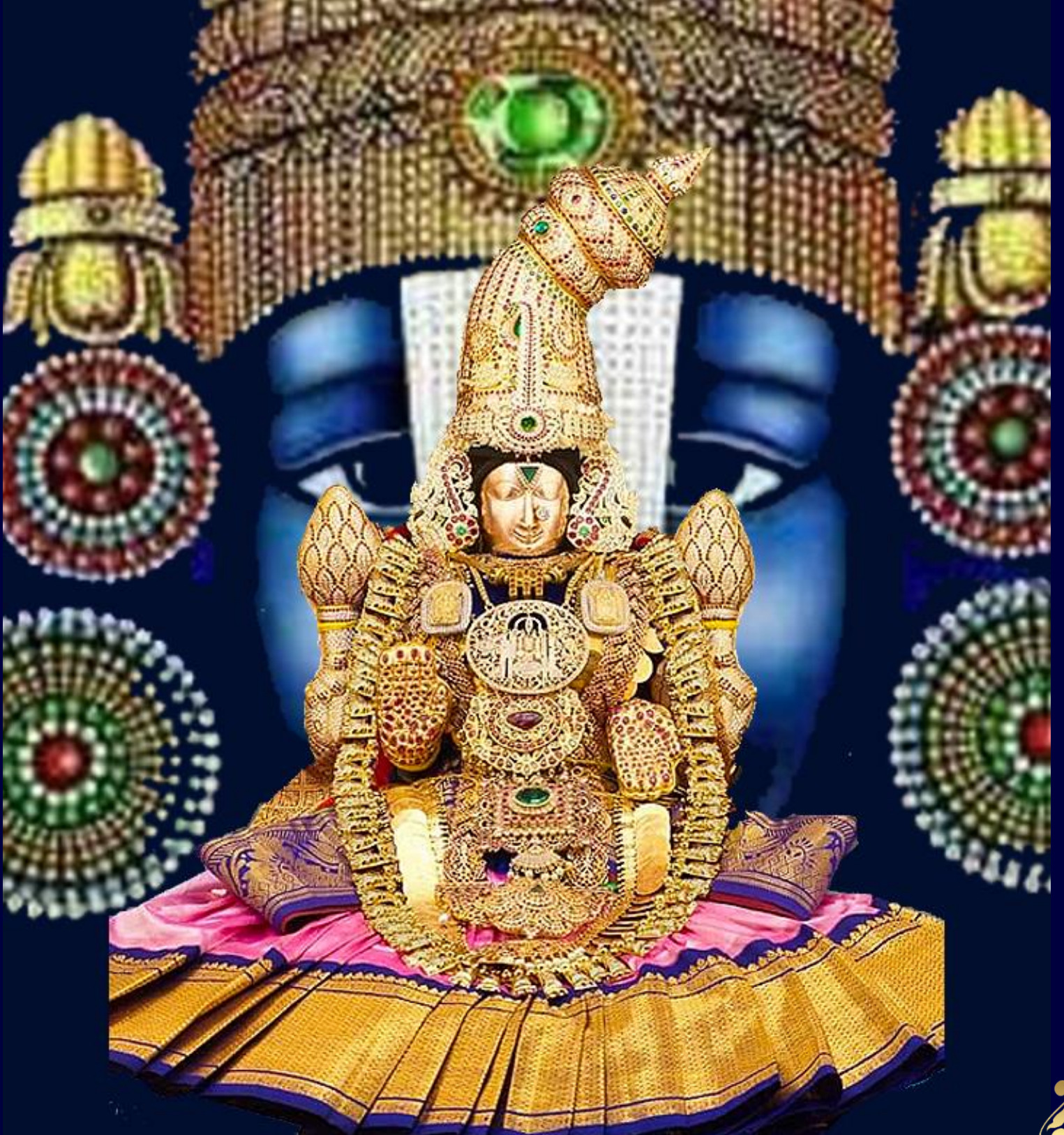
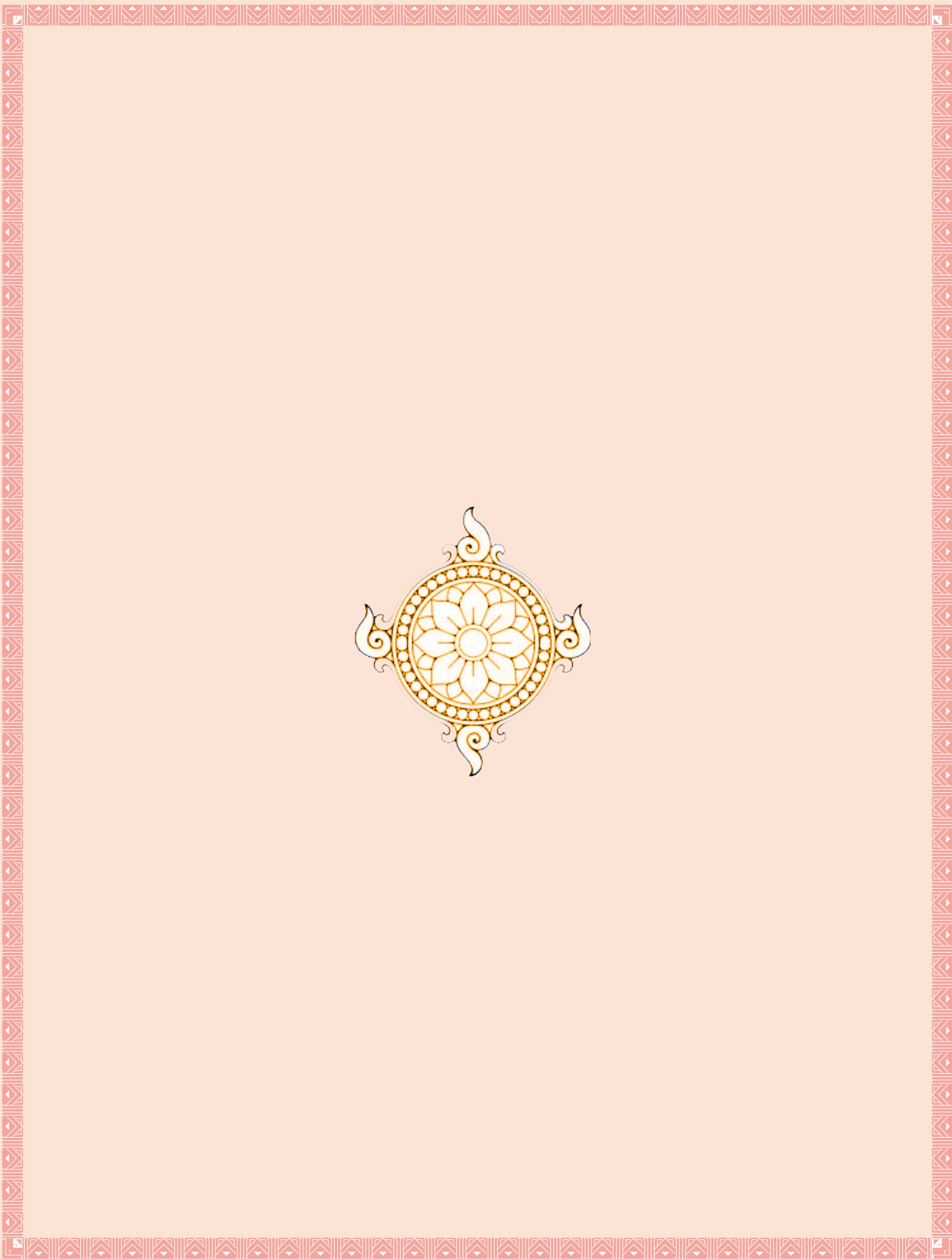


SvAmi NigamAnta MahAdeSikan's
Dayaa Satakam
(SlokaH 41 – 50)



Translated into English by

Ammangi Thandalam Muralidhar Rangaswamy



Sri:



SvAmi nigamAnta mahAdeSikan's

DAYAA SATAKAM



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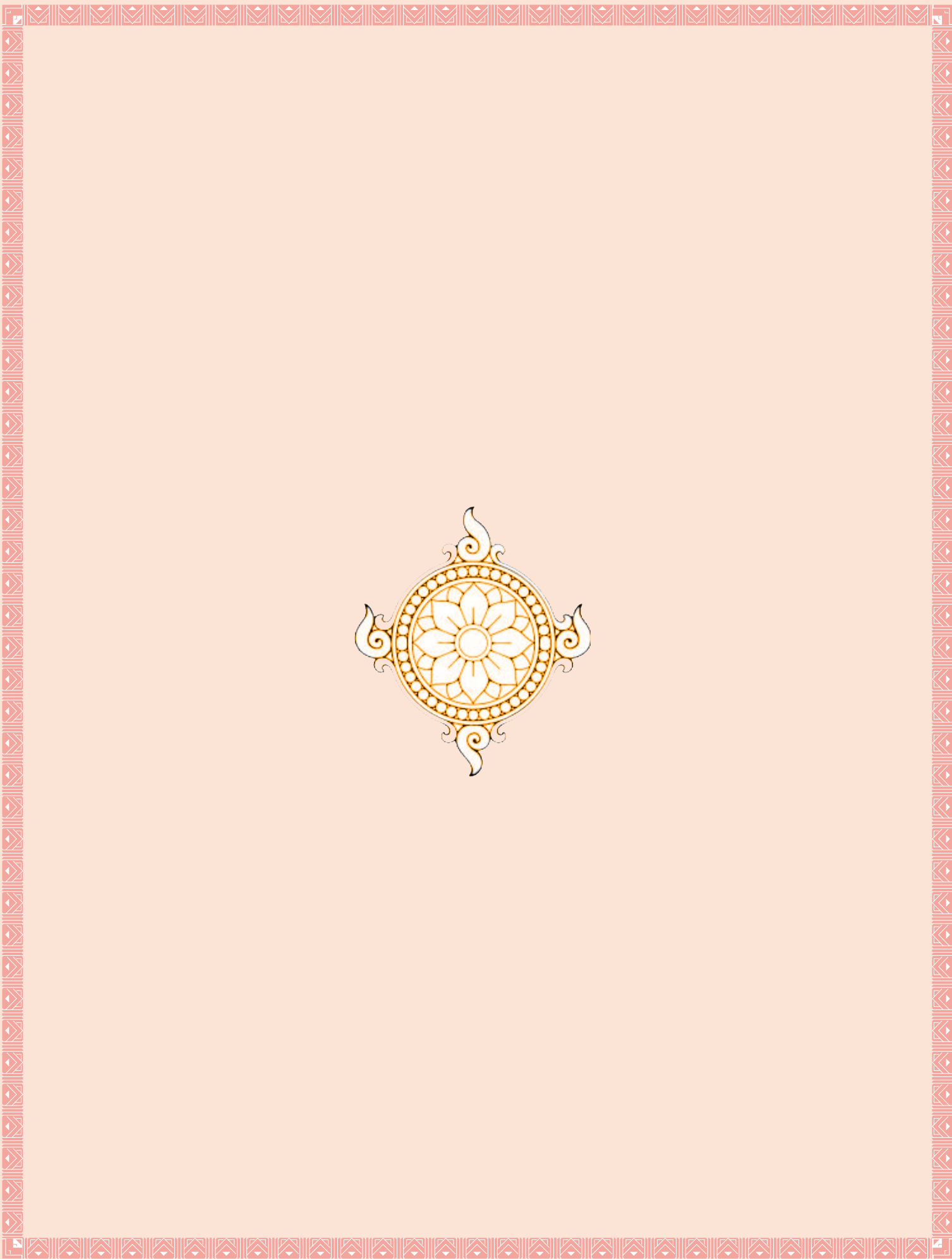
Tribute by

Ammangi Thandalam Muralidhar Rangaswamy





SrImad venkaTanAthArya tvadIya caraNadvayam |
bhavatvatra paratrApi madIyam SaraNam sadA | |
SrImate nigamAnta mahaAdeSikAya namaH | |
SrImate gopAladeSika mahAdeSikAya namaH | |



Sloka 41

आज्ञां ख्यातिं धनमनुचरान् आधि राज्यादिकं वा
काले धृष्ट्वा कमल वसतेः अप्यकिञ्चित् कराणि ।
पद्मा कान्तं प्रणिहितवतीं पालनेऽनन्य साध्ये
साराभिज्ञा जगति कृतिनः संश्रयन्ते दये त्वाम् ॥ ४१ ॥

Aj~nAM khyAtiM dhanamanucharAn Adhi rAjyAdikaM vA
kAle dhR^iShTvA kamala vasateH apyaki~nchit karANi |
padmA kAntaM praNihitavatIM pAlane(a)nanya sAdhye
sArAbhij~nA jagati kR^itinaH saMshrayante daye tvAm | |41



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“The 41st verse is the start of the fifth decad. The previous set of ten verses highlighted the role of Daya Devi in terms of securing the boon of residence in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill in the manner described by Svami NammAzhvar, identifying the correct path, gracing beings with Bhagavad anugraham even if they have taken residence in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill for some other purpose, functioning as a raft that is steered by the capable boatmen, Acharyas, to enable suffering jivans cross the ocean of samsara, blessing those jivans who take delight in getting caught up in the samsaric whirl with the grace of Lord Srinivasa leading them to perform Saranagati at the appropriate time and finally, chastising those who discard Daya Devi and Srinivasa to curry favors from Devatantara. This next set of ten verses documents the blessings of Daya Devi for those who were privy to Her grace as documented in the previous decad. The first two verses in this set of ten verses document the anubhavam of Svami Kulasekara Azhvar. The first verse in this set of ten is “Aj~nAM khyAtiM dhanamanucharAn Adhi rAjyAdikaM vA kAle dhR^iShTvA kamala vasateH apyaki~nchit karANi padmA kAntaM praNihitavatIM pAlane(a)nanya sAdhye sArAbhij~nA jagati kR^itinaH saMshrayante daye tvAm” This set of ten verses is set to mandhakrAntha meter. When one is climbing the hill, sheer exhaustion from scaling the peaks causes one to breathe heavily and climb slowly. In a like manner, these set of ten verses is set to a slow-moving meter. In



sandesa kavyams (poems containing important instruction) such as Hamsa sandesam, Meghasandesam, this meter is frequently used.

In this verse, Daya Devi is glorified as having a stature even greater than Lord Srinivasa. The question that arises then is how is this possible? In commentaries on Tiruppavai, many scholars have outlined that Bhagavad SvarUpam is quite enjoyable and satisfying. However, even more delectable than this is the enjoyment of Bhagavan nAmas - uttering them renders one extremely pure. The sheer delight gained by an understanding of these nAmas far exceeds that of Bhagavad svarUpa anubhavam. Specifically, Bhagavad svarUpam is like a solid gold bar (kaTTi pon), which is quite valuable. However, it can at best be safeguarded by

storage in a locker. On the other hand, Bhagavan nAma is the like the malleable gold (paNi pon), which can be made into ornaments for adornment. Therefore, it begets a status greater than Bhagavad svarUpam. Bhagavad svarUpam characterized by pratyaksham of satyatvam, jnAnatvam, Anandatvam, amalativam,

while valuable, is not fit for enjoyment analogous to the solid gold bar. On the other hand, Bhagavan nAmas are like the malleable gold, which can be transformed into ornaments for enjoyment. In a like manner, Lord Srinivasa is no doubt great. However, Daya Devi is even greater than Him. This is the import of the present Daya Satakam verse. The sambodhanam is **daye!** The next part of the tribute “**sArAbhij~nA jagati kR^itinaH saMshrayante**” denotes the fact that those who are well versed in essence (sAram) of the Sastras and are fortunate seek refuge in Daya Devi. This leads to the question, who are ones well versed in sAram? Who are the fortunate ones? In Srimad RahasyatrayasAram, Svami Desikan declares “**asAram alpasAram ca sAram sArataram tyajet bhajet sAratamam shAstram ratnAkaramivAmrutam**” The meaning of this statement is that we are Vaidikas who subscribe to the authority of the Sastras. Therefore, in matters which cannot be seen by the eyes or experienced by the senses, the words of the Sastram serve as the ultimate authority. Dharmam is elaborated upon by the Sastram. If one undertakes this task, the resulting benefit is moksham. We cannot behold this benefit visually. Neither is it something that can be experienced through the sense organs. For example, if there is a fire, one knows from instinct guided by the senses that it will burn and therefore one must stay away. However, unlike this moksham is not something that can be experienced through the senses. Hence, the declaration of the Sastram has to be accepted as is. This is known as **pramANam**. Those who accept this are known as **pramANikas**. Those who mis-interpret the Sastras and their purport while conveying a message that is exactly the opposite of that intended by the Sastras is known as **asAram**. This applies to both the expositor as well as the message and hence needs to be discarded. Next **alpasAram** is elaborated upon. In the Vedam, there are declarations for begetting **pashu** (cows), **Ayush** (long life), **Arogyam** (good health), and **putran** (son). These are worldly benefits and hence denoted as **alpa sAram**. The alpa sAram portions too can be ignored. When asAram and alpa sAram are discarded, other benefits offered by Vedic prescriptions such as svarga vAsam and the like may seem great (sAram). For example, the means to attain Svarga lokam through declarations such as “**eteta svargatAmaH**” However, this too is trivial and needs to be discarded. Even greater than this are the portions of the Vedam that pertain to Atma viShayam (matters pertaining to the Atma). Enjoyment of the Atma is called kaivalyam and is denoted by sArataram. Thus, asAram, alpa sAram, seemingly sAram, and sArataram need to be given up in favor of paramAtma anubhavam. This is denoted by sAratamam shAstram. This portion of the sastram than instructs us in knowledge about the ParamAtma needs to be carefully assimilated since it paves the way for one’s

wellbeing. This is akin to the churning of the milky ocean where a number of objects of value arose. Along with these came poison. However, just as these were discarded in favor of amrutam that came about from the churning of the ocean, one needs to focus on the sAratamam (knowledge of the ParamAtma) to the exclusion of all other portions. Therefore, that which is sAram is the knowledge of ParamAtma, the means to attain Him and knowledge of everything else that is completely dependent upon Him. One who is aware of sAram is denoted by the Daya Satakam salutation “sArAbhij~nAr”. Even among those possessed of the knowledge of sAram, it is important to know who among them has a clear understanding of sAram. These are denoted as BhagyavAns - the fortunate ones. There lived a mahAn in Srirangam, who was instructing his disciples in Vedantic truths through the mode of kAlakshepam. During these times, another mahAn who lived on uncha vritthi (begging for alms to meet daily needs of tiruvaradhanam and feeding one’s family) used to visit him. (This was a common practice in days of yore, where scholarly Brahmins would take a bowl to collect the offerings from various people residing in their town, all the time engaged in reciting some stotram or the other and accepting whatever is offered.) The visitor would come every day and be received with great respect by the scholar engaged in kalakshepam, even though the visitor was not as well versed in the sastras as the Svamin offering kalakshepam. The disciples too would be angered that the kalakshepam flow is being interrupted by the visitor and would wonder why their preceptor was according so much respect to the visitor by stopping his discourse and standing up to welcome the visitor. They even approached their preceptor with this question. In reply the preceptor said that the answer to their question would become known the next day. The next day as per his routine, the visitor arrived and was respectfully welcomed. After he had received the offerings of rice and other grains, the preceptor asked him “Svami, I have a question” The visitor replied with great humility out of extreme naichyam (self deprecation) “Svamin! You are well versed with the Sastras and widely read. Therefore, I am not sure I will be able to answer your question.” The preceptor said “No this is not true. I need to get a clarification from you.” The visitor replied, “I shall try to answer your question to the extent permitted by my knowledge.” The preceptor enquired “Who is Paratatvam? Some parts of the Vedam glorify Brahma as Paratatvam while other places glorify Rudra in the same vein and some others glorify Indra as Param. Therefore, please resolve this confusion for me.” The visitor was visibly shocked and remarked “I have performed a grave apacharam. I have been feeding myself with grains offered in uncha vritthi by one who does not have a clear understanding that Lord Narayana

is the Paratatvam. Is it not a sin to partake of such offering? Therefore, I shall return all the grains that I have accepted so far from you Svamin. I do not want to have anything to do with you.” As soon as he heard this the preceptor was delighted beyond measure and remarked “Svamin! I do not have the slightest doubt that Lord Narayana is the Paratatvam. However, these disciples of mine were envious of the respect I was according to you daily. It is only to reveal to them that you have a clear understanding of Paratatvam that I asked this question. Rest assured that you can accept the rice and grains from me to support your uncha vritthi.”



Para tattvam

The clarity of understanding of Paratatvam is contained in the salutation “brahmANaM shitikaNTha~nca yAshcAnyadevatAH smR^itAH | pratibuddhA na sevante yasmAt parimitaM phalam” Those possessed of great intellect do not engage in worship of Brahma, Rudra, or other devatas due to the fact that they can only confer worldly benefits (refer to the elaboration of parimita phala sangAt from the previous verse). However, they are incapable of granting moksham. In a prior verse, the greatness of Daya Devi was elaborated upon through the description of Her enormous help to jivans, who come seeking worldly benefits, to gain moksham. In the Tiruvaimozhi, Svami NammAzhvar declares “onRum devam ulakum uyirum

maRRum yAtum illA anRu nanmukhan tannODu tEvar ulakODuyir paDaittAn kunRam pOI maNi mADa nIDu tirukkurukUr atanuL ninRa AtipirAn niRka maRRaitteivam nADutirE” The Azhvar laments that when Lord Narayana of such magnificence is standing ready to grace us why seek out other devatas for worship? In the context of the Daya Satakam salutation, those having clear knowledge of

Lord Narayana as Paratatvam without ambiguity, are saluted as “kR^itinaH” or the fortunate ones (bhAgyavans). What do these bhAgyavans who possess clear knowledge of sAram do? They have established that “Aj~nAM khyAtiM dhanamanucharAn Adhi rAjyAdikaM vA kAle dhR^iShTvA kamala vasateH apyaki~nchit karANi” namely even the elevated stature of Brahma is impermanent. Brahma’s aishvaryam is derived from the fact that his origin comes from the lotus emanating from the Lord’s navel. He is constantly engaged in reciting the Vedam with the four mouths corresponding to his four heads. He is assigned the task of creation of the universe by the Lord as described in the salutation “kamala vasateH”. This seems like the greatest status that one can beget. The next salutation “api” suggests that the status of Siva, Indra and other Devatas is included here. The viseSham for Siva is described by the statement “mahadevaH sarva medhe mahAtma udvA AtmAnam deva devo babhUva samharta” He became the Deva of the Devas. How did he beget this elevated status? This is answered by the fact that he performed a yAgam known as sarva medha, wherein he submitted himself as the havis. As a consequence, he came to be known as Mahadevan. He is tasked by the Lord to destroy everything in the universe at the appropriate time. He is also known as sarvaj~nyan - or “all-knowing” one. He has been the parama bhAgavata as seen from the PurANam declaration “vaiShNavANAM yathA shambu”. However, even one of this elevated stature occupies this spot only for a finite period. Therefore, this too is impermanent. Next comes the role of Indra. This is described in the salutation “yo vritram avadhIt” One who is endowed with great strength destroyed Vritra. He is the Lord of Svarga lokam. However, even this status is not permanent and comes to an end at a certain time. “Aj~nyAm” is the Daya Satakam tribute which denotes the fact that the status of Brahma, Rudra, and Indra while lofty has finite duration and thus comes to a prescribed end in accordance with the Sastras. This is the reference to the Upanishad statement intended to provide a comparative analysis of the varying degrees of greatness and the enjoyment of happiness for different lokas/persons occupying those lokas. “yuvA syAt sAdhu yuvAdhyAyakaH, AshiShTho draDhiShTho baliShThaH, tasyeyam pR^ithvi sarvA vittasya pUrNAH syAt, sa eko mAnuSha AnandaH” This reflects the fact that nobody likes to age. Therefore, the glory of youth is illustrated here. Not only one who is youthful, but also one who is possessed of knowledge of the Vedas to instruct his sons is glorified in this tribute with the specific term “yuvAdhyAyakaH”. However, this in itself is insufficient. What if the individual thus endowed is suffering constantly from one ailment or the other? Even though the individual is well versed with the Scriptures and is able to instruct others, if one is

affected by ill health that does not permit involvement in Bhagavat Kaimkaryam such as utsavams for Varadaraja Perumal or Thuppul Deepa Prakasar, the learning becomes of limited value. Therefore, the Vedam declares “AshiShTho draDhiShTho baliShThaH” namely one who is learned in the Vedas and is capable of instructing others, having good health (free from illness), possessing bodily strength, and firmness of mind is glorified here. Not stopping here, the Upanishad further elaborates that even these are insufficient. One needs to be wealthy to support the demands of one’s family and other components of society. Therefore, one endowed with all the previously enumerated qualities and possessing in addition all conceivable wealth in this world enjoys a state of happiness described as “mAnuSha AnandaH”

In a like manner the Upanishad describes the delight of manushya gandharva, deva gandharva and the like in a step-by-step manner culminating in Brahma Ananda, the happiness of one occupying the position of the four faced Brahma. Svami Desikan alludes to the fact that this is not permanent and that it lasts only for a finite period even though this period is considerably longer than one can comprehend. Those who recognize the impermanence of the lofty states of Brahma, Siva, and Indra are described by Svami



Desikan as “sArAj~nyar” (ones who possess knowledge of sAram). Regardless of one’s status (rich or poor) they need a few people who will readily do their bidding. This is captured in the Daya Satakam salutation “Aj~nAM khyAtiM

ghanamanucharAn” This salutation describes the fact that one who is in the state of giving orders to others can easily incur a role reversal in future, where he is subject to the orders of the very same people, who he once commanded. This can easily be seen when one is working. As long as one is employed one can command and instruct subordinates to perform various tasks. However, upon retirement they would be very much at the mercy of those very subordinates to gain favors from the organization they worked for. This is also commonly encountered in families where children while growing up are under the command of their parents. However, when parents age and have to be cared for by their children, they are forced to obey the commands of their children. Thus, commanding influence is not permanent. The next thing that one craves for is “**KhyAtiM**” (praise). Those seeking praise go to great extents and make many sacrifices. However, even this is not lasting. In this context it is important to examine the case of MAndhAta (an ancestor of Lord Rama), who attained Svarga loka. Upon reaching Svarga loka, he was seated in a throne equivalent to Indra’s throne. This came about due the fact that MAndhAta had performed numerous karmas and yagas to acquire this status. Needless to say, Indra could not tolerate another receiving honors equivalent to his own. Out of great envy, he posed a loaded question to MAndhAta “In your opinion, in the BhU lokam, who is it that is hailed as Dharmishta (performer of Dharma karyas)?” This is a loaded question since it demands an honest answer. In truth MAndhAta was peerless as a Dharmishta and was hailed for this in BhU lokam. On the other hand, stating this honestly would incur the stain of self-praise. Accordingly, he honestly said that “today I am glorified in the earth as Dharmishta” However, due to uttering self praise, Indra declared that this was an exclusion for Svarga loka residents and expelled MAndhAta from Svargam. Therefore, it must be understood that all praise lasts for a finite time and comes to an end. Next comes the salutation “Dhanam” denoting the fact that there is nobody spared of the allure of wealth. This attraction can become seemingly endless. The acquisition of great wealth makes one a slave to wealth to the extent that one is prepared to give up one’s life for the sake of wealth. The tribute “anucharAn” from the Daya Satakam verse refers to the fact that a wealthy person will have some close followers, who may seek to gain his wealth by devious means including actively plotting and executing his death. Then follows the tribute from the Daya Satakam verse “**Adhi rajyAdhikam va**” denoting the fact that kings who inherit this title too are constantly in fear of adversaries, who constantly seek to undermine them with a view to annexing or taking over the kingdom by devious means including orchestrating the death of the king in extreme cases. Therefore, it is clear that the

pursuits described thus far give rise to **viparIta phalan** (results that are detrimental) Therefore, the tribute “**kAle dhR^iShTvA apyaki~nchit karANi dhR^iShTvA**” is examined. This refers to the fact that one who realizes the detrimental results yielded by the pleasures of command/influence, praise, wealth, and kingship and is aware of their impermanence is the one that has developed knowledge of sAram and is hence known as sAraj~nyar.



The day when even the Sun, Moon, Indra, Rudra, and Brahma ceased to exist, our emperumAn, Lord Narayana, was present.

In the **Paramapada sopanam**, Svami Desikan declares “**tantirankaL aLavilarAi tanattAl mikka tAr vEntar tozha ANDAr mANDAr cantiranum cUriyanum vlyum kAlam tArakaiyin vaDamum aRRu tanivAn ALum intiranum Er uyarttha lcan tAnum Ir iraNDu mukattAnum illA annAL nam tirumAl nilai kaNDAR nAkam ellAm narakenRu naRpatame nADu vArE**” This denotes the fact that kings who had a great following and were saluted by many ruled for a time and eventually passed away. The day when even the Sun, Moon, Indra, Rudra, and Brahma ceased to exist, our emperumAn, Lord Narayana, was present. Therefore, those who understand this and recognize the plight of Brahma, Rudra, Indra, and others is verily a narakam and instead resort to the feet of Lord Narayana as their sole refuge, beget great wealth and attain lasting bliss.

Next the focus turns to the salutation **saMshrayante**”. The feet of the Lord that serve as the refuge to enable this lasting wealth has a lofty status no doubt.



However, Daya Devi begets a status that is even greater than these sacred feet. It is important to understand that this tribute is rendered in the spirit of **nahininda nyAyam**. Namely, demonstrating the greatness of one object over another by way of comparison with an equally great object and showing that the former tops the latter. How does this come about? This is explicated in the tribute “**ananyasAdhye pAlane(a)nanya padma kAntaM praNihitavatIM**.” Namely, the task of rescuing suffering jlvans in samsaram, which is impossible for anyone else except the Lord, is facilitated by Daya Devi using some pretext or the other. In fact, She has the Lord at Her command and instructs Him to rescue these suffering beings (Her children). In this context, the sport of creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe, that the Lord engages in is controlled by Daya Devi, who instructs the Lord to use Brahma, and Rudra as instruments to effect the tasks of creation and destruction. However, the critical task of protection of suffering jivans is carefully assigned by Daya Devi to the Lord Himself. The inner meaning is that the tasks of creation and destruction are carried out by the Lord who is the indweller for Brahma and Rudra, while the task of protection is carried out by the Lord in His original svarUpam. The assignment is truly the orchestration of Daya Devi. What is the task of protection of the universe it may be asked? This is reflected in the tribute “**na sampadhAm samAhAre vipadhAm vinivartane samartho dR^iShyate kascit samvirA puruShottamam nahi pAlana sAmarthyam rithe sarveshvare harau**” that is there is no one as capable as Lord Narayana who ensures that all Sampath (wealth) is properly acquired and all obstacles for acquiring this wealth are removed. The wealth here refers to Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Lord Narayana is the one who bestows this Kaimkarya sAmrAgyam. He grants the supreme wealth (aishvaryam) of moksham. Vipat denotes the obstacles that come in the way of acquiring this supreme wealth. This refers to one’s karma that results in a mountainous sin-pile. Lord Narayana alone is capable of ensuring the destruction of this sin-pile. No one else besides Lord Narayana is capable of the task of protecting the universe and ruling over the worlds in this manner. Therefore, the Lord assigns the task of creation and destruction to Brahma and Rudra, respectively, at the behest of Daya Devi and retains the crucial function of protecting the entire universe again at the command of Daya Devi. The task of protection denotes aniShTa nivR^itti (removal of obstacles) and iShTa prApti (gaining the desired fruit). Therefore, those who realize this great upakAram of Daya Devi and seek Her out as their sole refuge are the ones blessed with true knowledge of “sAram” and are the fortunate ones (BhAgyavans).”

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin:

“Oh Daya Devi! Lord Srinivasa is the protector, unique and singular, for all the worlds. None else can manage it, and You induce Him. Hence, I can as well say that the whole protection of all the worlds is Your arena. You are the master-performer. This being so, how is it that commonly people resort to all and sundry Devas seeking their protection? The chief Deva among them is Brahma. To him and to all else also, the power, the position, the reputation, the wealth, the retinue, the paraphernalia attending on him for doing services and the suzerainty-these must be of the first rank for Brahma and have been cited here. However, all these are trivial and of no significance. They were acquired by long arduous efforts of penance. However, they would face an end. Only a few fortunate souls realize that these possessions are worth nothing and not care about them. They would remember that You, inducing Lord Srinivasa are the sole factor. They worship You. They are the people with real discernment.”



Sloka 42

प्रजापत्य प्रभृति विभवं प्रेक्ष्य पर्याय दुःखं
जन्माकाङ्क्षन् वृषगिरि वने जग्मुषां तस्थुषां वा ।
आशासानाः कतिचन विभोस्त्वत्परिष्वङ्गं धन्यैः
अङ्गीकारं क्षणमपि दये हार्दं तुङ्गैरपाङ्गै ॥ ४२ ॥

prajApatya prabhR^iti vibhavaM prekShya paryAya duHkhaM
janmA kA~NkShan vR^iShagiri vane jagmuShAM tasthuShAM vA|
AshAsAnAH katicana vibhostvat pariShva~Nga dhanyaiH
a~NglkAraM kShaNamapi daye hArda tu~NgairapA~Ngai||42



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“The next verse is “prajApatya prabhR^iti vibhavaM prekShya paryAya duHkhaM janmA kA~NkShan vR^iShagiri vane jagmuShAM tasthuShAM vA|AshAsAnAH katicana vibhostvat pariShva~Nga dhanyaiH a~NglkAraM kShaNamapi daye hArda tu~NgairapA~Ngai||” The last verse identified the saraj~nyars and bhAgyavAns. Here Svami Desikan takes it one step further and declares that foremost beings are those that have visited the Venkatam Hill and obtained Bhagavad anubhavam of Lord Srinivasa on account of Daya Devi. The thought process of sarabhij~nyars identified in the previous verse is now outlined. Their singular purpose is to be affiliated with the Venkatam hill as an animate or inanimate object so that they can be privy to the grace of Lord Srinivasa through His kataksham. This is their ultimate purushartham. “Arthobhij~nyAsi” An **ekAnti** is one who engages in sole worship of Lord Narayana for obtaining all purusharthas - Dharma, artha, kama, and moksha. For example, one in need of money, or seeking educational progress, or the bhogam of svarga loka, who seeks them only from Lord Narayana is an **ekanti**. A **paramaikanti** is one whose sole objective is that of uninterrupted Kaimkaryam to the Divine Couple. This is the ultimate purushartham for them. Thus, even moksham becomes a by-product of this purushartham. In the **emmAvITTu tiramum** pasuram, Svami NammAzhvar was engaged in a communion with the Lord. The Lord offered the Azhvar the ultimate boon of moksham since He was pleased with the Azhvar’s tribute. To this the Azhvar enquired “My Lord! What awaits me in



moksham?" The Lord answered "You will be freed from the cycle of births and deaths and will have the same form as Lord Narayana as described by **vishoka** (one who knows no sorrow), **vimR^ityuH** (one who never dies), **apipAsAH** (unaffected by thirst), **apahatapApma** (untouched by sins), **vijighatsaH** (one who does not crave for food), **satyakAma** (fond of the truth), **satya sankalpa** (one who wills the truth), **esha Atma** (of the nature of the soul)." The Azhvar then declared "If this is so, I do not want moksham." The Lord was quite astonished by this and further enquired "Why so?" To this the Azhvar replied "My Lord! I merely seek kaimkaryam for You. You did not mention this in Your offer of moksham. If this kaimkaryam, which is my sole objective, is available for me in moksham, I shall gladly accept it. If not, nothing is lost. I shall continue the kaimkaryam in BhUlokam." The Azhvar in his tribute "**emma vITTu tiRamum ceppam nin cem mA pAta paRpu talai cErttollai kaimmA tunpam kaDinta pirAnE amma aDiyEn vEnDuvatItE**" seeks the bhagyam of placement of the Lord's foot on his head. One whose sole objective is bhagavad kaimkaryam as outlined by Svami NammAzhvar is a ParamaikAnti. Tondaradipodi Azhvar salutes Lord Ranganatha in the pasuram "**pacchai mA malai pOI mEni pavazhavAi kamala cenkaN AcyutA! amarar ErE! Ayar tam kozhuntE! ennum iccuvai tavira yAn pOI intira IOkam ALum accuvai perinum vENDEn arankamA nakaraLulAnE**" Here it must be noted that the Azhvar's reference to Indira lokam is not Svargam ruled over by Indra, who killed Vritra. Instead, it is a reference to Sri Vaikuntam itself. The Azhvar is so mesmerized by the beauty of Lord Ranganatha that he is willing to give up residence in Sri Vaikuntam to engage in Kaimkaryam for Lord Ranganatha. Svami Desikan echoes a similar sentiment in the **Varadaraja Panchasat** salutation "**vaikuNThavAse(a)pi namebhilAShaH**" This is the state of Paramalkantis. In this Daya Satakam verse Svami Desikan refers to the state of a Paramaikantin in the context of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi. Kulasekara Azhvar in the Perumal Tirumozhi outlines the manner of conduct to be adopted by one interested exclusively in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa. Specifically, the fourth decad has the evocative tribute "**paDiyAi kiDantu un pAvazha vAi kAnpEnE**" The Daya Satakam salutation "**prajApatya prabhR^iti vibhavaM**" mirrors the Azhvar tribute from the fourth decad with reference to the state of "**caturmukhalshvaryam**", namely the elevated state of Brahma. This is no doubt a prominent position since all devas seek refuge in him when encountering difficulties. The tribute "**prekShya**" denotes the fact that upon careful examination reflecting the import of the Upanishad statement "**parIkShalokAn karmacitAn**". For example, one living in a village thinks that living in a city like Chennai is glamorous. One residing in Chennai thinks that the life afforded by Mumbai is even better,

while one residing in Mumbai thinks of a life of ultimate comfort as residence in USA. However, only when one experiences residence in these various places does one get exposed to the difficulties inherent therein. If this is the state for residing in various places on earth, one can only wonder about the complexity of challenges faced in the process of residing in Brahma lokam. After close examination (**prekSha**) the conclusion is that the state of Brahma is one of “**paryAya duHkham**” as outlined in this verse. The import of this salutation is that even though Brahma lokam seems to offer great pleasure, it is in fact a synonym (**paryAya**) for sorrow. Just like ghaTa and kalasha are synonyms for vessels, in this case the term sukham is actually a synonym for sorrow. Only one who occupies the place of a king knows the difficulties of the position. It is a trivial and impermanent benefit. It causes great sorrow. This is the state of “**prajApatya prabhR^iti vibhavaM**” It is common to seek ayur-Arogyam-alshcaryam (long life, good health free from diseases, and wealth). While these are seemingly great boons to seek, they in fact result in great sorrow. In accordance with the declaration “arogyam indriyolbhaNyam alshvaryam shatrusAmita viyogo bandhavAirAyuH”, when one is blessed with arogyam (good health), the sense organs are strong and hence wish to act in a manner of their pleasing. This results in actions which are contrary to the shastras, accruing great sins. Therefore, having Arogyam is pointless. Next comes aishvaryam. One who is endowed with aishvaryam incurs plenty of enemies, who actively seek to harm the wealthy individual. Therefore, this too is dangerous. Then, ayush is examined. If one is blessed with long life (say a hundred years), but loses all his near and dear ones much earlier “**viyogaH bAndhavaIH** - separation from near and dear ones), the gift of long life verily becomes a curse. Therefore, all of these give rise to no happiness. Instead, the outcome is only one of increased sorrow. This sorrow continues to a greater extent, when one seeks out the pleasures of Brahma lokam. Hence, it is merely accruing more sorrow in the name of seeking greater pleasure. Thus, it is pointless to seek these pleasures. It may then be asked what should be sought? This is addressed in the salutation “**tvat pariShva~Nga dhanyaiH hArdu~NgaiH vibho apA~Ngai a~NgIkAraM kShaNamapi AshAsAnAH**” One who is graced by the embrace of Daya Devi is the fortunate one. The overflowing grace of Lord Srinivasa emanating from His heart floods one thus blessed by Daya Devi. If this causes Lord Srinivasa to declare “He belongs to Me” even if it be for a second such an individual is truly blessed. Those who desire the compassionate eye-glances of Lord Srinivasa even for a second as a consequence of this process are the “ashAsanAH”. The greatness of these beings is further extolled in this verse. The salutation “**tvat pariShva~Nga dhanyaiH**” is again highlighted.



The loftiness of Daya Devi comes to the fore again as has been the case numerous times in this stotram. The essential nature of Daya Devi is described in the statement “prayojanamanudhiShya duHkha nivAraNa iccha” namely one whose sole objective is to remove the sorrows of others without expecting any benefit for Herself. The three terms **daye**, **hArdham**, and **apAngaiH** are used to glorify Daya Devi in this context. **hArdam** denotes the affection of Daya Devi in Her role of granting the wishes of Her seekers, **apAngaiH** denotes the compassionate eye-glances of Lord Srinivasa allied with Daya Devi. It is important to note that if one seeks the eye-glances of Lord Srinivasa in isolation, it would easily result in the Lord viewing the enormous sin-pile of the seeker, which would rouse His anger, incur His displeasure, and result in punishment. However, when allied with Daya Devi, the result becomes a polar-opposite in that the individual now becomes privy to the extraordinary compassion of Lord Srinivasa. Thus, it must be understood that bereft of Daya Devi the Lord’s glances result in detrimental consequences (punishment). There was a mahan, Tirukacchi Nambi, who rendered ChAmara kaimkaryam (fan service) to Lord Varadaraja. The Lord used to engage in conversation with Sri Nambi. In his **DevarAja Ashtakam** tribute Sri Nambi declares “**tvadIkShaNa sudhAsindhu vlcivikShepa shikaraIH kAruNyAmrutAnItaIH shItalaIrabhiShinca mAm**” The import of this verse is that Sri Nambi seeks an abhishekam in the compassionate eye-glances of Lord Varadaraja. Sri Nambi qualifies this with the statement, that it is not merely the eye-glances of Lord Varadaraja that he seeks but the eye-glances laden with compassion again recognizing the importance of Daya in seeking this benefit. It is only when allied with Daya Devi that the Lord’s eye-glances beget a disposition of granting what His seekers long for. Lord Varadaraja is saluted as “**karutavaram tarum daiva perumAL vantAr**” namely even a formal prayer is not necessary. Lord Varadaraja discerns the wishes of His seekers and at that moment itself He wills that these be granted. The use of bahuvachanam for **apAngaiH** needs to be appreciated. In a prior verse Svami Desikan saluted the torrential flow of Daya Devi in the same spirit as “**vAridhAra visheShaIH**” referring to the copious flow from the hill streams at the Venkatam Hill. In the Sri Stuti, Svami Desikan seeks the compassionate glances of Mahalakshmi Thayar in the tribute **sAnuprAsa prakaTita dayaiH sAndravAtsalyadigdhaiH amba snigdhalramR^italaharI labdhasa bhramhacharyaiH gharme tApatraya viracite gADhataptam kShaNam mAm AkincanyaglapitamanaghalrAr drayethAH kaTAKShaIH**”. In this tribute Svami Desikan seeks to be drenched by the cool compassionate eye-glances of Thayar by way of providing relief from samsaric heat which is burning his entire body. Thus,

it becomes clear that when the eye-glances of Lord Srinivasa are accompanied by Daya Devi, vAtsalyam (love of a cow for its calf) is bound to follow. This is sought in this Daya Satakam verse by Svami Desikan for a fleeting second through the declaration “kShaNamapi AshAsAn”. Svami Alavandar echoes the same sentiment in the Stotra ratnam salutation “sakR^it tvadAkAra vilokanAshayA tR^iNikR^itAnuttamabhuktimuktibhiH mahAtmabhirmAvalokyatAm naya kShaNe(a)pi te yadviraho(a)tiduHsahaH” Who are the mahatmas as described by Svami Alavandar? This is described in the Garuda PuraNam salutation “yan muhurtam kShaNam vApi vAsudevo na cintyate sA hAniH mahat chidhram sA bhrAntiH sa ca vikriyA” namely one who regards even a moment of non-contemplation on Lord Vasudeva as a moment of grave consequence and a difficult state is a Mahatma. In this context, it is instructive to note the thought process of the residents of Ayodhya in the Srimad Ramayanam salutation “yashca rAmam na pashyetu yam ca rAmo na pashyati nindita sa vaset loka svAtmapi enam vigarhate”. The meaning of this tribute is that the birth of one who lives in Ayodhya and has not beheld Rama or one who resides in Ayodhya and has not been seen by Rama is truly wasted. What have I done to deserve this plight? This reflects the thought process of the Mahatma described by Svami Alavandar. However, in the present day it is quite common to see one engaged in watching TV when the procession of the Lord arrives at one’s doorstep instead of coming out and offering respectful salutation. This merely illustrates the fact that these people are not graced with the same elevation of mind as the inhabitants of Ayodhya.

In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, those described as “ashAsAnAH” long for the compassionate Daya Devi allied eye-glances of Lord Srinivasa much in the same manner as the residents of Ayodhya. The appeal of these “ashAsAnAH” to Lord Srinivasa is not merely seeking residence in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill but to become a sentient or insentient object associated with the Venkatam hill to derive the benefit of the Daya laden Srinivasa kataksham. The reference here is to Svami Kulasekara Azhvar’s tribute “ponmalaimEl EtEnum AvEnE”. In the opening verse of the fourth decad of Perumal Tirumozhi, the Azhvar states his intent through the tribute “UnERu celvattu uDaR piRavi yAn vEnDeN AnERezh venRAn aDimai tiRam allAl kUnERu cankam iDattAn tan venkaDattu kOnEri vAzhum kurukAi pirappEnE” which documents the Azhvar’s desire to be born as a stork at the Venkatam hill. The Azhvar goes a step further in the next verse and seeks to be born as a fish in the tribute “mInAi pirakkum” out of the thought that the Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi may come to the lake where the Azhvar resides as a fish and thus he can be privy to the Daya-laden eye-glances of Lord Srinivasa.



The Azhvar then resolves he can do better and in the third verse seeks to be “pon vaTTil piDittuDanE puka peruvEn AvEnE”. (In days of yore, after kings partook of betel leaves and betel nuts, they would be offered a spit bowl to discard the remains from their mouths.) Here the Azhvar desires to be born as one who holds the spit bowl that is used by Lord Srinivasa so that the Daya-laden eye-glances of Lord Srinivasa are guaranteed to fall on him. Even today during Garudotsavam for Lord Srinivasa, one can see many people in the Vahanam. Specifically, there will be a Svamin nicely dressed, adorned in silk and holding an “aDakaai peTTi”, a box containing the betel leaves and betel nuts. Inside the box is a small container used as the Lord’s spit bowl, which enables the Lord to discard the remains of the offering of betel leaves and betel nuts, to remind Bhagavatas of the Azhvar’s anubhavam. Here it may be asked “saliva is considered ashuddham (impure). How is it that it is accepted in this case? This is answered by the fact that common people’s saliva is indeed impure. However, since it comes from the Lord’s mouth it is extremely pure and sacred”. Testimony in support of this position can be seen from the Srimad Bhagavatam, which documents the greatness of the Yamuna river coming about on account of Lord Krishna engaging in sport with the Gopikas and discarding the remaining water into the river from his mouth after cleansing. This is also alluded to in the Tiruppavai Pasuram-“mAyanai mannuvaDamaturaimAintanai”. Using this thought process, the Azhvar seeks increasingly better ways to engage in Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa to obtain his Daya-laden eye-glances in successive Pasurams culminating in the ninth Pasuram with the declaration “aDiyArum vAnavarum arambaiyarum kiDantiyankum paDiyAi kiDantu un pavalavAi kAnpEnE”. This reflects the Azhvar’s desire to be a step at the threshold of the shrine of Lord Srinivasa and behold His coral-lips. It may be asked why the Azhvar desires to be an inanimate object at the threshold of Lord Srinivasa’s shrine and how could an inanimate object behold the Lord. When it comes to worldly matters, this is an inanimate object bereft of senses. However, when it comes to Bhagavad vishayam, there need be no doubt that the object can behold and partake of Bhagavad anubhavam. This step at the threshold of the sanctum sanctorum of Lord Srinivasa is known as Kulashekara PaDi in recognition of the Azhvar’s intense desire. All Bhaktas seeking a darsanam of Lord Srinivasa can only proceed until the Kulashekara PaDi. Only the Kaimkaryaparas can cross this and enter the Sanctum Sanctorum. The Azhvar’s desire to become the threshold step at the Sanctum Sanctorum of Lord Srinivasa has special significance with respect to the contact with the Lord’s Feet. Svami Alavandar in the Stotraratnam salutation “kadA punaH shankha rathA~Ngakalpaka dhvajAravinda~Nkusha



vajralAnChanam trivikrama tvat caraNAmbujadvayam madhya
mUrdhAnamala~nkariShyati” laments that he is waiting for the day when the Lotus
feet of Lord Trivikrama can rest on his head. The import of this tribute is that during
the Trivikrama avataram, all sentient and insentient beings in the universe were
blessed with the touch of His Feet. Svami Alavandar’s regret is that he was not born
at the time of the Lord’s incarnation and is therefore longing for his head to be
blessed by the touch of the Lord’s feet. In the Azhvar’s case, he renders this benefit
fait accompli since the Lord would have to place His feet on the footstep at the
threshold each time He comes in and out of the Sanctum Sanctorum. This is the
inner meaning for the tribute “paDiyAi kiDantu un pavalavAi kAnpEnE.” The
essence of the Azhvar tribute is captured by Svami Desikan in the salutation
“jagmuShAM tasthuShAM vA” namely being anything sentient or insentient
associated with the Venkatam hill. The issue of a footstep being made of stone
being a sentient or insentient can be understood from the instance of Ahalya.
Ahalya incurred a curse to become transformed into a stone. However, the dust
from the Padukas of Lord Rama reconstituted her body and restored her original
form. If her transformation into stone, an insentient form, and subsequent
restoration to her original form took place almost as a matter of fact, then her being
in the state of a stone appears almost like being in a comatose state and then being
redeemed. This may not seem like much of a punishment at all. Also, this does no
justice to the impact of the curse and completely ignores her travails over many
years, the feeling of regret and disgust for incurring this state and the resulting
tribulations. However, her Atma was fully cognizant of the impact of the curse and
the attendant travails. To appreciate this better, one needs to understand from the
Srimad Ramayanam that Ahalya committed a sin as seen from the statement
“devaraja kutUhalAt”. Ahalya for a moment was conceited that her beauty lured
Indra, the king of the Devas. It was to punish this mis-guided thought that Ahalya
incurred the curse from Sage Gautama. Thus, while it may appear superficially that
in her stone-state Ahalya was oblivious to the heat, cold, wind, rain, and weight of
people stepping on her, her Atma was fully experiencing these. Furthermore, since
the consequences of curses have to be endured, Ahalya was fully aware of
everything she was undergoing. In a like manner, every animate or inanimate
object at the Venkatam hill has an inner sentient being, that is able to experience
Bhagavad anubhavam. Maharishis request the boon of Krishna anubhavam
through the salutation “patyuH prajAnAm alshvaryam pashUnAm vA na kAmaye
aham kadambo bhUyasam kundo vA yamunA taTe” The meaning of this salutation
is that the Maharishis did not desire wealth, cows or progeny. Instead, they seek to

be a Kunda tree on the banks of the Yamuna river, which can be sanctified by the touch of Lord Krishna's feet. This would be the ultimate Bhagyam for them. In the **AthimAnusha sthavam**, Sri Kuresha declares "hA janma tAsu sikatAsu mayA na labdham rAsE tvayA virahitAH kila gopakanyAH" Lord Krishna engaged in rAsa-krIDa on the banks of the Yamuna river bringing about great joy all around. In order to make everyone appreciate the bliss that arose, Lord Krishna disappeared for a moment. The Gopikas could not bear even for a moment the separation from Lord Krishna. They saw Lord Krishna's footsteps in the sand and decided to roll in the sand so that they seek refuge in His footsteps and rid themselves of their suffering. In the **Athimanusha sthavam** verse, Sri Kuresha desires to be the sand that was sanctified by the touch of Lord Krishna's feet and expresses regret that he was not born at that time. The sand on the bank of the Yamuna river is rendered doubly sacred due to the touch of Lord Krishna's feet and due to contact with the bodies of uttama Bhagavatas, the Gopikas. This is very much in line with the import of the Daya Satakam verse, where **ashAsAnaH** desire to become anything sentient or insentient at the Venkatam hill to beget the Daya-laden kataksham of Lord Srinivasa, is mentioned. If one is fortunate to get Brahmotsava Sevai at the Venkatam hill, it is highly likely for them to beget the grace of Lord Srinivasa in this manner. One who revealed the benefit of getting this kataksham is Svami Desikan. Thus, if one becomes privy to the compassionate eye-glances of Svami Desikan, the Daya-laden kataksham of Lord Srinivasa is bound to follow."

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri.U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin:

"Oh Daya Devi! Discerning seers longed for the Lord's Daya-laden eye-glances, may be for a mere moment. For this, they wished to be born as a plant, or animal or some being on the Hill; if such a glance falls upon them, it would be equivalent to the Lord's acceptance of their selves. Hence this wish. Such fortunate seers, who have perfect conception of what is good and what is our goal would naturally treat the seats of Devas like Brahma, Siva etc. with almost a contempt in the faith that such honors are synonymous with grief. Here Svami Desikan echoes the sentiments of Sri Kulashekara Azhvar. To stay in the hill is **puNya** indeed. However, the stay must be meaningful. It is not for joy, mirth, sightseeing etc. One should spend time on the hill as Nityas and Muktas do in Sri Vaikuntam (engaged in kaimkaryam for the Divine Couple)."



Sloka 43

नाभि पद्म स्फुरण सुभगा नव्य नीलोत्पलाभा

क्रीडा शैलं कमपि करुणे वृण्वती वेङ्कटाख्यम् ।

शीता नित्यं प्रसदनवती श्रद्धानावगाह्या

दिव्या काचिज्जयति महती दीर्घिका तावकीना ॥ ४३ ॥

nAbhi padma sphuraNa subhagA navya nilotpalaBha
krIDA shailaM kamapi karuNe vR^iNvatI ve~NkaTAkhyam|
shItA nityaM prasadanavatI shraddadhAnAvagAhyA
divyA kAchijjayati mahatI dIrghika tAvakInA|| 43

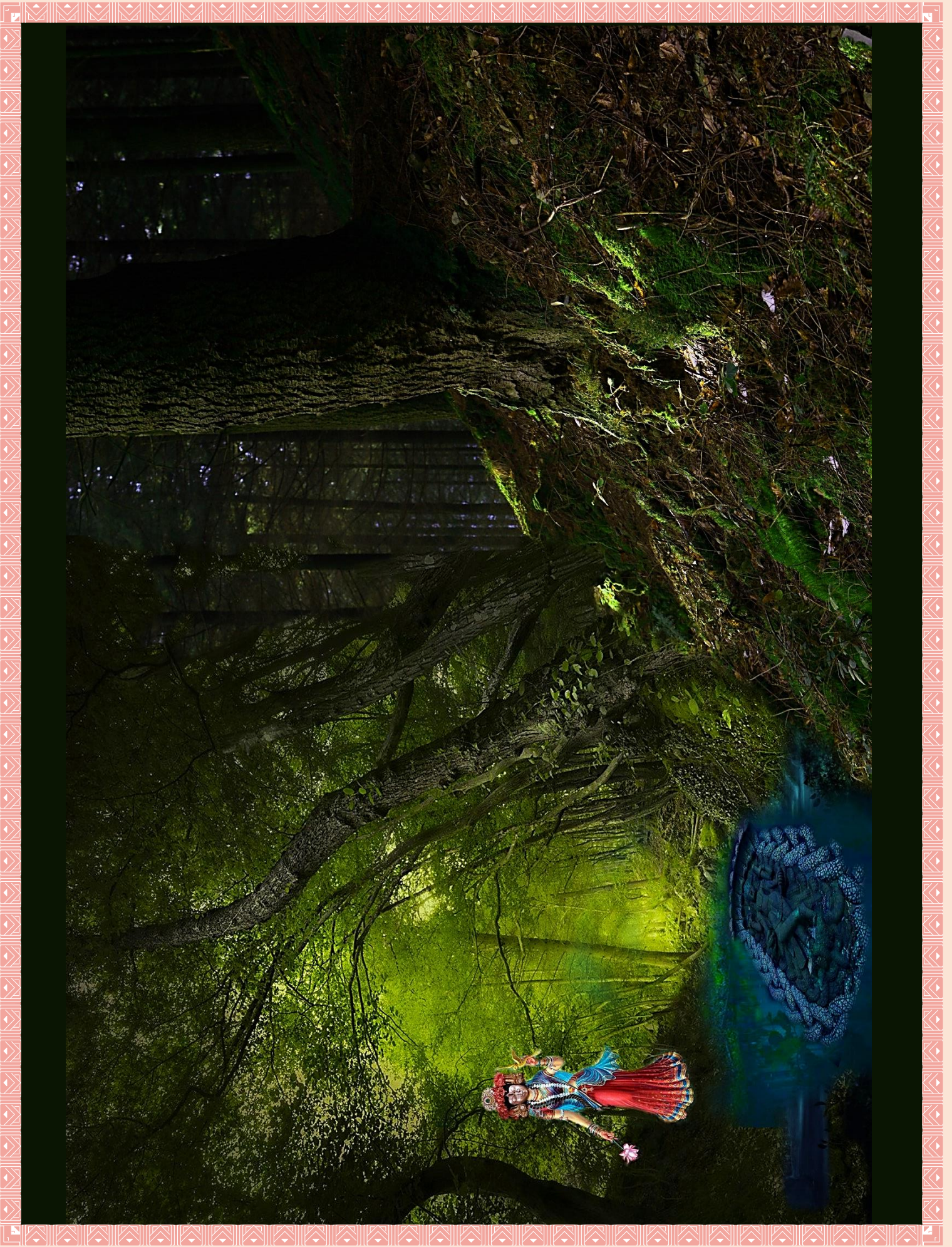


We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“Svami Desikan reflected the anubhavam of Svami Kulashekara Azhvar in the previous verse. In this verse, Svami Desikan expounds on the greatness of Lord Srinivasa who grants the Brahma anubhavam (anubhavam of the supreme being described by the Vedas and not to be confused with Chaturmukha Brahma). The Vedam declares “eSha brahma praviShtosmi grIShme shItamiva hradaM” namely the Brahma anubhavam is such that it is equivalent to the delight coming about from immersion in the coolness offered by a large body of water, which brings instant relief to beings from the scorching heat at the peak of the summer. This is the Bhagavad anubhavam granted by Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill. The sole reason for this is Daya Devi is highlighted by Svami Desikan in this verse “nAbhi padma sphuraNa subhagA navya nilotpalaBha krIDA shailaM kamapi karuNe vR^iNvatI ve~NkaTAkhyam|shItA nityaM prasadanavatI shraddadhAnAvagAhyA divyA kAchijjayati mahatI dIrghika tAvakInA”

In this verse Lord Srinivasa is depicted as a sporting arena of Daya Devi in terms of the banks of a cool body of water. Lord Narayana, who has taken up eternal residence in Sri Vaikuntam is no doubt great. However, even greater is the glory of Lord Srinivasa, who has come down in Archa form standing on top of the Venkatam hill. There is a difference between the anubhavam of Parabrahmam in Sri Vaikuntam versus the anubhavam of the archa form of the Lord. The former can only be enjoyed by a select few as described in the Upanishad salutation

“so(a)shnute sarvAn kAmAn saha brahmaNA vipasciteti”. The import of this statement is that Lord Narayana replete with His kalyaNa guNams in Sri Vaikuntam is enjoyed by a j~nAni, who has expended all his karma. The inner meaning is that only one who has a zero balance of karma (punyam and papam) can attain Sri Vaikuntam. Only upon reaching Sri Vaikuntam can one experience the Lord in his original state. This is known as paripurNa Brahma anubhavam. Thus, it becomes clear that one possessed of residual karma in the Bhulokam cannot enjoy Brahman as described in the Upanishad statement. However, Svami Desikan expounds here that the Brahma Ananda anubhavam that one begets upon reaching Sri Vaikuntam can also be experienced at the Venkatam Hill due to the grace of Lord Srinivasa. In order to appreciate this better, one needs to realize that one is constantly engaged in aparadhams (sins). Furthermore, these are committed in full view of the Lord in keeping with the statement “aj~nyA Chedi mama drohi” This highlights the fact that one who acts in violation of the Lord’s commands (Sruti and Smruti) incurs the Lord’s displeasure. We are the most egregious violators of the Lord’s commands. Our state is one of violating these commands every second of our existence. This is the aparadham and aj~nAnam. For example, when hearing upanyasams we completely subscribe to the fact that Lord Srinivasa is the supreme Brahman. However, when overcome by illness this mahavisvasam (extreme faith) falters and one seeks recourse to other means instead of engaging in singular worship of Lord Srinivasa with the utmost faith that He will come to our rescue. As a consequence, we are constantly steeped in sorrow. This comes in many forms - dearth of Bhagavad anubhavam, dearth of money, sorrow of not having children, the sorrow arising from the disappointment of not having gotten what one desires, accruing everything that is undesirable. We who are bound by karma and as a result are constantly steeped in sorrow have the good fortune that Daya Devi comes to the rescue and ensures that the elevated benefit of Brahma Ananda anubhavam that one can get only in Sri Vaikuntam is readily available to us in the form of experiencing Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill. This is highlighted by Svami Desikan through the use of the analogy of a pond of cool water offering welcome relief from the sweltering heat of the summer. For this to come about, the pond needs to be surrounded by green trees, against the background of hills. In such a setting, the pond water has an inherent coolness. Not only that, the pond needs to be replete with lotus flowers, making for a beautiful sight. Additionally, the water in the pond must be pure and run deep. In places where thorns flourish, the waters tend to be hot. Instead, the pond that is visualized by Svami Desikan here is bereft of this heat and is extremely cool, soothing, comforting and fit for drinking.



Even with all this if the pond is inaccessible, it is of no value. Instead, it should be suitable for enjoyment by all. The pond should be large enough to allow huge numbers to simultaneously take a dip. Svami Desikan makes the analogy of Lord Srinivasa to such a perfect pond. It is important to note the salutation “**dlrghika tAvakInAm**” which refers to Lord Srinivasa as the large pond of Daya Devi. This is like a private property, which states that it is exclusive to the owner. Lord Srinivasa is viewed as a bank on this large pond, which belongs to Daya Devi. Lord Srinivasa is very much dependent on Daya Devi. It must be noted that the Lord is completely independent to act as He wills. However, He subjugates Himself to Daya Devi. Even in the present day it is possible to see places of residence on the banks of the Kaveri River and TamraparNi River, which have steps leading to the river that the residents use to bathe in the river waters. Similarly, in Azhvar Tirunagari on the banks of the TamraparNi River, Andavan Asramam, and Ahobila Matham buildings have a set of steps leading to the river so that one can perform snAnam easily by using the river water. In a like manner, the pond of Srinivasa is the exclusive property of Daya Devi. A king while going out on a procession is accompanied by paraphernalia such as horses, elephants, and numerous servitors who offer fan service and the like. In a similar vein, Daya Devi, who is the empress among the Lord’s KalyaNa guNams (auspicious qualities) carries along with Her the pond (Srinivasa) and the hill (Venkatam) as if by way of engaging in sport with us beings who are like deer. Earlier it was pointed out that the pond needed to be replete with lotuses to make for pleasant viewing. Here the pond of Lord Srinivasa, who is the supreme Brahman, is beautified on account of “**nAbhi padma sphuraNa subhagA**”. Namely, the lotus from the Lord’s navel, from which Chaturmukha Brahma arose renders this pond of Srinivasa beautiful. Subhaga is the salutation that denotes a thing replete with beauty. This pond of Lord Srinivasa is an “anyAdR^iSha taTAKam” namely that which is unique and cannot be seen elsewhere. In all worldly ponds the beautiful characteristics described earlier may exist only for a short while and disappear after a prescribed time. However, only the pond of Lord Srinivasa retains these beautiful characteristics eternally. Such beauty can exist eternally only in Sri Vaikuntam and cannot be seen elsewhere except for the Venkatam hill. The lotus in the pond described in the salutation “**nAbhi padma sphuraNa subhagA**” refers to the aprAkR^ita (bereft of Prakruti sambandham) form of the Lord and is thus extremely beautiful. In the **Sundarabahu sthavam**, Sri Kuresha describes the beauty of the Lord’s eyes. These eyes are glorified uniformly as Lotus eyes. However, Sri Kuresha avers that this does not seem appropriate. A mere lotus does not do justice to the beauty inherent to the Lord’s eyes. The upamanam and upameyam need to be

examined. The former needs to be an object that is of greater value than the latter. For example, while describing a common person's appearance, the usage of moon-like is appropriate since the moon's elevated characteristics are well known. The person therefore acquires greatness due to the comparison. In another context, if one is asked to describe a town and the individual responds that "this resembles Tirupati" it is appropriate due to the fact that the glory of Tirupati is well known. The town described in terms of the glory of Tirupati, therefore begets greatness. However, in the case of the Lord's eyes, the comparison to a lotus violates the upamanam upameyam rule since the beauty of the Lord's eyes far exceeds that of a lotus. "adIrghamapremadughaM kShaNojjvalaM nacoramantaH karaNasya pashyatAm anubjamabjam nu kathaM nidarshanaM vanAdrinAthasya vishAlayordR^ishoH" is the salutation from the **Sundarabahu sthavam**, where Sri Kuresha first notes that the lotus is not as wide as the Lord's eyes. Furthermore, the Lord's eyes exude affection, which cannot be seen in a lotus. "svAgatodhAra netram" is the salutation employed by Svami Desikan to describe the beauty of Lord Ranganatha's eyes to highlight the fact that the eyes are inviting all comers. The lotus has no such characteristic. In **Devanayaka Pancasat**, Svami Desikan describes the beauty of Lord Devanayaka's eyes in the salutation:

"ArdhrlbhavAmyamR^itavarShanibhairapa~NgaiH".

This tribute highlights the fact that one who goes to the shrine of Devanayaka in Tiruvahindrapuram and receives the benefit of the compassionate eye-glances of Devanayaka, has the anubhavam of the eyes enquiring "Are you alright?" This is totally non-existent in any lotus. The lotus is in full bloom only in the afternoon but at other times it is in a shrunk state. However, the lord's eyes are always in full bloom. Therefore, Sri Kuresha posits the question in his tribute "How could a lotus even offer a mechanism for comparison with the Lord's eyes, that have far superior qualities?" In keeping with the sentiments of Sri Kuresha, Svami Desikan uses the aprAkR^ita Lotus emanating from the Lord's navel for this comparison.

In the **VairAgya Pancakam** verse "durlshvaradvArabahirvitArdika durAsikAyal racito(a)yamanjaliH" Svami Desikan affirms that his eulogy is meant exclusively for Lord Narayana and Thayar and that with folded hands he submits his refusal to glorify conceited kings standing at their doorstep. Instead, Svami Desikan describes his words as "parimalamucA vAcA yAcA mahe na" The reference here is to the fact that the lotus emanating from the navel of the Lord attracts bees due to its fragrance and that Svami's words are similarly replete with fragrance (Satvika ahankaram is alluded to here). Therefore, these words are meant

exclusively for glorifying Lord Narayana. Thus, in the context of the Daya Satakam salutation, the Lord is visualized as the pond that is beautified by the aprAkR^ita lotus emanating from His navel. The next salutation “navya nllotphalAbhA” describes the fact that the lotus should have colors of red and white mixed in. The contrast or “parabhagam” that is alluded to here is described further. The karuneital (nilotphala) flower (blue water lily), which is dark in color when mixed with the red and white color of the lotus causes a sight of rare beauty. When the archa murti of Lord Srinivasa is adorned with flower garlands, flowers of different colors, white, red, and green are used in an alternating manner. Additionally, a dark substance known as “kuruvEr”, which is a fragrant substance is also submitted. Then there would be a garland of jasmines. This bank of Tiruvenkatam with respect to the description as a pond is replete with such contrast, namely a mixture of the colors of black, red, and white to create a sight of astonishing beauty. This anubhavam of Lord Narayana, which can be experienced only in Sri Vaikuntam is captured in the salutation “navya nllotphalAbhA”. Specifically, Svami Desikan visualizes the lotus from the Lord’s navel as the lotus that provides the colors of red and white, while the Lord’s dark hued body itself is pictured as karuneital flower. This contrast is quite stunning in terms of its beauty. The fragrance emanating from there is a reference to the Lord’s countless kalyANa guNams (auspicious qualities) such as VAtsalyam, saushllyam, and saulabhyam, which beckon all comers invitingly. Svami Desikan’s usage of “kamapi” in this verse is used to document the fact that this beauty is beyond description by words. The inner meaning is that regardless of the sins committed, the Lord is prepared to grant refuge to the seeker. This transformation is verily the work of Daya Devi, who ensures that the supplicant’s sins are masked from the Lord’s view. Additionally, the saulabhyam denotes the Lord’s assurance “do not be awe-struck by My majesty and stay away from Me. Instead come seek Me out. It is only for your sake I have taken residence in the Venkatam hill.”

Next, Svami Desikan points out that this beautiful pond - namely Lord Srinivasa is entirely under the command of Daya Devi. The import of this is that the pond is Daya Devi’s private property and only those who seek refuge in Her and receive Her grace can enjoy the anubhavam in this pond. Where is this pond located? Svami Desikan answers this in the tribute “ve~NkaTAkhyam krIDA shailaM vR^iNvatI” The Venkatam hill is the sporting arena for Daya Devi. To understand this better, it is important to appreciate the fact that there is a difference between Sri Vaikuntam and Tiruvenkatam. In the former place, there is no one undergoing suffering of any kind. Since only unbounded joy prevails, the role of Daya Devi

remains under wraps. However, Her enormous help to redeem those who have sinned greatly by making them seek refuge at Lord Srinivasa's feet and thus become eligible for moksham is evident only in Tiruvenkatam. Only in a town replete with poor people can the charitable disposition of a wealthy individual become apparent. If there is no one seeking alms from the wealthy individual his generosity remains unknown. In a like manner, only when Daya Devi renders timely help to those who have sinned greatly and ensures their redemption can Her greatness be appreciated. Due to this "cetana rakShaNam" (protection of sentient beings), Tiruvenkatam acquires a status even greater than Sri Vaikuntam. The sthAna visheSham of Tiruvenkatam hill in terms of "rakSha vastu lAbham" (benefit accorded to those protected by Daya Devi) is described by Svami Desikan through the salutation "ve~NkaTakhyaM krIDA shailaM vR^iNvati" What is the visheSham for Tiruvenkatam? This is answered in the statement "anena pApa calam vai yasmAt dagdham dvijanmanaH ve~NkaTAcala ityasya prasiddhiH bhuvi vardatAm " The hill which destroys one's sins is denoted by Venkatam with vem denoting sins and kaTaH denoting their destruction. In fact, the hill literally burns up one's sins. One who is practicing a Brahma Vidya (Bhakti yogi) or one who has performed sharaNAgati has his karma (puNyam as well as pApam) destroyed in the manner of "iShikatUlam agnaU protuM pradahati" (like that of a thorn reduced to ash by the fire). That the sacred venkatam hill destroys one's sins is described in the statement "sarva pApa dAham yasmAt ve~NkaTAcalaM abhUt". The inner meaning is that this Venkatacalam hill, which is the sporting arena of Daya Devi, destroys one's sins thus enabling the seeker to gain Bhagavad anubhavam. Next the characteristics of the pond are described in the Daya Satakam salutation "nityaM shItA prasadanavati". This pond is always cool. The waters are forever clear. Once the statement of "jalam" is made its rasam becomes self-evident. In this instance what is the rasam for the water body known as Lord Srinivasa? This is described in the Upanishad statement "raso vai saH rasa (gum)hyevAyaM labdhvA (aa)nandi bhavati" The rasam here denotes the Supreme Lord, Narayana. Having partaken of this rasam, everyone begets happiness. The feeling is akin to the distribution of kshIrAnnam (rice cooked in milk) after it is offered as naivedyam to the Lord. There is a considerably long line for receiving the prasadam. The mere fragrance of this prasadam causes one's mouth to water let alone partaking of the prasadam. In a like manner, the mere mention of this rasam known as Lord Narayana would cause one's mouth to water. This is mirrored in Svami Madhurakavi Azhvar's KaNNinuN siRutAmpu declaration "aNnikkum amutUrum ennAvukke" and Svami NammAzhvar's tribute "tittikkum amute" reflecting the sweetness of the Rasam

denoted by “**raso vai saH**”. The second point of distinction for this water body known as Lord Srinivasa is **tApa haram**. The Upanishad statement “**eSha brahma praviShtosmi grIshme shItamiva hradaM**” reflects the fact that if one has anubhavam of Brahman, it relieves one of their troubles in the manner of the cool waters of a lake offering comfort from the scorching heat of the summer. Now the kind of tApam that the pond, Lord Srinivasa, offers relief from is examined. The salutation “**prasadanam**” denotes the fact that one is rid of one’s troubles and begets clarity. The inner meaning is that the pond, Lord Srinivasa, is always cool, offering always clear water, rids one of their suffering, and graces them as outlined in the salutation “**nityam shIta prasadanavatl**”.

In the **DevanAyaka Pancasat** tribute “**vyAmohitA vividhabhoga marIcikAbhiH vishrAnti madhya labhate vibudhalka nAtha gambhIrapUrNa madhuraM mama dhIrbhavantaM grIshme taTAkamiva shItamanupraviShTA**” Svami Desikan declares “Oh Devanatha! We have been experiencing many bhogams (pleasures due to wealth, bodily comforts, and the like). However, these are truly like the waters of a mirage. Mistaking these mirage waters for real pleasure I had been deceived until now. However, beholding Your majestic, imposing, and welcoming persona, I have now realized one thing. All the sufferings I had endured on account of my flawed perception have been removed in the manner of the cool waters of a lake offering relief from the sweltering heat of the summer.” The same thought is mirrored in the Daya Satakam tribute of this verse. This being the case, is it possible for all to take a comforting dip in this pond known as Lord Srinivasa? Svami Desikan answers this through the salutation “**dirghikAH tAvakInAm**” wherein he states that this pond is the private property of Daya Devi and only those who have Her permission may enter the pond. Who are the fortunate ones to receive Daya Devi’s permission? This is answered in the salutation “**shraddadhAnAvagAhyA**” namely those who have unshakable belief (mahAvishvAsam) in Lord Srinivasa, those who have absolute faith in the efficacy of Lord Srinivasa’s Daya, are the ones who are granted permission by Daya Devi to immerse themselves in the pond known as Lord Srinivasa. The inner meaning of this tribute is that it is impossible to beget the grace of Lord Srinivasa without the intervention of Daya Devi. If one becomes conceited about the fact that they reside in the USA and have purchased in advance tickets for Lord Srinivasa’s darsanam and that completing the darsanam is a mere formality which can be accomplished in about half an hour, numerous obstacles come in their way resulting in cancellation of the special sevai and allowing only Dharma darsanam. On the other hand, one who approaches the shrine of Lord Srinivasa with the thought that Daya Devi’s grace needs to prevail in order to make them

privity to the darsanam of Lord Srinivasa, they beget the most astonishing sevais of the Lord most unexpectedly. Thus, one who approaches the Venkatam hill with the thought that Lord Srinivasa is both the **prApyam** (object of attainment) as well as the **prAapakam** (means to attaining the object), which is facilitated by Daya Devi, alone is able to gain immersion in the pond known as Lord Srinivasa. The next tribute “**mahatl dIrghika**” denotes the fact that this pond is large enough for numerous beings to simultaneously engage in immersion. The clear, cool waters of this pond retain their essential nature regardless of the number of beings that perform immersion. This is in contrast to most lakes, rivers, which offer limited water resources to permit a finite number of people to take a dip simultaneously. Even the ocean allows only for a limited number of people (even though it may be much larger than that afforded by a lake or river) to take a dip at a given time. Therefore, Svami Desikan’s Daya Satakam tribute “**jayati mahatl dIrghika tAvakInAm**” must be understood as the mangalasasanam to the pond denoted by Lord Srinivasa, which is large, and knows no limit for the number of people who can engage in simultaneous immersion, and yet always retains the essential nature of coolness and clear water regardless of the number of people who engage in “avagAha snAnam” (deep immersion). One may wonder, this is Daya Sataka stotram, so why is Svami Desikan offering eulogy to Her pond instead of eulogizing Daya Devi? The rationale is that if one is glorifying Daya Devi, one develops an affection for all objects animate and inanimate near and dear to Her. In fact, a tribute to these near and dear ones is greatly valued and applauded by Daya Devi. Hence, Svami Desikan renders a mangalasasanam to Lord Srinivasa with the tribute “Jayati”. In the **Bhagavad dhyAna sopAnam**, Svami Desikan declares “**pAdAmbhojaM pratiphalathi me bhAvanA dIrghikAyAm**”. In keeping with this tribute, the Daya Satakam verse can be viewed as a conceptualization of the Lord as a pond, wherein, the full view of Lord Ranganatha’s Feet come into prominence. Such a visualization is possible only for Svami Desikan and none else.”

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin:

“This verse contains a metaphorical presentation of Daya Devi possessing the Lord as a kind of cool pond. This is beautiful as it is appropriate. Victory to Daya Devi! Oh Daya Devi! You occupied Your picnic spot, a play-field, namely, Sri Venkatagiri. There You possess a large, divine pond of water, called Lord Srinivasa! There is a lovely lotus - namely in the navel of the Lord; the water is of a deep-blue color as if filled with the blue lilies, freshly blossomed; it is of the color of the Lord Himself. The pond - the Lord Himself - is ever cool; ever lucid, ever available for immersion for trustful devotees. The pond is unlike anything that is merely seen in

the countryside. It is majestic, imposing, and suitable for all to get an immersion. It will remove all the sweltering heat of the summer. All beings without difference can get relief. What a proud possession in the form of Lord Srinivasa. Oh Daya Devi! You shine in victory! This verse is loaded with layers of meanings.

In this world, the Seven Hills that have come about is a boon from Daya Devi. She has a cool pond that will remove our suffering from the sweltering summer heat, namely the three kinds of suffering (AdhyAtmika, Adi bhauktika, and Adi Daivika) of worldly existence. The pond is denoted by Lord Srinivasa. The navel lotus and the deep-blue color of the Lord are visible in the pond.

Daya Devi has chosen this Hill and this divine image of Srinivasa for the benefit of the entire humanity. Otherwise, how could all of us cure ourselves of illnesses of all sorts?

In other words, we need to remember that this Supreme Lord residing in Srivaikuntam in the company of NityasUris and Mukta jlvans (liberated souls) has come down to the earth in the Supreme Image of Venkatesha.”



Sloka 44

यस्मिन् दृष्टे तदितर सुखैर्गम्यते गोष्पदत्वं
सत्यं ज्ञानं त्रिभिरवधिभिर्मुक्तमानन्द सिन्धुम् ।
त्वत्स्वीकारात् तमिह कृतिनः सूरि बृन्दानुभाव्यम्
नित्यापूर्वं निधिमिव दये निर्विशन्त्यञ्जनाद्रौ ॥ ४४ ॥

yasmin dR^iShTe taditara sukhair gamyate goShpadatvaM
satyaM j~nAnaM tribhiravadhibhir muktamAnanda sindhum |
tvat svIkArAt tamiha kR^itinaH sUri bR^indAnu bhAvyam
nityA pUrvaM nidhimiva daye nirvishant ya~njanAdrau || 44



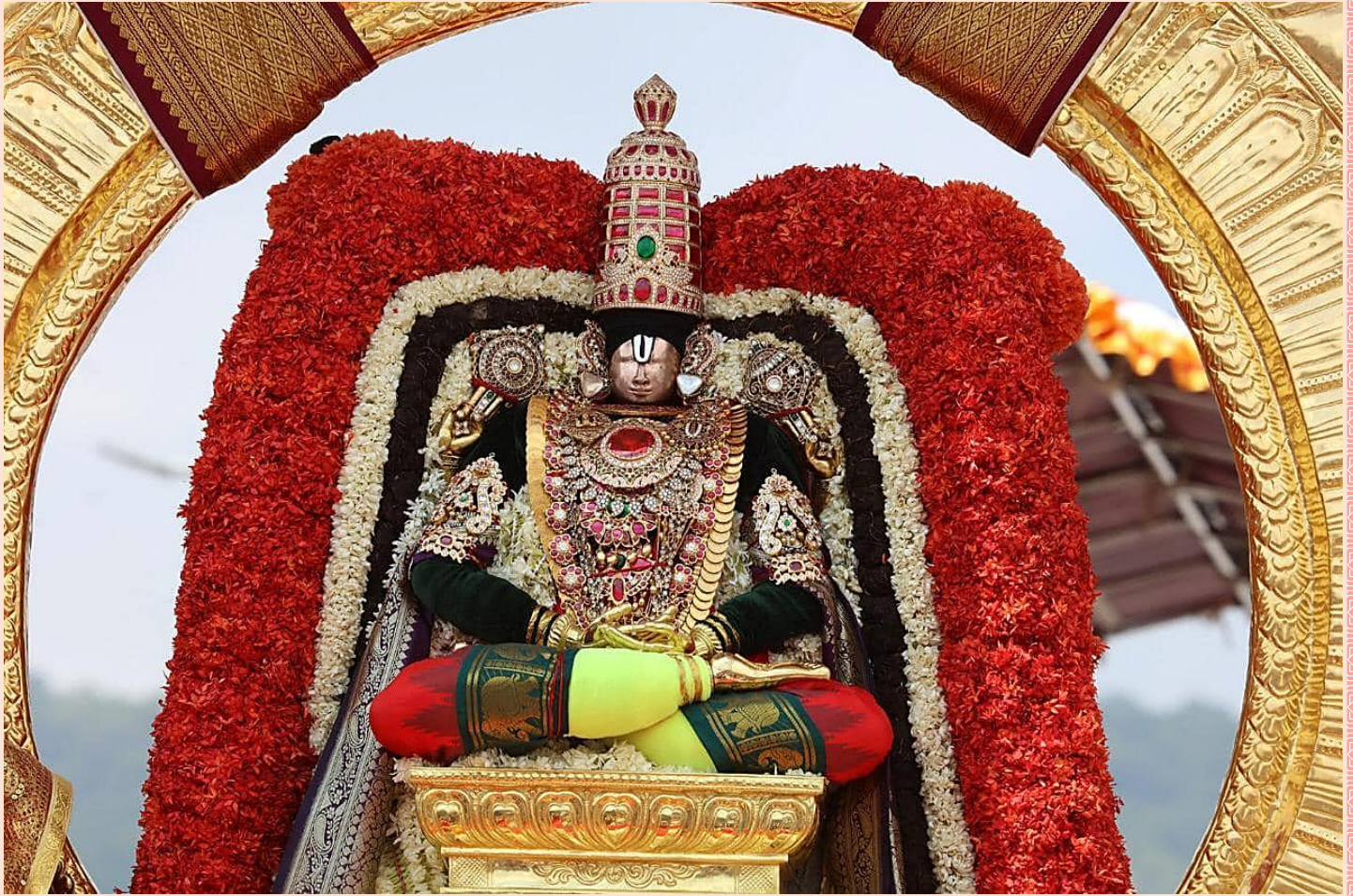
We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“The previous verse highlighted the glory of Daya Devi in terms of making available to all the pond of Lord Srinivasa, which is a large repository of clear and cool water, that is welcoming and relieves those who take a dip in these waters from the three kinds of Tapams, in the manner of the coolness getting rid of the scorching heat of the summer. This verse “yasmin dR^iShTe taditara sukhair gamyate goShpadatvaM satyaM j~nAnaM tribhiravadhibhir muktamAnanda sindhum tvat svIkArAt tamiha kR^itinaH sUri bR^indAnu bhAvyam nityA pUrvaM nidhimiva daye nirvishant ya~njanAdrau” is intended to illustrate the fact that the Brahma anubhavam at Tiruvenkatam, that is experienced by those beings bound by karma, is no different from the paripUrNa brahma anubhavam that can be gained in Sri Vaikuntam alone, when one is rid of all karma. One needs to adopt either Bhakti Yogam or resort to SaraNagati to completely expend one’s karma and obtain moksham to beget paripUrNa Bbrahma anubhavam in Sri Vaikuntam. However, the enormity of Daya Devi’s anugraham to beings bound by karma becomes evident when She makes available the same Brahma anubhavam to them in the Venkatam hill. The verse commences with the tribute “yasmin dR^iShTe” denoting the fact that those who offer obeisance at the Shrine of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill. Here, Svami Desikan provides a direct link to the **Mundaka Upanishad** salutation “bhidyate hR^idayagranthiH Chidyante sarvasaMshayAH kShlyante cAsya karmANi tasmin dR^iShTe parAvare” (**Mundaka Upanishad 2.2.8**)



Sri Daya Devi makes available Brahma anubhavam in the Tiruvenkatam hill

While expositing on the Brahma Vidyas for Bhakti Yogis, the Upanishad declares “shrotavyaH dR^iShTavyaH nididhyAsitavyaH mantavyaH” (Brihadaranya Upanishad 2.4.5) namely one must listen to the instruction carefully, one must apply one’s mind with concentration, one must perceive the instruction and one must engage in dhyAnam of the instruction pertaining to the Paramatma. dR^iShTe in this context is the darshana samAkAra j~nAnam, namely the knowledge gained by visual perception of the Brahman (Lord Narayana). This is gained by dhyAnam (uninterrupted contemplation of Lord Narayana).



Meditate on Srlman NARayaNan

The jlvAn is bound by the knot (granThi) of rAgA and dvesha due to rajo guNam and tamo guNam. However, when the jlvAn begets the j~nAnam as outlined in the Upanishad statement, it destroys the rAgA and dvesha by severing the knot as alluded to in the salutation “hrudayat granThi”. Additionally, by getting this knowledge, all doubts pertaining to the essential nature of the Paramatma, the relationship between the jlvatma and Paramatma are removed once and for all. Furthermore, the statement “kShIyante cAsya karmANi tasmin dR^iShTe parAvare”

declares that the jIvan is rid of all karma. The reference “**yasmin dR^iShTe**” (namely saluting Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill), in the Daya Satakam verse highlights this important message from the Upanishad. The inner meaning is that a darsanam of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill confers the same benefit as outlined in the Upanishad statement “**tasmin dR^iShTe parAvare**”. Svami Bhashyakarar declares “**prApya tR^iShNa**” or “**prApyeti vaitR^iShNa**” to denote the fact that in order to obtain something one needs to develop a desire for attaining the object. Additionally, one needs to develop the perspective that this object is superior to everything else in comparison and hence attaining it must be the singular focus of one’s efforts. For example, if one desires to succeed in the IIT entrance exam, one needs to develop an appreciation of the greatness of the institution IIT. Only when both the desire to obtain the object and an appreciation of the elevated nature of the object is present will one succeed in the endeavor to beget the object. In this context, it is important to develop the desire for Bhagavad Anubhavam and the appreciation of the fact that all other worldly and heavenly pleasures are insignificant in comparison. This is highlighted in the Daya Satakam tribute “**yasmin dR^iShTe taditara sukhair gamyate goShpadatvaM**”. In the previous verse, Lord Srinivasa was visualized as a pond belonging to Daya Devi. Here, the **dR^iShTAntam** (perspective) is further reinforced. For example, when a cow’s hooves create a slight depression in the sand where water can collect, it seems like a large body of water to ants and other insects. A bigger opening than this which holds more water seems larger in comparison. However, this pales in comparison to the waters of a pond which in turn seem small when compared to that of a large lake. In a like manner, the enormity of river water like the Ganga river trumps the lake waters. The waters of the ocean similarly exceed the vastness of river water. In another example, a village resident may be mesmerized by the comforts on offer in a city life, while the city resident is enamored by the comforts on offer in a large city and the residents of the large city are wonderstruck by the luxuries afforded in wealthy lands overseas. However, when one begets Bhagavad anubhavam by saluting Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill, the greatest of pleasures that one can imagine becomes like the puddle formed by cow hooves and pales into insignificance. This is described in the salutation “**taditara sukhair gamyate goShpadatvaM**”. However, in the present times, these desires seem to be in reverse, with residents in India thinking of the great comforts on offer overseas, while those residents overseas belonging to our sampradAyam look upon residents in India with envy for the Bhagyam of being able to get nitya darsanam of Lord Narayana.” Svamin then narrated a personal instance wherein his revered father purchased a house in

Kanchipuram. The owner who sold the house in Kanchipuram invested the amount from the Kanchipuram home sale in a property in Adayar, Chennai. Many years passed and Svamin remarked to his father. “Look at the investment of the previous owner of this house. Today his property in Chennai is worth several crore rupees. However, our home has not had much of an appreciation. May be it is due to our respective karmas.” Svamin’s father heard this silently. A few days passed. The procession of Varadaraja perumal arrived at their doorstep. Due to a large crowd that had gathered that day Svamin and his revered father were unable to go to the Temple of Lord Varadaraja. Instead, they had the bhAgyam of Perumal granting them sevai at their doorstep. After this darsanam Svamin’s father remarked “You mentioned that the previous owner of this house made a wise investment, which appreciated several fold. However, will that money enable a darsanam of Lord Varadaraja as we enjoyed now?” Thus, the investment of the prior owner became gOShpadam in comparison to the darsanam of Lord Varadaraja.

We now continue with the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin: “In a like manner, when compared to the darsanam of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill, even the status of Chaturmukha Brahma becomes like the puddle of water formed from the cow’s hooves. The majestic Lord Srinivasa is enjoyed by nityasUris in the manner of the Vedam declaration “satyam j~nAnam anantam brahma” It must be borne in mind that bhagavad svarUpam remains unchanged (has no vikAram). This bhagavad svarUpam is in the form of satyam (truth). Next comes j~nAnam, which is “svayam prakasham” (self-illuminating). In order to realize the Lord, no other aid is needed. To identify a lamp, one does not need another light source. In a like manner, no auxiliary light sources are needed to understand Lord Narayana. The bhagavad svarUpam in this instance is self-illuminating as denoted by the tribute “j~nAnam”. anantam is the next attribute. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, this is expounded upon as “tribhiravadhibhiH”, “desha kAla vastu pariChedha rahitam”. desha denotes the fact that Lord Narayana is omnipresent. His presence is not restricted to one place. He is present everywhere without exception. In a like manner with respect to kAlam or time, Lord Narayana is present at all times. His presence is not limited to certain times. vastu is the next thing that is elucidated upon in this salutation. That is the Lord is present in all objects without distinction or exception. For example, one cannot declare “ayam ghaTaH na paramAtmA na Brahma” (I am a pot, not Brahman or Paramatma). The Lord exists as the ocean of joy in the manner of the Upanishad statement “Anando brahmeti vyajAnAt” (Taitriya Upanishad). This Lord Narayana is enjoyed by nityasUris, who are eternal residents of Sri Vaikuntam.



Anando brahmeti vyajAnAt

“tamiha tvat svIkArAt kR^itinaH” is the next salutation from the Daya Satakam verse denoting the fact that beings that are bound to their earthly existence on account of Karma, who seek refuge in Daya Devi, are able to enjoy the Supreme Lord Srinivasa much in the same manner as the nityasUris in Sri Vaikuntam. This comes about due to Daya Devi interceding on their behalf and recommending to the Lord “These beings belong to Me. Please enable them to enjoy You in the same manner as the nityasUris do in Sri Vaikuntam”. Thereby these beings are granted “special entry” to enjoy Lord Srinivasa. The salutation “kR^itinaH” in this verse refers to those who have performed SaraNAgati to Lord Srinivasa or more precisely sought refuge in Daya Devi through SaraNAgati to Her. These are the fortunate beings granted special entry to enjoy Lord Srinivasa in the manner described herein. Svami Desikan declares “asmad deshika sampradAya rahitaiH adyApi nA lakShitaH” referring to the fact that this sampradayam that has embraced the doctrine of unconditional total surrender to Lord Narayana and has been handed down by learned seers (Acharyas) has still not been accepted by a large majority of people. One could go a step further and use this statement as a description of those in the sampradayam of Svami Desikan, who have not performed SaraNAgati, as being ignorant of the nuances of the sampradayam, while those in the tradition of Svami Desikan, who have performed SaraNAgati, are the truly blessed ones. These fortunate ones are embraced by Daya Devi in the manner of “tvat svIkArAt tamiha kR^itinaH sUri bR^indAnu bhAvyam” to grant them the anubhavam that is meant for nityasUris in Sri Vaikuntam. Svami NammAzhvar declares “ariyA kAlattuLLE aDimaiKaN anbu ceivittu aRiyA mAmayattu aDiyEnai vaittayAl aRiyAmai kuraLai nilam mAvali mUvaDi enRu aRiyAmai vancittAi enatAviyuL kalantE” The import of this tribute is “We are living in aj~nAnam. We do not have the requisite knowledge to enjoy paripUrNa brahma anubhavam. We are very much subject to the bonds of karma. If You bestow upon me, who is in this plight, the knowledge that I belong to You and that You are my Master, there can be no greater blessing. This would be my bhagyam (good fortune).” The tribute “sUri bR^indAnu bhAvyam” from this Daya Satakam verse mirrors the tribute of Svami NammAzhvar’s TiruvAimozhi “kaLippum kavavum aRRu piRappu piNi mUppu iRapaRRu oLikoNDa cotiyumAi”. “kaLippu” denotes the joy at begetting what one is longing for, while “kavavum” denotes the sorrow due to disappointment of not getting what one is longing for. “piRappu piNi mUppu” denotes the cycle of birth and death. “Freed from this cycle, I long for the time when I can enjoy Your splendourous form in the same manner as the nityasUris in Sri Vaikuntam” is the import of the Azhvar’s tribute.



Seek refuge in Her through SaraNagati

This outpouring of the Azhvar longing for the enjoyment of the Lord is readily made available on this earth by Daya Devi to those who have sought refuge in Her through SaraNAgati. In the **Varadaraja Panchasat** verse “**tvam cet prasIdasi tavAsmi samIpatascet tvayyasti bhaktiranaghA karishailanAtha samsR^ijyate yadi ca dAsajanastvadyaH samsara eSha bhagavannapavarga eva**” Svami Desikan declares that “begetting Your grace, developing blemishless love for You, being assured of a place near You, and getting the bhagyam of kaimkaryam for You along with other bhagavatas, there can be nothing greater.” Even in Sri Vaikuntam there is nothing greater on offer. This is the anubhavam that one gets in Sri Vaikuntam. In a like manner, in the context of the Daya Satakam verse, the fortunate beings, “**kR^itinaH**”, beget a state in their earthly existence itself of enjoying Lord Srinivasa identical to that of NityasUris enjoying the Lord in Sri Vaikuntam due to securing the grace of Daya Devi.

The final part of this verse “**nityA pUrvaM nidhimiva daye nirvishant ya~njanAdrau**” highlights those who beget this anubhavam. “**jAnmAntara sahasreShu tapo dhyAna samAdibhiH narANAm kShiNa pApAnAm kR^iShNe bhaktiH prajAyate**” is the tribute that describes one who begets Krishna bhakti. This comes about on account of innumerable births, wherein one is engaged in rigorous tapas and dhyAnam. Svami Desikan alludes to our condition in this Daya Satakam tribute. Specifically, we do not know what caused us to get this birth. If we are the receptacles of Daya Devi’s grace, we get the elevated Krishna Bhakti, which takes aeons to develop. This enables us to enjoy Lord Srinivasa even in one’s earthly existence in the same manner as the nityasUris of Sri Vaikuntam. The tribute “**nidhimiva**” in this Daya Satakam verse, refers to the upanishadic passage that describes the fact that in a house there exists a rare treasure. However, oblivious of this fact, residents of the house walk over it with total disregard. In a like manner, we too are oblivious to the presence of Lord Srinivasa standing on top of the Venkatam hill.

However, the Anjana giri (the hill of Anjana) offers the perfect collyrium for our eyes to behold the Lord Srinivasa and enjoy Him in the same way as the nityasUris in Sri Vaikuntam, thus highlighting the importance of bhagavad anubhavam. This made available for those who have sought refuge in Daya Devi through SaraNAgati. Again, no doubt the benefit conferred by Daya Devi is lofty. A simple mechanism for begetting this is by seeking refuge at the feet of Svami Desikan and developing pratibhakti for Svami Desikan. Those possessed of this are the “**kR^itinaH**” described in the Daya Satakam verse. Let alone gaining the darsanam of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill. The mere thought of this

anubhavam through the enjoyment of the Daya Satakam is indeed the major anugraham conferred by Svami Desikan. Thus, by seeking refuge in Svami Desikan's Feet one can gain the elevated anugraham of Daya Devi and Lord Srinivasa."

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin "The perception and comprehension of the Divine nature (svarUpa) of the Lord - which is pure Satyam, jñAnam, and Boundlessness - is itself a great ocean of bliss, compared to which all pleasures of this world would look miniature cow-hoof-size puddle of stagnant water. Oh Daya Devi! Gifted and fortunate people are enabled by sheer impact of Your granting assent "So be it" to enjoy the bliss of the unfathomable ocean of Bliss in AnjanAdri (Tirumalai Hill), which bliss is ever anew, which is the subject of enjoyment of Nityas and Muktas in groups and assemblies, eternally too. They used to say that one could discover an underground treasure by the application of collyrium. These fortunate souls were enabled to see the Lord's AtmasvarUpa in AnjanAdri. Without anjana-application! By sheer dint of Your will that it shall be so!"



Sloka 45

सारं लब्ध्वा कमपि महतः श्रीनिवासाम्बुराशेः
काले काले घनरसवती कालिकेवानुकम्पे ।
व्यक्तोन्मेषा मृगपति गिरौ विश्वमाप्याययन्ती
शीलोपज्ञं क्षरति भवती शीतलं सद्गुणौघम् ॥ ४५ ॥

sAraM labdhvA kamapi mahataH shrInivAsAmburAsheH
kAle kAle ghana rasavatl kALikevAnukampe |
vyakton meShA mR^igapati girau vishvam ApyAyayantI
shIlopaj~naM kSharati bhavatl shItalaM sadguNaugham | |45



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“ We now come to verse 45. In the previous verse the greatest of pleasures compared to the Daya Devi-orchestrated Bhagavad anubhavam of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill pales into insignificance in the manner of a water puddle formed from miniature cow hooves and that the anubhavam of Lord Srinivasa made available to ordinary jlvans (due to Daya Devi declaring that “this jlvana belongs to Me”) is identical to the paripUrNa brahma anubhavam enjoyed by nityasUris in Sri Vaikuntam. Svami Desikan’s Sri Suktis are of exceptionally high quality in that even when an athisayam or visesham is highlighted it is always in conformance with the Sastram. In the Ramayanam, King Trishanku desired to go to svarga lokam in his human form. Therefore, he submitted an appeal to his guru Vasishta and his sons to perform a yajna to aid in this task. Vasishta cautioned him by mentioning that this desire to reach Svargam in human form is inappropriate since it violates the important Sastraic command of giving up one’s human form to acquire a body suitable for residence in Svargam. Vasishta further expounded that the Atma is eternal. It is capable of remembering all the anubhavam in the current body and the experiences it encounters in the next janma. However, the experience from one birth to the other necessarily requires giving up residence in a body from the previous birth. Therefore, Trishanku’s desire to reach Svarga lokam in human form is in violation of this sastraic prescription. However, Trishanku was adamant in his desire to experience Svarga lokam in his human form. For this purpose, he

approached Visvamisra and performed Saranagati. Visvamisra out of his promise to Trishanku undertook great pains to perform a yajnam for this purpose. Trishanku proceeded to Svargam but was denied entry by Indra and pushed out. While his desire to reach Svargam in human form was in violation of Sastram, it is absolutely in conformance with the Sastram to desire the anubhavam of Svarga lokam on this earth itself. Had Trishanku desired this he could have even realized this wish. However, neither did Trishanku desire this anubhavam nor did he get it. In contrast Svami Desikan fully well recognizes that the paripUrNa brahma anubhavam is possible only in Sri Vaikuntam, which one can reach only upon attaining a zero balance of karma, as a consequence of which one begets Moksham. In this process, the jIvan performs VirajA nadi snAnam and begets an aprAkruta sharIram (a body that is free from prakruti sambandham) prior to entering Sri Vaikuntam. However, the desire to have the same brahma anubhavam as that experienced in Sri Vaikuntam in this earthly existence is perfectly valid and attainable. Most importantly it is in conformance with the Sastras. Svami Desikan notes that this benefit is possible entirely due to the intervention of Daya Devi, who declares “he belongs to Me”. In this instance, Daya Devi functions as an Acharyan, who intercedes on behalf of the jIvan and requests the Lord to grant paripUrNa brahma anubhavam. During the performance of Bharanyasam, Acharyas recite by way of sankalpam “madIya tvenabhimatasya asya chetanasya” which explicitly requests the Lord’s grace on the individual since “He belongs to me (the Acharyan)”. Once this declaration comes forth from the Acharyan, the Lord is moved and at once showers His mercy. Therefore, it is sufficient to hear this declaration from the Acharya since the Lord’s grace is bound to follow. Svami Alavandar in his Sri Sukti **Stotra Ratnam** declares:

dhigashucimavinItaM nirdayaM mamalajjam
paramapuruSha yo (a)haM yogivaryAgragaNyaIH
vidhishivasanakAdyaIrdhyAtumatyanta dUram
tava parijana bhAvaM kAmaye kAmavR^ittaH”

to reflect his naichyam (intense self-deprecation). The import of this declaration is that “I am the lowest of the low. I have no humility. I am bereft of any mercy. One would normally be ashamed of this state. However, I have no sense of shame either due to this state. Nevertheless, I shamelessly admit to the desire of Kaimkaryam to Your feet, which is not obtained even by elevated personages like Brahma and Rudra. You must grace me with this bhagyam.” Beholding the Lord’s silence to his appeal Svami Alavandar was puzzled. He then realized that since the

disqualifications for the Lord's grace had been laid bare, the Lord was urging him to get rid of them to become privy to the Lord's grace. Svami Alavandar continues that he has a major qualification. "pitAmahaM nAthamuniM vilokya prasIda madvR^ittamacintayitvA". The import of this declaration is that due to the fact that I belong to Svami Nathamuni (Acharya sambandham), there is no way You can exclude me." Therefore, it is established beyond doubt that when one begets Acharya anugraham through the statement "he belongs to me" the grace of Lord Narayana is bound to follow. In this verse Svami Desikan expounds on the compassion of Daya Devi for all beings without distinction of whether they belong to Her or not. This verse "sAraM labdhvA kamapi mahataH shrInivAsAmburAsheH kAle kAle ghana rasavatI kAlikevAnukampe vyakton meShA mR^igapati girau vishvam ApyAyayantI shIllopaj~naM kSharati bhavatI shItalaM sadguNaugham" is examined now. Here Lord Srinivasa is likened to an ocean and Daya Devi is described in terms of a cloud. The cloud absorbs the ocean water and distributes this through rain. It must be observed that the cloud has absolute freedom to determine where the rainfall occurs. However, the cloud cannot command an ocean to produce rain in a given place. The inner meaning of this verse is that Lord Srinivasa is the ocean whose waters are made up of the Lord's Kalyana gunams. These waters are absorbed by the cloud known as Daya Devi and distributed through copious rainfall. This rainfall is meant for all without distinction of any kind. The sambodhanam here is anukampe. "anukampe mahataH shrInivAsAmburAsheH is the tribute reflecting the fact that Lord Srinivasa is an ocean. In some commentaries it can be seen that sagarantam iva puttam. This refers to the sons of King Sagara (one of the ancestors of Lord Rama) who created a miniature body of water known as sAgara. However, in this instance Svami Desikan glorifies the ocean of Lord Srinivasa as "mahataH" namely as a limitless ocean. This is due to the fact that the Vedam glorifies Lord Narayana as "satyam j~nAnam anantam brahma". It is helpful to understand the import of the Vedam declaration from the exposition of the previous verse, which is reproduced here. It must be borne in mind that bhagavad svarUpam remains unchanged (has no vikAram). bhagavad svarUpam is in the form of satyam (truth). Next comes j~nAnam, which is "svayam prakAsham" (self-illuminating). In order to realize the Lord, no other aid is needed. To identify a lamp, one does not need another light source. In a like manner, no auxiliary light sources are needed to understand Lord Narayana. The bhagavad svarUpam in this instance is self-illuminating as denoted by the tribute j~nAnam. anantam is the next attribute. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, this is expounded upon as "tribhiravadibhiH" "desha kAla vastu paricCeda rahitam" desha denotes the fact

that Lord Narayana is omnipresent. His presence is not restricted to one place. He is present everywhere without exception. In a like manner with respect to **kAlam** or time, Lord Narayana is present at all times. His presence is not limited to certain times. **vastu** is the next thing that is elucidated upon in this salutation. That is the Lord is present in all objects without distinction or exception. For example one cannot declare “**ayam ghaTaH na paramAtma na brahma**” (I am a pot not Brahman or Paramatma). This verse of the Daya Satakam makes an eloquent case for the limitless ocean of mercy known as Lord Srinivasa. The commonly known ocean has breadth and depth which can be measured and is finite even if it is large. The clouds that absorb the salty waters of this ocean and disperse this as rain offer soothing comfort and relief to all beings. What then to speak of an infinite ocean of bliss, which is replete with the waters of the Lord’s Kalyana gunams, that is converted into copious rainfall by the cloud known as Daya Devi? The commonly known salty ocean water may contain gems in its depth. However, superficially, it is filled with alligators, whales, and sharks that are harmful creatures. Therefore, these waters contain an offering that is a combination of good and bad things. However, in contrast, the ocean known as Lord Srinivasa is replete with numerous auspicious qualities and is therefore an offering of blissful enjoyment. Here, “**heya pratyanka kalyANaguNalkatAnatvam**” is the description of the Lord. To enjoy the anubhavam of Lord Narayana, it is necessary to resort to the Sri Suktis of Sri Bhashyakarar, Svami Desikan, and Azhvars. Only with these can bhagavad anubhavam be completely enjoyed. One may wonder that when one is immersed in Azhvar Sri Suktis, what is the need for Bhashyakara Sri Suktis. The Azhvar’s Sri Suktis are replete with Bhakti, Vedanta arthams (meanings). It is to appreciate the latter, the need for Sri Bhashyakarar’s Sri Suktis becomes apparent. Unless one undertakes a kalakshepam of Sri Bhashyakarar’s Sri Suktis, it is impossible to appreciate the subtle and nuanced meanings of the Azhvar outpourings containing capsules of profound Vedantic wisdom. Svami Desikan goes a step further by condensing in his Sri Suktis the essence of the Azhvar outpourings as well as the insights from Sri Bhashyakarar’s Sri Suktis. Specifically, the ubhayalinga padam pertaining to Sri Bhashyakarar’s Sri Suktis expounds upon the “**heya pratyanka kalyANaguNalkatAnatvam**” of Lord Narayana. This is explicitly contained in Svami Desikan’s Sri Suktis too. **heya guNam** denotes everything that is bad. The Lord is one who is the exact opposite in that He is replete with innumerable auspicious qualities, completely bereft of the heya guNam. The Vedam expounds on the essential nature of Brahman. If one were to examine the Vedam tribute it is the statement “**heya pratyanka kalyANaguNalkatAnatvam**” namely, Brahman is

replete with innumerable auspicious attributes. Sri Bhashyakarar further expounds upon Brahman in the Sri Bhashyam opening verse through the tribute “**brahmaNi shrinivAse**”, namely that Brahman is none other than Lord Srinivasa. Thus it becomes apparent that this ocean of Lord Srinivasa is replete with numerous auspicious qualities and is totally bereft of any of the bad qualities (described in terms of whales, sharks and the like) that can be found in the commonly known ocean consisting of salty water. Svami Desikan in this Daya Satakam verse alludes to this quality of the ocean known as Lord Srinivasa through the tribute “**sAraM labdhvA kamapi mahataH shrInivAsAmburAsheH**”. **sAram** as it pertains to the salty ocean waters is only the water component bereft of salt. It is well known that clouds absorb the water from the ocean, while discarding the salt. The salt is known as **asAram** and hence is discarded in favor of the **sAram**. However, when one examines the ocean of Lord Srinivasa, He is completely free from heya guNam. Therefore, what can be the asAram in this case? It must be borne in mind that the Lord is greatly angered by baddha jlvans who act in a manner totally contrary to the Lord’s commands, namely the Sastras, and thus incur His displeasure resulting in His **nigraha** (punishment) **sankalpam**. daNDadaratvam is the specific guNam of Lord Srinivasa, which results in punishment being meted out to baddha jlvans in accordance with their karma. This is deemed to be the asAram according to Svami Desikan. The gentle cloud of Daya Devi in this instance skillfully discards this asAram and only pours out as copious rainfall the auspicious qualities of Lord Srinivasa, the most prominent among them being saushIlyam, saulabhyam, and vatsalyam reflecting the best of the best in terms of the Lord’s auspicious qualities. There are two types of clouds, the white fair weather clouds and the dark rain-bearing clouds. The salutation “**ghanarasavati**” from this verse reflects the fact that Daya Devi has extracted the sAram in the form of the above mentioned kalyANa guNams of the Lord and is waiting for the opportunity to burst forth and distribute these soothing waters to thirsty beings. Normally, a cloud that bears the rasam of water from the salty ocean is described as a visheSham in the form of ghanarasam. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, the reference to rasam is the Vedam description of Lord Srinivasa in the statement **raso vai saH rasa hyevayam labdhvAnandi bhavati**. This is a description of Lord Srinivasa as the rasam. The moment one beholds the glorious form of Lord Srinivasa, one’s eyes, ears, and mouth begin to water partaking of this joyous bhagavad anubhavam. This is reflective of Sri Kuresa’s tribute in **Sri Varadaraja stavam pAraNiyati varaprada! dR^ingme** wherein he declares that he would like to verily devour the Lord with his eyes. The pramanam for this comes from Svami NammAzhvar’s declaration that it is commonly



pAraNIyati varaprada! dR^ingme

understood that the eyes are meant for visual perception, while the ears are meant for hearing, while the tongue is meant for tasting. However, when it comes to Bhagavad anubhavam no such restrictions apply. Any sense organ can perform any function. The tribute of Sri Kuresa is best understood through the analogy of a man, who has remained on nirjalam (not even partaking of water) fasting on ekadasi and Sravana dvadasi days, taking to pAraNai (partaking of food) on the next day with great relish for the food on offer. In a like manner, Sri Kuresa seeks to devour the beauty of the Lord with his eyes. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, it is this rasam of Bhagavad anubhavam (**raso vai saha**) that is captured by the cloud known as Daya Devi and distributed as copious rainfall containing the primary kalyaNa guNams of **saushilyam**, **saulabhyam**, and **vAtsalyam**. There is an important difference between the cloud known as Daya Devi and ordinary clouds. The latter is merely water-bearing. However, the former has under Her command, the Supreme Lord Srinivasa. This is another reason for the usage “**ghanarasavati**”. One more interpretation of “**ghanarasavati**” comes about from the fact that Daya Devi exudes affection for all beings in the hope that they seek refuge at Her Feet and beget the grace of Lord Srinivasa. An ordinary rain-bearing cloud is dark in color. So too is Lord Srinivasa, who is glorified as “**nlameghashyAma**” by way of Azhvar mangalasasanam. For example the tribute from Svami NammAzhvar for Lord Srinivasa glorifies him as “minnumAmazhai tavazhum mEka vaNNa itu vaNNamaruLgal aNimEka vaNNa”. There is also the tribute from Sri Tirumangai Azhvar in a similar vein. TiruppAnAzhvar submits his eulogy as “**koNDal vaNNanai kovalanAi veNNaiyuNDavAyan**”. The Tiruppavai tribute from Sri Andal “**Uzhimutalvan uruvam pOl meikaruttu**” reflects the same glorification. These tributes identify a commonality between Lord Srinivasa and the rain-bearing cloud. In a prior verse the characteristics of upamAnam and upameyam were highlighted, with the latter attaining distinction due to the former. On the other hand, if the Lord were to be described in terms of a dark rain-bearing cloud, it brings no greatness to the Lord. Therefore, Andal instead refers to the cloud and declares that the cloud must acquire the color resembling the dark-hued body of the Lord. This needs to be understood from the fact that the Lord’s aprAkR^ita (no contact with PrakR^iti) divyamangala vigraham is pristinely pure and its beauty defies description. Therefore, the cloud cannot even be equated in any manner with the beautiful form of the Lord. The tribute “**mR^igapati girau vyakton meShA**” from this Daya Satakam verse attests to the fact that this cloud known as Daya Devi has taken root at the Simhachalam hill. This is one of the seven hills in the formation Seshachala, Garudachala, Vrushabhachala, Narayanachala, Anjanachala,



The Daya Devi cloud offers the rasam of Bhagavad anubhavam, for the upliftment of all jlvans

Simhachala, and Venkatachala. The import of this tribute is that Daya Devi is prominently seen at the Simhachala hill. The inner meaning of the tribute is that the rain-bearing cloud known as Daya Devi is capable of granting all Purusharthas. This can be seen from a distance. This rain-bearing cloud is capable of granting anything that one wishes for in terms of Ayush, Arogyam, Aishvaryam, Kaivalyam, Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, and Moksham. The Daya Devi cloud seems to instruct us in the message “Behold the Lord, who is under My command!” There are three kinds of rain that occur. One that provides welcome relief from the scorching heat of the summer. This is welcomed with great joy by all beings. The second type of rain is torrential, wreaking great havoc and destruction in its wake. Everyone looks forward to the end of this type of rain. In fact, this type of rain is detested. The third type of rain is that which arrives at the appropriate time in just the right amount, which facilitates the growth of crops, grains, and medicinal herbs. In this context a Veda mantram rendition along with a brief explanation by Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramanuja Tatacharya Svamin is included in the link [[Veda mantra](#)]. This rainfall is celebrated by all. The tribute “*kAlikevAnukampe vyakton meShA mR^igapati girau vishvam ApyAyayanti*” in this Daya Satakam verse glorifies the rain-bearing cloud of Daya Devi as one that grants the wishes of all Her seekers and is therefore celebrated like the third type of rainfall described herein. Svami Desikan’s anubhavam of Daya Devi as a rain-bearing cloud affords an interesting comparison with commonly seen clouds. The commonly seen rain-bearing cloud brings relief from the scorching heat of the sun, while the Daya Devi cloud brings relief from the unbearable heat of samsAram (refer to the narrative of verses 38 and 43 for more detail). The enormous act of the Daya Devi cloud is captured in the statement “*duShkarmasparsha vipAka virodhanam*” Namely, what we endure in this life is a result of accumulated Karma (good and bad). If one gets an opportunity to visit the Venkatam hill and gain a darshanam of Lord Srinivasa, it is entirely due to some previous punyam bearing fruit. On the other hand, if one begets something undesirable or encounters significant troubles, it is the result of some prior papa karma. The enormous anugraham rendered by the Daya Devi cloud is that She ensures that only the good prior karma yields fruit and that the prior bad karma never gets to prevail for an individual. In the process, She relieves all beings of the scorching heat arising from prior sins committed by the jIvan. This is described in terms of the rainfall arising from the Daya Devi cloud, which yields copious showers of Lord Srinivasa’s primary kalyANa guNams of saushIlyam, saulabhyam and vAtsalyam. This rainfall extinguishes the heat of any papa karma accrued by the jIvan. The Daya Devi cloud is also the welcoming shade, which offers relief to

suffering jlvans scorched by the tApam (troubles) arising from samsAram. Water is the critical life support for all jlvans. This is offered by the common rain-bearing cloud. The Daya Devi cloud offers the rasam of Bhagavad anubhavam, for the upliftment of all jlvans. The common rain-bearing cloud offers waters to quench one's thirst, while the Daya Devi cloud offers the elixir of the Upanishad statement "apahatapApma vijaraH vishoka vimR^ityuH vijighatsaH apipAsAH satyakAma satya sankalpa esha Atma" which renders thirst permanently a non-issue for the jlvan. Namely, by making the jlvan adopt Saranagati the Daya Devi cloud rids the jlvan of all sins and ensures that the jlvan begets the elevated state of permanent residence in Sri Vaikuntam, where one is bereft of the pangs of hunger, thirst, old age, death, unaffected by sins, always wills the truth, loves the truth and is of the nature of the Atma. Then we focus on the tribute "kAle kAle ghana rasavatI kAlikevAnukampe". The thunderous roar accompanying this rain-bearing cloud is welcomed with joy by all jlvans. The reference here is to the sound of Govinda Govinda permeating the entire area of the Venkatam hill, where the Daya Devi cloud has taken residence. Next, the tribute "shIllopaj~naM kSharati bhavatI shItalaM sadguNaugham" reflects the fact that the inherent nature of Daya Devi and the salient gunams of Lord Srinivasa outlined here is one of ensuring the well-being (yogakShemam) of all jlvans through their upliftment. In this instance, Svami Desikan glorifies Daya Devi as the rain-bearing cloud that liberally distributes these gunams by way of copious showers bringing forth great joy all around. Andal expresses Her preference for the cloud in Her Tiruvenkatam pasurams. In fact She expresses envy for the cloud. Not only the cloud but also all those who render antaranga kaimkaryam to Lord Srinivasa are objects of envy for Andal. This is not to be interpreted as a stigma for Andal but a depiction of Her anubhavam as an ordinary lady, who is subject to common human emotions. Andal describes the clouds with reference to the Lord of Seven Hills as "oLivaNNam vaLai cintai uRakkathODu ivai eIlAm eLimaiyAl iTTennai IDazhiya poyinvAl kuLir aruvi vEnkaTattu en govintan guNam pADi aLiyatta mekangAL AvikattiruppEnE" Andal describes Her state as one of paleness. She has lost Her lustre due to forsaking sleep, food and the like due to the fact that She is engaged in constant contemplation of Lord Srinivasa. However, since Lord Srinivasa has not heeded Her appeal and blessed Her with pratyakSha darshanam, Andal claims to have lost Her luster. She describes Her body as becoming pale, and as a consequence Her bangle is not in the appropriate place, though Her thoughts are always about Lord Srinivasa and in this process She has forsaken sleep. In contrast, She speaks with great envy of the clouds hanging over the Venkatam hill as those engaged in singing the glories of My Lord Govinda (Srinivasa). The reverberation of



Lord Srinivasa is an ocean of a thousand auspicious qualities

the Govinda nAmam according to Andal causes “matayAnai pol ezhunta mA mukilgAL venkaDattai paDiyAka vAzhvIrgAL pambaNaiyan vArttai enne kaDi enRum tAn AvAn karutAtu Or peN koDiyai vatai seitAn ennum sol vaiyyakattAr matiyArE” The clouds are described as being hefty like the mata yAnai or elephant in a rut. This is a direct reference to the “ghanarasavati” tribute of this verse. The reason for this is the fact that those clouds are engaged in the garjanam or roar of the Govinda nAmam. Andal requests the cloud to do Her a favor. Please submit the following appeal to Lord Srinivasa. “My suffering from lack of Your grace is inconsequential. However, I definitely do not want You to get a bad name for not coming to the rescue of one who has sought You and forsaking her. Please safeguard Your reputation.” This is a tribute by Andal to the cloud known as Daya Devi, that is ever present at the Venkatam hill and is never separated from Lord Srinivasa. Therefore, Andal submits Her appeal in this context to the Daya Devi cloud. This anubhavam is captured by Svami Desikan in this Daya Satakam verse. In summary, the Daya Devi cloud absorbs the water from the ocean known as Lord Srinivasa and distributes the salient kalyaNa guNams of saushllyam, saulabhyam, and vAtsalyam in the form of copious rainfall for all beings without distinction of “whether they belong to Her or not”.

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin:

“This verse is a metaphorization of Daya Guna as a cloud, cool to all beings irrespective of their nature. The Lord Srinivasa is an ocean-being a conglomerate of a thousand qualities. Which of them is cool, which useful, and which is comfort-conferring, that is Daya.

A figurative presentation of Kavi-tAarkika-simham is captured here. Oh Daya Devi! From the vast-rich ocean of many qualities that Lord Srinivasa is, You squeeze, draw, selectively so, the cool water of love, fondness, and condescending coolness, and shower at all places, high or low, on hills and forests, populated by lions and the like, in a timely phase, raining when it is needed, showering much needed kindness and sympathy, tinged by saushlly guNa. Lord Srinivasa is equal and common to all. He does not discriminate on any grounds; Daya Devi too is similarly universal.”



Sloka 46

भीमे नित्यं भव जलनिधौ मज्जतां मानवानाम्

आलम्बार्थं वृषगिरि पतिस्त्वन्निदेशात् प्रयुङ्क्ते ।

प्रज्ञासारं प्रकृति महता मूल भागेन जुष्टं

शाखा भेदैः सुभगमनघं शाश्वतं शास्त्र पाणिम् ॥ ४६ ॥

bhlme nityaM bhava jalanidhau majjatAM mAnavAnAm
AlambArthaM vR^iShagiripatistvannideshAt prayu~Nkte |
praj~nA sAraM prakR^iti mahatA mUla bhAgena juShTaM
shAkhA bhedaiH subhagamanaghaM shAshvataM shAstrapANim | | 46



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“In the previous verse, Daya Devi was described as the rain bearing cloud that absorbs the water from the ocean known as Lord Srinivasa and graces all with the shower of rainfall in the form of the Lord’s KalyaNa gunams of saushilyam, saulabhyam, and vatsalyam. In this verse Svami Desikan describes the help rendered by Daya Devi to baddha jivans struggling to tide over the samsaric ocean. This is contained in the tribute “bhlme nityaM bhava jalanidhau majjatAM mAnavAnAm AlambArthaM vR^iShagiripatistvannideshAt prayu~Nkte praj~nA sAraM prakR^iti mahatA mUla bhAgena juShTaM shAkhA bhedaiH subhagamanaghaM shAshvataM shAstrapANim”. In this instance sastram is depicted as one of the hands of Lord Srinivasa. In this case just as a commoner lends a helping hand to one in distress, Lord Srinivasa lends His hand of the sastram to struggling baddha jivans. In the 18th verse, Svami Desikan has described the elevated role of the sastras through the tribute “shAstramayena sthira pradIpena”. The import of this glorification is reproduced for the purposes of a self-contained narrative. The import is “baddha jivans are struggling greatly due to being enveloped by the darkness of ignorance. The sastrams banish this darkness and thus rid the jivans of their suffering. The sastras offer undying light, which rids the jivans of their nescience induced darkness. This is an enormous help rendered by Daya Devi. In this verse, Svami Desikan expounds on the help rendered by the Lord at the behest of Daya Devi to baddha jivans, who are struggling to navigate the



Lord Narayana, comes forth as an Acharya and out of compassion provides His helping hand of the sastras to enable the upliftment of struggling jlvans.

ocean of Samsara and are being tossed hither and thither. Specifically, the Lord lends His helping hand of Sastras for the upliftment of these jivans. It may be asked that since Svami Desikan has already expounded on the elevated nature of the sastras, and that it is not considered good poetic practice to repeat a previously discussed theme, why is he bringing this up again? This is answered in two ways. The first is that Svami Desikan treads in the footsteps of Acharyas prior to him. In this instance, he follows the lead of Sri Parasara Bhattar who declares “mAnaM pradIpamiva kAruNiko dadAti” which reflects the fact that the most compassionate Lord Ranganatha bestows us with mAnam (sastras), which are in the form of light that never fades. This is the reason for Svami Desikan’s declaration of “anuguNa dashArpitenA shrIdhara karuNe samAhita snehA shamayasi tamaH prajAnAM shastramayena sthira pradIpena” in verse 18 of the Daya Satakam. In the Pancharatra Samhitha it is declared “sAkShAt nArAyaNo devaH kRtvA martya mayIm tanum magnAn uddharate lokAn kAruNyAt shAstrapANinA”. The import of this statement is that Lord Narayana, comes forth as an Acharya and out of compassion provides His helping hand of the sastras to enable the upliftment of struggling jivans. Hence, Svami Desikan uses this statement as the motivation for this verse of the Daya Satakam. This verse commences with the tribute “bhIme nityaM bhava jalanidhau majjatAM mAnavAnAm”. “bhIme” denotes that which is extremely scary or one which strikes fear. In this context, the description is of the ocean of samsara denoted by “bhava jalanidhau”. Superficially, the waters of an ordinary ocean may look gentle. However, if one is struck by a couple of waves, it causes great wounds to the body. Furthermore, this ocean is infested by sharks, whales, and alligators, making it even more dangerous to enter.

Next, the ocean of samsara is examined. In this context what are the scary creatures like whales, sharks, and alligators? The Samsara Ocean is infested by creatures that are far more deadly compared to the common whales, sharks, and alligators. The two characteristics that permeate the Samsara Ocean are kAmam (desire) and krodham (anger). These are defined by Sri Bhashyakarar in his exposition of Chapter 3 of the GitAbhAshyam. Kamam is desire. If it is for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam it is a good desire. However, if it is for pleasing the senses and looking for something unattainable, this desire is unacceptable since it can yield severely adverse consequences. Specifically, such desires have the potential to drive one to any extent and extreme to fulfill them. Then one contends with either the disappointment of not having realized these desires or begetting something that is exactly the opposite of these desires, namely something that is totally undesirable. When the latter happens, the common tendency is to identify the root cause or

person that is responsible for this. The emotion developed towards this root cause or person is defined as anger by Svami Sri Bhashyakarar. “**krodho hanyAt gurUnapi**” is the statement that describes this state, namely in a fit of anger, one would not hesitate to even kill their own Acharya. Can there be anything scarier? Therefore, the two enemies are **kAmam** and **krodham**. If these are conquered nothing more is required. However, these can never be eliminated. Hence, the Ocean of Samsara, which is replete with these is scarier than the commonly encountered shark/whale/alligator infested ocean. This is captured in the statement “**bhIme nityaM bhava jalanidhau**” Shankaracharya describes the plight of one caught up in the Samsaric Ocean through the statement “**punarapi jananaM punarapi maraNaM punarapi janani jaTare shayanam**” denoting the fact that one is caught in the interminable cycle of births and deaths. This is the plight of baddha jivans being tossed hither and tither by the waves of the Samsaric Ocean. “**majjatAM**” is the salutation from the present verse of the Daya Satakam describing the plight of those being tortured by the waves of the samsaric ocean. Here it is important to note that Daya Devi has taken root on the Venkatam hill. She looks down and beholds the struggling jivans in the ocean of Samsara being tossed up and down sometimes giving the impression that they are drowning and at other times being tossed up by the waves. It is important to distinguish this from a sport where one can do this in a single instance sometimes being drowned and at other times coming up with the cresting wave. To make this distinction, Svami Desikan characterizes the plight of the suffering jivans through the tribute “**nityam majjatAm**” namely that the jivan is forever caught up in the waters of the Samsaric ocean with no apparent escape route. Daya Devi for a moment even wonders if the struggling jivan may ride a high wave and get out of this samsaric ocean. However, the jivan is always tossed right back in the middle of the vast samsaric ocean. Therefore, She recognizes the “**nityam majjatAm**” plight of the jivan and that it does not stand a chance at escape from this ocean.

Next Daya Devi’s help for these struggling jIvarAsis (baddha jivans) is captured through the tribute “**AlambArthaM vR^iShagiripatistvannideshAt prayu~Nkte**” namely that Daya Devi looks at Lord Srinivasa and imposes a command on Him. This is due to the fact that Daya Devi is none other than Thayar, who has Lord Srinivasa under Her control. Specifically, She draws the Lord’s attention to the plight of struggling jivan, who is being relentlessly tossed up and down by the waters of the Samsaric Ocean and remarks “Do You know who this jivan is? This is Our child. He belongs to Us.” She then asserts somewhat angrily “How can You remain a silent spectator when He is suffering thus”. As a result, the

tribute “tvannideshAt vR^iShagiripati prayu~Nkte” denotes the fact that bound by the command of Daya Devi, the Lord lends His hand. This is intended to help the baddha jivan rise up from the samsaric ocean and gain redemption. When one offers a helping hand it must be understood that the hand must be strong enough to support the jivan being rescued and safely extricate the jivan from the bonds of the samsaric ocean. Otherwise, the one offering a helping hand will drown along with the jivan. For example, one skilled in swimming may try to rescue another unskilled at swimming and on the verge of drowning. However, the fear of the drowning individual can easily restrict the skilled swimmer and come in the way of his rescue act. Therefore, rescuing one that is drowning is not a trivial task. It requires considerable skill, strength, and alertness of mind. In this context, the rescuer needs to operate from a safe distance so as to not be restricted by the fear of the one being rescued and yet be able to safely extricate the drowning being. With respect to the Daya Satakam tribute “vR^iShagiripatistvannideshAt prayu~Nkte” the reference is to Lord Srinivasa lending His hand, which has the Sastras. This hand is glorified by Svami Desikan as “shAstrapANim prayu~Nkte praj~nA sAraM” to establish the fact that this hand bearing the sastra is essence of all knowledge.



“vR^iShagiripatistvannideshAt prayu~Nkte”

The sastras provide “tyAjya upAdheyam” namely they instruct one in things that need to be given up and things that need to be preserved. When one is admitted to a hospital for treatment of an illness, it is customary to receive discharge instructions when the patient is being released from the hospital. The discharge instructions include a list of acceptable and unacceptable diet as well as a list of dos and don’ts. The sastrams in a like manner provide instructions for dos and don’ts in one’s life. The sastras bestow enlightenment as well as the knowledge of artha pancakam, which is jIvAtma svarUpam (essential nature of the jivatma), paramAtma svarUpam (essential nature of the paramAtma), upAya svarUpam (essential nature of the means to attain Paramatma), phala svarUpam (essential nature of the fruit of attaining paramatma) and phala virodhi svarUpam (essential nature of the obstacles that preclude attainment of the fruit). This is glorified in the tribute “praj~nyAsAram”. Next the tribute “prakR^iti mahatA mUla bhAgena juShTaM” is dwelt upon. The helping hand of the Lord should be firmly anchored to His shoulder. In this instance the Vedam glorifies Lord Narayana as “tasya prakR^iti lInasya yaH paraH sa maheshvaraH” The root of all the sastrams lies in the first aksharam of “praNavam” namely “a”. The tribute “mUla bhAgena juShTaM” refers to the fact that the root of the sastram is fortified by praNavam or more precisely, the first aksharam of praNavam “a”. The Vedam glorifies the elevated role of PraNavam in the rk “yo vedAdau svaraH prokto vedAnte cha pratiShThitaH tasya prakR^itilInasya yaH paraH sa maheshvaraH” to highlight the fact that PraNavam is uttered at the start and end of all Vedam recitation and that it functions as the support for all Vedanta. That which is the root cause of everything in the universe is the aShTaNakshara mantram. The critical support for this mantram too is PraNavam. Due to the fact that the Lord’s hand contains the sastrams, whose root is the PraNavam, it is greatly fortified. The hand has five fingers. However, the Vedam constituting the hand has numerous shAkhas (branches). Specifically, Sama Vedam has one thousand shakhas. The essential messages from those thousand shakhas were transformed into chaste Tamil by Svami NammAzhvar in the Tiruvaimozhi. The fingers serve as the alankAram (ornament) for the hand. This is further beautified by rings and the like. In a similar vein, that which function as the ornaments for the numerous shakhas of the Vedam are the kalyANa guNams (auspicious qualities) of Lord Narayana. The Vedic statement “sarve Veda yatpadamAmananti” describes the fact that all Vedas glorify the feet of Lord Narayana. This lends inherent beauty to the Vedam which is alluded to by the tribute “subhagam” in this Daya Satakam verse. Furthermore, the eulogy “anagham” from this verse denotes the fact that these Veda shakhas are



Lord Srinivasa lends His helping hand bearing the sastrams due to the command of Daya Devi

blemishless, namely they are free from faults or defects of any kind. It must also be borne in mind that the Veda shakhas are eternal just like Lord Narayana. This is described by Svami Desikan in the tribute “shAshvataM” of this Daya Satakam verse. The import of this tribute is that due to the fact that it is blemishless and eternal, the hand of the Lord bearing the shastras is superior to the hand of common beings. For example, a common person may be strong enough to rescue another in a single instance. However, it is impossible for them to repeat this act time and time again. On the other hand, the sastra bearing hand of Lord Srinivasa is constantly engaged in redeeming suffering jivans without fail. The tribute “vR^iShagiripatiH prayu~Nkte” of this verse needs to be understood in this context as Lord Srinivasa lends His helping hand bearing the sastrams due to the command of Daya Devi. The instruction from Svami Desikan in this instance is that when the benevolent Lord Srinivasa lends His helping hand at the command of Daya Devi, one must hold on to this hand. The inner meaning is that Lord Srinivasa blesses us with the gift of the Sastram. Therefore, it is incumbent on us to conform to its dictates. If one leads a life in conformance with the sastra, it will lead them to the world of ultimate bliss, Sri Vaikuntam. Therefore, it is important to seek refuge at the feet of Lord Srinivasa, due to the Daya Devi inspired act of compassion (in view of Her declaration “This jivan belongs to Us”) on His part due to which one can become a receptacle of the combined anugraham of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi. In conclusion, salutations are offered to the feet of Lord Srinivasa, Daya Devi and Svami Desikan, who revealed this path for redemption on account of the combined grace of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi.”

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin:

“We people drown ourselves in the deep dreaded ocean of samsara - worldly life and pleasures. We are not able to rise above it, reach the shore and escape the recurrent cycle order. To save and help such men like me, You let the Lord help us. At Your instance, Oh Daya Devi! the Lord lent an arm of Sastra, so as to say, which is in the form of knowledge, wisdom, and elucidation so that discerning individuals can benefit. The arm of Sastra, so to say, is sturdy, faultless, unambiguous; it stems from the fundamental of PraNavam; is based on Ashtaksharam and has five branches (implied by five fingers representing Artha-Panchakam). The Vedic literature is the prime Shastra; it is not man-made; it is eternal and faultless. It can guide in all emergencies. It is in sweet tenor. Catching hold of it people can rise above and escape from the deep water of the Samsara ocean.”

Slokam 47

विद्वत् सेवा कतक निकषैर्वीत पङ्काशयानां
पद्मा कान्तः प्रणयति दये दर्पणं ते स्वशास्त्रम् ।

लीला दक्षां त्वदनवसरे लालयन् विप्रलिप्सां

माया शास्त्राण्यपि दमयितुं त्वत्प्रपन्न प्रतीपान् ॥ ४७ ॥

vidvat sevA kataka nikaShairvIta pa~NkAshayAnAM
padmA kAntaH praNayati daye darpaNaM te sva shAstram |
IIIA dakShAM tvadanavasare lAlayan vipra lipsAM
mAyA shAstrANyapi damayituM tvat prapanna pratIpAn | |47



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin: “This verse “vidvat sevA kataka nikaShairvIta pa~NkAshayAnAM padmA kAntaH praNayati daye darpaNaM te sva shAstram |IIIA dakShAM tvadanavasare lAlayan vipra lipsAM mAyA shAstrANyapi damayituM tvat prapanna pratIpAn|” is important in highlighting the glory of the Srivaishnava tradition in accordance with the prescriptions of the Pancharatra shastram. In the previous verse, the Daya Devi orchestrated help to suffering jivans in the ocean of Samsara through the sastram-laden helping hand of Lord Srinivasa was highlighted. The statement therein was intended to highlight the greatness of the Vedas in keeping with the declaration “vedA shAstrAt paraM nAsti na dalvam keshavAt param” namely that among all Sastras, the Vedam reigns supreme. In order to completely understand the Vedas it becomes important to gain mastery over the six Vedangas which are niruktam (etymology), jyotisham (astrology/astronomy), shIkSha (phonetics), chandas (meter), vyAkaraNam (grammar), and kalpam (rituals). Furthermore, when it comes to nyAyam, the declaration “kANaDam paNinIyam ca sarva shAstropakArakam” prevails, namely the works of KANaDa and PANini’s grammar rules need to be mastered to understand any sastram comprehensively. In this context, those who have studied vyAkaraNa and mImAmsa are known as pankti pAvanas. Due to various circumstances, one may be forced to speak with those that should not be spoken with, or one may not be able to speak with those who need to be spoken with. Additionally, one may be forced to be in places that are forbidden. These are proscribed acts according to the sastras. However, if one who has engaged in these

acts partakes of food in the company of those who have mastered vyAkaraNa and mImAmsa, they are rid of the resulting sins from the aforementioned acts and become extremely pure. This is the meaning of the term “**pankti pAvana**”. Each of these disciplines such as vyAkaraNam, nyAyam, mImAmsam have as their source maharishis of great caliber such as PaNini, KANaDa, Jaimini and the like. These are elevated jivAtmas. However, when tracing the origin of the Pancharatra sastram, it goes back to Lord Narayana Himself - the ParamAtma. Therefore, Svami Desikan selects this verse to highlight the glory of the Pancharatra sastram. The tribute “**vidvat sevA kataka nikaShairvIta pa~NkAshayAnAM**” conveys an amazingly insightful perspective. **ThEtthAnkoTTai** is the seed commonly known as clearing-nut. When this seed is ground and mixed with impure water, it has the characteristic of ensuring that the impurities settle at the bottom of the water container, allowing for use of the pure water at the top of the container. If one has no choice but to partake of water that is not pure (let’s say even if the water is from the Sarasvati River, which is extremely sacred, but is mixed with slush containing sand and weeds) and is therefore unfit for consumption but must necessarily be partaken of to quench one’s thirst, the mixing of ground **thEtthAnkoTTai** facilitates the use of this water. This is the perspective conveyed by Svami Desikan in this verse. Sastras are of three types - **sAtvIka sastram**, **rAjasiKa sastram**, and **tAmasiKa sastram** analogous to the three types of purANams. sAtvIka sastrams are characterized by a direct instruction of what is good and that by following which one is directly led to Lord Narayana. The rAjasiKa sastram is one which might initially point one in wrong direction but ultimately resorts to course correction and leads one on a good path. tAmasa sastram is one which constantly leads one on the wrong path and ensures the follower is condemned to life in hell. Thus, it is apparent that among sastras, the sAtvIka sastras are supreme. For example, if one is not performing the sandhyAvandanam, a knowledgeable elder instructs him in the error of his ways and urges him to perform this duty. Specifically, performance of the morning sandhyAvandanam at the prescribed time is instructed in the salutation “vande aruNedvIpe prakShipantiyat pradakShiNamprakramanti”. In particular, the arghyam that is offered during this period is more powerful than the Vajra weapon of Indra as declared by the Vedam. The asuras known as mandehar are waiting to inflict trouble. They received a boon from Brahma that they would be able to devour the Sun daily. However, Brahma while granting their request also warned them that they will be destroyed when those who perform the morning and evening sandhyavandanam offer arghyam with the utterance of the appropriate mantras. This is documented in the tribute “**udyantamastamyantam**”



AdityaM abhidhyAyan kurvan brAhmaNO vidvAnthsakalaM bhadramashnute". (Taittiriya AraNyakam 2.2.1) Therefore, the power of arghyam offered during SandhyAvandanam is very great. The mantram instructs us in the fact that performance of the prescribed Sandhya duty results in protection of all. One may counter this by saying that one does not have the discernment to know what is good and what is bad. However, the Vedam message suggests that this is irrelevant. Even if one does not possess the discriminating knowledge, merely performing the prescribed duty results in the well-being of all. Sastrams such as this which only have our well-being in mind belong to the category of sAtvika sastram. Among these sAtvika sastrams, the Pancharatra sastram shines forth according to Svami Desikan's YatirAja Saptati tribute "kamapyAdyA guruM vande kamala gR^ihamedhinam pravaktA cChandasAM vaktA pAncarAtrasya yaH svayam". Chandas in this tribute refers to the Vedam, which functions as the life breath of Lord Narayana in accordance with the tribute "nishvasitam veda" by Sri Kuresha. Just like Lord Narayana, the Vedas too are eternal. Since they have no human authorship, they are decreed to be perfect and blemishless in the same manner as Lord Narayana. The Vedam in its pristine form (without any change) is passed on as instruction by Lord Narayana time after time. Lord Narayana of such glory is the source of the Pancharatra sastram. "padmA kAntaH praNayati" in the context of this verse of the Daya Satakam refers to the fact that Lord Srinivasa, the consort of Sri has expounded upon the Pancharatra sastram. It may be asked for whom is this sastram expounded? The answer to this question comes about from the tribute "vItapa~NkAshayAnAM" of this verse. Those who are rid of the dirt denoted by aj~nAnam (nescience) and pApam (sins) are characterized as "vItapa~NkAshayAnAM". Thus, it needs to be understood that this sastram is meant for those possessing citta shuddhi. Only those possessed of this can understand and appreciate the nuances of Pancharatra sastram. It can then be asked will the cittam forever be pure? The answer is a resounding no. The cittam here refers to the mind. The mind becomes easily confused due to aj~nAnam (nescience) and pApam (sins). For example, one may listen to an upanyAsam where it is expounded upon that "Lord Narayana is the Supreme Being and that He always acts with the sole aim of ensuring the well-being of the entire universe. If something adverse happens from a laukika perspective, the mind gets shattered. This state befalls even the one rendering the upanyAsam. Then it may be asked of the UpanyAsakar, being so knowledgable, is it not possible to withstand this calamitous occurrence? The answer is again no. This is due to the fact that even though the upanyAsakar is well versed in the nuances of the sastram, he does not

possess the maturity and tranquility of mind like Maharishis. Therefore, the upanyAsakar too is bound by pApa karma, as a result of which the mind becomes shattered in the face of a calamitous occurrence. Additionally, there is also the bond of aj~nAnam. Only when one is freed from both the sins and ignorance can tranquility of the mind prevail. It is only for those beings rid of sins and ignorance that Lord Narayana has created the Pancharatra sastram. Only such beings can appreciate the loftiness of this sastram. Here the dR^iShTAntam (perspective) and dArShTAntikam (final message) need to be appreciated. Here the example of thEtthAnkoTTai comes to the fore. A container bears dirty water, which is unsuitable for use. However, when the ground thEtthAnkoTTai is added to this, it causes the impurity to settle at the bottom of the container enabling the use of clear water from the top. Specifically, the analogy to the container, water and thEtthAnkoTTai needs to be made. In this context, the container is denoted by the mind (manas), while the dirty water denotes the confusion caused to the mind by aj~nAnam and pApam. The tribute “vidvat sevA katanikaShaiH” from this verse of the Daya Satakam referring to service rendered to Vidvans denotes the ground thEtthAnkoTTai seed. This leads to the question who is the Vidvan? It is common to give sambhavanam to learned ones uttering the Veda mantram “vedam vidvAMsam abhito vadanti” Does vidvan denote one who has performed Veda adhyayanam, or does it pertain to one who has mastered the sastras, or does it apply to one who expounds on the sastras in kAlakshepam mode or does it apply to one performing an upanyasam or does it apply to one that excels in anuShTAnam? The reference of Vidvan is for one who has performed Veda adhyayanam at the feet of a sadAchArya, learnt the nuances of all the sastras from the sadAchArya, understood the import of the sastras gained in this manner, adopts these sastraic instructions in daily practice, and instructs deserving sishyas in these sastrams is called a Vidvan. If these onerous requirements define a Vidvan, such persons would be extremely difficult to come by due to the fact that only a handful may exist in keeping with these demands. Therefore, it may be sufficient to regard as a Vidvan, one who has received the instruction of these sastrams from a great AchArya and practices these instructions in his day-to-day life. Therefore, this vidvan kaimkaryam is like the ground thEtthAnkoTTai seed, which purifies the water in the container. Here it must be noted that a one-off meeting with a Vidvan and rendering some kaimkaryam is insufficient. It should be sustained over a long period of time. Only then does clarity of mind come about. The tribute “katanikaShaiH” from this Daya Satakam verse refers to the fact that those who have their aj~nAnam and pApam destroyed due to “vidvat seva” are blessed by

Lord Srinivasa to appreciate the Pancharatra sastram. The glory of the Pancharatra sastram is highlighted in the eulogy “**darpaNaM te sva shAstram**” from this Daya Satakam verse. The meaning of this tribute is that the Pancharatra Sastram functions as a mirror for Daya Devi. This again highlights the greatness of Lord Srinivasa’s Daya, namely the Pancharatra Sastra is a glorification of Daya Devi. The Pancharatra Sastram enables us to gain a darsanam of Lord Ranganatha in archa form, the darsanam of Lord Srinivasa in archa form, and enables us to appreciate the five types of avataras that Lord Narayana takes (para, vyUha, vibhava, hArda, and archa). The PancharAtra sastram provides life support for many Srivaishnava temples by outlining the principles and practices to be adhered from idol consecration to conduct of daily rituals. Most significantly, it depicts the glory of the Archa murti of Lord Narayana. The Azhvar declares “**Atiyanjyoti uruvai anku vaitthinku pirRandAr**” denoting the fact that the Archa murti of Lord Narayana is identical to the Lord residing in Sri Vaikuntam in terms of the characteristics of the aprAkR^ita divya mangala vigraham. Svami Bhashyakarar waxes eloquent on the greatness of the Archa form of Lord Narayana in his exposition of the Gita Bhashyam pertaining to the discussion on the Lord’s avatara rahasyam (the reason for the Lord’s incarnation). Again it must be noted that the glory of the Archa form is first revealed in the Pancharatra Sastram. The concept of SharaNAgati too is expounded in great detail in the Pancharatra sastram. The main objective of Daya Devi is **loka rakShaNam** (ensure the well-being of the entire universe). She instructs beings of the universe in the manner “You are all **akinchanas** (incapable of any means) and hence cannot undertake the arduous prescriptions of Karma yoga, j~nAna yoga, and bhakti yoga. Therefore, resort to the path of unconditional total surrender to the Lotus Feet of Srinivasa, which is readily available to you. The moksham which is attained by bhakti yogis will also be available to you upon resorting to the path of SharaNAgati. The paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam available to Bhakti Yogis upon begetting Moksham will also be accessible to you. Therefore, it is only for you that the Pancharatra sastram has been created. The Pancharatra sastram brings to the forefront the **nirhetuka kR^ipa** of Lord Narayana, that is his essential nature of compassion towards all beings. Here an important question arises: If the Lord is exuding compassion for all beings, where is the need to perform any act to beget His grace? The Pancharatra Sastram answers this through the statement that the act of SharaNAgati is merely an excuse to invoke the free flow of the Lord’s inherent compassion. At the same time the Sastram instructs us that one must not become conceited about the fact that they are assured of moksham on account of their performance of SharaNAgati. It must be borne in mind that this



Archa murti of Lord Narayana is identical to the Lord residing in Sri Vaikuntam

elevated benefit is conferred entirely due to the limitless grace of Lord Narayana in keeping with the declaration “**madlyalva dayayA**”. The Pancharatra sastram highlights the krupai of Lord Narayana, which is none other than Daya Devi! This sastram is glorified as “**te darpaNam**” in this verse of the Daya Satakam. Namely, the sastram functions as a mirror for Daya Devi reflecting Her glory everywhere. Here it must be noted that everyone longs for the “**kannADi-arai-sevai**” (darsanam through mirror arrangement) of the Lord. Hence the practice in many Temples to provide the Lord’s darsanam in this manner, when He is adorned with visheSha alankArams. For example, in nAcchiyar tirukkOlam (when Lord Narayana is decorated and eulogized as Thayar), it is customary to first have a darshan of the Lord and then behold the image in the mirror. The latter darshanam enhances the Lord’s beauty several-fold. Details of the alankaram that are not discernable in the direct viewing become known through the mirror image. In a like manner, the Pancharatra Sastram reveals to us facets of Daya Devi, which may not be readily apparent even in a **pratyakSha darshanam** (direct viewing). The beauty of the kannADi-arai sevai is that one beholds the Lord no matter what direction one turns.



Ayna Mahal -Tirumala

At the shrine of Srinivasa in the aynA mahal at the Venkatam hill, which has the mirrors installed, one is able to experience this no matter what direction one turns and whether one looks up or down. When one beholds the Lord looking down, one is scared to take a step for fear of stepping on the Lord. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, this Pancharatra sastram, which reveals to us Daya Devi in kannADi-arai-sevai, was created by Lord Narayana for “vItapa~NkAshayAnAM” (the meaning of this term has been expounded earlier in this narrative).

Svami Desikan is known for his outstanding choice of words. He refers to this in the YatirAja Saptati tribute “paruShAtivAda parivAdapalshuna prabhR^itiprabhUtapatanlyapa~NkilA svadate mamAdya subhaga sarasvatI yatirAja kIRtikatakalrIvishodhitA” Svami Desikan sets out to glorify Sri Bhashyakarar. At this juncture, Svami Desikan is confronted with the question “Sri Bhashyakarar is greater than the Lord Himself. How could one with impure thoughts, harsh words and one who resorts to lies possibly be able to glorify Sri Bhashyakarar?” Svami Desikan answers this “It is irrelevant here because I possess the thEtthAnkoTTai (clearing-nut). What is the clearing-nut? It is the declaration “yatirAja kIRtikatakalrIvishodhitA” namely the very act of glorifying Sri Bhashyakarar renders his words extremely pure in the manner of the ground clearing-nut purifying the water in a container. Furthermore, since the Rahasyarthams were gained through kalakshepam at the feet of Svami AppuLar, there is no need to worry about the words used in glorifying Svami Bhashyakarar. In a like manner, people rendering upanyasams and those who listen to them are rendered pure if the Sri Suktis of Svami Desikan are expounded upon in the upanyasam. So far, the meaning for the first two lines of the verse have been expounded. The next two lines are replete with meaning and give rise to a number of positions which require careful and comprehensive treatment. Lord Srinivasa creates all sastras. We accept these sastrams. For example, Jyotisham (astrology) is accepted as one of the sastras. Only one who has learnt this properly from a qualified Acharya can make predictions that turn out to be true. On the other hand, if one by chance is able to pull off a correct prediction or two without complete mastery over the sastram, it is due to some sukR^itam. However, this cannot prevail always. Therefore, it is not to be regarded lightly. There are several exceptions to the rules underlying this sastram. Therefore, unless one is intimately familiar with these nuances, one should not rush to make predictions. Otherwise, this can have serious consequences. “mAyA shAstrANyapi damayituM” is the salutation from this verse that is examined here. Mohana Sastram is one of the sastrams. This is a tAmasa sastram, which has been created by Lord Srinivasa. It can be asked “How could a tAmasa sastram be created

by Lord Srinivasa?” The answer to this comes forth due to the fact that Daya Devi, who is the Empress, due to Lord Srinivasa being the Emperor of the entire universe. When one views Sanskrit plays the terms dhlrodhArtham, DhIrodhattham, DhIrOlalitham are commonly encountered. These are the characters in the play conceived by the composer. The composer is in uttama (extremely elevated) status. They would only see the empress (rAja mahishi) and no one else. The DhIralalitham character while extremely appreciative of the empresss also behaves affectionately towards other women servitors in the absence of the empress. In this instance, when Daya Devi is not to be seen, Lord Narayana in a moment of moham towards the other servitors, who are not of the caliber of Daya Devi, creates the Mohana Sastra. This is described in the tribute “lAlayan vipra lipsAM mAyA shAstrANyapi damayituM” of this Daya Satakam verse. It may then be asked what is this Mohana Sastram? First, it is to be recognized that this Mohana Shastram is different from Bhagavad Sastram. Bhagavad Sastram is the cause of upliftment for all “ujjIvana hetu”. This quality characterizes the Pancharatra Sastram. On the other hand, Mohana Sastram is “naraka hetu” in that its followers are led to hell, which causes immense suffering. For example, the sastras followed by CArvakAs (materialists) fits the description of Mohana Sastram. This Charvaka school does not recognize the difference between the shariram and Atma. Instead, it expositis that one can enjoy a good life as long as one is in this world, not worrying about ekadasi upavasam, anushtanams of Sandhyavandanam and the like. Additionally, they raise questions of the sort that the existence of one in Sri Vaikuntam is unknown. All that the scripture states is “na ca punarAvartate na ca punarAvartate” namely that one who reaches Sri Vaikuntam does not return to the earth. In the absence of one who has returned from Sri Vaikuntam and described life there, why should one torture oneself with the demands of anushtanam and sastraic principles? Instead, be content with life as is and enjoy the comforts on offer. This misleading sastram is called Mohana Sastram. The danger with this sastram is that it advocates the performance of sinful acts and that too without remorse, resulting in the most egregious violations of the Satvika Sastraic prescriptions. This is the Mohana Sastram created by Lord Narayana. If Lord Srinivasa created this Mohana Shastra due to being under the influence of “vipralipsAm” it negates all the esoteric messages stated thus far and dismisses the message from the subsequent verses too. Since this raises a number of questions, a complete description of the import from the last two lines of this verse can be arrived at only when these questions are comprehensively answered. First it has been stated that the Sastras have been created by Lord Srinivasa, while under the command of Daya Devi. Now, if the Lord

has engaged in the creation of Mohana sastram due to the influence of “**lAlayan vipralipsAm**” in the absence of Daya Devi as described by the “**tvadanavasare**” tribute of this verse, it negates the fact that all Sastras were created while Lord was under the command of Daya Devi. It also gives the impression that Lord Srinivasa who was previously described as being totally under the sway of Daya Devi now also comes under the sway of “vipralipsa”. Even if this is so, the creation of the Mohana sastram under the sway of “vipralipsa” brings about great harm in that it encourages one to proceed on the path of sin. Left to oneself, absent the Mohana Sastram, the individual may be loath to follow the sinful path. However, authenticating this sinful path via sastram, offers the individual free license to take to this path. Therefore, the harm done by the creation of this sastram is quite grievous. The declaration by the Lord himself “**kShipAmejasram AsureShu yoniShu**” condemns sinners in the above-described manner to be born as Asuras. Thus, it gives rise to another perception that the Lord actually encourages beings to resort to the sinful acts authenticated by the Mohana sastram resulting in a progressive decline from one birth to another. The Upanishad declares “**madhaU nishlyati etahyevate asAdya karma**”. This raises another question. The Lord is the master of all beings in the universe. Therefore, He incurs the responsibility of protecting all beings under His command. Then the question of selectively affording protection to some beings while excluding others (through encouragement to resort to the sinful path) goes against His responsibility of affording protection to all equally. It is analogous to the father of several kids declaring that I shall protect only the first two kids. The rest have to find a means to fend for themselves. Thus, such an instance would result in the Lord losing his “**sarva svAmitvam**” (Lordship over all beings). Furthermore, the Lord has the trait of “**sarvAtma sAdAraNatvam**” namely treating everyone equally without discrimination. If He engages in the task of selectively elevating some beings and pushes others on the path of sin leading to their decline it negates the “**sarvAtma sAdAraNatvam**” trait. This also result in the loss of the Lord’s trait of “**parama kAruNikatvam**” (extreme compassion). In order to preserve these traits, the Lord should not engage in the creation of the Mohana Sastram. Therefore, He should not be swayed by “vipralipsa”. Only when all these facets are addressed would it be possible to provide a satisfactory explanation for the tribute “**lAlayan vipra lipsAM mAyA shAstrANyapi damayituM**” of this verse. All of these aspects are addressed by Svami Desikan himself in the tribute “**tvat prapanna patIpAn**” of this verse. That is, in order to protect those who have surrendered to You, oh Daya Devi!, it is necessary to eliminate those opposed to these beings. Therefore, to facilitate the elimination of those opposed to Your

sharaNAgatas, the Lord has created the Mohana Sastram. Hence, this too is an act of Daya Devi, who has the Lord under Her command and not “Vipralipsa”. In verse 24, Svami Desikan has described the process of ridding the field of weeds in order to ensure unhindered growth of grain-yielding crop as an act of Daya Devi. Thus, the creation of the Mohana sastram to facilitate the de-weeding process is an act of Daya Devi. This seems like an apparently satisfactory answer to the previously raised questions. However, this gives rise to another question. Just as explicated in verse 24, Svami Desikan could have come out directly and stated here that creation of the Mohana Sastram is an act of Daya Devi. Where is the need for the tribute “tvadanavasare” (absence of Daya Devi)? The answer to this question needs to be arrived at after careful analysis. For this one needs to examine specific instances from the Ramayana, Vamana avataram, and Krishna avataram to address this issue. In the Ramayana, Rama sets out alone to go to battle with Khara, DhUshana and fourteen thousand rakshasas. The eulogy “rAmo raktAnta lochanaH” from the Ramayana describes the fact that Lord Rama’s eyes became red as He set out for the battle. This offers the impression to His SharaNAgatas that He has arrived to protect them while at the same time it conveys His anger towards the Asuras that are intent on causing harm to His SharaNAgatas. Beholding this very sight of Lord Rama’s compassionate eyes could have inspired Khara and DhUshaNa to perform sharaNAgati at the Lord’s lotus feet. However, they did not resort to this and instead engaged in war with Lord Rama. Consequently, they met their end at Lord Rama’s hands as did their fourteen thousand followers. Rama singlehandedly destroying the hordes of Rakshasas stood as eloquent testimony to His valour. However, while killing Vali the Lord did not do it directly. Does this mean Lord Rama was incapable of killing Vali in a straight up combat? Absolutely not. One can understand Ravana’s nature from the Ramayanam statement “rAvaNo loka rAvaNaH” This powerful Ravana was effortlessly tucked away under his armpit by Vali. Again killing Vali is a straightforward matter for Lord Rama. However, the circumstances need to be borne in mind. Sugriva sought refuge in Lord Rama and performed sharaNAgati. Accordingly, Lord Rama assured him of protection and promised him that He would kill Vali. Since it was His sworn position to come to the rescue of His sharaNAgata, he remained hidden (to keep up the boon that Vali had received) from Vali’s view and undertook the killing of Vali. Next, the Vibhishana sharaNAgati needs to be understood in perspective. Vibhishana advised Ravana that a monkey set fire to Lanka resulting in its total destruction. “This is no ordinary monkey but a messenger of Lord Rama. Therefore, in accordance with his instruction, restore Sita to Lord Rama and you will be freed from all your sins.”

However, when nobody heeded his advice, Vibhishana resolved to leave Lanka and seek refuge at Lord Rama's feet in accordance with the statement "parityaktvA maya lanka mitrANi dhanANi ca AjagAma muhUrtena yatra rAmah sa lakAhmanaH" (I give up all my belongings like property, friends, and wealth to resort to Lord Rama who has Lakshmana by His side). Upon reaching the other side of the Ocean where Rama and the Vanara army had arrived, Vibhishana submitted his appeal to the monkey army chieftains "tyaktvA putrAmshca dhArAmshca rAghavam sharaNam gataH nivedayitumAM kShipraM vibhISHaNAmupastitam sarva loka sharaNyAya rAghavAya mahAtmane" (please go and inform Lord Rama, that Vibhishana having given up his wife and children has arrived at the location of Lord Rama to perform sharaNAgati at the feet of Lord Rama, who is the refuge of the entire universe). As soon as Vibhishana submitted his appeal, the monkeys in the Vanara army began to doubt the sincerity of this appeal. They were viewing Vibhishana as belonging to the group of their adversary and questioning the motivation for him to come to Lord Rama. Lord Rama is occupying a stone seat while all the monkeys of the Vanara army are seated on the ground below him. He enquires of every monkey whether or not he should accept Vibhishana. Each monkey expresses opposition to accepting Vibhishana due to various concerns. At the end, when Lord Rama turned to Hanuman enquiringly, Hanuman answered "This Vibhishana is an elevated person. He is of pure mind and soul. However, the ultimate decision to accept him or not is with You, Svami." Lord Rama then declared "anayenam hari shreShTa datta asyAbhayam mayA" (Even before all of you could speak, the very moment Vibhishana arrived and submitted his appeal I had assured him of My protection. However, since he would be among you from now on, I wanted to ask each of you for your opinion). In the Rahasya grantham known as Sri AbhayapradhAna sAram, Svami Desikan provides a comprehensive treatment of all the sharaNAgatis that took place in the Ramayanam. The choice of words on the part of Svami Desikan is quite instructive in that although Lord Rama is the emperor of the entire universe, the usage of Maharaja is reserved for Sugriva, while Angada and other Vanara Chiefs are referred to as leaders (mudali) and Lord Rama himself is referred to as Chakravarti Tirumakan (son of Dasharatha Chakravarti). In the context of Vibhishana sharaNAgati, an important question arises in that when the Lord had already made up His mind to offer Abhayam to Vibhishana, where is the need to consult the Vanaras? It is entirely to bring out the nuances of SharaNAgati and make the greatness of sharaNAgati understood by the Vanara army that Lord Rama expounded on the KapOtha vrutthAntham (life-story) and Kanda vrutthAntham and convinced them of His position to accept Vibhishana. The reason for Lord Rama

consulting all the Vanaras is to show that in this instance, Sugriva is the king of the Vanaras. Therefore, any decision that the Lord arrives at must be acceptable to the king and his subjects. Hence Lord Rama, even though He was fully aware of Vibhishana's sincerity and had made up His mind to give him refuge, adopted the approach of consulting all the Vanaras. During the battle with Ravana it is declared in the Ramayanam that "tammAnye rAghavam vIram nArAyaNam anAmayam" (Who do you think this Rama of extraordinary prowess is? He is not a mere mortal. He is verily Lord Narayana in human form). This is the tribute of ManDodari (Ravana's wife) to Lord Rama. Ravana hears this and replies "nanameyam kadAcana svabhAvam duratikramaH" (I am unable to change my nature. As you have stated, I need to bow my ten heads at the Feet of Rama, drink His beauty with my twenty eyes, and offer salutations folding my twenty arms. However, my nature of not bowing before anyone is something that cannot be changed. Therefore, I am unable to accept your advice. Thus, I have to fight with Him). Even then in the first battle, Lord Rama had Ravana at His mercy and could have easily ended his life. However out of extreme compassion, the Lord allowed Ravana to go back, get well rested and come to fight another day, out of the hope that even then it was not too late for Ravana to express remorse for his sinful actions and seek refuge at Lord Rama's feet. Only when Ravana chose to continue on his sinful path did Lord Rama undertake the killing. The boon desired by Bhishma in the Mahabharata war (to meet his end at the hands of Lord Krishna) but was never realized, was obtained by Ravana. In the Mahabharata war Bhishma was inflicting carnage for ten days on the entire Pandava army and Arjuna out of reverence for Bhishma as his grandfather and Acharya was not using his full might to wage war against Bhishma. Lord Krishna upon beholding this resolved to undertake the killing of Bhishma even if it meant breaking his oath to not bear any weapons in the war. Thus, He proceeded with the Sudarshana Chakram in His hand to finish off Bhishma. Bhishma exclaims "ekyEhi phullAksha" (This is the day I have been longing for. Please come and take my life. It will render my life fulfilled). However, lord Krishna could not undertake the killing of Bhishma due to being stopped by Arjuna. Therefore, that which could not be obtained by Bhishma came easily to Ravana. Thus, even the killing at the hands of Lord Rama was a blessing (anugraham) for Ravana. Hence, even the nigrham (killing) of Ravana was in fact an anugraham on account of Lord Rama's Daya declares Svami Desikan. However, even this explanation is insufficient to account for the creation of MAya (Mohana) Sastram in the absence of Daya Devi (tvadanavasare) due to "vipralipsa". Daya Devi is defined as "anugrahAika shalla". She is glorified in the Yatiraja Saptati as "nityam aj~nyAta nigrAhAm" That is the

word nigraham is non-existent in Thayar's dictionary. In a like manner Daya Devi only knows anugraham. Here the thought process of Svami Desikan is that even if the act of nigraham is termed as an act of Daya Devi, in the process of protecting those, who have surrendered to Her, it still poses an asterisk to Her essential nature of affording protection alone and not engaging in any destruction. Therefore, Svami Desikan exposts that the Lord created the M^Aya sastram (Mohana Sastram) while under the sway of "vipralipsa". Thereby there is no stigma incurred by Daya Devi. This act can easily be explained in terms an analogy whereby sometimes, we may not undertake an act directly but instead have someone else perform the act on our behalf. However, since the process is instigated by us, we bear responsibility for it. Thus, the Lord creating this Mohana Sastram is accounted for in this manner. Next it may be asked, why did the Lord undertake the creation of Mohana sastram? This is answered by the fact that if one incurs apacharam to Lord Srinivasa, He would be forgiving. However, if one incurs apacharam to His SharaNagatas, the Lord has taken the sworn position to annihilate them. Therefore, He leads them to the path of ruin through the creation of the Mohana sastra. This is best illustrated through the life history of Ambarisha. The Lord was powerless to stop the Sudarshana Chakram that harassed Durvasa by pursuing him everywhere he went seeking relief. This was due to his Bhagavata apacharam towards Ambarisha. Thus in the context of the tribute "tvat prapanna patIpAn" from this verse of the Daya Satakam, Lord Srinivasa can never tolerate anyone that incurs apacharam towards those who have sought refuge in Daya Devi by way of sharaNagati. Therefore, the creation of the M^Aya Sastram came about to ensure the annihilation of those opposed to the SharaNagatas of Daya Devi. The Lord took the incarnation of Buddha to deliberately mislead those opposed to the SharaNagatas of Daya Devi. The premise of Buddha's followers is that the Vedam is not a valid body of knowledge and hence they do not subscribe to its authority. Even though they advocate non-violence (ahimsa), since they are opposed to the tenets of the Vedam (veda shAstrAt paraM nAsti - there can be no greater sastra than the Vedam), this school of thought is a Mohana Sastram. Their line of argument is as follows and is illustrated through a conversation between two individuals A and B. A enquires of B, where did you perform snAnam? B answers in the Ganga River. To this A remarks where in the Ganga Rriver? B answers this as "the same place that you performed snAnam yesterday". A then remarks there is a difference between the water in which I performed snAnam versus the water you performed snAnam in. Since it is not the same water even though you went to the same place in the Ganga as me, you cannot be assured of a cleansing of your sins. Such reasoning ensues in the

followers of Buddha in all matters up to and including the Atma, although seemingly logical, in total violation of the Vedam prescriptions. Therefore, this school of thought belongs in the category of Mohana Sastram. The creator of this system is undoubtedly Lord Narayana. Therefore, the import of this Daya Satakam verse is that the Lord has created the M^Aya (Mohana) Sastram for the sole purpose of destruction of those who have incurred apacharam towards the sharaN^Agatas of Daya Devi. “**sva shAstram**” in this verse refers to the Bhagavad Sastram, namely the Pancharatra Sastram, which reflects the glory of Daya Devi verily like a mirror. The protection of sharaN^Agatas is undertaken by the Lord in the company of His consort-Thayar. More precisely, this is a yaj~nam undertaken by the Lord for which He must necessarily have His consort by His side. This holds for both the **upAya dasha** (means for attaining Lord Narayana) as well as the **phala dasha** (the benefit of attaining Lord Narayana). The greatness of Thayar as well as Her status as the empress of the entire universe can be found in the statement “yathA sarvagato viShNuH SrlranapAyini” implying that just as Lord Vishnu is all pervasive so too is Thayar. In this context it must be remembered that Daya Devi is no different from Thayar and therefore, the glory of Thayar elucidated in the Pancharatra Sastram is a tribute to Daya Devi. Those who appreciate and understand the nuances of SharaN^Agati and the glory of Daya Devi as expounded in the Pancharatra Sastram are those noble ones, who have rendered themselves pure due to kaimkaryam for Bhagavatas. Thus, the protection of the SharaN^Agatas, who have surrendered to Her, as well as the annihilation of those opposed to these sharaN^Agatas through the creation of the Mohana Sastras by the Lord (indirectly on account of Daya Devi) are carried out solely due to Daya Devi. The greatness of the Pancharata Sastra is expounded upon in considerable detail by Svami Bhashyakarar in the Pancharatra AdhikaraNa of the Sri Bhashyam, which provided the foundation stone for entire Visishtadvaita system. Until this time, there was considerable debate on the acceptance of Pancharatra Sastram. However, Bhashyakarar in the Sri Bhashyam devoted the largest adhikaraNa (chapter) to placing this sastram on firm ground through extensive quotation of pramANams. Following the lead of Svami Bhashyakarar, Svami Desikan composed a kalakshepa grantham known as Pancharatra Raksha. In the absence of the treatises of Svami Bhashyakarar and Swami Desikan, there would be no valid scriptural authority for the performance of rituals at temples (such as Srirangam, Kanchipuram and the like) or for that matter the performance of Bhagavad Aradhana kramam through Salagrama worship in homes. Even though this sastram was created by the Lord Himself, it is only due to the efforts of Svami Bhashyakarar and Svami Desikan that the Sastram could be



placed on a firm foundation. The Vedam no doubt expositors that Lord Narayana is omnipresent. However, how does this help in dhyAnam (contemplation) of the Lord? It is only through the alankArams of NAcchiyar TirukkOlam (Lord Narayana in the form of Sri) of Lord Varadaraja for example, which has the scriptural authority in the Pancharatra Sastram, that enables alpaj~nyAs (those possessing little knowledge) to engage in contemplation of the Lord. Not everyone is endowed with superior knowledge that is the privy of great Maharishis. Therefore, the Sri sUktis of Svami Bhashyakarar and Svami Desikan have rendered yeoman service to commoners. Svami Desikan has declared the Sri sUktis of Svami Bhashyakarar to be the clearing nut (thEtthAnkoTTai) for his pure speech. We in turn are fortunate to have the Sri sUktis of Svami Desikan as the clearing nut that purifies us either while expositing on them or while hearing them. Therefore, it is a matter of immense pride to closely follow the Sri sUktis of Svami Desikan and become privy to his grace, which automatically ensures the grace of Daya Devi.”

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin:

“Those who cherish close service at holy seers’ precincts would possess a heart cleansed of filth and scum. Oh Daya Devi! The Lord of Padmavati furnishes holy books, spiritual guides, which could serve as perfect mirror to You, reflecting You- i.e., which would clearly be Daya-products so to say. In Your absence-that is when the Lord is not influenced by Daya guna-however, He helped the authoring of deceptive works that would teach anti-spiritual philosophy and bad morals, such as atheism, Buddhism etc. One would be justified in classifying this deceptive mode of approach, as a hand maid to Daya, designed to destroy the devils that prey upon good souls, who are Your dependents.

Such deceptive works are irreligious. However, nothing worthwhile could be accomplished in this world, without Your impact. Hence, I would assume those works as produced without Daya or in the absence of Daya.

1. Deceptiveness is merely a handmaid of Daya
2. Recall from verse 24 that it was noted that Daya is the force activating the growth of paddy crop; Your wrath choosing to be the handmaid to Daya Devi acts towards weeding out the field. In other words, the Lord’s wrath has a role. It helps in the paddy production by ridding the field of the weeds. That is, wrath causes the decimation of foes to Dharma-such as Hiranya and Ravana.
3. One needs to assimilate the message carefully. Poetic imaginative portrayal, can easily be missed by dull-headed individuals. Deceptiveness is

personified as a woman; a seducer. If the Queen is away, the low class woman could exert a temptation. Not much must be said on this count since it can turn out to be unorthodox words of offence.”



Sloka 48

दैवात् प्राप्ते वृषगिरि तटं देहिनि त्वन्निदानात्
स्वामिन् पाहीत्यवश वचने विन्दति स्वापमन्त्यम् ।
देवः श्रीमान् दिशति करुणे दृष्टि मिच्छं स्त्वदीयाम्
उद्धातेन श्रुति परिषदां उत्तरेणाभि मुख्यम् ॥ ४८ ॥

daivAt prApte vR^iShagiri taTaM dehini tvan nidAnAt
svAmin pAhItyavasha vachane vindati svApamantyaM |
devaH shrImAn dishati karuNe dR^iShTi michChaM stvadlyAm
udghAtena shruti pariShadAM uttareNAbhi mukhyam | 48



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:
“This verse is “daivAt prApte vR^iShagiri taTaM dehini tvan nidAnAt svAmin pAhItyavasha vachane vindati svApamantyaM devaH shrImAn dishati karuNe dR^iShTi michChaM stvadlyAm udghAtena shruti pariShadAM uttareNAbhi mukhyam” The previous sloka highlighted the glory of the Pancharatra sastram which functions as the mirror for reflecting the magnificence of Daya Devi. This sastram was created by Lord Srinivasa Himself. Additionally, to ensure the destruction of those inimically inclined towards the sharaNagatAs of Daya Devi, the Lord created the Mohana sastram. In this verse, Svami Desikan highlights the anugraham of Daya Devi for those who may be in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill and breathe their last. In the **Srimad RahasyatrayasAram**, Svami Desikan states that an object being extremely beneficial, or detrimental, or indifferent to us is due to our Karma. For example, an individual may be a close childhood friend with another but as they age, due to some account or another they could become bitter enemies. The reverse can also happen whereby two individuals could be antagonistic towards each other for a good portion of their lives only to become the best of friends towards the end of their lives. Similarly, one may have favorite food items at a given time in their lives only to despise the thought of eating it after many years. On the other hand, an individual may exhibit total indifference in the afore-mentioned context. Why does this come about? This comes about entirely

due to karma. In this verse Svami Desikan declares that when one arrives in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill and utters the prayer “svAmin pAhi” the protection afforded by Lord Srinivasa to the individual is enormous. Specifically, the individual has not arrived seeking Bhagavad Kaimkaryam or Moksham, but instead merely happen to come to the vicinity of the Venkatam hill. It then raises the question. How did the individual come near the Venkatam hill? What is the cause for this? Svami Desikan answers this through the tribute “daivAt prApte” namely that the individual’s arrival was entirely due to having received the compassionate eye-glances of Daya Devi at some point of time. Here it must be noted that the terms adR^iShTam, daivam, and bhAgyam are synonyms for good fortune. In order to beget the bhAgyam to come to the Venkatam hill there must be a cause. Svami Desikan affirms here that the cause for this bhAgyam is Daya Devi. Specifically, the tribute “tvan nidAnAt prApte daivAt” reflects this fact. The purANAs declare “kAshI maraNAn muktiH” namely that there is no doubt about the fact that one who breathes his last at Kashi attains liberation. So much so that large number of people are waiting in expectation of this event. In fact, there is a place known as Mukti Bhavanam at Kashi, which houses a number of aged people. They are anxious to breathe their last at Kashi. The reason for those who breathe their last at Kashi attaining mukti is due to the fact that Lord Shiva, performs the upadesam of the RAma tAraka mantram in their ears. This causes them to beget moksham. Once an Advaiti scholar, who desired to have his end in Kashi, set out with this purpose. However, he breathed his last as the train he was travelling in arrived at the station before Kashi. This was an instance of daivAt aprApte, namely he did not have the bhAgyam of residing in Kashi at the end of his life. Thus, in the context of arriving at the vicinity of the Venkatam hill towards the end of their lives and taking their last breath there, it is necessary to have the anugraham of Daya Devi. There are two things known as “sukR^ita paripAkam” and “duShkR^ita paripAkam”. The former prevails when even an atheist turns a corner and performs a good act. The latter remains in force when an extremely pious one resorts to impious acts. Thus, the good and bad acts committed by an individual yield fruit, which must necessarily be borne by the individual. Even the order in which one endures the consequences of good and bad actions is a result of Karma, which is determined by BhagavAn. Here Svami Desikan emphasizes the fact that even an atheist, who has no inclination towards the Lord and is set to reap the consequences of his bad karma, is assisted by Daya Devi. Specifically, when the Lord is ready to ensure that the individual must face the consequences of his bad karma, Daya examines his numerous prior birth to locate something good that he has accomplished and

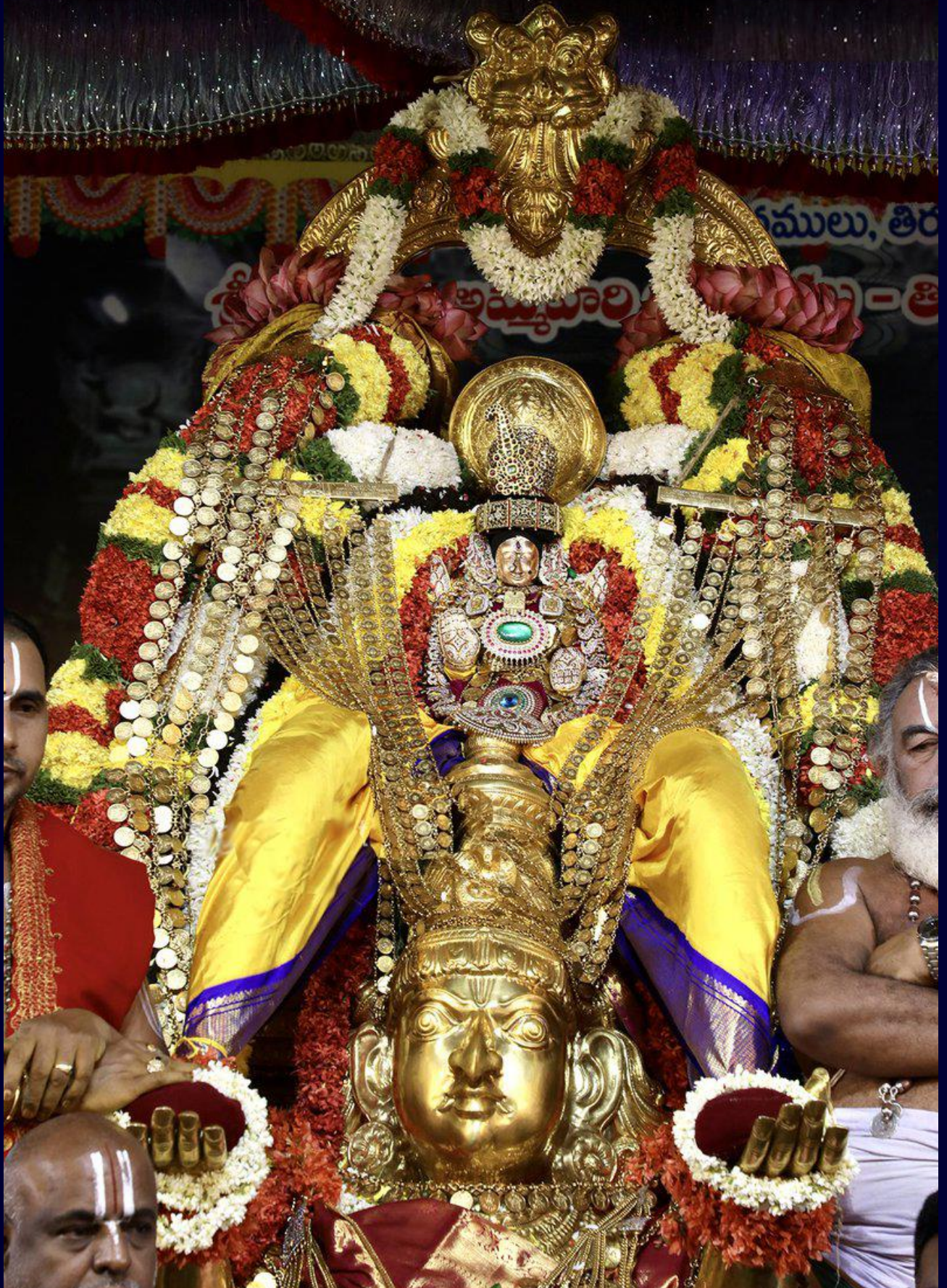


svAmin pAhi!

brings this to forefront, thereby causing the individual to seek the grace of Lord Srinivasa. The tribute of this verse “tvannidAnAt vR^iShagiri taTaM daivAt prApte” in the anvaya kramam (prose order) reveals the above meaning. The individual referred to in this verse (be it a person or animal) is described as “dehi” to denote anything that has a body. The term dehi is used to highlight the fact that Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi do not engage in any act of partiality or discrimination. If one has incurred an extremely pitiable state either on account of one’s birth, deeds, or line of work, that individual is still graced by Daya Devi. The anugraham of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi for such people is the elevated benefit that is accorded to nitya sUris, who inhabit Sri Vaikuntam and are engaged in constant enjoyment of the Lord. Svami Nammazhvar declares “cumantu mAmalar nlr cuDar tUpam koNDu amarntu vAnavar vAnavar kOnoDum namanRezhum tiruvEnkaTam nankaTku caman koL vIDu tarum taDankunRamE” Nothing significant needs to be offered. In the manner outlined by Lord Krishna in the Srlmad BhagavadgIta “patram puShpam phalam toyam yo me bhaktyA prayacChatI” the Azhvar states that submit anything you can to Lord Srinivasa be it flowers, fruit, water, or leaves and you will be assured of His grace. In the Garuda sevai for Lord Srinivasa at Tirumalai, people admire the Lord majestically seated on Garuda from a distance, being unable to get close due to the large crowd. As the procession comes close, they would break a coconut, and light a piece of camphor by way of offering to Lord Srinivasa. The Lord accepts this offering in the manner of offerings by nitya sUris in Sri Vaikuntam. This is accepted in the same manner as the offerings by the Archakas in accordance with the Agama sastras (yathAvasthitA). The Azhvar declared in his pasuram that Lord Srinivasa is saluted by nitya sUris in Sri Vaikuntam and also by commoners through their offerings. He accepts both of these identically and graces the offerers identically. The paripUrNa brahma anubhavam enjoyed by the nitya sUris at Sri Vaikuntam is also made available to commoners due to the grace of Lord Srinivasa at the behest of Daya Devi. The central theme of this Daya Satakam verse is the elevated boon conferred upon even an atheist, who by some dint of good fortune arrives at the vicinity of the Venkatam hill, and due to the grace of Daya Devi utters the words “svAmin pAhi”. The effort involved in coming to the Venkatam hill is considerable. Upon arrival the supplicant needs to utter the words “svAmin pAhi”. How to get him to utter these words? Svami Bhashyakarar states in the SharaNAgati gadyam “dvayavaktA tvam kevalam madlyayaIva dayayA” (Those uttering the dvaya mantram are assured of the Lord’s grace). How to make one utter the dvaya mantram? This too requires the anugraham of Daya Devi. Daya Devi magically ensures that some janmAntara sukR^itam (good karma from some past birth)

prevails and instructs the supplicant to utter the word “svAmin pAhi”, Once this act is performed, the tribute “avasha vachane” comes into force. Namely, being totally unaware of the fact that Lord Srinivasa, who is the object of adoration for the nitya sUris, who is worshipped by Brahma and Rudra, and who gave up residence in Sri Vaikuntam and took root at the Venkatam hill, entirely for the sake of gracing beings on this earth, if one by happenstance utters the words “svAmin pAhi”, he becomes privy to the limitless grace of Lord Srinivasa. For example, one may encounter in dreams good and bad things. What one utters during those dreams is only known to one experiencing the dream and no one else. In that process one may exclaim “I behold a snake”. Even due to one such occurrence if the individual, who is totally ignorant of the greatness of Lord Srinivasa, utters the words “svAmin pAhi” he becomes privy to the Lord’s blessings. This is illustrated in the ViShNu purANam and Srlmad BhAgavatam through the life story of ajAmiLa. AjamiLa, who had sinned greatly, uttered the name Narayana while taking his last breath and that too not thinking of the Lord but by way of calling his son. However, this was treated by the Lord as an appeal, and he immediately came to the aid of Ajamila by keeping him out of bounds from Yama. In fact, Yama remarks about the magnitude of these sins while elaborating to his assistants through an instruction whispered in their ears “vadati yamaH kila tasya karNamUle parihara madhusUdanaM prapannAn prabhurahamasmi nR^iNAM na vaiShNavAnAm”. Namely “I am recognized as Yama the Lord of death. Everybody lives in the knowledge that they cannot escape my noose. Therefore, I am Prabhu (Lord) for these beings. However, for those who have performed Saranagati to Lord Narayana, I am not Prabhu. Understand this instruction carefully.” Normally one does not admit to one’s deficiencies in the open. In keeping with this dictum, Yama whispers in the ears of his attendants, his lack of Lordship over Saranagatas. Thus, it is established that one who has performed saranagati to Lord Narayana, is freed from the clutches of Yama. The same puranic message is conveyed by Tirumazhisai Azhvar in NAnmukan tiruvantAti (pAsuram 68) “tiRampElmin kaNDIr tiruvaDi tan nAmam maRantum puRam tozhA mAntar iRainciyum cAtuvaRai pOtuminkaL enRAn namanum tan tUtuvapai kUvi cevikku”. It is instructive to observe the Azhvar reproduce verbatim in Tamil using the same words from the puraNAs. The Azhvar goes a step further than the Maharishis that authored the PuraNams in that Yama instructs his attendants “If you encounter one that has performed saranagati to Lord Narayana, salute them respectfully by prostrating at their feet and then stay away from them.” Svami Desikan’s tribute “svAmin pAhtyavasha vachane” in this Daya Satakam verse, mirrors the message of the Azhvar to reflect the fact that the

Sri Alamelumanga tAyAr garuDa sevai



involuntary utterance of the words “svAmin pAhi” is sufficient to invoke the grace of Lord Srinivasa and keep the attendants of Yama at bay. This raises the question “does one have to utter those words while breathing their last at the Venkatam hill. Would the Lord not protect one who breathes his last in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill?” This is answered by Svami Desikan through the statement “rakShApekShAm pratIkShate”, which is **goptrutva varaNam**, one of the angAs (limbs) of sharaNAgati. Lord Srinivasa expects this of a supplicant. This can be in the form of an appeal through speech or mAnasikam (through thought). If such an appeal is submitted, the Lord always graces the supplicant. In Kanchipuram there lived a Svamin known as Turinjal Svamin. In those days there would be a number of bats inhabiting the Vahana Mantapam of the Temple. One day this Svamin was waiting for a Parayanam at the Vahana Mantapam, when a bat injured itself and landed near his feet. Realizing that the bat had only a few more moments to live and appreciating its plight, this Svamin performed sharaNAgati for the bat. His line of reasoning for this act was “The injured bat could have landed anywhere. However, it landed near my feet and hence I am bound to protect the bat.” The very act of falling near the feet of this Svamin is interpreted as a statement of “svAmin pAhi”. Thus, the bat became fit for sharaNAgati and hence the grace of Lord Narayana followed automatically. In Navalpakkam, there lived a great Acharya known as Ayya Devanatha Tatacharya Svamin. His compassion was such that he performed Bharanyasam for the cow and calf residing in his house. Again, his line of thought for performing sharaNAgati for them was “These animals have sought refuge in me. They should be freed from the cycle of births and deaths.” Thus, the manner of “svAmin pAhi” can mean an actual utterance of the words, or a mental contemplation of this fact or any act performed by the supplicant (like falling at the feet of a great Bhagavata). This is sufficient to invoke the limitless compassion of Lord Srinivasa. This is the import of the tribute “svAmin pAhItYavasha vachane vindati svApamantyam” (namely one who breathes his last in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill uttering the word “svAmi pAhi”). The prayogam in this verse is quite extraordinary in that instead of using the term maraNam (death), Svami Desikan employs the term “**antYam svApam**” (final sleep from which there is no waking up). The term “maraNam” is jarring and disliked universally. However, here Svami Desikan is instructing us in an important puruShArtha, namely begetting paripUrNa brahma anubhavam. The usage of “maraNam” takes away from the elevated nature of this puruShArtha. Hence Svami Desikan exhibits his skill as **Kavi-tArkika-simham** through the description “svApam antyam”. Sleep is something that is desired no matter what time of the day or night. One may be in the middle of an

upanyasam and doze off for example or when one is reading a book. Therefore, the term “svApam” denoting sleep is a term that is acceptable to all. Hence Svami Desikan conveys an important message through the usage “antyam svApam vindati” namely when one who arrives in the vicinity of the Venkatam Hill, submits the appeal “svAmin pAhi” as outlined previously and goes to sleep from which there is no waking up, the individual is assured of paripUrNa brahma anubhavam. It must be observed that Svami Desikan follows the lead of Maharishi Valmiki in this instance. This can be understood by examining an instance from the Srlmad RAmAyaNam. Upon Lord Rama’s departure to the forest, Dasaratha breathes his last. Word of this grave happening (without explicit mention of Dasaratha’s demise) is conveyed to Bharata, who returns to Ayodhya from his maternal uncle’s home. Now Kaikeyi needed to convey the news of Dasaratha’s demise to Bharata. As he arrives, Bharata observes that all citizens of Ayodhya have their heads bent in sorrow and avoid looking at him contrary to the practice of citizens welcoming their prince. Bharata puzzled by this unusual occurrence arrives at the palace of Dasaratha only to find it empty. Seeing this, he resolves that King Dasaratha is extremely fond of his mother Kaikeyi and perhaps would be in her palace. Accordingly, he proceeds to see his mother. There too there is no sign of King Dasaratha. Bharata thinks his father may be resting. He beholds Kaikeyi sitting on the bed but no trace of Dasaratha. He enquires “shUnyo(a)yam shayanIyaste parya~nko hema bhUShitaH? (This golden bed seems empty without Dasaratha. How is it that you are seated here alone?).” Without answering this directly, Kaikeyi enquires of Bharata as to when he embarked on his return to Ayodhya and if he encountered any troubles during his travel and whether all is well with his maternal uncle and maternal grandfather. Bharata responds that all is well with the maternal uncle and maternal grandfather but asks Kaikeyi why she did not answer his question. Very casually she responds “yA gati sarvabhUtAnAM tAM gatiM te pitA gataH rAjA mahAtma tejasvi yAyajUkaH satAM gatiH” (That state which everyone begets at one time in life was attained by the King, who is extremely radiant, a dharmAtma (follower of Dharma), who had performed numerous yagams. Therefore, he has attained an elevated state. Do not worry). This is in keeping with the Bhagavadgita declaration “jAtasyahi dhR^ivo mR^ityuH” (everyone that is born is bound to die). The usage by Svami Desikan in this Daya Satakam verse is very similar to the prayogam of Valmiki Maharishi in that without explicitly mentioning death he alludes to the elevated state attained by Dasaratha through the words of Kaikeyi. Next, the tribute “devaH shrImAn” from this verse is examined. This refers to Lord Srinivasa, who is never separated from Thayar and affords protection. The

next tribute “dishati karuNe dR^iShTi michChaM stvadlyAm” from this Daya Satakam verse highlights the fact that Lord accepts the supplicant’s appeal in the manner of “angikaram” (embrace) and assures him of paripUrNa brahma anubhavam. How this comes about and in what manner the angikaram takes place is discussed in this tribute. In order to gain the good graces of an elevated person, one needs to approach them at an opportune time. If the opportune time is made use of properly, one can be assured of being privy to the individual’s good books. In this context, Lord Srinivasa is constantly seeking an opportunity to get in the good books of Daya Devi. The opportune moment is when He rescues someone that arrives at the Venkatam hill submitting the appeal “svAmin pAhi” and breathes his last. This gives Daya Devi immense pleasure, and She casts Her benign eye-glances on the Lord. Therefore, Lord Srinivasa gladly performs this act of angikaram. The import of “tvadlyAm dR^iShTi michChaM” becomes apparent. That is Lord Srinivasa Himself, desires the compassionate eye-glances of Daya Devi and is therefore willing to go to any extent to ensure that He gets this. Therefore, He resolves to protect the supplicant. We seek the kaTAKSham (compassionate eye-glances) of Lord Narayana and Thayar for our upliftment. However, the Lord seeks the KaTAKSham of Daya Devi! The glory of Bhagavad KaTAKSham is highlighted in the next verse.



Thayar’s KaTAKSham is highlighted in the GuNaratna Kosham by way of a glorification “Brahma, Rudra, and Indra beget their elevated status by being privy for a moment to the compassionate eyeglances of Thayar. However, Her eyeglances are constantly falling upon Lord Narayana. Therefore, He became para Brahman!” Thus, all of us seek the KaTAKSham of Thayar. She bestows Her kaTAKSham constantly on Lord Narayana. He seeks the compassionate eyeglances of

Daya Devi. The next tribute from this Daya Satakam verse “shruti pariShadAM uttareNAbhi mukhyam dishati” extols the fact that one who breathes his last in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill in the aforesaid manner gets importance. The Lord turns towards the supplicant and assures him of protection by uttering praNavam. This is the angikaram that is highlighted through the statement “abhi mukyam dishati” from this verse. It would be sufficient for Lord Srinivasa to merely state “I

shall protect you". Where is the need for the majestic usage "udghAtena shruti pariShadAM uttareNAbhi mukhyam"? The inner meaning is that once the Lord utters praNavam it is His binding promise that He will come to the rescue of the supplicant. The Azhvar tribute to Lord Srinivasa "nAnmaRaikaL tEDiyOtum selvanAka iruntu" reflects the fact that the four vedas offer their tributes to Lord Srinivasa. The root of all the Vedas is the PraNavam. The utterance of PraNavam is indicative of the pramANYam of all the Rks contained in the four Vedas. Therefore, the Lord's utterance of PraNavam is equivalent to a solemn oath attesting to the authenticity of all the Vedam Rks and an unmistakable promise that this is the truth based upon which He offers protection. The Lord is known as satya sankalpa - that is one who wills the truth. Therefore, if Lord Srinivasa assures one of His protection, even if Mahalakshmi Thayar draws up a litany of complaints pertaining to the sins committed by the supplicant, He will never swerve from His promise. This is also reflected in the Azhvar tribute "en aDiyAr atu ceiyAr ceitArEl nanRu ceitAr" (My sharaNAGatAs will not act in that sinful manner. Even if they apparently did this only good will come out of it. Therefore, do not intervene to alter My sankalpam. Hence, the Lord never forsakes those who have surrendered to Him.) In the AdhikaraNa sArAvali, which is a commentary on Sri Bhashyam of Svami Bhashyakarar, Svami Desikan declares "satyalkAlambi bhAShyam yatipati kathitam" (this Bhashyam known as Sri Bhashyam expounds only the truth and is replete with contemplation of the truth). satya avalambanam denotes the absolute conformance (without deviation of any kind) with the truth. This is a direct refutation of other doctrines which expound "what we behold, what we experience and the world we live in are unreal (untruth). The only truth is Brahman. Some other doctrines declare that reality prevails only for a time but due to changes is replaced by something that is unreal. The satya avalambanam is a refutation of these doctrines too." Thus, on this basis of satya avalambanam, Svami Bhashyakarar established the correct position of the Vedas that everything is real including one's dreams. In a like manner, Bhagavad Sankalpam is apratihata (that which cannot be altered by anyone). Therefore, the Lord's utterance of PraNavam is an affirmation of His sworn position of protecting those who come to the vicinity of the Venkatam hill and submit the appeal "svAmin pAhi" and breathe their last. In the exposition on verse 37, the grace of Lord Srinivasa for ordinary beings who take residence in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill on some pretext or the other was illustrated. Why is the apparently similar message being repeated here is a possible question that arises. A distinct feature of Svami Desikan's works is the avoidance of punarukti (repeating a previously covered theme). There is a difference between

the purport of verse 37 and this verse. Verse 37 is intended to extol Daya Devi's help to those who seek residence in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill on some pretext or another. However, this verse is intended for one who has no such desire but yet by dint of some good Karma happens to arrive in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill and breathes his last upon submitting the appeal "svAmin pAhi". One may undertake kShetra vAsam - residence in a punya kshetram like the Venkatam hill. However, the indriyas (senses) still hold sway and can cause the individual to engage in forbidden acts in accordance with the statement "duShTendriya vashAt cittam nR^iNyAn yat kalmashet vittham tadantakAle samsiddhim yAti nArAyaNALaye". The mind becomes a slave to the senses and as result is forced to engage in actions that are forbidden by the sastras. Even if this be so, the residence at the Venkatam hill ensures that manaH shuddhi will come about eventually. This is the import for verse 37. On the other hand, this verse goes a step further in that it is not even necessary to take residence in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill. Even a cursory visit without any aspirations undertaken with the utterance "svAmin pAhi" prior to taking one's last breath in the vicinity of the Venkatam hill assures the individual of the elevated benefit of paripUrNa brahma anubhavam."

We next quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin:

A sentient being can by mere accident happen to breathe his last in the precincts of Tirumalai. By sheer pursuit of some accidental puNya deed he could utter a few words of prayer to the effect "Oh Lord! Please save me" This could be a spontaneous, unconscious, undesigned request. What happens then? Lord Srinivasa, to act as per Your prompting, oh Daya Devi! responds with a monosyllable answer - praNavam, which is an affirmative assent. It is a clear assent. The reply from Lord Srinivasa is the basis of all Vedas. Hence the Lord's response has Vedic authority, and it would be reassuring to all of us.

1. The enormity of Daya Devi's help to all of us needs to be appreciated. Of course, Daya Devi would do so only if we have secured Her acceptance. The verse and Daya Devi's overwhelming, ready consent do not imply sarva-mukti-prasanga, namely deliverance to all.

2. Daya ought to relent in our case. We ought to have done something towards this. The implication is upaya anushtanam. That makes the being to be in Tirumalai at the time of breathing his last. It also makes him utter an SOS cry in the nick of time.

3. Other theories and conjectures are beyond our comprehension. Therefore, we must implicitly believe the words of great seers.



The merciful glance of Daya Devi is the dear friend of PerumAL's jAyamAna kaTAKSham

Sloka 49

श्रेयःसूतिं सकृदपि दये सम्मतां यः सखीं ते
शीतोदारामलभत जनः श्रीनिवासस्य दृष्टिम् ।
देवादीनामयमनृणतां देहवत्त्वेऽपि विन्दन्
बन्धान् मुक्तो बलिभिरनघैः पूर्यते तत्प्रयुक्तैः ॥ ४९ ॥

shreyaH sUtIM sakR^idapi daye sammatAM yaH sakhIM te
shItodArAmalabhata janaH shrInivAsasya dR^iShTim |
devAdInAmayamanR^iNatAM dehavattve(a)pi vindan
bandhAn mukto balibhiranaghaiH pUryate tatprayuktaiH | 49



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin: “The previous verse illustrated the help rendered by Daya Devi to one who breathes his last at the vicinity of the Venkatam hill while uttering the prayer “svAmin pAhl”. This leads to the question: Does it have to be this way? As a matter of fact, one never knows what is in store in the future and how one’s life would be towards the end of their earthly sojourn. What about the remaining beings of the universe? Would they not be privy to the anugraham of Daya Devi? Svami Desikan addresses these issues in this verse:

“shreyaH sUtIM sakR^idapi daye sammatAM yaH sakhIM te
shItodArAmalabhata janaH shrInivAsasya dR^iShTim devAdInAmayamanR^iNatAM
dehavattve(a)pi vindan bandhAn mukto balibhiranaghaiH pUryate tatprayuktaiH”

Specifically, Svami Desikan addresses the grace of Daya Devi for those who are blessed with jAyamAna kaTAKSham (kataksham of Lord Srinivasa at birth) of Lord Srinivasa. The uniqueness of this sloka comes about due to the portrayal of Lord Srinivasa’s dR^iShTiH (compassionate eyeglances) as the friend of Daya Devi. First and foremost, it is observed that the term dR^iShTiH and Daya Devi are both “strI linga shabdās” (belonging to the feminine gender). Their relationship is glorified here. At birth one can be privy to the kaTAKSham of Lord Narayana, Brahma, or Rudra. Their subsequent living will be in accordance with the kaTAKShams that they received at birth.



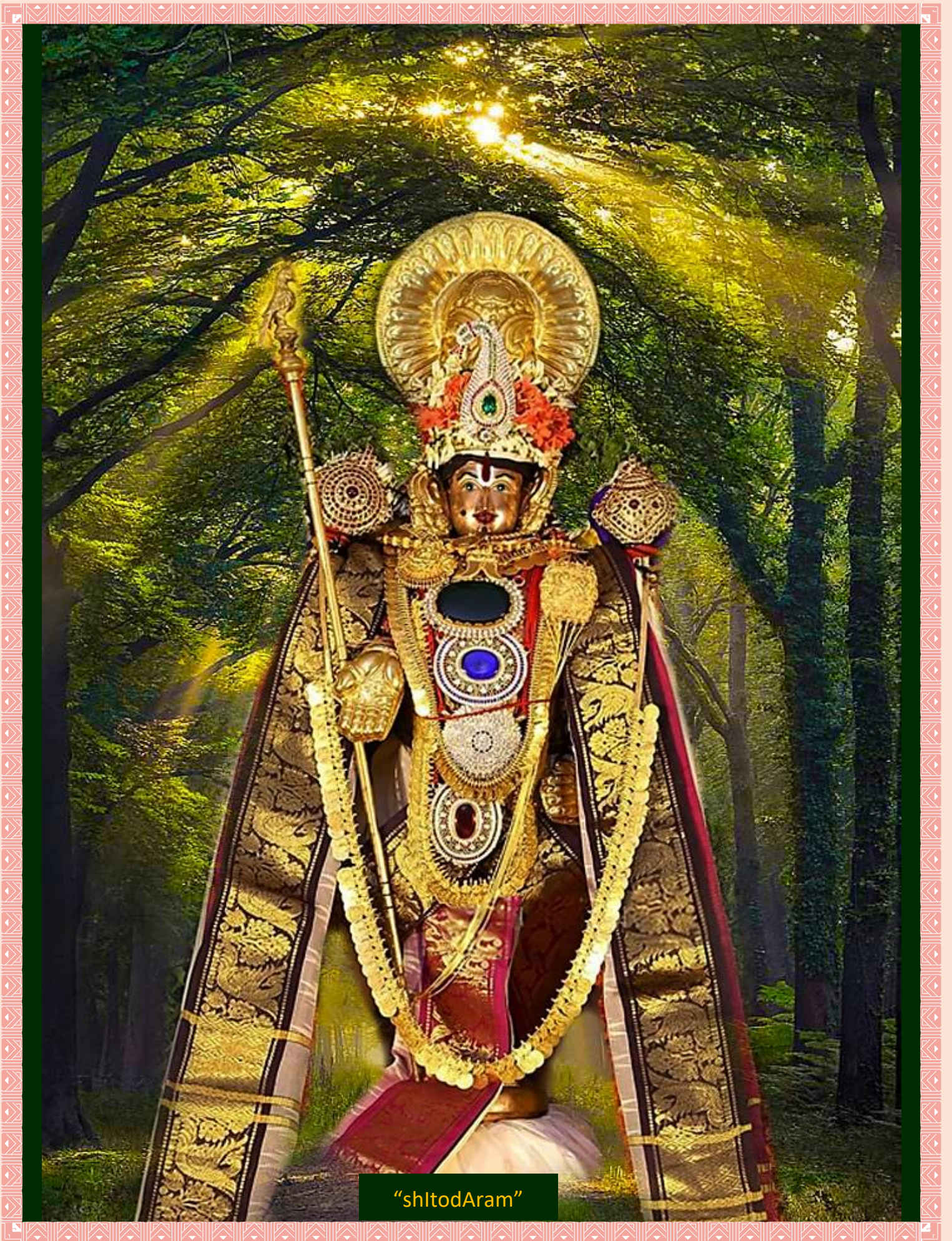
"sadAchAryAs bless us with sharaNAgati"
SriImad ParavakOTTai PeriyANDavan

One receiving the kaTAKSham of Rudra becomes tAmasa prakR^iti due to Rudra being associated with tamo guNam. [It must be noted here that this is in the manner of the nahi-nindA nyAyam. In the performance of all Vaidhika rituals, when the name Rudra arises, it is followed by apaupaspR^ishya (sprinkling of water to cleanse one's hands from the tamo guNam associated with Rudra.) Those who receive the kaTAKSham of Brahma at birth engage in rAjasa prakR^iti. They will constantly be seeking wealth even though they do not go to extremes in this pursuit. Those blessed with the kaTAKSham of Lord Narayana at birth have sAtvika prakR^iti. In accordance with the puranic statement "jAyamAnam hi puruSham yam pashyet madhusUdhanaH sAtvikaH sa tu vij~neyaH sa vai mokShArtha cintakaH", one who is graced with the kaTAKSham of Lord

Narayana at birth will be of sAtvika disposition, knowing the prescriptions of sAtvika conduct. Only such a person is engaged in contemplation of mokSham. To gain the very thought of mokSham it becomes imperative to have the kaTAKSham of Lord Narayana at birth. Thus, we could as a matter of pride declare that due to the jAyamAna kaTAKSham of Lord Narayana, we have been blessed with sharaNAgati through a sadAchArya. Those among us who have not received sharaNAgati would be motivated to receive this from a sadAchArya as a consequence of the jAyamAna kaTAKSham of Lord Narayana. Thus, when one is blessed with this kaTAKSham, one must use the anugraham properly and not be led astray. Otherwise, it would be an opportunity wasted. The previous verse declared that Lord Srinivasa is willing to do anything to gain the compassionate eyeglances of Daya Devi. Here, the anugraham of Srinivasa to those blessed with jAyamAna kaTAKSham of Lord Narayana is expounded upon. Svami Desikan cautions us that this benefit needs to be used properly in that one needs to seek the upAyam of sharaNAgati at the earliest possible time lest it turns out to be an opportunity missed.

In this verse, the compassionate eyeglances of Lord Srinivasa (dR^iShTi or kaTAKSham) is eulogized as a sakhi (friend) of Daya Devi. Here it may be asked what “dR^iShTi” is being alluded to? Is it the casual sight of Lord Srinivasa or does it pertain to something else? Among the qualities of Lord Srinivasa is “daNDadharatvam” namely meting out the consequences in accordance with good and bad karma. Each sentient being in the universe is well aware of the good and bad actions they undertake. Thus, when one encounters an adverse happening, it is quite common to think “I visited numerous temples at various times and offered salutations to the Lord. Still why am I being punished?” However, when asked what are the good acts that the individual has performed, it may be hard to think of and enumerate them. Thus, in such an instance, if the Lord has to dispense consequences in accordance with the individual’s karma, the individual would forever be steeped in sorrow due the results from the bad karma. Is this not a consequence of Bhagavad KaTAKSham or SrinivAsa dR^iShTi? Svami Desikan emphatically answers this in the negative through the declaration that this dR^iShTi can never be a friend of Daya Devi due to the fact that nigrham is a word that does not exist in Daya Devi’s dictionary. This is understood from the tribute “shreyaH sUtim” of this verse, namely only the dR^iShTi of Lord Srinivasa which results in elevation for the individual who is privy to His gaze, is the friend of Daya Devi. Next it may be asked what is meant by shreyas? shreyas denotes that which is for one’s well-being (hitam). If this is the case, does this denote accrual of large amounts of wealth or excelling in studies resulting in academic accomplishments, or being blessed with long life, or being blessed with good health or all of these combined? Above these things does hitam denote Bhagavad Kaimkaryam or paripUrNa brahma anubhavam? Does “shreyaH sUtim” in this context denote everything good arising for an individual which comes about on account of Lord Srinivasa’s compassionate eyeglances? Svami Desikan answers this by observing that “shreyaH sUtim” here denotes the indestructible shreyas, namely that which is lasting and permanent. It is not the granting of trivial benefits that last for a time. Instead, it denotes the benefit of eternal kaimkaryam to the Divine Couple upon begetting moksham. The paripurNa brahma anubhavam that arises in this as a result is known as shrI. This is understood from the Ramayanam salutation “lakShmaNo lakShmi sampannaH” Elsewhere in the Ramayana, Vibhishana is glorified as “antarikSha gataH shrIman” to denote his acquisition of Sri while airborne and seeking the grace of Lord Rama. How could LakShmaNa beget the title “lakShmi sampannaH” and that too while proceeding to the forest along with Lord Rama and Sita Piratti leaving behind all wealth? This is to be understood from the fact that LakShmaNa was

blessed with the right of exclusive kaimkaryam to Lord Rama and Sita. This Kaimkarya Sri is **pradhAnam** (foremost). In the case of Vibhishana too, he was leaving behind his family and wealth in Lanka to seek refuge at Lord Rama's feet as evidenced by the Ramayanam tribute "**tyaktvA puttrAmshca dhArAmshca rAghavam sharaNam gataH**" How then could he be deemed to be Sriman? The Sri again in this case is the Kaimkarya Sri for Lord Rama. Thus, "**shreyaH sUtim**" is to be understood as the reference to nitya kaimkarya Sri. This results from the dR^iShTi of Lord Srinivasa. The manner of the Srinivasa dR^iShTi is glorified next through the tribute "**shItodAram**", which denotes that the dR^iShTi of Lord Srinivasa is cool and benevolent. In the **Sri DevanAyaka PancAshat** Svami Desikan salutes the compassionate eyeglances of Lord DevanAyaka through the tribute "**ArdriBhavAmyamR^itavarSha nibhalrapA~NgaIH**" to reflect the fact that receiving the eyeglances of Lord Devanayaka is akin to a shower of **amR^itam** (elixir). In the context of the Daya Satakam tribute of this verse it denotes the fact that Lord Srinivasa confers upon us much more benefit than we deserve. The reference here is to the fact that a mere utterance of the prayer "**svAmin pAhi**" results in the enormous benefit of paripurNa brahma anubhavam, which even great Maharishis have not been able to obtain. This is made possible by the dR^iShTi of Lord Srinivasa. The tribute "**te sammataM sakhiM**" from this verse denotes the fact that this dR^iShTi of Lord Srinivasa is a bosom friend of Daya Devi. Next the tribute "**shItodArAm shrInivAsasya dR^iShTim janaH alabhata sakR^idapi**" is examined. This denotes the fact that one who receives the compassionate eye glances of Lord Srinivasa for once at birth, namely jAYamAna kaTAKSham, is assured of the elevated benefit of Kaimkarya Sri and paripUrNa brahma anubhavam. The tribute janaH is meant as a descriptor for a common person regardless of stature as learned, wealthy or otherwise. This could apply to one engaged in sweeping away the dirt from the precincts of the shrine of Lord Srinivasa - great indeed is the bhAgyam of one who renders this service. Even though they may be engaged in this act for their livelihood, their service at the Shrine of Lord Srinivasa is noteworthy. Thus, the term janaH in the tribute "**sakR^idapi alabhata janaH**" is indicative of one who receives the jAYamAna kaTAKSham of Lord Srinivasa and makes no distinction on the basis of caste, creed, gender, affiliation, wealth, or erudition. The tribute "**dehavattve(a)pi**" denotes one possessed of their body in their current state. Everyone, that arrives in the world with a human body comes with debt. Every Brahmana is born with debt according to the Vedam statement "**jAYamAno vai brAhmaNaH tribhir R^iNavA jAyate brahmacaryeNa R^iShibhyo yaj~nena devabhyaH prajayA pitR^ibhyaH**" (**Taittiriya Samhita: 6.3.10.5**).



“shItodAram”

It is not just one but three kinds of debt. These are the debts to the Rishis, Devas, and Pitrus. Discharging these debts is impossible in one's entire lifetime. How are these debts discharged? "brahmacaryeNa R^iShibhyaH" instructs us in the fact that the debt to rishis is discharged by performing Veda adhyayanam. The debt to the Devas is discharged by the offering of havis in yaj~nams in accordance with the instruction "yaj~nena devabhyaH". Finally, the debt to one's ancestors (pitrus) is discharged by begetting progeny for undertaking tarpanams and shradhams in keeping with the instruction "prajayA pitR^ibhyaH". This is the means for absolving oneself from the three kinds of debt that one is born with. Svami Desikan notes in this Daya Satakam verse that one who receives the jAyamAna kaTAKSham of Lord Srinivasa, is relieved of these three kinds of debt while in the present body. The Srimad Bhagavatam declaration "devaR^iShi bhUtApta nR^iNAM pitR^iNAM na ki~Nkaro nAyamR^iNI ca rAjan sarvAtmanA yaH sharaNaM sharaNyaM nArAyaNe loka guruM prayantaH" states that those who perform surrender at the feet of Lord Narayana, the Acharya for the entire universe, are relieved of the debts to rishis, devas, and ancestors, while in their mortal body. Svami Desikan conveys this puranam message in this verse through the tribute "dehavattve(a)pi ayaM anR^iNatAM vindan". The irony is that while Lord Srinivasa relieves us of our debt to the Devas, Rishis, and Pitrus, He is constantly engaged in debt repayment to Kubera, which was incurred at the time of His marriage to Padmavati Thayar. Even now all the money received is only covering the interest payment, while the principal amount remains intact without dent. Thus Lord Srinivasa, who is nitya shrI, is forever indebted to Kubera! However, the important thing to note is that despite being steeped in debt, Lord Srinivasa readily comes to our succor and relieves us of our debt. As a consequence, we become "bandhAn muktaH" as described by Svami Desikan in this verse, namely we become freed from all debt of karma with this bodily existence itself. Next the anvaya kramam (prose order) of the salutation from this verse "tatprayuktaiH balibhiH anaghaiH pUryate" reveals that those who receive the jAyamAna kaTAKSham of Lord Srinivasa and perform sharaNAgati at His feet are offered upacharams by devas of the various lokas traversed by the Atma during its sojourn to Sri Vaikuntam. During their residence on earth, these beings offered by way of havis during yaj~nams various upacharams to devatas. However, now during their sojourn to Sri Vaikuntam through the archirAdi margam, the devatas offer upacharams like arghyam, pAdyam, and Achamanam to the liberated jIvan in keeping with the Upanishad tribute "sarvesmai deva balimAvahanti". The Upanishad statement is reproduced almost verbatim by Svami Desikan in the eulogy "balibhiranaghaiH pUryate



“sharaNaM sharaNyaM nArAyaNe loka guruM”

tatprayuktaiH". This role reversal namely, the jIvan offering upacharams through yAgams to Devatas, now receiving upacharams from the very same Devatas during their sojourn to Sri Vaikuntam, is made possible due to the jAyamAna kaTAkSham of Lord Srinivasa, which is a bosom friend of Daya Devi. The very fact that aDiyEn is rendering this upanyasam and the message is being heard by a number of people is indicative of the fact that all of us are privy to the jAyamAna kaTAkSham of Lord Srinivasa. Without this there would be no upanyasam nor would we entertain thoughts of moksham. Thus, when presented with this rare gift of the jAyamAna kaTAkSham, the opportunity must not be wasted. One must seek the constant grace of Daya Devi. Thus, we conclude this verse seeking the blessings of the jAyamAna kaTAkSham of Lord Srinivasa, the compassionate eyeglances of Svami Desikan and Daya Devi."

Next we quote the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin: "The highly blessed state of Moksha, is vouchsafed to one who is a recipient of Daya Devi's friend-in-action, the eye-glance of Srinivasa. This is designated as jAyamAna kaTAkSham is to be had only once in one's life. When it is conferred at birth, the life is singularly divine in nature.

It is only a matter of time. If he accomplishes Prapatti, he gains moksham in the same birth. Or else, he will reach the fit state for deliverance through Prapatti in a certain birth. The term **bandhAn muktaH** attests to the validity for any birth - not necessarily the final birth. Anyway, when he is on his path to the Lord's abode, he is served with great honors and upacharas by devas because he is freed from his debts to the Devas, Rishis, and Pitrus. The Sastras state that anyone born herein owes three kinds of debt - to the Devas to be cleared by performance of yagams, to the Rishis to be cleared by undertaking Veda adhyayanam and to the Pitrus (ancestors) to be cleared by begetting progeny for the purpose of performing tarpanams and shraddhams."



Slokam 50

दिव्यापाङ्गं दिशसि करुणे येषु सद्देशिकात्मा

क्षिप्रं प्राप्ता वृषगिरि पतिं क्षत्रबन्ध्वादयस्ते ।

विश्वाचार्या विधि शिव मुखाः स्वाधिकारोपरुद्धाः

मन्ये माता जड इव सुते वत्सला मादृशे त्वम् ॥ ५० ॥

divyApA~NgaM dishasi karuNe yeShu saddeshikAtmA
kShipraM prAptA vR^iShagiri patiM kShatrabandhvAdayaste |
vishvAchAryA vidhi shiva mukhAH svAdhikAroparuddhAH
manye mAtA jaDa iva sute vatsala mAdR^ishe tvam || 50



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin: "The previous verse highlighted the benefit of receiving the Jayamana kataskham of Lord Srinivasa, which is a bosom friend of Daya Devi. In particular, it was pointed out that this kataksham of Lord Srinivasa is entirely for upliftment of an individual. Not only that, it also absolves the individual of the three kinds of debt, which are hard to discharge and frees them from karma. Furthermore, it was noted that if one receives this kataksham at birth, that individual alone can attain moksham as a consequence of performing saranagati. This verse is: divyApA~NgaM dishasi karuNe yeShu saddeshikAtmA kShipraM prAptA vR^iShagiri patiM kShatrabandhvAdayaste vishvAchAryA vidhi shiva mukhAH svAdhikAroparuddhAH manye mAtA jaDa iva sute vatsala mAdR^ishe tvam. From a collection of gems, where it is impossible to make the distinction of one gem being

superior to another, various people make selections of particular gems suited for their needs. In a like manner, it is impossible to say which slokam of Svami Desikan is the best. This slokam describes the state of **mandhamatis** (dim-witted ones) and **mUDAs** (fools) and the anugraham of Daya Devi for such beings. Who can be included in this class of beings is a matter for another discussion! Therefore, adiyen refrains from generalizing this class of beings to include others and restricts this categorization to himself. However, the visesham of beings belonging to this class will be described towards the end of the verse. [The day prior to rendering the upanyasam for this slokam, Sri Svamin visited Navalpakkam to see his revered father, Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramanuja Tatacharya Svamin. At that time, his revered father enquired if the Daya Satakam upanyasam series had concluded. Sri U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin answered not yet. To this, his father asked “which verse are you going to cover?” The answer was “**divyA pAngam**” to which Sri. Valayapettai Ramanuja Tatacharya Svamin remarked, “This is a beautiful slokam. It is meant only for people like us.”] This verse contains the quintessence of the Sri Vaishnava sampradayam. Svami Desikan declares here that due to our nescience it is not inappropriate to call ourselves foolish or dim-witted. This yields great benefit as shall be seen later. The Lord is supported or motivated by Daya Devi in all His actions. However, some tasks that are beyond the reach of Lord Srinivasa are made possible by Daya Devi. This verse glorifies Daya Devi, who incarnates as an Acharyan. The resulting benefits from receiving the compassionate eye-glance of the Acharyan is highlighted here. In the **Subhashitha Nivi**, Svami Desikan extols the loftiness of the grace conferred by a single eyegance of an Acharyan. Specifically Svami Desikan states “The grace conferred by an Acharyan looking at one through the corner of one of his eyes far outweighs the combined grace resulting from the entire glances of the three-eyed one (Siva), eight-eyed one (Chaturmukha Brahma), the thousand-eyed one (Indra) and Perumal Himself.” It must be noted that Lord has taken the forms of Para (in Sri Vaikuntam), vyuha murtis (in the ocean of milk), vibhava (such as Rama, Krishna, Narasimha, Vamana) and Archa murtis (such as Srinivasa on the Venkatam hill) for the singular purpose of blessing all beings in the universe. The Archa form is particularly noteworthy in that He is waiting in the manner of the declaration “**rakShApekShAm pratIkShate**”, namely He is anxiously awaiting the arrival of beings seeking His protection. The state of beings in the universe is depicted in Svami NammAzhvar’s opening verse of Tiruviruttam: “**poi ninRa j~nAnamum pollA ozhukkum azhukkuDambum in ninRa nlrmai iniyAm uRAmai uyir aLippAn en ninRa yOniyumAi pirantAi imayOr talaivA meininRu kETTaruLAI aDiyEn ceiyum viNNappame**”.



Sri Daya Devi incarnates as an Acharyan.

That is the Lord incarnates each time in the hope that each being of the universe will seek redemption from Him through the utterance of “svAmin pAhi” in the manner of the statement “rakShApekShAm pratikShate”. In the fourth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna declares “bahUnime vyatItAni janmAni tava cArjuna” where He expounds on the cause of His incarnations and the cause for birth of beings like Arjuna. Specifically, Lord Krishna states that His incarnations are due to His sankalpam, while the birth of beings like Arjuna comes about on account of Karma. In the nitya vibuti (Sri Vaikuntam) there is not much effort required on the part of the Lord. He is surrounded by nityasUris engaged in rendition of sAma gAnam (hau hau), while performing ceaseless kaimkaryam for the Divya Dampatis and thereby deriving eternal bliss. Therefore, there is not much of a role for the Lord’s kalyana gunams since eternal bliss prevails for everyone. While in vyuha form reclining on the ocean of milk, he awaits the call from beings in the manner of “rakShApekShAm pratikShate”. In the avatarams of Vamana, Rama, Krishna, He comes to the earth for a specific purpose. Once the purpose is served, He returns to His eternal abode - Sri Vaikuntam, in the manner of “mission completed”. For example, as Rama, He incarnated for destroying the evil Ravana and then ruled the kingdom for 11,000 years after which He returned to Sri Vaikuntam. The one important thing to note is that prior to returning to Sri Vaikuntam, He granted moksham to all animate and inanimate beings of Ayodhya and there too, when Hanuman declined the Lord’s offer of moksham, He did not turn back and instead proceeded with His journey to Sri Vaikuntam. During the Vamana avataram, He graced all sentient and insentient beings of the universe with the sparsham (touch) of His blessed feet. In the Krishna avataram, He desired to come to the earth as an Acharyan and instruct all beings in the eternal truths embedded in the Vedas. Hence, He took the incarnation as gltAcharya for blessing us with the Bhagavadgita. All of these will appear in verses 82-90 of the Daya Satakam, wherein Svami Desikan notes that the main reason for these avatarams is Daya Devi. Dwelling on the Krishna avataram for a bit, the Lord incarnated for the purpose of satisfying the command “senayorubhayormadhye rathaM sthApaya” (Arjuna commanded the Lord, who was his charioteer to take the chariot to the middle of the two armies. It must be understood here that the command was in belittling manner as one would command one’s chauffeur. However, Lord Krishna was least perturbed by the tone of the command. Instead, He most dutifully drove the chariot to the middle of the two armies). Upon arriving at the middle of the two armies, Arjuna beholds on one side Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Ashwathama, Shalya, and a host of others, who are related to him in some manner or the other. He then turns towards his own army

to behold his brothers, brothers-in-law and father-in-law. In the battle between the two armies, only a few will survive. The kingdom comes about as a result of the killing of so many near and dear ones. Thus, Arjuna is left wondering if this price is worth it. He further wonders if this is in keeping with Dharma. On the other hand, if he refuses to fight, he will become the laughing stock of all. His dilemma pertaining to the right and wrong of the act of killing near and dear ones needs clear answers and direction. He himself is not sure who to approach for resolving this issue. At that juncture the renowned warrior Arjuna salutes Lord Krishna and utters the prayer “kArpaNya doSho pahata svabhAvaH prucChAmi tvAM dharmasammUDhacetAH yacChreyaH syannishcitaM brUhi tan me shiShyaste(a)haM shAdhi mAM tvAM prapannam” reflecting his ignorance of what is right and what is wrong, what is dharma and what is adharma and therefore performs a formal surrender to Lord Krishna to be accepted as His disciple and that Lord Krishna alone could answer these issues satisfactorily. It may be noted here that Dharmaputra - YudhiShtira, was near-by and was well versed in matters of dharma and could have been approached with the very same questions. However, it was not so. Only Lord Krishna was sought in this instance with the thought “Lord Krishna alone can take an impartial view and resolve my dilemma”. Lord Krishna blesses Arjuna and expounds on quintessential truths embedded in the Vedas through an exposition of 18 chapters. Many times, the messages would be repetitive in the sense that the Lord would cover karma yogam, j~nAna yogam, and bhakti yogam individually and then in a combined manner. Finally, the Lord concludes with the doctrine of Saranagati in the **Bhagavadgita Charama slokam** (Chapter 18, Verse 66). Having heard this, a natural question that arises is whether Arjuna adopted the margam of Saranagati? Did he gain moksham as a consequence? If one examines the Mahabharata epic, it only states that he attained svarga lokam and not Sri Vaikuntam at the end of his life. It is a moot point as to whether he secured moksham in a future birth. Thus, even in the Krishna avataram, after expounding upon saranagati in painstaking detail, the Lord could not impress upon Arjuna to perform saranagati. Therefore, in order to reinforce the message, just like we are born in this world, the Lord incarnates as an Acharya to redeem us. In keeping with the statement from the **pAncharatra shAstram** “sAkShAt nArAyaNo devaH kR^itva martya mayIM tanUM magnAn uddharate lokAn kAruNyAt shAstra pANinAH”, the Lord incarnates as an Acharyan and lends His Sastram bearing hand by way of help to suffering jivans. Svami Desikan goes a step further in **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** by way of instruction to his followers pertaining to the conduct of shishyas towards Acharyas through the declaration:



The Acharya's tongue functions as the
simhasanam for Lord Hayagriva

“adhyAsIna turanga vaktra vilasat
jihvAgra simhAsanAt AchAryAt iha
devatAM samAdhikAM
anyAnamanyAmahe yasya asau
bhajate kadAcit ajahat bhUmA
svayam bhUmikAm magnAnAm
bhavinAm bhavArNava
samuttarAya nArAyaNaH”.

Namely, Lord Narayana incarnates to redeem suffering jivans that are being tossed hither and tither in the ocean of samsara. Specifically, replete with all His auspicious qualities, He incarnates as an Acharya. The Acharya's tongue functions as the simhasanam for Lord Hayagriva. There is no deity greater than or equal to such an Acharyan. This is certain and needs to be known. The Acharyan of such loftiness is none other than Lord Narayana incarnate! One may

wonder “The meaning of the shloka has barely been touched. The

background is quite extensive. What is the reason?” The answer lies in the fact that once the background is properly understood, the meaning of the sloka becomes self-evident. No further exposition is necessary. Thus, the upadesam of Bhagavadgita from the Acharya, Lord Krishna, to Arjuna concluded. Only the two of them were privy to the knowledge that was imparted. The Lord declared in the course of His elucidation “divyaM dadAmi te chakShuH” and blessed Arjuna with the Visvarupa darsanam. This was seen by Arjuna alone and not a single other entity in the entire Pandava and Kaurava army. This is meant to illustrate the fact that the Acharya's blessings are exclusively reserved for a disciple, who sincerely seeks the anugraham of the Acharyan. Since Arjuna submitted his appeal to Krishna to be accepted as a disciple, he received the visesha anugraham of Vishvarupa darsanam.

Upon receiving the upadesam from Lord Krishna, Arjuna was ready to fight. However, at that juncture, Dharmaputra removed his armor covering and proceeded towards the Kaurava army leaving behind all his weapons in his chariot. Everyone was left wondering what was taking place and questioned the strange behavior of Yudhishtira. “tato yudhiShTiro dR^iShTvA yuddhAya susamudyate te sene sAgara prakhye muhuH pracalite nR^ipa” The sight of the two armies resembled an ocean. Yudhishtira discarded his weapons and armor in his chariot and proceeded towards the Kaurava army with bare feet as documented in the tribute “vimuchya kavachaM vlro nikShipya ca varAyudham avaruhya rathAt tUrNaM padbhyAm eva kR^itAnjaliH” It must be borne in mind that this is the emperor Yudhishtira, who is proceeding in this manner. Not only is he proceeding on bare feet, his hands are folded in the **anjali mudra** (pose). Next the tribute “pitAmaham abhiprekSha dharmarajo yudhiShTiraH vAgyataH prayayau yena par~Ngmukho ripuvAhinIm” reflects the fact that Yudhishtira proceeded towards his grandfather Bhishma. It may be asked if this was an act of cowardice. This is answered by Veda Vyasa in the negative through the tribute “prayayau dhlraH” to denote the fact that Yudhishtira was a great warrior. Beholding this, Bhima and Arjuna reason that even though Yudhishtira’s action of proceeding towards the Kaurava army unarmed and on bare feet with folded hands seeking out Bhishma is strange it must have a valid objective and they decide to follow suit. Nakula and Sahadeva too, who are well versed with the nuances of Dharma, think that although Yudhishtira’s actions are weird, it must have a definite purpose and thus, they too follow in the path of Bhima and Arjuna. Seeing this, Lord Krishna thinks, “What should I do sitting alone in the chariot, let me also accompany the Pandavas.” Accordingly, He joins the Pandavas and proceeds towards Bhishma. Beholding this sight causes a great deal of amusement in the ranks of the Kaurava army, who engage in ridiculing the Pandavas on the basis of being stricken by fear at the sight of the large Kaurava army and thus they probably decided to lay down their arms. Yudhishtira is undeterred and prostrates at the feet of Bhishma. He clings to the feet of Bhishma and states “Amantraye tvAM durddharSha yotsye tAta tvayA saha anujAnIhi mAm tAta AshIShashca prayojaya” (Regrettably, I have to fight against you in this war, you who are invincible. However, please grant me permission to start the fight and bless us.). Upon hearing this, Bhishma was extremely pleased and blesses Yudhishtira with the words “prlto(a)smi putra yudhyasva jayaM Apnuhi pANDava” which meant “Oh YudhiShtira! You are well

versed in Dharma and you have acted thus. Had you not done this, you may have been condemned to defeat. However, now that you have performed this act, proceed to commence the war. You will definitely be victorious. However, short of asking me not to fight ask for anything and you shall have it.” Here, Lord Krishna instructs the Pandavas with the statement “shrUyate hi purAkalpE gurUnananumAnyayaH yudhyate sa bhavedvyaktam apadhyAto mahattaraiH” to reflect the fact that “One who engages in war without the blessings of one’s Acharya is bound to face defeat. Therefore, Yudhishtira’s seemingly strange act was in fact well thought out as a consequence of his intimate familiarity with the rules



Seek the blessings of a sadAcharya

of Dharma sets out on bare feet bereft of weapons and armor to seek the blessings of Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, and Shalya. When this is the case for obtaining a trivial worldly benefit (victory in the war), what to speak of the elevated benefit of “shreyas” arising from moksham which guarantees eternal bliss? It is imperative to have the anugraham of one’s Acharya for gaining this shreyas. Therefore, Perumal

of Dharma.” Lord Krishna continues “anumAnyaya yathA shAstraM yastu yuddhyenmahattaraiH dhruvastasya jayo yuddhe bhavediti matir mama” (We have seen the Sastraic position in this matter. Now I present my understanding. One who commences an auspicious task upon seeking the blessings of one’s Acharya is assured of victory. In this instance, the war, which would normally be a detested act, becomes an auspicious task.) It is for this reason alone that when we undertake the performance of weddings it is customary to submit the wedding invitation and seek the blessings of one’s Acharya. Therefore, prior to undertaking any auspicious task, we seek the blessings of our Acharyas and thereby are assured of success. The Acharya’s blessings ensure success of the task and enable an obstacle-free performance of the task. Yudhishtira, being well versed in the nuances

Himself incarnates as an Acharya to redeem the Saranagata. This is the fundamental import of this Daya Satakam verse. As has been expounded in an earlier verse, Svami Desikan has instructed us to discard **asAram**, **alpasAram**, and **sArataram** in favor of **sAratamam**. Therefore, his message will never dwell on trivial benefits. Instead, the focus of Svami Desikan's Sri Suktis is on the lasting and permanent benefit of moksham which bestows one with the eternal bliss arising from uninterrupted Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Svami Desikan recognizes very well that dim-witted and foolish beings will not focus on lofty ideals like Moksham. Therefore, he proceeds in a step-by-step manner in all of his stotrams by outlining the various benefits that could accrue. For example, reciting the **Abhiti Sthavam** enables one to overcome all fears, while reciting the **Dasavatara Stotram** confers the benefit of becoming world famous. Recitation of **Hayagriva Stotram** confers knowledge. It is the knowledge pertaining to moksham that becomes important in the context of the Daya Satakam and hence at the outset of the stotram Svami Desikan offers salutations to the elevated role of Acharyas through the tribute "**vigAhe tIrtha bahuLAM shItaLAM guru santatim shrInivAsa dayAmbhodhi parlvAha paramparAm**" to reflect the fact that the Ocean of Lord Srinivasa's mercy has torrential waves. As a result, one can easily get swept up by these waves. On the other hand, the Acharyas function as bathing ghats to allow for convenient descent and immersion (**avagAha snAnam**) in the Daya of Lord Srinivasa. The inner meaning is that Acharyas such as Svami Alavandar, Svami Bhashyakarar, Svami Kuresar, and Svami Nathamuni, incarnated with the sole purpose of blessing ordinary beings with the benefit of immersion in their Sri Suktis (sacred works) so that these beings can become privy to the Daya of Lord Srinivasa. Again in verse 21, Svami Desikan depicts Lord Srinivasa as a farmer, who is delighted at beholding the bumper crop of Saranagatas, who throng in large numbers at the Venkatam hill, on account of Daya Devi causing the incarnation of Acharyas, who have established that for the well-being of the entire universe, there is no path greater than that of unconditional total surrender to His Lotus Feet. The inner meaning is that these Acharyas, through their Sri Suktis cause a large number of beings to adopt the mode of Saranagati. As a result, these beings develop strong **mahAvishvAsam** (unshakable faith) towards Lord Srinivasa and throng to the Venkatam hill in large numbers denoting the bumper crop, which brings great joy to Lord Srinivasa. In this context, it is helpful to recall an outpouring of the Saint Bhadrachala Ramdas, who was a great Bhakta of Lord Rama. During one time, he was imprisoned for using

funds from the king's treasury to make ornaments for Lord Rama. While in prison, he remarks "Oh Lord Rama! You and Your consort Sita Devi are resplendent with the various ornaments that adorn You. Please let me know, who arranged for You to receive these ornaments? Were these submitted by Dasaratha, or Janaka, or were they gained as strī dhanam by Your consort Sita Devi? While You and Sita Devi are shining forth, I languish in prison. Is this appropriate?" Upon hearing this, Lord Rama resolves to bless Bhadrachala Ramdas with the Dasavatara sevai, which the saint glorifies in another outpouring. Now when it comes to Lord Srinivasa, a similar question may be posed in that "is the bumper crop of Saranagatas, the result of His own efforts?" The answer to this question is a resounding no. Instead, it is entirely the doing of Acharyas declares Svami Desikan through the tribute "vR^iShashallesha kR^iShIvalaM dhinoti".



vR^iShashallesha kR^iShIvalaM dhinoti
(Svami Desikan in NAcchiyAr tirukkOLam)

Again, in verse 37 Svami Desikan describes Daya Devi as the raft that enables suffering jivans caught up in the ocean of Samsara to cross this ocean. The raft is steered by a capable boatman (Acharyas, who are experts at navigating the waters of the Samsaric ocean) and safely guide the raft to the destination (yonder bank of the Samsaric ocean, namely the Venkatam hill) as evidenced by the tribute "dishi dishi gatividbhiradeshikaInIyamAnA sthirataramanukampe styAnalagna guNaIstvam". Hence it may appear that there is a contest as to who is superior, Daya Devi or Acharyas? Svami Desikan expertly resolves this in the present verse by observing that Daya Devi incarnates as the Acharyas and hence there is no difference between Daya Devi and Acharyas. It may also be argued that Lord Narayana incarnated as an Acharyan. How then is this different? Svami Desikan answers this by observing that the benefits conferred by Daya Devi incarnating as an Acharyan are several fold greater than that conferred by the Lord himself in the

form of an Acharyan. How so? We shall see in the following. Another objection could be raised in that Daya Devi is a lady. Would this not be an exclusion? Svami Desikan notes that no exclusion criteria apply in this case. Let us see how this comes about.

In this verse Svami Desikan seeks the kataksham of Daya Devi through the tribute “divyApA~NgaM dishasi karuNe yeShu saddeshikAtmA”. It may be borne in mind that that Svami Desikan’s stotrams are replete with the glorification of the kataksham of Lord Rama, Krishna, Ranganatha, Devanayaka, and Varadaraja. In each case, he extols the uniqueness arising from those katakshams. In the present instance, he extols the kataksham of Daya Devi, who has incarnated as an Acharya. Specifically, those who receive the kataksham of Daya Devi, who incarnates as an Acharya, are blessed with “divyApa~Ngam” namely this is not the common sight arising from every individual. Instead, it is the divine sight of Daya Devi arising from an Acharyan. In this context it is important to note that the Archa forms of Lord Narayana at various kshetrams should not be viewed as a metal or stone image. On the contrary, they are no different from the shuddha satva maya divya mangaLa vigraham forms of Lord Narayana as viewed in Sri Vaikuntam, the milky ocean, or the vibhava forms of Lord Rama and Krishna. Hence, they must be contemplated upon in the same manner that one performs dhyanams to these aforesaid forms. In a like manner, one must not view an Acharya as a common man. Instead, he must be revered in the same manner as Lord Narayana in human form. In the Srimad Rahasya Trayasaram, Svami Desikan observes “AchAryan iDattile manushyatva buddhi paNNuvArkaLum emperumAnin archA mUrti iDattile lokatva buddhi paNNuvArkaLum narakattai aDaivArkaL”. In keeping with this declaration, one must not view an Acharya as a mere human being and must be revered in the same manner as one reveres Lord Narayana. Hence, Svami Desikan in the present verse employs the usage “divyApa~Ngam” to denote the Acharya Kataksham. Next it may be enquired, who begets this Kataksham? This requires six fundamental factors to be in place without which it becomes impossible to obtain this blessing. These factors are: Ishvarasya sauHArdam (incurring the grace of Lord Narayana, who decides that this jivan is fit for redemption), yadR^icCha suKR^itam tathA (some good act performed unknowingly and unexpectedly by the jivan without any thought of the resulting benefit.) For example, one may visit Kanchipuram for purchasing silk sarees and that moment, be blessed with the Sevai of Lord Varadaraja’s utsavam and Svami Desikan’s utsavam most unexpectedly, or when one visits Srirangam for official work with no desire or knowledge of Lord Ranganatha but due to sheer happenstance receives a sevai of Lord Ranganatha,

or when one sets out at the height of the summer to seek relief from the heat and unexpectedly ends up immersing himself in the Ganga river, totally oblivious to the attendant benefits of Ganga snAnam are instances of **yadR^icCha sukR^itham**), **viShNoH kaTAkSham** (This denotes the **jAyamAna kaTAkSham** covered in the previous verse and specifically acquiring this at birth), **advesham** (bereft of enmity towards the Lord, namely acting in accordance with the Lord's dictates such as "satyam vada" and "dharmam chara"), **Abhimukhyam** (performing all the **Aj~na kaimkaryams** for the Lord and giving them due importance - hearing **sat vishayam**, reading the scriptures, and engaging in speech glorifying the Lord), **sAtvikaIH sambhashaNam** (engaging in conversations with satvikas). Only if these six factors are in place will one gain the kataksham of an Acharyan. From this it seems as though getting Bhagavad Kataksham may be possible but gaining the Acharya kataksham is quite onerous. Hence, the Acharya kataksham is glorified as "divyApA~NgaM dishasi karuNe". The next tribute in **anvaya kramam** (prose order) "vR^iShagiri patiM kShipraM prAptA yeShu saddeshikAtmA" reflects the fact that those blessed with Acharya kataksham very soon attain proximity to Lord Srinivasa. It is no trivial matter to go to the Venkatam hill and receive the darsanam of Lord Srinivasa. However, when blessed with the Kataksham of an Acharyan, this is readily accomplished. Somehow or another, the jivan is taken straight through the **dvArams** to the garbha gruham of Lord Srinivasa for a special darsanam. The import here is that one may even gain moksham easily but getting the darsanam of Lord Srinivasa is an arduous task. Who is it that gets this anugraham is the next question that arises. Svami Desikan answers this through the tribute "**kShatrabandhvA dayaste**" to denote that Kshatrabandhu and his ilk are the ones, who beget this good fortune. Kshatrabandhu was a king. However, he engaged in wrongful deeds as a result of which he was expelled from his kingdom and had to live in a forest. To support his family, he waylaid unsuspecting travelers in the forest and looted their belongings sometimes even going to the extent of killing them. Once, sage Narada was traversing this forest. As per his usual practice, Kshatrabandhu accosted him and demanded his belongings. Narada calmly replied "I shall give you everything I have. However, let me ask you why you are resorting to this wrong mode of living?" Kshatrabandhu replied that it was only to support his family. Sage Narada then said "Why don't you enquire of your family members, for whom you are undertaking this act of robbery, if they would accept a portion of the sins arising from your actions? Come back to me with their answer." Kshatrabandhu replied "How can I be sure that you will not go away in the time I go to my family and get their response to your question?" Sage Narada assured Kshatrabandhu that he will

wait patiently for the latter's return. The meeting with Sage Narada itself was yadR^icCha sukR^itam for Kshatrabandhu. He was convinced that the sage would not leave and then proceeded to enquire from his family members, who he was supporting, if they would partake of a portion of the sins arising from his wrongful actions. His wife responds that he is duty bound to take care of her and that she wanted no part of the sins arising from his actions. His children too answered that having become their father, it was his obligation to take care of them up to a stage in life and that they too would distance themselves from the sins arising from his actions. He enquired of his aged parents, who he was supporting as well if they would accept a part of his sins. They too answered in the negative. Kshatrabandhu returned to Sage Narada's presence and conveyed the answer from his family. Sage Narada then advised him "Desist from your sinful actions. You have realized that nobody will partake of the sins arising from your actions. I shall now bless you with an upadesam of the Ashtakshara mantram from which you can gain redemption." Accordingly Sage Narada blessed Kshatrabandhu with the upadesam of the Ashtakshara mantram and its esoteric meanings. Kshatrabandhu adopted this as his practice and gained moksham. Svami Desikan notes in the Daya Satakam verse that Kshatrabandhu did not resort to any of the onerous prescriptions of karma yoga, j~nAna yoga, or bhakthi yoga. Instead, due to the Ashtakshara mantra upadesam from the great Acharya, Sage Narada, he performed Saranagati and gained moksham. When one gains the anugraham of an Acharyan, even the Lord's anugraham becomes secondary. Svami Desikan extols this fact in the **Yatiraja Saptati** tribute "anukalpa bhUtamurabhitpadaM satAm ajahattrivargamapavarga vaibhavam chalachitta vR^ittivinivartanauShadhaM sharaNaM yatIndra charaNaM vR^iNImahe". Even though seeking refuge at the Lord Narayana's feet guarantees one the benefits of dharma, artha, kAma and moksham it becomes **anukalpam** (secondary). anukalpam to what? it may be enquired. Svami Desikan answers this by noting that the Lord's feet become secondary to the Acharya's feet - in this case the feet of Svami Bhashyakarar. Due to the fact that the Acharya's feet acquire a status even greater than the Lord's feet, Daya Devi desires to incarnate as an Acharyan as evidenced by the tribute of this Daya Satakam verse. The Acharya's feet pave the way for moksham of Kshatrabandhu and his ilk. What about the rest of us? It may be true that in a few prior instances, moksham was gained in this manner. Will that prevail now? Svami Desikan answers this by the usage of present tense (**vartamAna kAlam**) in the tribute "**divyApA~NgaM dishasi**" namely Daya Devi is conferring this anugraham. Kshatrabandhu may be a singular instance of a great sinner gaining moksham. However, we may have committed sins of much greater

magnitude and continue to do so in the manner of Svami Desikan's **Goda Stuti** tribute "**ArdraAparadhi**". What about this? Svami Desikan assures such beings that even if this be so, once the jivan becomes privy to the Kataksham of Daya Devi in the form of an Acharyan, moksham is guaranteed in the manner of the **NyAsa dashakam** tributes "**etaddehAvasAne mAM tvat pAdaM prApaya svayam**" "**tvacCheShatve sthiradhiyaM tvatprApyeka prayojanam niShiddha kAMya rahitaM kuru mAM nitya ki~Nkaram**". Thus, a place in Sri Vaikuntam is reserved for one who becomes privy to the kataksham of Daya Devi in the form of an Acharyan. In the tribute "**nlcanEn niRai onRum ilEn en kaN pAcam vaitta parancuDar cOtikkE ican vAnavarku enban enRAI atu tEcamO tiruvE~NkaDattAnukku**" Svami NammAzhvar declares that the Lord Srinivasa is saluted by **Nitya sUris**, and three hundred and thirty million devathas and in turn Lord Srinivasa graces them. However, this is no great act on the part of the Lord. His greatness lies in the fact that he elevates the lowest of the low like aDiyEn declares the Azhvar in an outpouring of intense **naishchyam** (self deprecation). The Azhvar ends with a rhetorical question "which is greater? The Lord's anugraham for the Nitya Suris and three hundred and thirty million devathas that come to salute Him or His extreme compassion for the lowest of the low jivans?" Svami Desikan mirrors the Azhvar's anubhavam in his **Saranagati Dipikai** tribute "**kartavyamityanukalaM kalayAmyakR^ityaM svAminnakR^ityamiti kR^ityamapi tyajAmi anyadvyatikramaNajAtamanantamartha sthAne dayA bhavatu te mayi sArvabhaumi**" wherein he seeks the Daya of Lord Dipaprakasara. Svami Desikan describes himself as one who engages in forbidden acts with vicarious delight in the manner of the declaration that one must not contaminate running water, while readily giving up the prescribed acts that one should necessarily perform. Svami Desikan declares "Only Your Daya can redeem me from this pitiable plight by correcting me and bringing me on the right path." The implication is that the Lord accrues great fame by redeeming errant baddha jlvans, who are the most egregious violators of the Lord's commands, on account of His Daya. The next tribute from the present Daya Satakam verse "**vishvAchAryA vidhi shiva mukhAH svAdhikAroparuddhAH**" indicates that great ones like Brahma, Rudra, and Indra have performed numerous yaj~nas to attain their elevated positions. For example, Rudra is hailed as the all-knowing one. The tribute "**ArogyaM bhAskarAt icChet shriyaM icChet hutAsanAt IshvaraM j~nAnaM icChet**" reflects the fact that knowledge can be gained from worship of Rudra. In **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram**, Svami Desikan while discussing the Ashtakshara mantram pays tribute to Rudra as "**sarvaj~nanAna Ahirbudhnya bhagavAn**". Rudra of such elevated status has not gained moksham. He is in **prakR^iti maNDalam** engaged in

divyApA~NgaM dishasi karuNe yeShu saddeshikAtmA



his assigned task of destruction. How could he not have knowledge pertaining to moksham and not undertake the necessary action to gain this? Next let us consider Brahma. He is engaged in constant recitation of the Vedam through his four mouths. Any devata that encounters difficulties, resorts to Brahma with a prayer for protection. Brahma of such loftiness too has not gained moksham. Instead, he too is in prakR^iti maNDalam engaged in the task of creation. How is this possible? Then we examine Indra. He is also in a similar state not having gained Moksham. Elevated bhakti yogis like Vyasa, Vasishtha, Vishvamitra and others are anxiously looking forward to the bliss of moksham but will gain this only after attaining a zero balance of karma at the end of a certain birth. The Brahma Sutra states “yavadadhikAram avasthitiH adhikArikANAm” to describe the fact that these elevated beings occupy positions of authority. Only after the prescribed time when this authority ends can they gain moksham. Svami Desikan alludes to this vakyam in the tribute “svAdhikAroparuddhAH”. When this is the state of elevated beings, how is it possible that mere common beings like us can gain moksham? Svami Desikan answers this by noting that this benefit comes about entirely on account of Daya Devi’s kataksham in her incarnation as an Acharya. So far Svami Desikan has expounded on important Vedantic truths. In the concluding tribute of this verse “vidhi shiva mukhAH svAdhikAroparuddhAH manye mAtA jaDa iva sute vatsala mAdR^ishe tvam”, he exhibits his skill as Kavi-tArkika-simham. One is never appreciated as a poet unless an appropriate simile is used to make a point. In this case, the point to be made is that Daya Devi is a female. Is it appropriate for Her to incarnate as an Acharya? This is answered in the tribute “manye mAtA jaDa iva sute vatsala mAdR^ishe tvam”. The example here is one of a mother blessed with three children, the oldest of whom is brilliant, excels in his studies, goes to the Temple without prompting, and performs his duties without fail. The second child requires some prompting but complies with instructions when prompted even though he may be otherwise distracted and engaged in trivial pursuits. The third child is a complete contrast in that neither does he know of his own accord the right code of behavior, nor does he listen when instructed in this matter. In fact, he exhibits a total disdain for prescribed code of behavior. When a visitor arrives at this home and the discussion of the children arises, the first two are addressed in a matter-of-fact manner. Whereas when it comes to the third child, who is completely dim-witted and incapable of following instructions, the mother exudes affection (vAtsalyam). This is verily the depiction of the plight of all baddha jivans who are neither aware of the correct code of conduct in the manner of elevated bhakti yogis like Vasishtha and Vishvamitra, nor are they willing to listen when instructed by

learned ones. These beings are described as the “jaDa iva sute”, namely the dim-witted ones, foolish ones or the ones bereft of intellect. Since this child is incapable of doing anything on its own or even when instructed, the mother’s affection for this child is overwhelming. In a like manner, Daya Devi, the mother of the entire universe, out of Her overbearing affection for errant baddha jlvans caught up in samsaram, blesses them with Her kataksham through her incarnation as an Acharyan. The analogy is complete when Brahma, Rudra, and Indra are akin to the first child of the mother, whereas the errant baddha jlvans behave in the manner of the third child. Consequently, the mother, Daya Devi, out of great concern for the well-being of the third child, elevates the priority and confers Her kataksham on this “third” child in Her incarnation as an Acharyan. As a consequence, this child gains moksham immediately in the manner of “etat dehAvasAne mAm”. Therefore, even the bhAgyam of appreciating the incarnation of Daya Devi as an Acharyan and Her anugraham to suffering baddha jlvans comes about entirely due to the grace of Svami Desikan, who blessed us with this insight. The kataksham of Daya Devi in Her incarnation as an Acharyan is “divyApA~Ngam”. This divyApA~Ngam is continuing even at the present time. It will be everlasting if one develops bhakti for Svami Desikan. Having heard the benefit conferred by Daya Devi in Her incarnation as an Acharya to Her retarded child, is it really inappropriate for us to call ourselves foolish, dim witted or devoid of intellect? The readers are encouraged to draw their own conclusions in this matter. Once again this exposition is concluded with a prayerful appeal to Svami Desikan and Daya Devi.”

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin: “Oh Karuna Devi! You presumably take the body of a good preceptor. You then cast Your divine eye-glance on chosen disciples. Those who are thus privileged to receive Your manifestation as the benevolent eye-glance of a good preceptor quickly attain Lord Srinivasa - the Lord of Vrushagiri. That is, I repeat, they gain moksha. It is almost an instantaneous result. The sinful nature is not relevant. For example, sinners like Kshatrabandhu were no exception to the rule of immediate deliverance by reason of Acharya-Kripa.

We then see the contrast phenomenon: Devas such as Brahma, Rudra, and Indra have continued in their elevated positions for a long time. They have not been able to gain Moksha, notwithstanding the authority granted to them by the Lord. A commoner would look unconvinced. Office of power is no qualification for Moksha. In fact, their authority stands in the way of gaining moksha. They need to relinquish office, seek a preceptor, enjoy his eye-glances and perform the necessary pleasing actions. However, I on the other hand am lacking in merit, though not suffering the

disqualification of high office (like Brahma, Rudra, and Indra), feel that You, Oh Daya Devi as my Mother, will show special fondness and interest in a son - deficient in all equipment and virtues; being a dunce with regard to general worldly matters.

Great sinners like Kshatrabandhu are cited for quickly jumping from sinful life to Lord Srinivasa's abode (Tirumalai) by dint of a good perceptor's kindly glance. Though spelt out in an impressive manner, this ought to be understood correctly consistent with the concepts outlined previously. (This is by no means a license to indulge in sinful acts since even the worst sinners can gain redemption.) For example, this sinner-king received advice from a sage to chant Govinda's name. He was purified in course of time. A change came over him causing him to resort to Prapatti. This is a prelude to the next decad, which highlights the glory of Prapatti."

