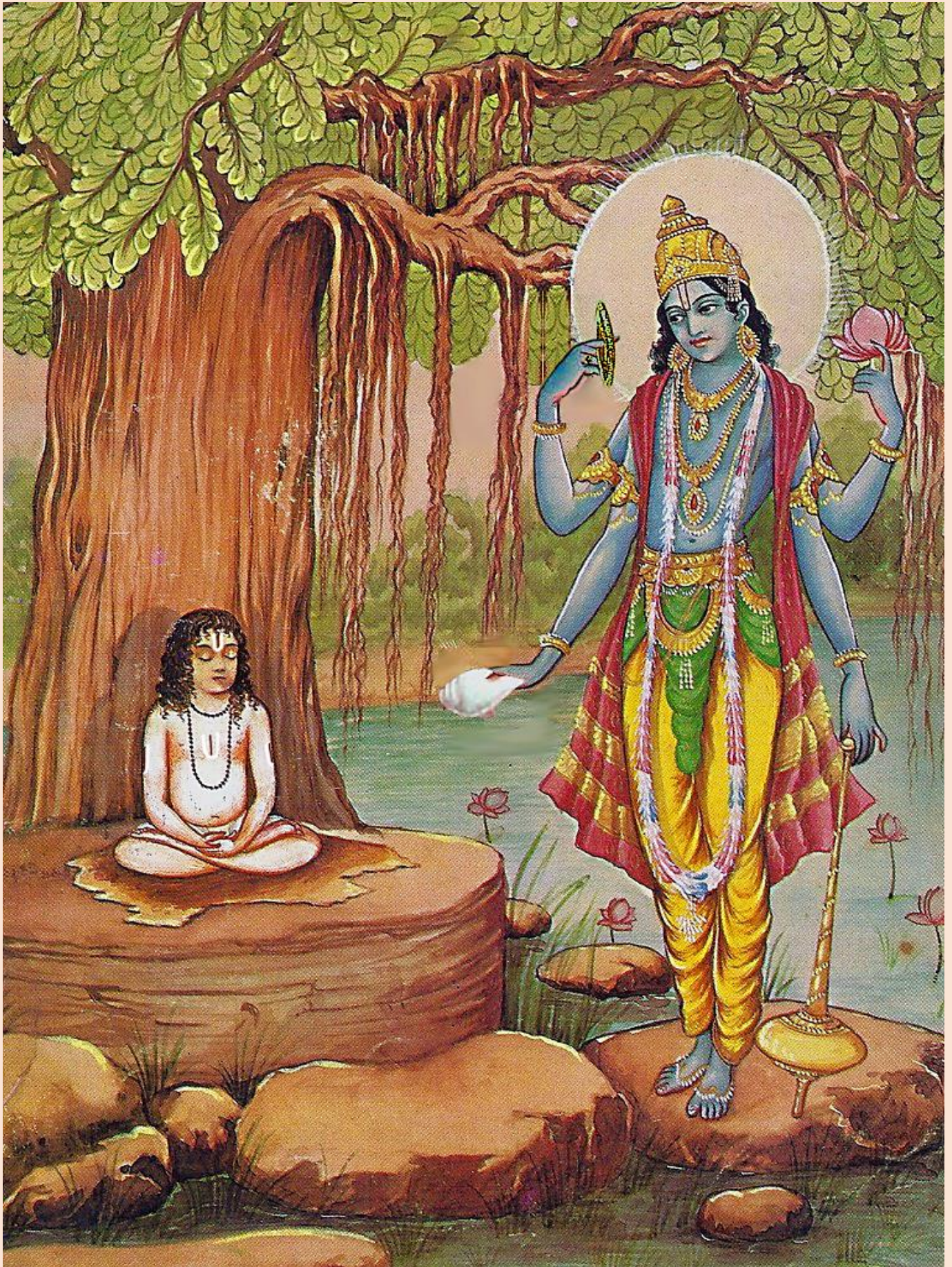


7. Does the Lord close his eyes when a pious devotee commits an offence? It may superficially appear so. Svami Desikan's stand is patent and ought to be reiterated from the Srimad RahasyatrayasAram. "He is actually omniscient; He sees all; He only refrains from a mood of meting out a punishment when the individual is a pious bhakta. Who can question Him in this matter?"

It is also helpful to summarize the anubhavam of H.H. Srimad Paravakottai Andavan Svami for verses 6-8. "The Lord looks at NeeLa Devi only to see her verily spread a white veil to obscure the sin-pile of the supplicant from His view. Angered by this act he turns to Bhumi Devi, who implores that the supplicant's sins be forgiven and therefore impediments to the Daya-flow are removed. Perhaps somewhat becalmed by the appeal of Bhumi Devi, He remains indifferent to the plight of the jivan. However, Sri Devi cannot tolerate this indifference towards her suffering children. Therefore, when the Lord turns to Sri Devi, She argues that indeed the supplicant has sinned. However, these sins need to be overlooked and he must be made a receptacle for Your Daya-flow. Bound thus, by the appeal from Sri Devi, Bhumi Devi, and Neela Devi, the Lord confers his grace on the supplicant."







The benevolent Lord touched Dhruva's cheek with His Panchajanya conch



## Slokam 9

कमप्यनवधीं वन्दे करुणा वरुणालयम् ।

वृषशैल तटस्थानां स्वयं व्यक्तिमुपागतम् ॥ ९ ॥

kamapyanavadhIM vande karuNA varuNAlayam |

vR^iShashaila taTasthAnAM svayaM vyaktiM upAgatam ||9



First, the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin is quoted “In the previous verse, the role of Neela Devi in securing the grace of Lord Srinivasa was highlighted. Now it comes to the turn of glorifying the Lord. Svami Desikan, known for his poetic prowess is now at a loss for what aspect of the Lord to glorify, i.e., svarupam (Divya Mangala Vighram), vibhuti, or gunam, which are abundant, unceasing, and almost in competition with each other to be glorified. This is also Svami’s plight as exemplified by the Yatiraja Saptati salutation “kamapyAdyam gurum vande”. When the young child Dhruva was engaged in Tapas, he was lost in dhyanam of the Lord through the dvadasakshara mantram, which was received by way of instruction from sage Narada. Pleased with his Tapas the when the Lord appeared before him, Dhruva was rendered speechless by the magnificence of the Lord and was at a loss for words. Realizing his plight, the benevolent Lord touched Dhruva’s cheek with his Panchajanya conch. Immediately Dhruva renders an astonishing tribute to the Lord. In a like manner, Svami Desikan is graced here by Daya Devi with the reassurance “I am there for you. Please proceed with your glorification.” to commence his tribute of the Lord. Svami commences his tribute with the salutation karuNa varuNAlayam. When Lord Srinivasa goes on utsavam he is in his full glory with beautiful ornaments, at which point even ordinary mortals wonder “what aspect of the Lord should we appreciate and focus our salutation. Should we glorify his beauty, or the ornaments, or the parishkarams that accompany the Lord? Or should the focus be on the ladies, who fill the Mada street during utsavam with kolattam and the like in their anubhavam of the Lord? Or should we take in aisvaryam of the blending of the Mada street with the background of the Hill which makes it impossible to discern whether it is day or night? Or should we appreciate the 4 directions of the Mada veethi jam-packed with bhagavatas, who out of intense bhakthi have lined up to submit their offerings in the form of karpura neerajanam to the Lord with the accompaniment of the

Govinda Govinda chant? Or should we appreciate the Lord's **samAsrityam**, whereby he equally graces common people as well as the Nitya Suris, who come down to seek his blessings at Tiruvenkatam? **MaNi pon mutthalaikkum** is the salutation from Svami NammAzhvar that should be referenced here. Vedam commenced its tribute but realizing that the Lord was beyond comprehension stopped with the tribute **yato vAco nivartante aprApya manasA saha**. In the **Varadaraja Panchasat**, Svami Desikan salutes Lord Varadaraja as **muhyantyabhanguradhiyo muni sArvabhaumAH** reflecting the plight of great sages, who sought to glorify Lord Varadaraja but were simply stupefied by the magnitude of the task and instead were absorbed in a **moham** of his magnificence." In a like manner Svami Desikan is befuddled as he contemplates what aspect of the Lord needs to be glorified. At this juncture, Daya Devi comes to his rescue with the assurance "Fear not. I am by your side. Please commence your tribute now." Therefore, Svami Desikan deems it most appropriate to commence the tribute with the name of Daya Devi in the manner of "**karuNa varuNAlayam**". An ocean is conceived here. For this there needs to be water. Needless to say the ocean water will be salty. However, can this be an appropriate glorification for the Lord? No. Therefore, Svami Desikan introduces the beautiful karuNa rasam for the ocean waters here. The Lord's karuNa is in the form of the ocean. That which is the ashrayam for karuNa is apt to be glorified. Then Svami Desikan wonders about the suitable description for this ocean. Commonly encountered oceans can be precisely measured in terms of their breadth and depth. However, the Lord's karuNa ocean is immeasurable as described by the salutation **anavadhim** (transcending space and time), all pervading (in terms of being found in all vastus), beyond description by words, larger than the largest, smaller than the smallest. The Lord of such magnificence is described as the ocean in this instance. This ocean contains a number of hills. However, this karuNa samudram is seated on top of the seven hills as described by the salutation **vruShashalla taTasthAnAn svayam vyaktim upAgatam**. The Lord arrived here on his own accord. Some kshetrams have the Lord as the archa murti due to penance undertaken by Rishis, whereas in other places, he is consecrated by Bhagavatas. However, in places like Srirangam and Tirumalai the Lord arrived on his own accord and hence these are known as **svayam vyakta kshetrams**. Here an important question arises pertaining to the arrival of the Lord. Is it meant only to grace those in the vicinity of the Seven Hills? Svami Desikan affirms that this is merely an upalakshanam meant for gracing the whole universe. The reference here is the tribute **viNNavarum maNNavarum virumbum verpE**. This is not meant exclusively for Nityasuris but also for akinchanas (those who are totally incapable and entirely



reliant upon the Lord for salvation). **vrusShashalla taTasthAnam svayam vyaktim**. Here the inner meaning is that the Lord is forever available for darsanam at the Seven Hills to anyone that comes seeking him. During one instance, Chaturmukha Brahma thought to himself “The Lord is my father. I can get his darsanam at any time.” When this occurred Brahma could not get a darsanam of the Lord. Therefore, he adopts tapas at Pushkar. Right there, the Lord provides a darsanam in the form of Pushkarani but is invisible to the eyes. From there Brahma moves to Naimisaranyam, but there too the Lord is in the form of the forest but Brahma could not realize the forest was none other than the Lord himself. Filled with grief, as a last resort Brahma comes to Kanchipuram and performed the **asvamedha yajnam** to get pratyaksham of the Lord. When such was the travail of Brahma, what to speak of ordinary mortals? Out of His extreme compassion for ordinary mortals, the Lord decided to take the form of the archa murti of Srinivasa. How can this be explained? The Upanishad waxes eloquent about this through the salutation **avij~nAtam vijAnatAm vij~nAtam avijAnatAm**. One may think on the basis of undergoing extensive kalAkshepam that they are familiar with the svarupam, rupam, gunams of Emperuman and therefore, understands Him very well. However, such a person does not know anything about the Lord. On the other hand, one who approaches the Lord with the mindset “I know nothing. I am completely ignorant about his **svaUpam, rUpam, guNam, vibhUti**, or his being **j~nAnamayam** and **Anandamayam**. It is only His feet that give me refuge and protect me. This is the only thing that I contemplate upon.” Such a person is surely knowledgeable about the Lord and is the beneficiary of His paripurna anugraham. One who perfunctorily seeks Perumal sevai merely because he has planned everything to the minutest detail and thinks that there can be no other obstacles to his plans, invariably fails in the attempt to get the darsanam of the Lord. Even if all plans are in place, something unexpected will invariably come in the way and preclude the sevai. Only one who approaches the Lord with the mindset “It is entirely your grace on account of which, I have the bhagyam of Your sevai” is inevitably graced by the Lord and most unexpectedly lands up with beautiful sevai. Therefore, the Upanishad tribute of **avijnAtam vijAnatAm vij~nAtam avijAnatAm** is most appropriate for Lord Srinivasa. This Srinivasa is saluted as **svayam vyaktim upagatam. anavadhim karuNa varuNalayam vande**. In this manner Svami Desikan completes the glorification of guru parampara starting from Azhvars, Acharyas all the way to Perumal. Now that Svami Desikan has completed this task, his audience in the exalted sabha is wondering “What next?” This is answered by Svami Desikan in the next verse.”





The Lord is forever available for darsanam at the Seven Hills to anyone that comes seeking him



Next we quote the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin “I pay obeisance to that singular ocean of karuNa, unique in having no limits to its dimension, the Lord Srinivasa, standing at the top of the Hill, to voluntarily grant the vision to the Hill-people, for which purpose He came to the Hill.

1. People did not, do not, have to make efforts to search for Him and see Him. He has of his own accord come and stationed himself at the Hill top.
2. He is figuratively described as the Ocean of KaruNa. The Hill-people can easily see Him even as they can see an ocean if it were at the hill-foot.
3. His voluntary coming and taking residence at the Hill top is indication of His Daya in respect of Hill residents.”



## Sloka 10

अकिञ्चन निधिं सूतिं अपवर्ग त्रिवर्गयोः ।

अञ्जनाद्रीश्वर दयाम् अभिष्टौमि निरञ्जनाम् ॥ १० ॥

aki~njana nidhiM sUtiM apavarga trivargayoH |

a~njanaadrIshvara dayaam abhiShTaumi nira~njanaam || 10



The anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin is quoted first “Lord Srinivasa arrives in the Sabha, that has been conceived by Svami Desikan. Normally, emperor’s court has protocols and formalities. Once the emperor arrives and takes his high seat, proceedings in the Sabha can commence. Accordingly, Lord Srinivasa now addresses Svami Desikan, “Svami since you wanted to render a tribute you may commence it now. Are you not going to glorify me now?” To this, Svami Desikan responds, indeed I render a tribute, but it is not for you (abhiShTaumi). Instead it is for Daya Devi (daya abhiShTaumi i). Lord Srinivasa looks enquiringly at Svami Desikan and asks “Do you plan to glorify Daya? It is after all a gunam. Even granting this, whose Daya do you plan to glorify? Would it be the Daya of Lord Narayana in Nitya Vibhuti, or would it be the Daya in the Vibhava avataras of Rama and Krishna? Or would it be the Daya of archa murtis in places like Srirangam?” Svami Desikan answers “It is none of these. I shall render my tribute to the Daya of anjanAdrishvara. anjanAdrishvaradayAm abhiShTaumi.” The Lord pursues this further and asks Svami “What is so special about the anjanAdri?” To this query Svami Desikan responds with the reply “My master, you yourself have described the glory of anjanAdri in Your Rama avataram” To this the Lord enquires further “What is it that I said?” Svami Desikan responds “Oh Lord, when you sent the swan with a message to Sita Piratti, you dwelt on the greatness of anjanAdri. agrebhAvI tvadanu nayane ranjayan anjanAdriH, namely, when the Swan is on its sojourn the very sight of the anjanAdri hill is soothing to the eyes and brings great joy. When a mere sight of the hill brings forth great joy, what to speak of an exposition that delves into the expanse of the anjanAdri hill? Therefore, I render my tribute to the Daya of anjanAdrishvara (Lord Srinivasa)” The Lord responds “So be it. You have decided to glorify Daya. Should I hear this tribute?”





Lord Srinivasa arrives in the Sabha, that has been conceived by Svami Desikan

To this Svami Desikan responds “Definitely my Lord. You have to hear this tribute, because it is not something that I have conceived on my own. I am merely following the path of great masters before me.” The reference here is to Sri Bhattar’s tribute to the Divine Couple of Srirangam. The stotram, Sri Gunaratna Kosam, is in praise of Ranganayaki Thayar. The ninth verse of this stotram addresses Lord Ranganatha as:

shriyaH! shrIH! shrIrangeshaya! tava cha hrudyAM bhagavatIM  
shriyaM tvattopyucchairvayamiha phaNAmaH shruNutarAm |  
drushau te bhUyAstAM sukhataralatAre shravaNataH  
punarhaShotkarShAt sphuTatu bhujayoH kanchukashatam | |

Here Sri Parashara Bhattar declares to Lord Ranganatha that he will be glorifying Thayar. The manner of glorification will be louder than the glorification of You. Here the Lord is approached with the intent of requesting his presence and hearing the glorification of his consort. The usual response is glorify my bhArya to your heart’s content, I shall move away. However, Sri Bhattar insists that the Lord remain in that very place to hear the glorification of His consort. Feigning indifference, the Lord says let me turn away you can proceed with your tribute. Sri Bhattar responds “No. The tribute to Thayar will be several fold louder than the tribute to you.” The Lord responds “I shall block my ears with cotton balls. You may proceed.” To this, Sri Bhattar pleads “No my Lord, you need to hear this tribute attentively with no impediments to your ears. Who is She? Your most beloved, one who resides in your Vakshasthalam. You must take in this tribute with full enjoyment reflected by delight in your eyes so much so that they reach to your ears and ask Does Thayar have such limitless glory? Hearing this tribute, you will be overjoyed so much so that your body swells up, stretching the limits of all adorning dresses. Therefore, you must hear this tribute.” In a like manner, Svami Desikan states that he has assembled the Sabha replete with distinguished attendees including Perumal with the sole of objective glorifying Daya Devi and requests the Lord to hear his tribute. Normally, glorification of another distinguished personage in the presence of a distinguished person is never taken kindly. In this instance even though the glorification is about one who is extremely dear to Lord Srinivasa, the Lord enquires of Svami Desikan “You plan to glorify Daya Devi. What is the visesham about Daya Devi?” To this Svami Desikan responds “Oh Lord! You act appropriately in accordance with the moment. At times you set out to punish individuals. However, Daya Devi is constantly engaged in showering her grace and blessing me.



Therefore, I glorify Her.” There is an aidhiyam here. A great mahan, who was quite poor, wanted to come to Tirumalai and have the darshan of the Lord. Since this was his only opportunity, he planned to spend a week at Tirumalai and enjoy the vaibhavam of Lord Srinivasa. Somehow or another, each day he was denied the darshan, while other wealthier folks readily obtained the darshan. Enraged by this, he declared “Oh Lord! You have become quite conceited on account of the tremendous flow of wealth in your coffers. Therefore, you are blind to my plight. However, remember that when someone unaware of your glory declares that you are a commoner, it is I that will remind them through the Vedam declaration that you are **avApta samasta kaman, akhila heya pratyankan**. You are resplendent with the effulgent Sudarshana Chakra. You are the one who is declared to be **hiranya smashru** and **hiranya kasha**. Do not forget this!” Immediately, the Lord sent his archakas after this mahan with the request to have darshan with full honors. From this it is clear that the Daya gunam of the Lord was responsible for this change of heart on the part of the Lord. Therefore, the Daya gunam is given a concrete form and saluted by Svami Desikan.

Previously Svami Desikan had referred to the Lord as **karuNa varuNAlayam**, namely, the ocean of Mercy. The ocean has gems hidden in it. How can anyone know the hidden gems? How would Svami Desikan be able to glorify these and the ocean? In this regard, it needs to be understood that the very sight of the ocean is pleasing. The crashing waves of the ocean against the shore have a calming effect on the waves in the mind. Therefore, Svami Desikan declares that he will salute the **karuNa varuNAlayam** to the extent he can as per the salutation “**abhiShTaumi**”. This is merely a reflection of Svami Desikan’s humility, while in fact he salutes all salient aspects of Daya Devi. The reason for this is Daya Devi herself as documented in the tribute of verse 107 “**janjhAmAruta dhUtachUtanayataH sAmpAtikoyaM kramaH**” The grace of Daya Devi is such that the moment Svami Desikan settled upon her as the object of his tribute, She endowed him with knowledge pertaining to all Her salient aspects. This is known as kalekaposham nyAyam in the manner of birds which flock to grain and partake of it in entirety. Thus, came about the praise of anjanAdriShvara dayAm. Anjana is the mother of Hanuman. This was the hill, where she resided. Here the tribute is for the Daya of the Lord of anjanAdri. It is for the mahishi, who is known as Daya Devi. How does this Daya Devi exist? Svami Desikan glorifies this as **niranjanAm**-one who is blemishless. **niranjanam paramam sAmyam upaiti** is how the Lord is glorified, i.e., the blemishless one, one who is unaffected by karma. In a like manner, Srinivasa’s Daya too is blemishless! How can this be said with regards to Daya Devi? This comes about from the tribute **akinchananidhim**.



### Daya Devi – The hidden gem of the Lord’s Ocean of Mercy

She is the nidhi for those who are incapable of anything (no means to adopt upasanas prescribed for Bhakthi yogis). She is the one who graces these helpless, incapable ones and elevates them. She is the empress for those who seek the Lord’s feet as their only recourse - such Daya Devi is saluted by Svami Desikan. In verse 46 of the Devanayaka Panchasat, Svami Desikan declares “**ye janmakoTibhirupArjitashuddha dharmAH teShAM bhavaccharaNabhaktiratIva bhogyA**”. Due to the good (**shuddha dharma**) done over countless janmas, great ones develop intense Bhakthi for the Lord’s feet”. In a like manner, to even have the opportunity of sevai of Lord Srinivasa, one must have accumulated the shuddha



dharma from countless births. Only when such karma fructifies, would it even be possible to have the Lord's sevai at Tirumalai to the accompaniment of the namam Govinda! Govinda! This confers the benefit of **achanchala bhakti** (steadfast devotion) for Lord Srinivasa. In verse 47 of the Devanayaka Panchasat Svami Desikan states:

**nishkinchanatva dhaninA vibudhesha yena  
nyastaH svarakShaNabharastava pAda padme |  
nanAvidha prathitayoga visheSha dhanyAH  
nArhanti tasya shatakoTi tamAMshakakShyAm |**

"I do not know what good I have done in what janma? However, I have a great wealth. This dhanam I submit to You my Lord. What is this dhanam? Inability to perform karma yogam jnAna yogam and bhakthi yogam but seek Your Feet as my sole refuge. I who possess this dhanam, have submitted the responsibility of my protection to Your Lotus Feet. Those who behave in this manner, even great yogis who have accumulated tapobalam over countless births do not measure up to a small fraction. Those who perform Saranagati to the Lord with **paripurna vishvAsam**, for them the nidhi is Daya Devi. I salute this Daya Devi" declares Svami Desikan. **apavarga trivargayoH sUtim** is the next question, namely for someone of the stature of Svami Desikan, who had mastered Vedanta, it is appropriate to engage in the stotram of Daya Devi. However, what about the countless common folk, yearning for the grace of Lord Srinivasa who wait in long lines sometimes for 48 hours without getting Sevai? What vedantam have they studied? How have they come to Tirumalai? Svami Desikan answers this through the statement that it is solely the grace of Daya Devi that has caused them to come to Tirumalai. The next question that arises is that these common folk have not studied any Vedanta and thus have no idea of the concept of Moksham. Why do they come to Tirumalai? Svami answers this through the tribute "**trivargayoH**". Namely, Daya Devi, who is capable of granting the bliss of eternal kaimkaryam to the Divine Couple through moksham, also confers the purusharthas of dharma, artha, and kama sought after by common folks. Therefore, they too yearn for the grace of Daya Devi. The inner meaning is that those who act righteously and desire anything be it wealth, putra prapti, educational progress, success in exams and a plethora of such requests, Lord Srinivasa's Daya unfailingly fulfills them. However, if one is rooted in adharma and seeks the Lord's blessings for dharma viruddha karyams such as stealing and offering 10% of the loot by way of sambhavanam to the Lord, such requests will

never be granted. This completes the summary of the first decad of Daya Satakam. It is the **upodghAtam** for the stotram-sort of an executive summary of the content. From the next decad Svami Desikan delves into the details of Daya Devi's glory."

Next, we quote from the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin. I sing the praise, from all sides, completely too, of Daya of Srinivasa, who is the Lord of anjanAdri. The Daya quality is a treasure-trove to the destitute. Poor and helpless devotees can gain everything from this treasure. It can confer moksham and the three this-wordly gifts of Dharma-Artha-Kama. Not only does it confer from a ready stock; it can create, generate, produce anything to give to the destitute devotee. The Daya quality is faultless; acting in a discriminatory manner would be termed a great stigma; No Daya is all-generous; it has no meanness; no smallness; it is all-generous without a fault. It is this Daya Devi I praise from now on.

1. There is a beauty in referring to the Hill of the Lord as anjanAdri. Why? The Lord is pictured as a treasure-trove. There is an upanishadic passage citing human weakness in not recognizing a treasure hidden in earth under one's feet, walking over it, never discovering it-till a collyrium, an unguent, or anjanam is applied on one's eyes. The Daya of the Lord of anjanAdri is a treasure of this nature needing an **anjanam**-application to discover the treasure. Also Daya is free from any stigma-**niranjana**.
2. Daya of the Lord can fulfill all our prayers. It can first of all grant us Moksha. It can also confer all worldly gifts. It is so potent; when it can grant Moksha why worry about earthly gifts? They will be conferred on mere asking.
3. There is a beauty in the word sUtim-meaning generation, creation etc. As sage Vishvamitra "created" a heaven for his disciple, Trishanku, the Lord's Daya would create an artefact in respect to any craving from a devotee for the occasion. Not only She gives what is already existing and available, but She will generate, produce, create etc. what we ask for."







SvAmi DeSikan in TAYAr tirukkOlam - Tirumala