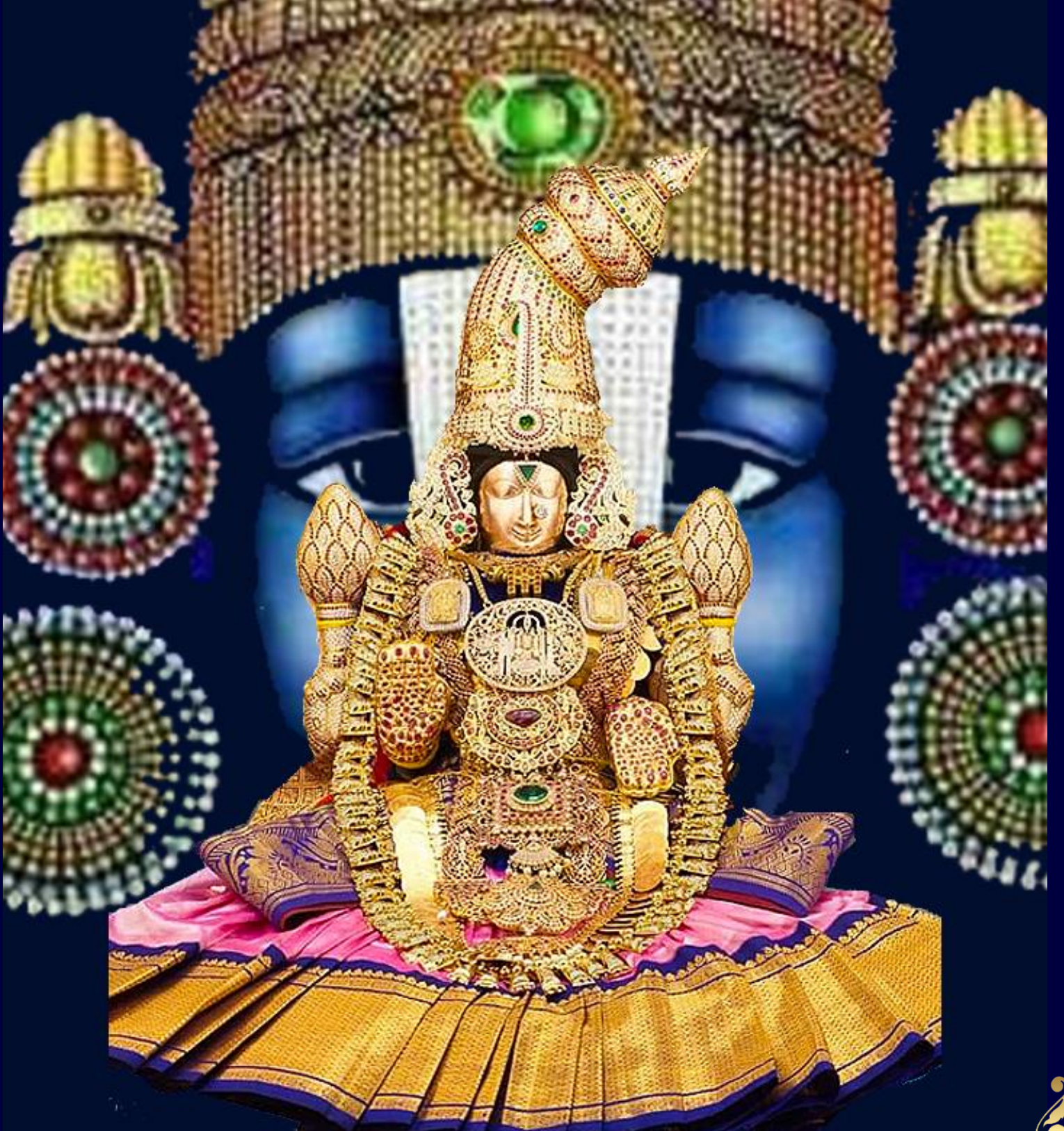
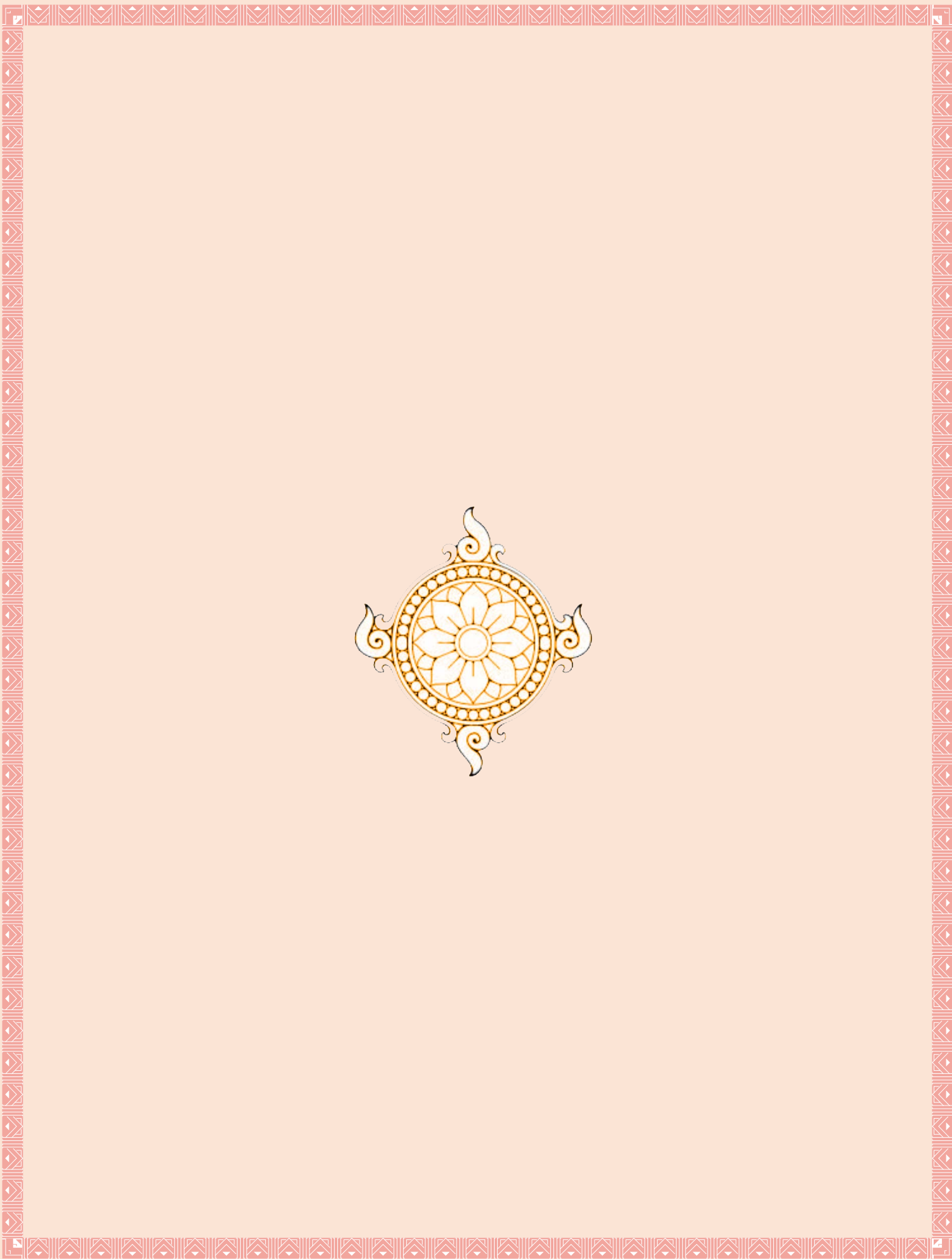


SvAmi NigamAnta MahAdeSikan's
Dayaa Satakam
(SlokaH 61 –70)



Translated into English by

Ammangi Thandalam Muralidhar Rangaswamy



Sri:



SvAmi Nigamanta MahaDesikan's

DAYAA SATAKAM



A

Tribute by

Ammangi Thandalam Muralidhar Rangaswamy

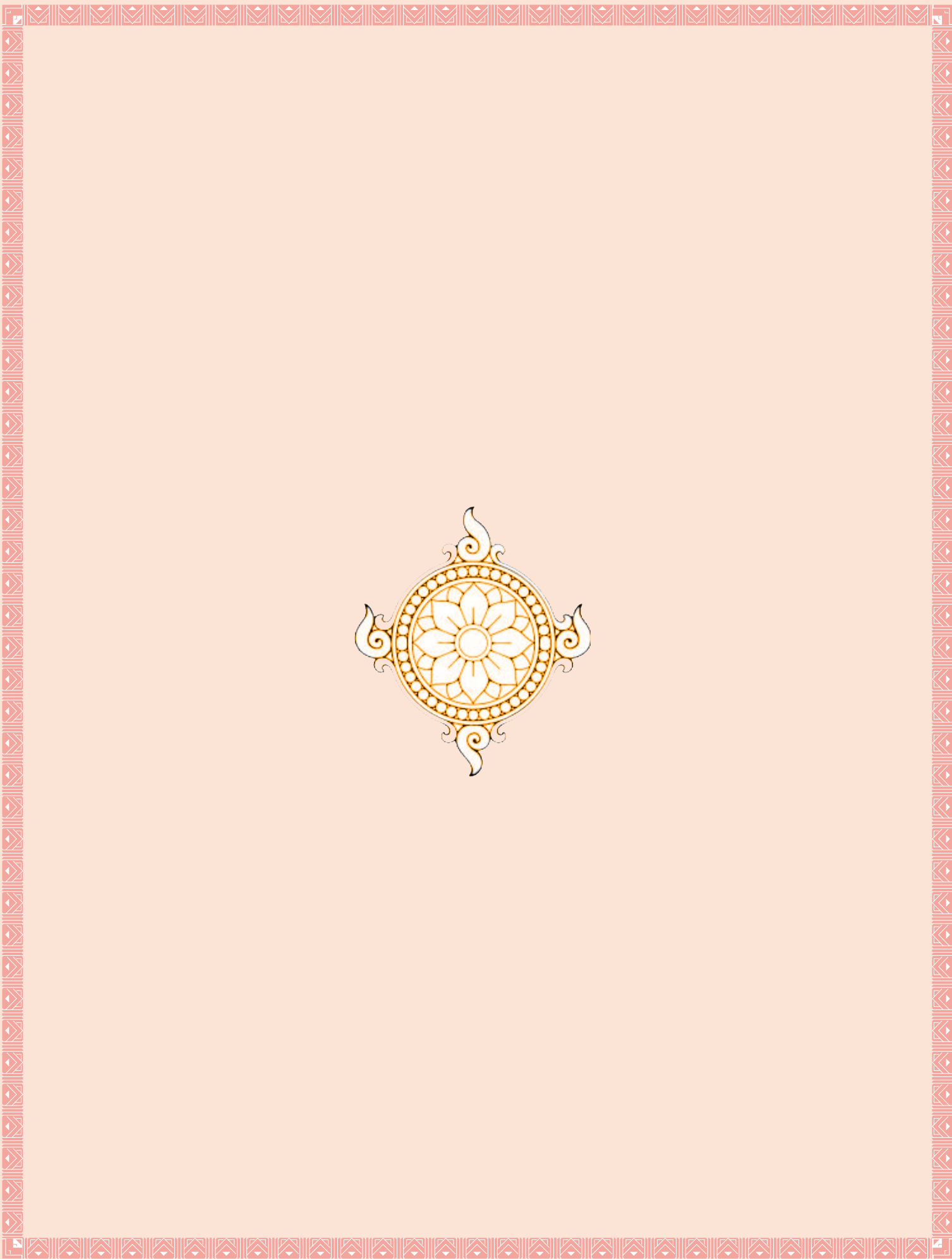




SrImad venkaTanAthArya tvadIya caraNadvayam |
bhavatvatra paratrApi madIyam SaraNam sadaa | |

Srimate NigamAnta MahadesikAya namaH | |

Srimate Gopaladesika MahadesikAya namaH | |



Sloka 61

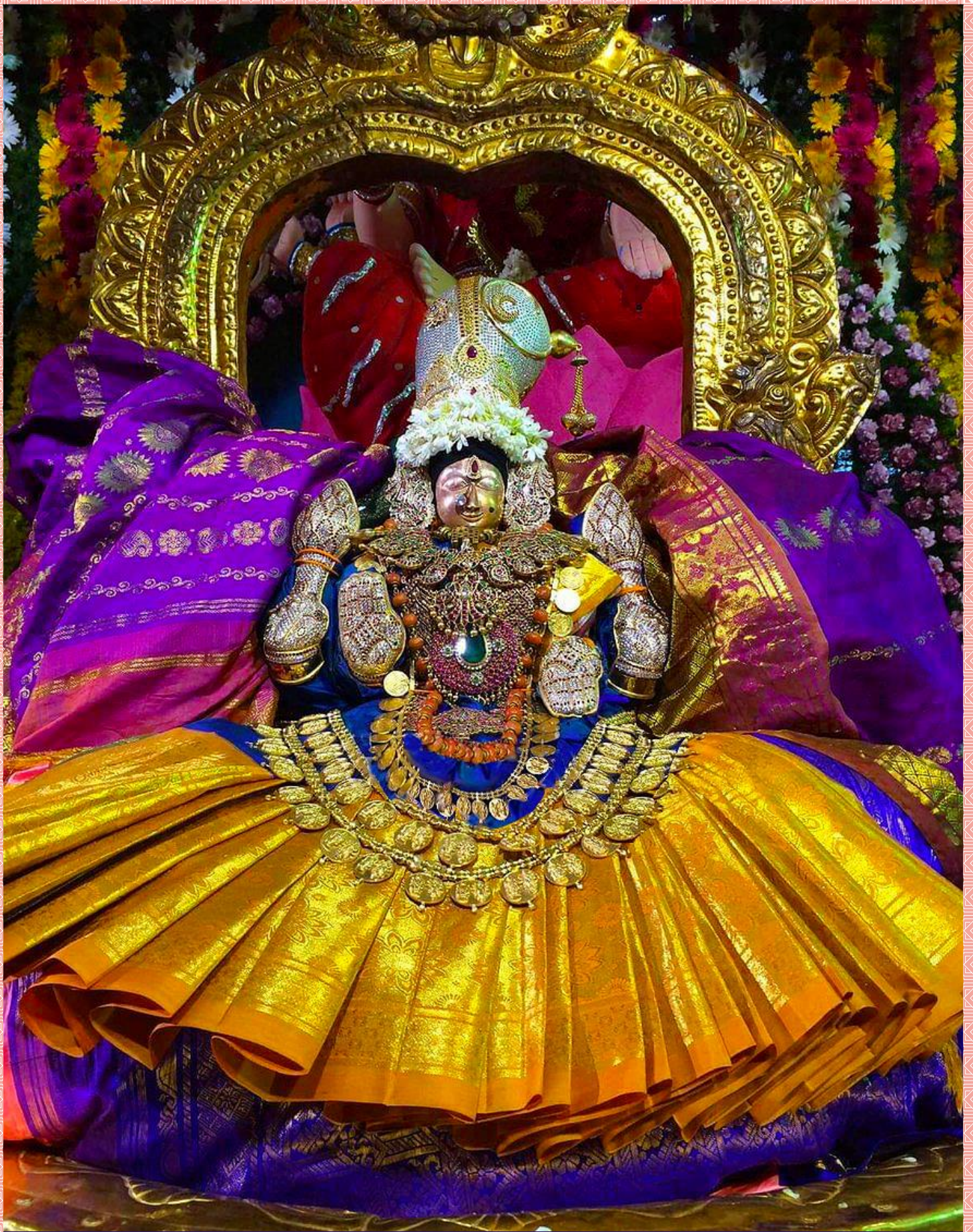
अकूपारैरेकोदक समय वैतण्डिक जवैः
अनिर्वाप्यां क्षिप्रं क्षपयितुमविद्याख्य बडबाम् ।
कृपे त्वं तत्तादृक्प्रथिम वृष पृथ्वीधर पति-
स्वरूप द्वैगुण्य द्विगुण निज बिन्दुः प्रभवसि ॥ ६१ ॥

akUpArair ekodaka samaya vaitaNDika javaiH
anirvApyAM kShipraM kShapayitum avidhyAkhyā baDabAm |
kR^ipe tvaM tattAdR^ik prathima vR^iSha pR^ithvI dhara pati
svarUpa dvaiguNya dviguNa nija binduH prabhavasi | |61



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

“We now commence the exposition on the 7th decad of the Daya Satakam. The previous set of ten verses commenced with the tribute “*ati kR^ipaNopi*” and ended with a formal surrender to Daya Devi to destroy at the root karma that binds individuals to samsaraam through the eulogy “*bhavamUlaharAm laharIm*”. This set of ten verses is set to ShikkaraNi meter. This meter glorifies Daya Devi, who resides in the elevated place of the Venkatam Hill. In the previous verse, Svami Desikan performed SaraNagati to Daya Devi. One needs to carefully examine, who is fit for surrendering unto. The individual that one surrenders to must be capable of protecting the SaraNagata. Also, the individual must possess the strength to accept the SaraNagati and its attendant responsibilities. If the surrender is performed to a person that it is unfit for this role, the SaraNagati will not yield the desired fruit. The one to whom SaraNagati is performed must possess a kind heart. He must also be intelligent. One cannot perform SaraNagati to a dim-witted individual having poor intellect. How is it possible to assess whether one has the strength to accept the SaraNagati? In common parlance, if an individual is approached with a request for help, the one submitting the request needs to be sure that the individual can render the requested help. Only such an individual can be approached with the request to help. There may be strong individuals, who possess intellect and strength to render the requested help. However, they may not be willing to help. Again, if such an individual is approached the SaraNagati will not fructify. This is



When SaraNagati is performed to Daya Devi, it will indeed be successful

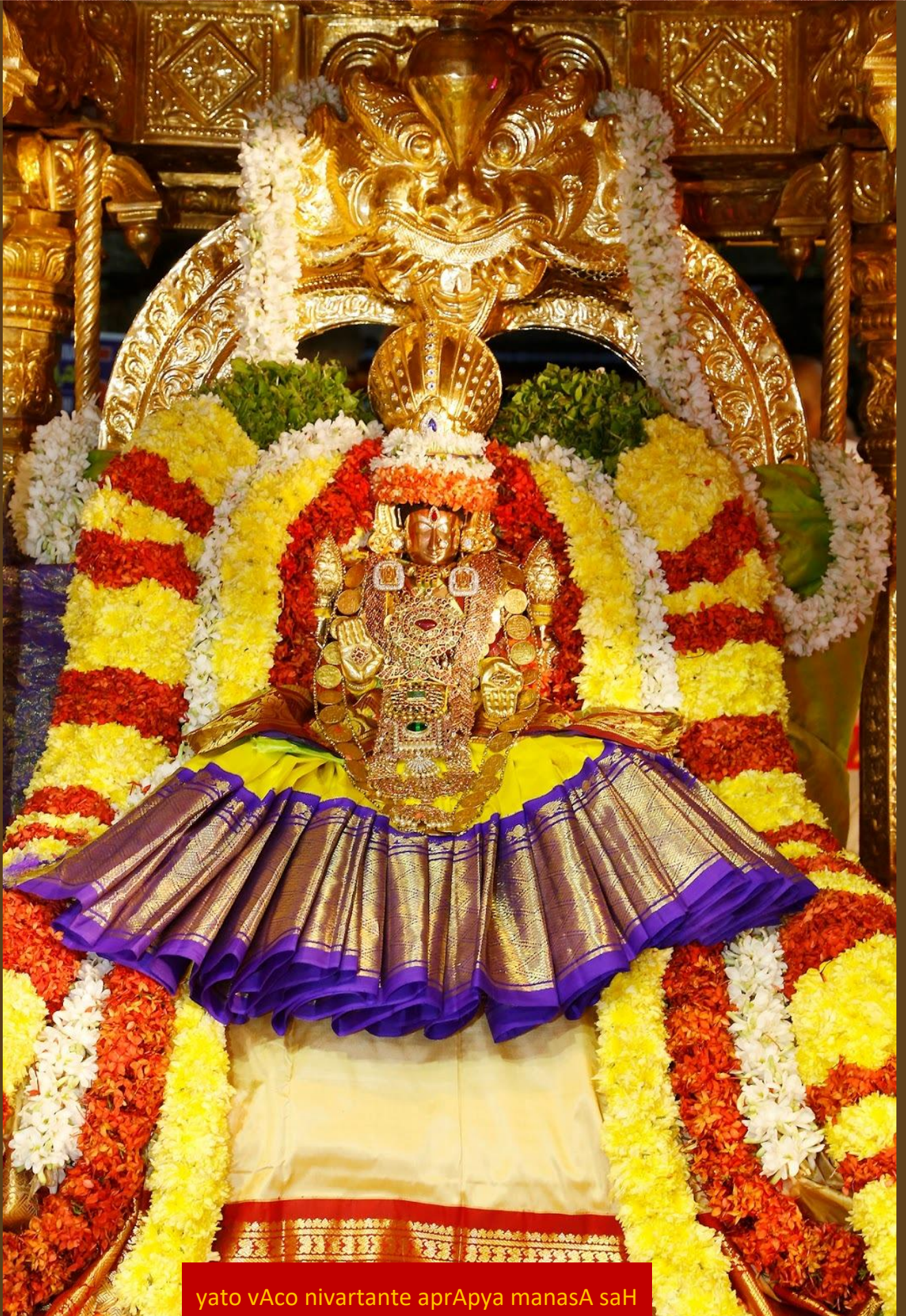
illustrated by the SaraNagati of Lord Rama to the King of the Ocean. On the other hand Vibhishana performed SaraNagati to Lord Rama and was welcomed by the Lord with open arms and granted a prominent role in the campaign against Ravana to recover Sita. When pondering over the matter of crossing over the ocean to get to Lanka, Vibhishana submits the suggestion to Lord Rama “samudraM rAghavo rAjA zaraNaM gantum arhati khAnitaH sagareNAYam aprameyo mahodadhiH” namely if Lord Rama performed SaraNagati to the King of the Ocean, he would automatically pave the way for crossing the ocean, since the ocean itself came about due to the efforts of the sons of Sagara, who was Lord Rama’s ancestor. Accordingly, Lord Rama performed SaraNagati to the king of the Ocean, and had taken residence in Darbashayana. Three days passed but the ocean did not budge. This greatly angered Lord Rama, who addressed Lakshmana who was by His side with the declaration “cApam Anaya saumitre sharAMshcAshlviShopamAn adyAkShobhyam api kruddhaH kShobhayiShyAmi sAgaram padyAM yAntu plavangamaH” (Oh Saumitra! Bring Me My bow and quiver full of fierce arrows. I shall transform this ocean into a desert by drying up its water and enable the monkey army to cross over to the other side.) The important point to be noted here is that Lord Rama’s SaraNagati to the king of the ocean did not yield fruit. Why? This is due to the fact that the king of the ocean had poor intellect. He was incapable of accepting Lord Rama’s SaraNagati. This gives rise to an important question. Svami Desikan performed SaraNagati to Daya Devi in the previous verse. Is Daya Devi endowed with strength and a large heart to accept this SaraNagati and ensure its fructification? In order to answer questions such as these Svami Desikan highlights the glory of Daya Devi in this set of ten verses. This is illustrated through a sambhAShaNam (dialog) between Daya Devi and Svami Desikan, wherein Daya Devi poses a rhetorical question “Oh Svami! You have sought My torrential flow (pravAham) to grace you and destroy at the root all karma that binds you to samsara. However, to invoke this flow the nuances of j~nAna yogam, karma yogam, and bhakti yogam need to be adopted. Have you adopted any of these?” Svami Desikan’s responds that he has not adopted any of these means. However, he has performed SaraNgati as prescribed by the Shastras and therefore, Daya Devi has no choice when it comes to his protection. To this Daya Devi responds “Svami! The karma that you have accumulated is not over a day or two but from beginningless time. Therefore, it is endless. Hence, getting rid of this Karma is quite difficult. How do I do this?” Svami Desikan answers this as “Oh Mother Daya Devi! I agree with everything You mentioned. While this is not possible for others, only You possess the means to rid me of this karma.” In Srimad Ramayanam, Sugriva dispatched his



dvaiguNya dviguNa nija binduH

vanara army in all directions to locate Sita Devi. The group that proceeded in the southern direction had in its ranks Angada, Jambavan and Hanuman. After an elaborate search, Sita Devi was nowhere to be found. Realizing the grave consequences for not locating Sita Devi, the monkeys decided that it would be better for them to end their lives on the seashore rather than face death at the hands of Sugriva. At that point they encounter Sampathi, the brother of Jatayu, from whom they learn the location of Sita Devi. The next question that comes up is how to cross the ocean to get to Lanka and locate Sita Devi. The Vanaras take stock of how far each of them is capable of going. One of them states that he can cross 20 yojanas, another says 30 yojanas and so forth. When it comes to Angada, he states that he can cross 100 yojanas and get to Lanka but is unsure that he will be able to return. Jambavan states that during the Trivikrama avataram, he was youthful and strong and could circumambulate the gigantic form of the Lord three times. However, now that he has aged, he is unsure of his ability to cross the ocean. Jambavan then turns towards Hanuman, who remained silent all this while and remained aloof from the other Vanaras and addresses him as “*aneka shata sAhasrIm viShaNNAm hari vAhinIm jAMbavAn samudIkShya evam hanumantam atha abravIt vIra vAnara lokasya sarva shAstra vidAm vara tUShNIIm ekAntam Ashritya hanuman kim na jalpasi*” (Oh Hanuman! You are well versed in the Shastras, foremost among the Vanaras, why do you remain silently engaged in Rama nama japam and not speak up?) He continues “*hanuman hari rAjasya sugrIvasya samo hi asi rAma lakShmaNayoH ca api tejasA ca balena ca*” (You are equal to our king Sugriva, you also have a stature similar to Rama and Lakshmana. Your radiance and strength are legendary. Why do you remain silent here?). Jambavan further glorifies Hanuman “*pakShayoH yat balam tasya tAvat bhuja balam tava vikramaH ca api vegaH ca na te tena apahlyate*” (Hanuman’s valor and strength are on par with that of Garuda. Hanuman’s pace of travel is the same as that of Garuthman.) “*balam buddhiH ca tejaH ca sattvam ca hari sattama vishiShTam sarva bhUteShu kim AtmAnam na sajjase*” (Do I have to exposit on your glory? Are you not aware of your extraordinary capabilities?) In a like manner, when Daya Devi submits Her rhetorical question to Svami Desikan about his karma being accumulated over aeons, being immeasurable, endless and engulfing to the point where they cannot be destroyed at their root, Svami Desikan responds “Oh Daya Devi! You are not aware of Your extraordinary prowess. Adiyen will highlight this in this tribute. This task of destroying my karma at its root is a trifle as far as You are concerned.” This verse is “*akUpArair ekodaka samaya vaitaNDika javaiH anirvApyAM kShipraM kShapayitum avidhyAkhyā baDabAm|kR^ipe tvaM*

tattAdR^ik prathima vR^iSha pR^ithvI dhara pati svarUpa dvaiguNya dviguNa nija binduH prabhavasi". Here Svami Desikan describes the darkness caused due to nescience for baddha jivans in terms of the baDaba agni, which emanates from the mouth of a female horse that exists below the ocean bed and cannot be destroyed even during praLayam. Agni is generated from samit or blocks of wood. However, the baDaba agni uses the ocean water for its sustenance (indhanam). This baDaba agni can never be extinguished. The avidya (ignorance) of baddha jivans too is in a similar state (indestructible). "avidya karma samj~nAnyA" is the declaration that formally describes avidya. This declaration provides the equivalence between avidya and karma. Next it becomes useful to dwell on praLayam. Lord Srinivasa engages in the task of sR^iShTi (creation). He endows sentient beings with body, arms, legs, and sense organs with the sole motivation that the sentient beings put these to use for seeking knowledge about Lord Narayana and engaging in the means for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Instead of being aligned with the Lord's intent, due to prior karma, the jivan resorts to forbidden acts that are in violation of sastraic prescriptions. As a consequence, the jivan is enduring the consequences of these actions, accumulated over a long time. Unable to withstand this sight, the Lord causes mahapraLayam - great deluge. During this time all beings are rendered in a state of inertness. The accumulated karma is described in terms of the baDaba agni, that cannot be extinguished even during the time of PraLayam. This is captured in the salutation "ekodaka samaya vaitaNDika javaiH akUpAraiH". A well, lake, pond, river or ocean are distinct bodies of water. Instead, if one can visualize a continuous body of water that is so vast in its expanse that it is all engulfing, it captures the meaning of "ekodaka samaya vaitaNDika javaiH akUpAraiH". The waves of the ocean break up upon hitting the shoreline. However, during praLayam the waves from the seven oceans combined are cresting left, right and center without breaking. This resembles the speech of those engaged in vithaNDA vAdam (fluff without substance). The tribute "akUpAraiH ekodaka samaya vaitaNDika javaiH anirvApyAM kShipraM kShapayitum avidhyAkhyA baDabAm" captures the fact that one's karma/nescience is similar to the baDaba agni, which cannot be extinguished by the cresting waters of praLayam. The consequence of "avidya" from this tribute is sheShatva j~nAna virodhi, namely the jivan forgets the fact that it is the undisputable property of Lord Narayana, who is the controller/master for the jivan, and that the jivan is forever subservient to Lord Narayana. sheShatva j~nAnam denotes the relationship between Lord Narayana and the jivan as described in the salutations "dAsabhUtasvataH sarve hyAtmAnaH paramAtmana" (all beings in the universe are dAsabhUtas for Lord Narasimha) "aDimai...



yato vAco nivartante aprApya manasA saH

AraNarkku allAl” (We are slaves of the Lord and His Bhagavatas and none else). That which is opposed to this knowledge is the avidya. The functioning of the baDaba agni is similar in that it consumes the very ocean waters that provide it sanctuary and instead lays waste to the ocean waters. The avidya causes **sharlra Atma bhramam** and **svatantara Atma bhramam**. That is, the jivan mistakenly believes that the sharlra (body) and Atma (soul) are the same and even in the instance that the jivan recognizes that the body and soul are different, it has the mistaken impression that the Atma is independent, thus giving no chance for the jivan for redemption. This avidya is so strong that it cannot be destroyed by waters of PraLayam. The tribute “**anirvApyAM kShipraM**” denotes the fact that Daya Devi instantaneously expunges the avidya that is impossible even for the PraLayam waters to destroy. How is this possible? Clearly, the ocean waters are incapable of destroying the baDaba agni. Only the megha vR^iShTi (rain from clouds), which are denoted by puShkala and Avartaka are capable of extinguishing the baDaba agni. Due to this vR^iShTi, the avidya, which is akin to baDaba agni is destroyed. What sort of a cloud is this? Who is denoted by this cloud is discussed next! The cloud is none other than Daya Devi. Next follows a comparison between a small sprinkling of Daya (say an atomic particle) and Lord Narayana. This is captured in the salutation “**tattAdR^ik prathima vR^iSha pR^ithvI dhara pati svarUpa dvaiguNya dviguNa nija binduH**” (Oh Daya Devi! Your glory is indescribably high. Lord Srinivasa resident on top of the Venkatam hill is immeasurably great as evidenced by the Vedam tribute “**yato vAco nivartante aprApya manasA saH**” (Words cannot adequately describe His glory. The mind cannot fully comprehend His greatness). He is characterized by the attributes of “satyam j~nAnam and anantam” (Truth, knowledge, and infiniteness). This is the divyAtma svarUpam of Lord Narayana as described by the Vedam in the tribute “kam brahma kam brahma”. A tiny speck of Daya Devi is equivalent to four times the glory of Lord Narayana as described herein. This is captured in the tribute “**dvaiguNya dviguNa nija binduH**” “**IriraNDu mAlvarai tOL**”. If this is the nature of Daya Devi, it is readily apparent that when Her grace befalls a baddha jivan, their avidya is instantaneously destroyed. This is Svami Desikan’s tribute to Daya Devi. In a prior verse (verse 58), the connection of Daya Devi to KR^iShNa megham was made. Specifically, She is the water from the dark rain-bearing cloud known as Lord Srinivasa. The tribute that needs to be remembered in this context is “**janitAm janitApaharAm**”.

In this verse the flow of Daya, which is in the form of Pushkala Avartaka vR^iShTi, in a moment destroys the avidya/karma of baddha jivans, which has been accumulated over a long time, which is endless and which is difficult to

exterminate. Here an important question arises. It is well known that Bhagavad svarUpam of Lord Narayana is immeasurable and infinite. This Bhagavad svarUpam is declared by Svami Desikan to be equivalent to an atomic particle of Daya Devi. Does this not then make the claim that the infinite and immeasurable divyAtma svarUpam of Lord Narayana is now measurable? How could Svami Desikan, who is known for conformance to Sastraic prescriptions, make a statement that contradicts the sastra?



The flow of Daya, in a moment destroys the avidya/karma of baddha jivans

Here one must pay attention to the PuruSha sUktam eulogy “pAdosya vishvA bhUtAni tripAdasyAmR^itamdivi” “asya pAdaH” (a quarter part) “vishvA bhUtAni” (constitutes the universe with all its sentient and insentient beings). The remaining three quarters constitutes the Divya Vibhuti (note that Vibhuti in Sanskrit denotes property and is not to be confused with the Tamil usage of Vibhuti to denote ash) of Sri Vaikuntam. Then it denotes the fact that Lord Narayana’s divyAtma svarUpam becomes measurable. However, in this instance pAdo is used in the context of ekadesham to denote one part or portion and not one quarter. Thus one part of



bhavamUlaharAm laharIm

the infinite being constitutes the universe with all its sentient and insentient beings. Three parts of the infinite Brahman constitute Sri Vaikuntam. Similarly, the comparison between Daya Devi and Lord Narayana is only on the basis of this relative description and does not take away from the aparicinnam (immeasurable) nature of Lord Narayana. This is solely intended to bring out the greatness of Daya Devi. The Pancharatra Sastram describes the Lord in terms of the tributes shantoditam, antoditam, maha vibhuti, and paramam. shantoditam denotes the fact that one who gains moksham and thereby eternal residence in Sri Vaikuntam, is free from the pangs of thirst, hunger and the like. antoditam denotes the fact that no measure can capture the greatness of Lord Narayana. Maha vibhuti denotes the Nitya VibhUti and Lila VibhUti both of which are infinite in extent. Paramam is the attribute which exceeds all measures. These four characteristics have been elaborated upon by SvAmi Alavandar. In keeping with this tribute, these four characteristics of Lord Narayana are used in a manner to denote the ekadesham with respect to Daya Devi. Therefore, the exposition of this slokam is consistent with the Sastram. Thus, the import of this slokam is that avidya which has been accumulated over a long time, is infinite in extent and indestructible even by the waters of praLayam in the same manner as the baDaba agni, is instantaneously destroyed by a tiny speck of Daya Devi's flow, which is in the manner of PuShkala and Avartaka clouds. This Daya Devi's glory is such that a tiny speck of Her flow is equivalent to four times that of the immeasurable divyAtma svarUpam of Lord Narayana. When SaraNagati is performed to Daya Devi of such loftiness, will it not be successful is the rhetorical question posed by Svami Desikan. The inner meaning is that even if the Lord Himself is inclined to punish the baddha jivan for the sastraic violations over a long time, Daya Devi ensures that the Lord's disposition towards the baddha jivan, who has resorted to Her through SaraNagati, will undoubtedly be changed and that the baddha jivan will beget Bhagavad Kaimkaryam."

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

"Oh Daya Devi! I know Your potency; a drop of Your great universal magnitude could be described as bigger, more extensive, and more potent than four times, that of the massive divyAtma svarUpam of Lord Srinivasa. What is it for me? I have stored sins due to actions born of nescience. They bear fruit as the three fold heat torture (tApatrayam - adyAtmika, Adi bautika, Adi daivika). This fire is almost analogous to the proverbial mystic sub-marine fire, called BaDabamukha agni, which is impossible to quench even by the oceans all merging into one water at the time of PraLayam. Incidentally, the oceans, seven in number, merge into one, making a huge roaring noise continuously. The behavior of oceans is reminiscent of

the loud worthless chatter of wranglers, who argue without logic or reason or literary pramANas (valid sources of knowledge). You alone can successfully quench my sin-fire, which is a veritable BaDabAgni!

1. It is helpful to recall the exposition of verse 13 in this context.
2. Whether in court of law or in Vedantic debates, sometimes a wrong technique is adopted by a speaker, who has no logic or law to support him. It would be mere loud torrential wrangling. Svami Desikan is highly critical of this practice. He uses this verse to suggestively condemn this practice. The ocean's roar is sheer wasteful noise."



Sloka 62

विवित्सा वेताली विगम परिशुद्धेऽपि हृदये

पटु प्रत्याहार प्रभृति पुटपाक प्रचकिताः ।

नमन्तस्त्वां नारायण शिखरि कूटस्थ करुणे

निरुद्ध त्वद्बोहा नृपति सुत नीतिं न जहति ॥ ६२ ॥

vivitsA vetAll vigama parishudhde(a)pi hR^idaye
paTu pratyAhAra prabhR^iti puTapAka prachakitAH |
namantas tvAM nArAyaNa shikhari kUTastha karuNe
nirudhda tvaddrohA nR^ipati suta nItiM na jahati | |62



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

“In this verse Svami Desikan continues his eulogy for Daya Devi. Here Daya Devi poses another question to Svami Desikan “Oh Svami! No doubt My pravAham (torrential flow) will destroy the accumulated karma. However, for this to occur, the flow must not have any obstacles. In this instance, it may be a case of My flow ending in a puddle. Have you undertaken any shAstrodita (that which is prescribed by the shastras) upAsana to avoid this because My flow can only occur in places where such practices have been followed? How would it be possible for Me to rid you of these sins otherwise? How can I favor you if you have not undertaken any of these upAsanas? Will I not incur the stigma of favoring you over another (vaiShamya naigruNyam)? Therefore, if you come under the category of one who has adopted the nuances of either Karma yoga, j~nAna yoga, or bhakti yoga, it can be used as an excuse for invoking My grace. However, if you have not done this, it becomes very difficult.” To this Svami Desikan responds that he has not adopted any of these practices. Daya Devi then poses the question “how then is it possible for Me to come to your rescue?” Svami Desikan answers this in this verse. In this context it is helpful to recall the tribute of Sri Kuresha to Lord Varadaraja “Oh Lord! Please grant me Moksham.” To this Lord Varadaraja responds “You have not

adopted the nuances of Bhakti yogam. How can I grant your request?" Sri Kuresha responds with the verse



karuNAmR^itAbdhe - Sri Perarulan with Sri Perundevi Thayar - Kanchi

“tvAmAmananti kavayaH karuNAmR^itAbdhe!

J~nAnakriyAbhajanalabhyamalabhyamanyaiH

eteShu kena varadottara kosalasthAH

pUrvaM sadUrvamabhajanta hi jantavastvAm”

Meaning: Oh Ocean of Mercy! The learned ones glorify You as the One that is attained through the practice of karma yoga, j~nAna yoga, and bhakti yoga and nothing else. However, I have one important question. After You answer this question, I shall respond to Your question about the nuances of bhakti yogam, j~nAna yogam, or karma yogam that I have adopted. In Your incarnation as Rama, You granted insentient beings like a blade of grass and a stone that were in Ayodhya, the benefit of Moksham. What nuances of karma yogam, j~nAna yogam

or bhakti yogam did they adopt? Once You answer this, I shall gladly respond to Your question about these upAsanAs that I have adopted.

In a like manner Svami Desikan responds “Oh Mother Daya Devi! Just as You stated, Your flow can take place and grace the practitioners of karma yogam, jñAna yogam, and bhakti yogam. However, I too have performed an act prescribed in the Sastras and am therefore a fitting receptacle for Your flow.” This verse documents an important Rahasyam (secret) embedded in the concept of SharaNagati. This verse is “vivitsA vetAll vigama parishudhde(a)pi hR^idaye paTu pratyAhAra prabhR^iti puTapAka prachakitAH | namantas tvAM nArAyaNa shikhari kUTastha karuNe nirudhda tvaddrohA nR^ipati suta nItiM na jahati | |”



Before examining the salutation “vivitsA vetAll vigama parishudhde(a)pi hR^idaye” it is important to remember that there are two ways to attain Lord Narayana - one is Bhakti Yogam, the other is Prapatti. Either of these means can be adopted for the purpose of gaining Moksham. Thus, both means yield the same benefit. The fact that two different paths yield the same benefit is denoted by the usage vikalpam. vikalpam comes about in two ways niyata vikalpam and aicchikaa vikalpam. During weddings, it is customary to perform a pravishya homam. At this time sankalpam is undertaken with the

utterance “yavadjIvam vA yavad AdhAnam vA” (as long as we are alive or we have AdhAnam to perform agnihotram we solemnly vow to perform aupasanam.) It may be asked how will this be carried out? The answer lies in the salutation “yavairva tandalaIr vA juhyAt” (with rice or the dhAnyam yava). The benefit of performing aupasanam either with yavam or rice is identical. This is called aicchika vikalpam. Namely, this difference is a matter of convenience for the performer. Likewise in other instances the vikalpam can come about due to niyata karaNam (as ordained by the sastras). For example, certain tasks can be performed by certain groups of people. In a like fashion, it is outlined in the Sastras that there are two means to attain moksham - bhakti yogam and Prapatti. In this instance the vikalpam coming about on account of Bhakti yogam and Prapatti being two independent means for

gaining Moksham, as elucidated by the Sastras, it becomes niyata vikalpam. Thus, it becomes clear that only one who is fit to undertake the prescriptions of Bhakti yogam can adopt it as a means for gaining moksham. Only those who are incapable of conforming to the nuances of Bhakti yogam can resort to Saranagati for gaining Moksham. Svami Desikan highlights this niyata vikalpam in this verse. Bhakti yogam is adopted by those who have the knowledge and strength to conform to its rigorous requirements. These practitioners too perform Saranagati for ensuring successful completion of their upAsana. Those incapable of Bhakti yogam resort to Saranagati entirely for the purpose of gaining Moksham. One more point of importance needs to be observed. If one has the knowledge and strength and willingness to adopt the prescriptions of Bhakti yogam but is not prepared to wait an eternity (innumerable births for the Karma balance to go to zero) after which moksham is gained, such individuals must perform Saranagati. The important difference between Bhakti yogam and prapatti is that the former requires numerous births to exhaust prarabdha karma, at which point one gains moksham. In the case of Saranagati, moksham is obtained at the moment it is sought. For example, if one is an Arthan (sick of enduring the travails of samsara), and desires Moksham at the instant that Saranagati is performed, he begets this. On the other hand, if the Saranagata desires Moksham at the end of the current birth it is granted as a consequence of Prapatti. Thus, if any one of the factors - knowledge, strength, or waiting time for bhakti yogam to fructify, is missing in an individual, he/she automatically becomes fit for adopting Saranagati to gain moksham.

Again it must be remembered that this verse is a reply to Daya Devi's question about the upAsanam that Svami Desikan has resorted to in order to invoke the torrential flow of Daya Devi. Here Svami Desikan states "Oh Mother Daya Devi! I am indeed a fitting receptacle for Your torrential flow because, I have performed



Saranagati as ordained by the Sastras. In accordance with my fitness for undertaking this path, I have performed Saranagati. This is in keeping with the Upanishad tribute “tasya vasikaraNam tat sharaNAgatiH” Another upanishadic tribute “yamevai sharaNate tena labhyaH” declares that only those who the Lord deems fit for Moksham can attain Him. What causes the Lord to deem one fit for Moksham? This is answered in the tribute “tasya vasikaraNam tat sharaNAgatiH” For example, in the case of aged parents living with one of their children, the parents tend to think mostly about the offspring that is caring for them in their present state and may not think of their other children as often. In a like fashion, that act which causes Lord Narayana to remember His children and deem them fit for Moksham is performance of Saranagati. Therefore, Lord Narayana acts in accordance with this principle and grants Moksham to His Saranagatas. This is the Srivaishnava Siddhantam (doctrinal principle). Thus, it is established that Lord Narayana remembers His children who have performed Saranagati. What is one’s state while this act is being performed becomes the next question. This is described in the salutation “vivitsA vetAll vigama parishudhde(a)pi hR^idaye”. (Our minds need to be cleansed of the devilish afflictions - namely the infatuation with wealth, grains, property, garden, land, progeny, residence in svarga lokam, wife and the like.) No matter how learned one is, the craze for wealth takes deep root in them and only makes them seek out more of it without limit. So much so it causes the individual to give up numerous Bhagavad Kaimkaryam opportunities in this pursuit. Therefore, it is a devilish affliction (paNa pishAachu as the saying goes in Tamil). In a like manner the other things documented here denote devilish afflictions. The inner meaning is that these items are transient and trivial compared to nitya Brahma anubhavam, which is lasting and permanent. Even if one is cleansed of these afflictions, the Bhakti yogi adopting the upAsana has to conform to the eight angAs (limbs) underlying this upAsana. These are yama, niyama, Asanam, prANAYama, pratyAharam and the like. PratyAhara and others that follow are most challenging. Before considering this, even proper performance of prANAYama is difficult. The yama and niyama prescriptions are meant to gain control over the sense organs. PrANAYama has three components - rechakam, pUrakam, and Kumbhakam. First, one has to close one nostril with the thumb and let out air through the other. Then, one has to cover the other nostril with the ring finger and little finger filling it with air. Once this is complete both nostrils need to be covered to preserve the breath. This needs to be done for as long as possible. After this comes pratyAharam, which is the task of subjecting the jñAnendriyas (sense organs for acquiring knowledge) to be in accordance with the mind (manas). This

is analogous to the Tamil saying of “pudam veikaratu”, namely the task of constraining fire to a given area instead of spreading in all directions. This is accomplished by surrounding the fire pit for the most part with sand. The fire though covered by sand is still burning and gives off a lot of heat. In a like manner, the yogam of pratyAharam causes a lot of discomfort. Therefore, the practitioners of Bhakti Yogam resort to Daya Devi as evidenced in the salutation “tvAM namantaH”.



nArAyaNa shikhari kUTastha karuNe



Sri Daya Devi will never forsake those that surrender to Her

The next tribute “nArAyaNa shikharI kUTastha karuNe” denotes the fact that Daya Devi has taken root in the Narayana hill (one of the Seven Hills at Tiruvenkatam). This is also reflective of the fact that Lord Narayana is our sole protector and that utterance of His names (Narayana Keertanam) results in our ultimate good. In this context, it must be remembered from the opening verse of the Daya Satakam, that Daya Devi alone has caused the solidification of the flow of Srinivasa Daya in the form of the Seven hills, which is like the easy to partake of sugar candy. Therefore, even the Narayanatvam itself comes about on account of Daya Devi. This also conveys the important message of the Narayana shabdham central to Ashtakshara mantram - a key recipe for Saranagatas. Lord Srinivasa who is resident in the Venkatam hill is denoted by the tribute “kUTasthar”, namely He is nirvikAram (He has no change in form). However, even He is transformed by Daya Devi to be greatly moved by the plight of suffering baddha jivans and literally causing Him to melt in the face of Her appeals. Therefore, Daya Devi is resorted to universally. These seekers forever become followers of Daya Devi and never act in a manner that is in violation of Her instructions and are graced in the manner of princes being accorded high honors as evidenced by the salutation “nirudhda tvaddrohA nR^ipati suta nltiM na jahati”. Here, Svami Desikan embeds an important message from Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram. The punishment meted out to a commoner by a king is one thing. However, when he discovers that the errant individual is his own son, the blow is softened and only a light punishment is accorded for the same transgression. The inner meaning here is that Saranagatas beget the status of princes. Since they act entirely in conformance with the wishes of Daya Devi and do not engage in the slightest violation of Her commands, She ensures that nothing comes in the way of their coronation for Kaimkarya Samrajyam on the anointed day. This fact is also referenced in the SaraNAgati Deepika tribute “yunjAnacintya yuvarAja padaM bhajanti”. This refers to the fact that those who have performed Saranagati beget the bliss of ceaseless kaimkaryam for Lord Narayana and Sri in Sri VaikuNtam upon gaining moksham. Here, Svami Desikan states that they are coronated as princes, in readiness for becoming emperors in “Kaimkarya Samrajyam”. Thus, for those intimidated by the arduous prescriptions of Bhakti Yogam, the only recourse is Saranagati (unconditional total surrender) to Daya Devi. Those who perform Saranagati to Daya Devi and act entirely in conformance with Her dictats beget the status of princes. They are waiting in readiness for their coronation for the Kaimkarya Pattabhishekam. Due to this fact, they are always under the protection of Daya Devi, who never forsakes



them. We need to be eternally grateful to Svami Desikan for revealing to us the importance of Saranagati to Daya Devi and Lord Srinivasa.”

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

“Oh Daya Devi of Sri Narayanadri (Venkata Giri)! Certain noble souls have a purified heart zone, having conquered the demon of desire. They are truly great souls in this respect. Nevertheless, they hesitate to embark on Bhakti upasana discipline. Why? They are scared by the arduous task of withdrawing all vision into the inner soul-which is virtually a kind of roasting in a crucible. They therefore, resort to You through the Prapatti path, oh Daya Devi! They have shed all violations of Your canons. They are faithful to You. They thus fall in the category of the Rule of the Royal Prince - in regard to whose violations in the post-Prapatti era, small punishments alone are meted out. Sometimes a Prayaschitta Prapatti is performed. You allow the favored ones to escape serious punishment as a special case.

It is important to note that certain commentators from a previous era interpret this verse as a criticism of the Bhakti path. Their assumption is that Bhakti Yogam ignores one’s PARatantrayam (That is the state of totally being the property of the Lord, without an individuality, or ego or sentience - like Sandalwood, lamp, or flowers in the Lord’s paraphernalia). However, Svami Desikan would never disregard the Bhakti path notwithstanding his preference for Prapatti. This verse is intended to highlight the rule of exception accorded to the Royal Prince. We the Prapannas are like the Royal Prince. Svami Desikan’s Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram provides a comprehensive documentation of these concepts. In the post-Prapatti period, one should lead a life of non-violation of the Lord’s commands. If a Prapanna errs unconsciously, it is excused. If he commits errors deliberately, it cannot be excused. Will Prapatti fail? Will he be denied Moksham? Not at all. Such transgressions will incur minor punishments. Thus, this verse contains an important instruction with regard to one’s conduct in the period after performance of Prapatti.”



Sloka 63

अनन्याधीनः सन् भवति परतन्त्रः प्रणमतां

कृपे सर्वद्रष्टा न गणयति तेषामपकृतिम् ।

पतिस्त्वत्पारार्थ्यं प्रथयति वृष क्षमाधर पतिः

व्यवस्थां वैयात्यादिति विघटयन्ती विहरसि ॥ ६३ ॥

ananyAdhInaH san bhavati paratantraH praNamatAM

kR^ipe sarvadraShTA na gaNayati teShAm apakR^itim |

patistvatpArArthyaM prathayati vR^iSha kShamAdhara patiH

vyavasthAM vaiyAtyA diti vighaTayantI viharasi | |63



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin: “We commence this tribute from verse 63 of Svami Desikan’s outstanding stotram, the Daya Satakam. The delivery of this upanyasam coincides with Makara Sankaranthi day - a sudinam due to the arrival of Thai Masam (Makara Masam). Adiyen had the bhagyam of darsanam at the sannadhi of Sri Varadaraja Perumal prior to commencing this upanyasam and offered prayers on behalf of all Bhagavathas, that hear this series to confer upon them bhagavad anugraham and growth of their Kaimkarya Sri. This decad extols the greatness of Daya Devi. The first verse provides a comparison in the manner of Ekadesam between Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi, wherein Svami Desikan notes that a mere drop of Daya Devi’s flow is equivalent to four times the immeasurable divyAtma svarUpam of Lord Srinivasa. In the next verse, Svami Desikan states that there are two paths to attain moksham - Bhakti yogam and Prapatti. The former is extremely demanding due to its arduous requirements, while the latter is simple to adopt. However, the benefit arising from both of them is identical as stated by Svami Desikan. The reason for this is entirely Daya Devi. Thus, regardless of their mountainous sin-pile, and their utter helplessness to adopt the upasanas of Bhakti yogam for redemption, if one surrenders to Daya Devi, She will never forsake them. Instead, She ensures that they beget an elevated status of crown prince for the kingdom of Kaimkarya Samrajyam. Next Daya Devi requests Svami Desikan “Oh Svami! You have glorified Me beyond measure. Please refrain from stating that everything is possible for Me to accomplish. There are some things that I simply cannot do.”



Oh Mother! Is there anything that You cannot accomplish?

Svami Desikan asks in response “Oh Mother! Is there anything that it is impossible for You to accomplish?” To this Daya Devi responds “Indeed Svami! If one adopts a means for a specific objective, only Lord Narayana can grant this benefit in keeping with the declaration “**sakalaphala pradopi viShNuH**” . I am totally powerless when it comes to granting the desired benefit. Therefore, when it comes to Dharma, Artha, Kama, granting of wealth, luxuries, and other desires, only Lord Narayana can bestow these upon the seeker. When this is the case, why are you glorifying Me instead of Him? A second point of note is that the Vedanta Sutram declares “**phalam atha upapadyateH**” That is, yagas are undertaken for example with the objective of gaining Svarga vAsam. One who confers the fruits of the yagam is Lord Narayana alone. It is a commonly held belief that the deity that is glorified in the yagam grants the fruit. However, it must be borne in mind that Lord Narayana, who remains as the in-dweller of the deities glorified in these yagas is the one that grants the fruit. This point has also been established in the Sri Bhashyam by Svami Bhashyakarar. When this is the case, it seems inappropriate for you to glorify Me and request the elevated boon of Moksham. Well even granting the fact that I make a recommendation to the Lord for granting you Moksham, Lord Narayana acts independently. Once He decides to do something nobody can stop Him. Therefore, it becomes impossible for Me to command Him to perform a certain task. Could it be possible that I am highlighting something that is unknown to the Lord? Even this is impossible because Lord Narayana is all-knowing. When this is case how is it possible for Me to influence Him to confer His grace on you for this elevated benefit?”

Svami Desikan provides a point-by-point response to the issues raised by Daya Devi in this verse. This verse is “**ananyAdhInaH san bhavati paratantraH praNamatAM kR^ipe sarvadraShTA na gaNayati teShAm apakR^itim patistvatpArArthyaM prathayati vR^iSha kShamAdhara patiH vyavasthAM vaiyAtyA diti vighaTayantI viharasi**” The import of this verse is “Oh Mother Daya Devi! Every word You have uttered is absolutely true. Where is this documented?” asks Svami Desikan. Daya Devi responds “In the Vedas Svami, which you accept as the supreme pramANam. They declare that there exists none that is superior to Lord Narayana, that can rule over Him and command Him. Thus, He is the only one who rules over the two vibhutis - nitya vibhuti and leela vibhuti. There is none that can command Him and therefore, He is independent (**svatantaran**). tasya nAma mahadyataH is another Vedic tribute which attests to Lord Narayana’s supremacy. Due to His immeasurable glory, He cannot be readily perceived by mortal eyes. Thus, He is completely independent and cannot be constrained by anyone in any

manner. Another tribute of note is tvamlshvarANAm paramam maheshvaram (He is the Supreme Lord that rules over those that are called Ishvara). Thus, His independence becomes unquestionable.”



Lord Srinivasa is Paratantran for Daya Devi

Svami Desikan states in his reply “Indeed this is the considered position of the Vedam. adiyen will now present my case Oh Mother!” Svami Desikan continues “My Acharyas have stated this. Lord Narayana Himself has stated this “**ayam bhakta parAdhinaH**” (The Lord himself has declared that He is at the mercy of His Bhaktas and is therefore bound to do what they request of Him.). Therefore, even if the Vedam has declared Him to be Svantantaram, I daresay that Lord Srinivasa is Paratantran for Daya Devi. Not only that, He is solemnly bound by the appeal of those who have performed sharaNAgati to You, Oh Daya Devi!” In this context, it is helpful to recall Sri Kuresha’s tribute to Lord Varadaraja in the **Varadaraja Stavam** “**ananyAdhInatvaM tava kila jagurvaidikagiraH parAdhInAM tvAm tu**

praNataparatantraM manumahe upalambho yaM bhoH shrayati bata
sArvaj~nyamapi te yato doShaM bhakteShviha varada naivAkalayasi” (The Vedam states that the Lord is described as Ishvara who is not bound by anyone in any manner. Who is this Ishvara? None other than Lord Varadaraja. However, even those skilled in the Vedam are at a loss for determining who this Ishvara is.)

Sri Kuresha declares in another shloka of the **Varadaraja Stavam** tribute “eSha Isha iti nirNayaM trayI bhAgadheyaarahiteShu no dishet hastidhAmani na nirNayeta ko devarajamayamIshvarastviti” (Those unfortunate ones who have not received the Kataksham of Lord Varadaraja, even though they may have performed Veda adhyayanam taking great pains, will not be able to establish who the Ishvara is. It is important to note the purport of Sri Kuresha’s tribute in the sense that the Vedam unambiguously establishes Lord Narayana as the Supreme Brahman. However, those who are not blessed with the Kataksham of Lord Narayana, even though they may intensely study the Vedas, will end up misinterpreting these important Vedam statements.) “Who then is able to establish the identity of Ishvara?” is a question that arises naturally. Sri Kuresha submits that one need not be well versed in the Vedam. However, if one worships Lord Varadaraja at Hastigiri or Lord Srinivasa in Tirumala with bhakti, they will automatically be endowed with the knowledge of the Supreme Being, Lord Narayana. In this context, Sri Kuresha states that the sacred hill Hastigiri or Venkatam hill (as glorified in the **imayOr adipatiyE** tribute of Svami NammAzhvar) reveal the identity of the Supreme Being. Thus, it is established on account of the hill that Lord Srinivasa is Ishvaran, the Supreme Being. The term Ishvara in the context of His overlordship of the entire universe declares Him to be independent and not subject to the command of anyone. However, Sri Kuresha avers that “**parAdhInAm tvAm tu praNataparatantram manumahe**” namely that the Lord does not have any independence when it comes to His Bhaktas. Instead, He is completely bound by their appeal and acts to fulfill their commands. Lord Varadaraja is quite shocked by this extreme interpretation and asks of Sri Kuresha “What? The Vedam declares Ishvara to be independent and you offer an interpretation that is completely opposed to this.” Sri Kuresha answers in the affirmative and states “indeed”. What is it that Lord Varadaraja did that caused Sri Kuresha to declare thus? This is answered through the observation, that Lord Narayana has taken root as the Archa murti in the Venkatam hill as Lord Srinivasa. However, He is constantly at the command of His Archakas receiving some upacharam or the other never getting even a moment’s respite. Barely 10 minutes after shayanam it is time for Suprabhata sevai following which there are numerous sevais lined up in sequence

without offering the Lord a break. Thus, the Lord becomes **archaka parAdhIna**. Not only that, Temple administrators also do not desire to be left behind and are eager to demonstrate their influence too. Thus, the Lord becomes parAdhIna for the Temple administrators too! All the alankarams submitted by the archakas are accepted by Lord Srinivasa in the manner of Madhurakavi Azhvar's tribute "**kaNNinum ciRutAmbinAl kaTTuNNa paNNiya perumAyan**". Thus, He is archaka parAdhIna. Not only that He is parAdhIna to Tirumala Nambi since He has to wait for the latter to perform his teertha kaimkaryam from Akasha ganga. To demonstrate the elevated bhakti of Tirumala Nambi to the world, the Lord declares "**tAta tAta** (Father Father)! I am thirsty. Please bring Me water." This practice is followed to this day as the Lord awaits theertha kaimkaryam from the descendants of Tirumala Nambi for Tiruvaradhanam. Likewise, Lord Varadaraja awaits the theertham from the well offered by his kaimkaryaparas for Tiruvaradhanam. Furthermore, Sri AnanthAzhwan rendered nandavana kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa. The Lord assisted Sri AnanthAzhwan every step of the way. If he was engaged in tilling the land, the Lord followed suit. If he was planting a tree, the Lord did so too. If he was digging for water, the Lord too was engaged in the same activity. Even today at the mukhadvAram of Tirumala, one can behold the gardening tools symbolizing the kaimkaryam of Sri AnanthAzhwan. This again attests to the fact that the Lord is a bhakta parAdhIna. Lord Varadaraja has taken root as the Archa murti on the elephant hill (Hastigiri). Once in Archa form the Lord becomes silent. All His messages are conveyed by His Archakas. However, Tirukacchi Nambi, who rendered Chamara Kaimkaryam (fan service) to Lord Varadaraja, enjoyed the privilege of conversation with the Lord. If the Lord engaged in this act in spite of Archa samadhi, it denotes that the Lord is bhakta parAdhIna. These are instances in recent times. If one goes further back to the vrutthAntham of the Azhvars, the life of Triumazhisai Azhvar with YathoktakAri Bhagavan in Kanchipuram illustrates His bhakta parAdhInam in a lucid manner. In the **Vega Setu** stotram, Swami Desikan declares "**caturAnana saptatantu goptA saritaM vegavatImasau nirundhan paripuShyati mangaLani puMsAM bhagavAn bhaktimatAM yathoktakAri**" (The Lord reclining at this Divya Desam confers auspiciousness to all those who come to worship Him with bhakti. In fact, He ensures an increase in the bhakti for these followers.) He is glorified as yathoktakAri - namely one who carries out the wishes of His bhaktas, bound by their bhakti. In Tamil this is described as "**sonna vaNNam seyyum perumAL**" (one who follows the commands of His bhaktas). This Divya Desam is the avatara sthalam of Poygai Azhvar. The beauty of the Moolavar and Utsavar at this sannadhi is captivating.



The Lord will act as per Her wishes!

Once Tirumazhisai Azhvar visited this Divya Desam. So great was the Azhvar that he would enjoy Bhagavad sAkShAtkAram (direct experience of the Lord) through yogam. The Azhvar took residence near the PushkaraNi known as Poygai kuLam and engaged in his Tapas to experience the Lord. An elderly lady, adopted the Azhvar as her guide and rendered dutiful service to him. One day upon completion of his yogam, the Azhvar beholds the elderly lady and asks her "Please let me know what you want. I shall gladly fulfill your desire." The elderly lady replied that she would like to be rid of the travails of old age and instead desired to get back her youth. The Azhvar declared "so be it". Accordingly, the elderly woman was transformed into a beautiful young lady. The king of the land, Pallavarayan, was infatuated by the beauty of this lady and desired to marry her and started living with her. Many days passed in this pursuit. The king aged greatly as a result whereas the lady's youth was preserved. He asked the lady as to how his youth can be restored. The lady informed him that there is a staunch sishya of Sri Tirumazhisai Azhvar named KaNikaNNan. If the king approached him and requested the latter to offer a song of tribute to the king, it is possible for the king to regain his youth. It must be borne in mind that Tirumazhisai Azhvar is a ParamaikAntin par excellence and so too is his devout follower KaNikaNNan. Therefore, he would not render a

song in praise of anyone else besides Lord Narayana. The king nevertheless makes the request to KaNikaNNan, who responds “mAniDam pADavanta kaviyEn allEn” (I do not render songs in praise of mere mortals). Svami Desikan too echoes the same sentiment in the **Nyasa Tilakam**. The king persisted in his request to KaNikaNNan. However, the latter refused this flatly on the grounds that he would only render songs of praise on Lord Narayana and his bhagavatas but not a king who demands this. Infuriated by KaNikaNNan’s reply, the king ordered him to leave his kingdom. KaNikaNNan went to the shrine of YathOktakAri Perumal and offered his salutations. He then went to the PushkaraNi nearby where Sri Tirumazhisai Azhvar was engaged in yogam and tearfully submitted his prayer “Master! I have served you dutifully all these days. However, now onwards I will not have the good fortune of rendering kaimkaryam to you since the king has ordered me to leave the kingdom for refusing his persistent request to render his praise. Therefore, I have come to seek your blessings before leaving this land.” The Azhcar was quite shocked to hear this and remarked “So be it. If you leave this land, I shall not stay back. I too shall go with you. Not only that when we both leave, YathOktakAri Perumal will also leave with us. He is bound to be followed by Brahma and the other Parivara Devathas.” The Azhvar then rendered the Pasuram “KaNikaNNan pOkinRAN kAmarupUnkacchi maNivaNNa nI kiDakka vENDa tuNivuDaiya cenna pulavanum pOkinREn nlyum un tan painnAkap pAi suruTTikoL” (Oh Manivanna! KaNikaNNan has been ordered to leave this kingdom. I too am bound to leave due to the same reason. Now it is inappropriate for You to remain in Your reclining posture here, when it is bereft of Bhagavatas. Therefore, roll up Your serpent bed and follow us). The Lord immediately heeded this appeal and began to follow the Azhvar and kaNikaNNan. Once the Lord left the place, all the parivAra devatas followed suit, leaving behind nothing but emptiness. It was in the same manner as the trees and creepers of Ayodhya, which were yielding bountiful fruits but withered away when Lord Rama decided to leave for the forest. This is described by Valmiki Bhagavan in the **Ramayanam** salutation “api vR^ikShAH parimlAnaH sapuShpa ankura korakAH upataptodakA nadyaH palvalAni sarAMsi ca”. In a like manner, all the parivAra devatas left Kanchipuram. Thus, it was like the Sri (wealth) of Kanchipuram leaving for residence elsewhere. Beholding this sight of a barren Kanchipuram, the king encountered enormous grief. His difficulties did not last for a day or two but seemed like an eternity. He then rushed to the shrine of YathoktakAri Bhagavan and submitted an impassioned appeal to return to His svasthAnam. However, the Lord informed the king that He would return only if the Azhvar comes back.

Accordingly, the king rushed to the Azhvar's side, full of contrition and requested the Azhvar to return to Kanchipuram. However, the Azhvar decreed that his return is possible only if his disciple kaNikaNnan decided to return. The king fell at the feet of KaNikaNnan, sought forgiveness for the apacharam, and requested his return to Kanchipuram. When KaNikaNnan relented and agreed to return to Kanchipuram, the Azhvar submitted another beautiful appeal to the Lord "KaNikaNnan pOkointAn kAmaru pUnkacchi maNivaNNA nI kiDakka vENDi tunivuDaya cennapulavan nAnum pOkointEn nlyum untan painAka pAyai virittu koL" (KaNikaNnan has decided to return. I too am following suit. Therefore, You please roll out Your serpent bed and return to Kanchipuram in Your reclining posture.) Accordingly, the Lord returned to His svasthAnam. This instance is intended to illustrate an important point. This Divya Desam is called Tiruvekka. Here the Lord is seen reclining on the serpent bed with His left hand as support. Normally, in a reclining posture, one uses the right hand for support. The visesham here is that the Lord implicitly follows the command of His Bhagavatas as evidenced by the **Vegasetu stotram** tribute "bhaktAnuganturiha yasya gatA gatAni". Therefore, Svami Desikan enquires of Daya Devi "Is the Lord Paratantrar or Svatantarar in light of these instances?" Another instance from the life of Tirumazhisai Azhvar becomes relevant. When he visited Tirukutantai to perform mangalasasanam, he beholds Aravamuta Perumal in His reclining posture. It occurs to the Azhvar that the Lord is enduring some discomfort causing him to break out with the tribute in his **Tirucchantaviruttam** "naDanta kAlkal nontavO naDunka j~nAlam EnamAi iDanta mei kulunkavO vilanku mAl varaiccuram kaDanta kal paranta kAviri karai kuDantaiyuL kiDantavaRu ezhuntiruntu pEcu vAzhi kEcanE" (In Your incarnation as Trivikrama, You measured the entire universe including the earth, and heavenly regions in two giant strides. Is the effort from this task the reason for Your fatigue and causing You to rest? During the Varaha avataram, You bore the entire earth on Your tusks. Is this the cause for Your fatigue? Now that I have sung Your praise, I see that You have some relief. Therefore, please arise from Your reclining pose and engage in conversation with me!). In response to the Azhvar's tribute, the Lord of TirukuDantai, Sri Aravamutan, is seen in a slightly raised mode as opposed to a completely flat reclining posture. He is known as AparyAptAmR^itan - namely the one that anybody never gets tired of enjoying no matter how long they enjoy Him. Thus, this is another instance of the Lord obeying the command of Tirumazhisai Azhvar. Svami Desikan reiterates his message to Daya Devi "In light of this instance please determine for Yourself if the Lord is Svantran or Paratantran?" In the Krishna avataram, the Lord used to accompany the ladies



vyavasthAM vaiyAtyA diti vighaTayanti viharasi

of Gokulam when they proceeded to the Yamuna River to engage in snAnam. Bathing ghats are not always available near the Yamuna River. The snAna shuddhi for ladies - especially sumangalis comes about only when they apply turmeric paste to their bodies and perform snanam. Since the riverbank was replete with sand, it became impossible to make the turmeric into paste. Therefore, they used to summon Lord Krishna and ask Him to bend down. They would use His back to prepare the turmeric paste and apply it on their bodies. After they finished their bath, Krishna would return home. Yashoda would look at His back and enquire "How come Your dark form has this yellow covering on the back?" Lord Krishna replied "You were the one who sent Me as an escort for the ladies of Gokulam when they went for their bath. They could not find bathing ghats for preparing turmeric paste for their bath. Therefore, they used My back." Yashoda was deeply moved by this reply from the Lord. This is captured in the anubhavam of Periya Azhvar in **PeriyAzhvAr Tirumozhi** "paRRu manjal pUci pAvai mArODu pADiyil ciRRil citaittenkum tImai ceitu tiriyAmE kaRRu tULiyuDai vEDar kAniDai kanRin pin eRRukken piLLayai pokkinEn eIlE pAvamE" (The instruction from Yashoda to Lord Krishna the next day is that let the ladies of Gokulam find another way to mix turmeric into paste. They should not use Your back. However, Lord Krishna disregards this instruction and accompanies the Gopikas again the next day. The Gopikas do not have any means for mixing turmeric paste and resort to Lord Krishna's back once more. The cows and calves are greatly moved by Lord Krishna's plight. On the one hand He incurs Yashoda's anger and hence her words of scolding for lending His back to the Gopikas. On the other hand, the Gopikas are unrelenting in their demand for Lord Krishna's back to prepare their turmeric paste. Therefore, at least to spare Him the scolding from Yashoda the calves and cows lick His back clean of the turmeric paste! Such is the bhakta paradhIna nature of Lord Narayana). Again, in the Mahabharata war, Lord Krishna follows the command of Arjuna as evidenced by the Bhagavadgita salutation "senayorubhayormadhye ratham sthApaya" (take my chariot to the middle of the two armies). It must be borne in mind that Arjuna regards Lord Krishna as a mere charioteer and commands the Lord to steer the chariot to various places. Is this not further proof that the Lord is ParAdhIna for Arjuna or more generally Bhakta ParAdhIna? Furthermore, the Lord has the names of ParthasArati and PANDava dUta. ParthasArati denotes the fact that He is the Charioteer of PARtha. In other words, the Lord is subservient to PARtha. However, the Lord regards this as a BhAgyam. PANDava dUta denotes the fact that the Lord was prepared to perform the most menial of services - functioning as a messenger on behalf of the Pandavas. However, the Lord regards

this as a privilege and adopts the name PANDava dUta. He is the Archa murti in a Divya Desam in Periya Kanchipuram. Here, He is in sitting posture. Despite this He is taller than the murtis of Varadaraja perumal and UlagaLanda Perumal, where He is standing and is gigantic. Each limb of the Lord starting from His nails is worthy of enjoyment at this Divya Desam. Svami Desikan enquires of Daya Devi “Oh Mother! Based on all the arguments I have advanced thus far, how could it be stated that the Lord is Svatantrar?” The manner of this Paratrantrayam needs to be examined carefully. In the **MantrarAjapada Stotram**, Ahirbudhnyan declares “**dAsabhUtAH svatassarve hyAtmAnaH paramAtmanaH atohamapi te dAsaH iti matvA namAmyaham.**” (The essential nature of all Your dAsabhutas is to be subservient to You, Oh Bhagavan Nrusimha!). For such dAsabhutas, the Lord acts according to their dictates. This then raises the question whether such a status of acting as per the dictates of His Bhagavatas is “**svataH siddham**” (essential nature) for Bhagavan. This is answered by observing that such action on the part of Bhagavan is not svataH siddham for Him. Instead, it is His iccha (desire) on account of His own sankalpam. “**paratantraH praNamatAM bhavati**”- the salutation from this Daya



Satakam verse, becomes relevant thus. That is Lord Narayana, who is not subservient to anyone, acts in manner that is in conformance with the commands of His Bhagavatas. This comes about on account of His Sankalpam in keeping with the statement “**sveccayaiva pareshasya sadadhinya balathunaH bhagavad bhakta sheShatavam sveccayApi kvacidbhavet**”. In fact, Lord Narayana considers it to be an honor to act in a subservient manner to His Bhaktas. This is reflected in Svami Desikan’s **NavamaNimAlai** tribute “**cencol anbar cintaikoNDu ttilAta tUtanAi tErum Urntu tEcuyarnta celva deiva nAyaka**” (Hearing the command of His Bhagavatas, Lord Narayana acts in a manner that is in

conformance with His role as a messenger. Duryodhana being aware of Lord Krishna’s arrival in the court as the messenger of the Pandavas, had ordered everyone to accord no respect to the Lord. The Lord arrives like a common

messenger, conforms to all the protocols befitting a messenger, and delivers His message in the Kaurava court. Not only this, the Lord later served as the charioteer for Arjuna. By undertaking these tasks His radiance grew several fold. That is the already effulgent Lord's effulgence increased several-fold due to being Bhakta ParAdhIna).

Thus, Svami Desikan comprehensively lays out the case that the Lord is Svatantaran in all aspects other than Bhakta rakShaNam and enquires of Daya Devi "Oh Mother! Are You now convinced of my position that the Lord is Bhakta ParAdhIna? Therefore, if You make the request for protection on my behalf will the Lord not act to protect me?" This is the import of the salutation "**ananyAdhInaH san bhavati paratantraH praNamatAM**". The salutation "**kR^ipe teShAm apakR^itim na gaNayati**" from this verse is examined next. Daya Devi responds to Svami Desikan with the words "I completely accept your logical arguments. However, there is still one bothersome aspect. You have committed sins that have accumulated like a mountain from beginningless time. You continue to engage in sinful acts. You will also continue to sin in future. These are glaring violations of the Lord's commands. You engage in "akR^ityAnAm ca karaNam kR^ityAnAm varjanam" (namely you engage in all forbidden acts, while readily giving up acts that the Lord has ordered you to undertake.). How then can you expect the Lord to favor you?" Svami Desikan answers this through the tribute "**kR^ipe teShAm apakR^itim na gaNayati**" (The Lord does not even keep count of the numerous transgressions of a SaraNagata. This account is written off by the Lord so to speak. Hence there is nothing to worry on this count. How so? The Lord who is required to mete out punishment for these transgressions does not do so. Thereby He ignores these erroneous actions on the part of the SaraNagata). This is very similar to the treatment of preferred employees versus detested employees in the workplace. The former may routinely arrive late. However, because of his stature, this is never questioned. However, the latter is subject to numerous disciplinary actions as permitted by law. Another example is that of doting parents condoning the errant actions of their recalcitrant child. In a like manner, the Lord forgives the transgressions on the part of a SaraNagata. The use of ekavacanam denoted by "apakR^itim" in this context must be observed. This is used to depict the Lord's disposition in that no matter how grave the offences committed by the SaraNagata, Lord Narayana bundles them all up and regards them as a single trivial act. Again, Svami Desikan's careful choice of words in this context need to be observed. He does not use "**na pashyati**" (does not see). Instead, he describes the Lord's disposition through the statement "**na gaNayati**" (does not count). There is a

difference between not seeing and not counting. The latter is the Lord's disposition towards the grave offences on the part of the SaraNagata. Does this mean that the Lord is ignorant of these offences? He definitely knows that the saraNagata has committed these offences since He is known as "sarva dR^iShTa" (all observant one). The Ramayanam salutation "Na smaratyapacArANAm shatamapi atmavattaya" (Lord Rama's greatness lies in the fact that even if one has committed apacharams in the hundreds towards him, the Lord forgives such beings) becomes relevant here. In keeping with the spirit of this tribute, Lord Narayana forgives all the apacharams on the part of a SaraNagata. In the Vishnu sahasranamam, the Lord is eulogiz/ed as "avij~nAtA" (ignorant one). One may ask, with respect to what does this ignorance prevail? It is in regard to the sins committed by His SaraNagatas. This would then open up the issue that such a tribute is in contradiction to His glorification as "sarvaj~na" (all knowing one). This needs to be understood in context in that the Lord is not ignorant of the sins committed by His SaraNagatas. He is fully aware of these acts. However, the "avij~nAta" tribute comes about due to the fact that He does not punish them for these sinful acts on account of His compassionate disposition towards them. In a like manner, the Lord does not count the numerous sinful acts committed by His SaraNagatas and instead regards these offences as a single trivial item. Daya Devi accepts all of Svami Desikan's arguments in this context. She then poses a follow up question "Oh Svami! I accept all your eloquently stated arguments. However, what is the justification for Me to make the request to the Lord on your behalf. Based on what authority will the Lord accept My request?" The answer to this question lies in the tribute "patistvatpArArthyaM prathayati vR^iSha kShamAdhara patiH" Lord Srinivasa always demonstrates that He is the Paratantrar for Daya Devi. In fact, His every act is carried out at the command of Daya Devi. Daya Devi is none other than Mahalakshmi Thayar. The Lord in this instance acts in conformance with the command of Thayar. Sri Kuresha salutes this aspect of Thayar in the Sri Stavam through the eulogy "yasyA vIkShya mukhaM tadingitaparAdhIno vidhattekhilaM krIDeyaM khalu nanyathAsya rasadA syAdaikarasyAttayA" (The Lord undertakes the acts of sR^iShTi, stithi, and layam - creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. While undertaking these tasks He looks at Thayar for approval. Only upon discerning Thayar's approval from the look on Her face does the Lord proceed with His act. Thus, Lord Narayana becomes the "ingita pArAdhInaH" for Thayar.) Sri Parashara Bhattar goes a step further and states "anglkaribhiH AIOkaiH" to denote the fact that Lord Narayana engages in His act of creation and has arrived at the final stage of the process. Only if Thayar approves the act through the looks on Her eyebrows, does the act get



Lord Srinivasa considers the Kataksham of Thayar upon Him to be a parama bhagyam

completed. If she disapproves, the action stops. Thus, there is no doubt that the Lord performs all actions at the command of Thayar and is thus AdhInam to Thayar. It is also helpful to recall the tribute from an earlier verse of the **Daya Satakam** where Svami Desikan declares “**acida vishiShTAn praLaye jantUn avalokya jAta nirveda**” (Daya Devi is responsible for giving sentients specific forms from their inert state during the time of praLayam). Thus, even if Lord Srinivasa grants benefits or undertakes an act, it is established beyond reasonable doubt that Daya Devi is instrumental for this. Sri Kuresha again declares in the **Sri Stavam** tribute “**tenaitena na vismaye mahi jagannatthopi nArAyaNaH dhanyaM manyata**

IkShaNAttava yataH svAtmAnamAtmeshvaraH” (The Lord is His own master! He is subservient to none. However, He considers the Kataksham of Thayar upon Him to be a parama bhagyam).

Thus, Swami Desikan addresses Daya Devi’s question “Oh Mother! Based on the references quoted in this context, it is not inappropriate to conclude that Lord Narayana is Your parAdhIna. Thus, there needs to be no doubt about the success of one’s SaraNagati to You and that Your subsequent recommendation to the Lord will certainly be implemented.” In laukika terms, it is common practice for the lady of the house to conform to the recommendation of the man of the house. However, the opposite order has not always been accepted by traditionalists. However, at the present time this seems to be the accepted norm in most households! Thus, when it comes to the relationship between Lord Narayana and Mahalakshmi, the

Lord has no qualms about implementing the recommendation of Thayar. This is out of Thayar's overbearing concern for protecting the beings of the universe. She ensures that even though they may be replete with faults, these remain hidden from view for Lord Narayana and highlights their good actions to invoke His grace. Svami Desikan further declares in the tribute "vyavasthAM vaiyAtyA diti vighaTayantI viharasi" that even if the Lord Himself wanted to alter the disposition of His paratantryam to Daya Devi, He would not be able to do this. It is helpful to recall Sri Andal's Tiruppavai salutation "untannODu uravEl namakkinku ozhikka ozhiyAtu". In the Eastern parts of India, there lived a poet named Jayadeva, who composed the AShTapati. This is quite popular in that region. This is a tribute to Radha and Lord Krishna. In one verse he states "smara-garala-khandanam, mama shirasi maNDanam dehi pada-pallavam udAram jvalati mayi dAruNo madana-kadanAnalo haratu tad upahita-vikAram, priye cArushIle" (My beloved! Offer the fresh buds of your enchanting feet as an ornament upon My head, so the devastating effect of Cupid's poison may be alleviated, and the harsh fire of amorous desires may also be relieved.) Contrast this with the prayer of the Gopikas to Lord Krishna "Our hearts must be sanctified by Your feet that have traversed the harsh terrain of the forest. This is the only way to destroy our sins." Jayadeva realizes that he has made an error in requesting Radha's feet to adorn the head of Lord Krishna. Thus, he destroys the palm leaf on which this verse was written. No matter how hard he tried to re-write this verse, the same words ended up repeating themselves. Somewhat angered by this, he decided to hold off on writing this verse and come back to it later. He then went to perform snAnam. Upon his return and completion of his daily routine, he found the palm leaf with the verse that he had destroyed. He enquired of his wife if someone had come to their house while he was engaged in snAnam and written the verse. His wife replied nobody other than him had written this. She said to him "You went out, returned, wrote this verse and went out again and returned. You forgot that you had written this verse in between your going out and coming back a couple of times." Jayadeva realizes that it is Lord Krishna who arrived when he had gone out for snAnam and authored this verse and hence decided to retain it as is. Thus, it is established from another perspective that Lord Krishna is desirous of being "RADhA Paratantryan". Therefore, in this instance, Lord Srinivasa has no qualms about being Paraatantryan to Daya Devi. What a miracle has been brought about by Daya Devi! She has transformed Lord Srinivasa, who is declared to be Svatantran by the Vedas, to be Her Paratrantran. Furthermore, even though He is fully aware of the sinful acts committed by His SaraNagatas, He does not take cognizance of these sins and instead regards these



mama shirasi maNDanam dehi pada-pallavam priye cArushlle

as a single trivial act of error on their part. Daya Devi enjoys the anubhavam of the Lord declared to be Svatantran by the Vedas becoming the PraNata Paratantran- namely subservient to His Bhagavatas and carrying out their commands. Furthermore, Daya Devi is the reason for the Lord, who is known as sarva dR^iShTA, to ignore the sins committed by His SharaNagatas. The Lord is SarvasheShi - master of the entire universe. However, Daya Devi transforms Him to become Her sheShan (one who follows Daya Devi's command). This transformation of the Lord totally opposed to the conventional norm, is accomplished by Daya Devi as a matter of an act of sport. Thus, Svami Desikan concludes his submission to Daya Devi in this verse with a request for protection "Oh Mother Daya Devi! There is nothing that is impossible for You to accomplish. Since I have performed SaraNagati to You, it becomes Your duty to protect me. As I have outlined here, the Lord functions as Your Paratantrayan. Therefore, Your recommendation on my behalf will undoubtedly be implemented by Him." Thus, those of us who have performed SaraNagati to Daya Devi can rest assured of the Lord's protection. In fact, due to this SaraNagati, we acquire the status of queens, that gain priority when it comes to receiving the anugraham of the Lord. We conclude this exposition with a prayerful request to Lord Srinivasa, Daya Devi, and Svami Desikan for growth of Bhakti towards them, increase in Bhagavad Kaimkarya ruchi and Kaimkaryam growth for Svami Desikan. "

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

"Lord Srinivasa of Vrishadri is a super-master. He can never be subservient to anyone, but actually He makes Himself obedient and to be ordered about, in respect of those who chose the Prapatti path. Furthermore, He is reputed as omniscient and all-perceiving. However, He does not reckon the offence of Prapannas. Oh Daya Devi! Your consort proclaims that He bears Paratantryam to You. So much so, You loudly and proudly announce a reconciled situation, namely reversed relationship of Paratantryam between the Lord and Prapannas/Yourself, which is virtually impossible to bring about. You do this as an act of sport.

1. It is well known that the Lord is the inner soul to all beings. However, in the Bhagavadgita, He declares the j~nAni to be His soul.
2. He is the sheShi to the entire universe but is sheShan to Daya Devi."

Slokam 64

अपां पत्युः शत्रूनसहन मुनेर्धर्म निगळं
कृपे काकस्यैकं हितमिति हिनस्ति स्म नयनम् ।
विलीन स्वातन्त्र्यो वृषगिरि पतिस्त्वद्विहृतिभिः
दिशत्येवं देवो जनित सुगतिं दण्डन गतिम् ॥ ६४ ॥

ApAM patyuH shatrUnasahana munerdharma nigalaM
kR^ipe kAkasyaikaM hitamiti hinasti sma nayanam |
villna svAtantryo vR^iShagiri patistvat vihR^itibhiH
dishatyevaM devo janita sugatiM daNDana gatim | |64



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

“We now begin the elaboration of verse 64 which is “ApAM patyuH shatrUnasahana munerdharma nigalaM kR^ipe kAkasyaikaM hitamiti hinasti sma nayanam villna svAtantryo vR^iShagiri patistvat vihR^itibhiH dishatyevaM devo janita sugatiM daNDana gatim” This is a beautiful verse. Svami Desikan continues his glorification of Daya Devi. In the previous verse, Lord Srinivasa, who is declared to be Svatantran by the Vedam, out of His own desire, becomes Paratantran to His Bhagavatas, Sharangatas and Daya Devi. Furthermore, even though He is the all-knowing one and thus is fully aware of the sinful acts on the part of Sharanagatas, He does not highlight these flaws and mete out punishment. Instead, out of compassion, He bundles up these offences into a single trivial act and ignores them. All of this comes about on account of His being

Paratantran for Daya Devi. Thus, the glory of Daya Devi exceeds even that of Lord Srinivasa. Next, when it comes to vyapara karyams of sR^iShTi (creation), stithi (preservation), and layam (dissolution), the Lord undertakes them in accordance with the accumulated karma for each individual being. For those with good karma, the Lord confers a noble birth. For those who have sinned greatly, He confers birth in a pApa yoni consigning them to have an inherent disposition to commit sins. Likewise, in accordance with the wrongful acts committed by these beings, Lord Srinivasa metes out appropriate punishment. Even these acts of punishment, on account of Daya Devi's intervention, ultimately results in something good for these beings. The tribute "ApAM patyuH shatrUnasahana munerdharma nigalaM kR^ipe kAkasyaikaM hitamiti hinasti sma nayanam" reflects the fact that "Oh Daya Devi! Lord Srinivasa acts in accordance with a sport that You engage in (as evidenced in the "tvat vihR^itibhiH" salutation). Consequently, even His apparent acts of punishment result in the ultimate good for those who are punished. This comes about on account of an act of sport in keeping with Svami NammAzhvar's words of praise "alli malar bhogayarkaLAIE"". Due to Her Leela, the Lord alters His intent so to speak. We have sinned gravely. This is not over one or two days but over countless lifetimes. The extent of these sins is also quite vast. If one has sinned, one needs to endure the consequences for these sins. In Tamil there is a saying "uppu sAppiTtavan tlrtham kuDicchuthAn AkaNum" (one who has partaken of salt necessarily needs to drink water). However, our sin-pile is so great and mountainous that by the time we endure the consequences time itself will run out as documented in verse 34 of the Daya Satakam. Thus, despite having sinned greatly, there is protection for us. How does this come about? This is the crux of the matter and is addressed in this verse. Once a being has performed Sharanagati to Lord Srinivasa, it should not be construed that the jivan has accomplished a great task as a consequence of which moksham is attained. Instead, Svami Desikan instructs us that the correct perspective is that Lord Srinivasa treats the act of Sharanagati as an excuse to invoke His grace, which results in the benefit of moksham for the jivan. The role of Daya Devi in this context is important to note. Specifically, She ensures that Lord Srinivasa, who is greatly angered by the sins committed by the jivan and resolves to mete out punishment, is appeased and even the punishment from the Lord results in the well-being for the jivan. Another important capsule of wisdom embedded in this verse is that it is not possible to perform Sharanagati easily. For this one requires jAyamAna kATakSham, Ishvara

sauhArdam, adveSham, abhimukhyam to perform some AnukUlyam to please the Lord, yAdR^icChika puNyam, and finally, sAdhu sambhAShaNam. These come about on account of Daya Devi. Sri Kuresha declares in the **Varadaraja Sthavam**, “Varada! tava khalu prasAdAdR^ite sharaNamiti vacopi me nodiyAt tvamasi mayi tataH prasAdonmukhaH” (If I did not have the anugraham of Daya Devi I would never be able to utter the words “I surrender to You for my upliftment”. Let there be no doubt that this utterance comes about entirely on account of Your Daya.) Svami Desikan too echoes this sentiment in the **NyAsa dashakam** salutations “ahaM madrakShaNabharo madrakShaNa phalam tathA na mama shrlpaterevetyAtmAnaM nikShipet budhaH” and “mAM madliyaM ca nikhilaM cetanAcetanAtmakam sva kalInkaryopa karaNaM varada svIkuru svayam”. Those who resort to Lord Narayana in this mode are assured of ultimate good on account of Daya Devi. In short, She alone is capable of transforming **Bhagavad nigraham** (punishment) into **anugraham** (blessing). One may reason “Is this even possible? Some one that has sinned greatly is accorded punishment in keeping with their offence. How then does this lead to something good?” In this verse, Svami Desikan quotes three specific instances from the RamayaNam to make the point. The first among them is “ApAM patyuH shatrUn” (ApAM patiH denotes the king of the body of water or Samudra Raja). This Samudra Raja was graced by Lord Rama. How so? A closer examination of the Lord’s encounter with Samudra Raja is in order. Valmiki Bhagavan is not known as Adikavi for nothing. His usage of words is appropriate, simple, and easy to understand for a mere child that is





unskilled in the nuances of Samskritam. The Ramayanam is replete with such usages. Specifically, the Lord accepted Vibhishana's sharanagati after consulting other leaders and commoners in the Vanara army, although He had decided before hand in accordance with His statement "Anaya enam hari shreShTha dattam asya abhayam mayA". This was done in order to overcome all opposition by the Vanaras to the acceptance of Vibhishana and to ensure that he can be afforded a prominent role in the war against Ravana. Once He accorded this prominent status to Vibhishana, Lord Rama addresses the entire Vanara army "We have now arrived at the shores of the sea. How do we cross the ocean and reach Lanka? This is no mean feat since the ocean is replete with tidal waves, which seem to crest higher and higher. The ocean is also vast. Thus, crossing the ocean is no small matter." One possibility would be to confer with Hanuman due to his prior experience. However, this was accomplished once

by Hanuman using his individual strength. However, in this instance the entire Vanara Army needs to cross the ocean and not all of them are endowed with Hanuman's strength. After careful consideration, Lord Rama addressed Vibhishana with the statement "sainaiH parivR^itAH sarve vAnarANAm mahAjasAm upAyair abhigaccAmo yathA nada nadI patim tarAma tarasA sarve sasainyA varuNa Alayam" "evam uktastu dharmaj~naH pratyuvAca vibhIShaNaH" (The Lord addressed Vibhishana thus: Please suggest a means for the entire Vanara army to cross the ocean and reach Lanka. This is not a case of one or two of us crossing the ocean.

Instead, all the vanaras in the army need to get to the other side.) Vibhishana replied through the salutation “**samudram rAghavo rAjA sharaNam gantum arhasi**” (If you undertake a sharanagati to Samudhra Raja, this mission will be accomplished). Lord Rama decreed “**vibhIShaNasya mantro ayam mama lakShmaNa rocate sugrIvaH paNDito nityam bhavAn mantra vicakShaNaH**” Lord Rama’s words illustrate an important point. Superficial meaning of this verse is “I think it is appropriate to undertake the sharanagati for Samudhra Raja as suggested by Vibhishana.” Deeper analysis surfaces an important question. Lord Rama is the emperor of the entire universe. Is it appropriate for Him to perform sharanagati to Samudhra Raja? The response to this question is found from the statement of Lord Rama Himself. If the sharanagati is performed for His own personal benefit, then the question becomes relevant.

However, when it is intended for the well-being of the entire universe, there is nothing wrong in performing sharanagati to anyone. It must be borne in mind that Lakshmana detests the meek approach of seeking any favors from anyone. Instead, he believes that Lord Rama should command all He Lords over to perform the demanded tasks. Therefore, it is instructive to note that in the first part of this Ramayanam verse, Lord Rama states “**satkriyA artham kriya dakShaH smita pUrvaM sambhAShita**” (Oh Lakshmana even if this sounds unpleasant to you, there is nothing wrong with adopting the approach of Sharanagati to Samudhra Raja as outlined by Vibhishana). Due to this act of Lord Rama, even today we have the bhagyam of darshanam of Lord Rama as Darbha shayanar at the Divya desham of TirupullANI. This is described in the Ramayanam salutation “**tataH sAgaravelAyAm darbhAnAstIrya rAghavaH anjalim prA~ngmukhaH kR^itvA pratishishye mahodadheH**”. This needs to be understood in the context of the subsequent Ramayanam verses, where Valmiki Bhagavan writes “**bAhum bhuja~nga bhogAbham upadhAyArisUdanaH, jAtarUpamayaishchaiva bhUShaNair bhUShitam purA**”, “**maNikAncanakeyUramuktApravarabhUShaNaiH, bhujaiH parama nArINAm bhimRiSHTamanekadhA**”, “**candanAgurubhishcaiva purutAdabhisevitam bAlasUryaprakAshaishca candanairupashobhitam**” (Lord Rama’s shoulders had numerous ornaments. Furthermore, this was the resting place for Sita Devi. Now the Lord uses the same arms to rest on the plain ground). Another verse from the Ramayanam becomes important here “**asyatA ca punaH savyam jyAghAtavigatatvacam dakShiNo kakShiNam bahum mahApAraghasAmnabham**

gosahasrapradAtAran hyupadhAya bhujam mahat adya me manaNam vAtha taraNam sAgarasya vA” (The hand has performed numerous gift-giving of cows, is now resting on the barren ground as support for Lord Rama’s head). This greatly pains Valmiki Maharishi. Lord Rama, an emperor, is sleeping on the bare ground by the sea-shore engaged in prayer to Samudhra Raja to make way for His army to cross over to Lanka. Lord Rama resolves that either He will cross the ocean or else something grave will befall Him. However, despite remaining on fast for three days and not even partaking of water, Samudhra Raja did not relent and accede to Lord Rama’s request. This greatly angered Lord Rama, who declared “sarvatra utsR^iShTa daNDam ca lokaH sat kurute naram na sAmnA shakyate klrtir na sAmnA shakyate yashaH” “prAptum lakShmaNa loka asmin jayo vA raNa mUdhani” In Tamil an equivalent saying is that “mayilE mayilEnnu sonnA iraku pODAtu” (namely by calling out a peacock, you cannot get it to drop a single feather. Only when held



and grabbed can one get the peacock feather). Lord Rama continues “Likewise, it was a grave mistake on My part to engage in prayers for Samudhra Raja. Those who are bereft of any strength or fame think no end of themselves. One cannot approach them in a pleasant manner for any help. Thus one has to resort to forceful means” This is captured in the Ramayanam salutation “sa darshayati sAmnA me sAgaro rUpamAtmanaH” (When I

approached Samudhra Raja respectfully through prayer, he did not heed My request. Now I have no other recourse but to use force.) The Lord then declares “cApam Anaya saumitre sharAmaH ca AshI viSha upamAn samudram shoShayiShyAmi padbhyAm yAntu plava~ngamAH” (Lakshmana! Bring Me My bow. With a single arrow, I shall dry up the ocean and transform it into a sand bed on which the entire Vanara army can cross over to Lanka by walking). Lakshmana is delighted to hear these words from Lord Rama and informed Rama “I am very

pleased to hear You speak thus. When You embarked on the prayerful submission to Samudhra Raja, I remained silent out of respect and due to the fact that I did not want to dissuade You from undertaking a noble task. But now I shall gladly bring You Your bow.” While mounting the arrow on his bowstring Lord Rama utters the statement “adya akShobhyam api kruddhaH shoShayiShyAmi sAgaram sapAtAlam mahArNava sharanirdagdha to yasya parishuShkasya sAgara” (I shall ensure that there is no trace of the ocean. Even if the ocean seeks refuge in the nether region, I shall ensure that there will be no water there.) Just the words of Lord Rama with His arrow ready for release caused the ocean waters to start boiling. The creatures residing in the ocean were in a state of panic. The nakshatrams and residents of the upper regions were aghast at the thought of the unmitigated catastrophe that could potentially come about due to Lord Rama’s anger. Samudhra Raja surfaced then and came before Lord Rama. It is instructive to reproduce Valmiki Bhagavan’s matchless description of this instance in the Ramayanam salutation “ga~ngasindhupradhAnAbhirApagAbhiH samAvR^itaH” (Samudhra Raja was scared to appear alone. Therefore, he appeared as the the Lord of Ganga and Sindhu, Yamuna and the like. These rivers are feminine. Samudhra Raja is the consort of these ladies so to speak). It is precisely to mirror the Valmiki Ramayanan salutation that Svami Desikan uses the tribute “ApAM patyuH shatrUn” in this Daya Satakam verse. Samudhra Raja then submits his prayer to Lord Rama “Oh Lord! Your anger towards me is incomprehensible. My conduct is entirely in keeping with Your sR^iShTi (creation).” Again, the appeal of Samudhra Raja from the Valmiki Ramayanam salutation is quoted “sAgaraH samatikramya pUrvam Amantrya vlryavAn”, “abravIt prAnjalir vAkyam rAghavam shara pANinam pR^ithivi vayur AkAsham Apo jyotiH ca rAghavaH”, “svabhAve saumya tiShThanti shAshvatam mArgam AshritAH” (Beholding Lord Rama with bow in hand Samudhra Raja submitted his prayer that the earth, wind, sky, water, light, are all in existence in accordance with their essential nature. For example, the fire is hot. If it does not burn anything that it comes in contact with, that would be contrary to its essential nature. There would have to be a compelling reason for this. Even the fire that did not harm Anjaneya, was due to the prayer of Sita Piratti. Similarly, each object of Your creation remains true to its essential nature. In this instance, my essential nature is to run deep and not to let anyone cross over. Thus, I acted in conformance with this fact.) This is reflected in the Ramayanam salutation “tat svabhAvo mama api eSha yad agAdho aham aplavaH” (My essential nature is to run deep and remain

vast not allowing anyone to cross over. Thus, I am acting in conformance with this fact. Thus, my intention is not to remain unhelpful to You but to merely act in accordance with Your prescribed role for me. When this is the case, is Your anger against me justified? I will definitely help You and ensure that the entire Vanara



army is able to safely cross over to Lanka. None of the whales or alligators in the ocean will harm them. However, please do not use Your arrow against me.) Lord Rama responds to this prayer with the statement “harINAm taraNo rAma kariShyAmi yathAsthalam tamabravIttadA rAmaH shruNu me varuNALaya”, “amogho(a)yam mahAbAnaH kasmin deshe nipAtyatAm” (I accept Your submission. However, this arrow mounted on My bowstring cannot be wasted. It has to be used.

Where can I aim this?) To this, Samudhra Raja replies “drumakulya iti khyAto loke khyAto yathA bhavAn ugradarshanakarmANo bahavastatra dasyavaH”, “abhlrapramukhAH pApAH pibanti salilam mamatairna tatsparshanam pApam saheyam pApakarmabhiH” (I have a few enemies. There is place known as Drumakulya which is inhabited by people engaged in extremely sinful acts. They make use of my water for all prohibited purposes and thus cause me untold harassment. Please aim Your arrow at these inhabitants and rid me of their menace.) Accordingly, Lord Rama aimed His arrow at these beings and rid Samudhra Raja of his trouble. This is captured in the Daya Satakam salutation “ApAM patyuH”. Thus, Lord Rama, who intended to punish Samudhra Raja for his perceived recalcitrance in coming to His help, ended up exterminating the enemies of Samudhra Raja. This is the visesham here. A similar instance can be found in the Krishna avataram too. The poisonous snake Kalinga had contaminated the Yamuna water with venom resulting in the death of numerous innocent victims that unknowingly drank the water. Lord Krishna was quite outraged by this act of Kalinga and decided to punish the serpent. Beholding the ferocity of Lord Krishna’s dance

on the hoods of Kalinga and blood oozing out of them, the wives of Kalinga perform sharanagati to Lord Krishna for protection of their mAngalyam. Their appeal to Lord Krishna was “Please do not kill Kalinga. This will result in the loss of sumangali status for us and confer upon us widowhood. Therefore, please spare his life.” The same intent is conveyed by Samudhra Raja by appearing before Lord Rama with all the nadhis. The inner meaning is that “By aiming Your arrow on me, You will confer widowhood upon these rivers. Therefore, please do not engage in this act”. Kalinga too submits an appeal to Lord Krishna similar in spirit to Samudhra Raja “I am incapable of glorifying You. However, I want to bring an important point to Your attention. All beings in the universe are created by You and act in accordance with their essential nature again bestowed upon them by You. In this instance, You created me as a snake and endowed me with poison, which I had been spreading. Now, angered by this fact, You want to exterminate me. Is this appropriate?” Lord Krishna responds to this with the statement “There is an appropriate place for using this venom. Instead, You used this against innocent Sadhus, who were engaged in austerities. That is the mistake for which I had to punish you.” Here too it must be noted that although Lord Krishna seemingly meted out punishment to Kalinga by dancing on his hoods, He provided a great anugraham to the serpent, namely blessing the serpent’s hoods with the touch of His feet. Additionally, it must be noted that while Lord Krishna destroyed numerous asuras, heeding the appeal of the wives of Kalinga, He spared the serpent’s life and instructed the serpent to leave the precincts of lake that was inhabited by the serpent.” This transformation of a seemingly punitive act (dandana gatim) on the part of the Lord into a great blessing (sugatim) is undoubtedly the work of Daya Devi as described by Svami Desikan in this verse. Sri Kuresha glorifies the Lord in the **AthimAnuSha sthavam** as “ha janmatAsu sikatAsu mayA na labdhaM rAse tvayA virahitAH kila gopakanyAH yAstAvakInapadapa~nktijuShojuShanta nikShipya tatra nijama~nga mana~nga taptam” (Once during the performance of RasAkrida, You disappeared from view. The Gopikas were unable to bear the separation from You and were literally scorched by the heat arising from this separation. They rid themselves of their plight by rolling in the sand of the Yamuna river-bank, which was blessed by the touch of Your feet. How I wish I was a grain of that sand sanctified by Your lotus feet!) Thus, Lord Rama, who was subjected to a three day fast without water and an unrelenting attitude by Samudhara Raja who was clearly deserving of punishment was instead graced by Lord Rama with the destruction of his enemies.

The cause for this transformation on the part of Lord Rama is undoubtedly Daya Devi. The next instance of such a transformation is described in the Daya Satakam tribute “*asahana munerdharma nigalaM*”. In this context *asahanam* denotes jealousy. Here the reference is to muni Parashurama. This is again an instance from the Ramayanam. Upon completion of the marriage ceremony of Lord Rama, Dasharatha, the princes of Ayodhya along with their entire retinue embarked upon their return to Ayodhya from Mithila. At this juncture, Parashurama of matchless radiance arrives before them. His radiance is described in the Valmiki Ramayanam salutations “*jvalantamiva tejobhiH durnirIkShyam pR^ithaj janaiH*” “*tam dR^iShTvA*

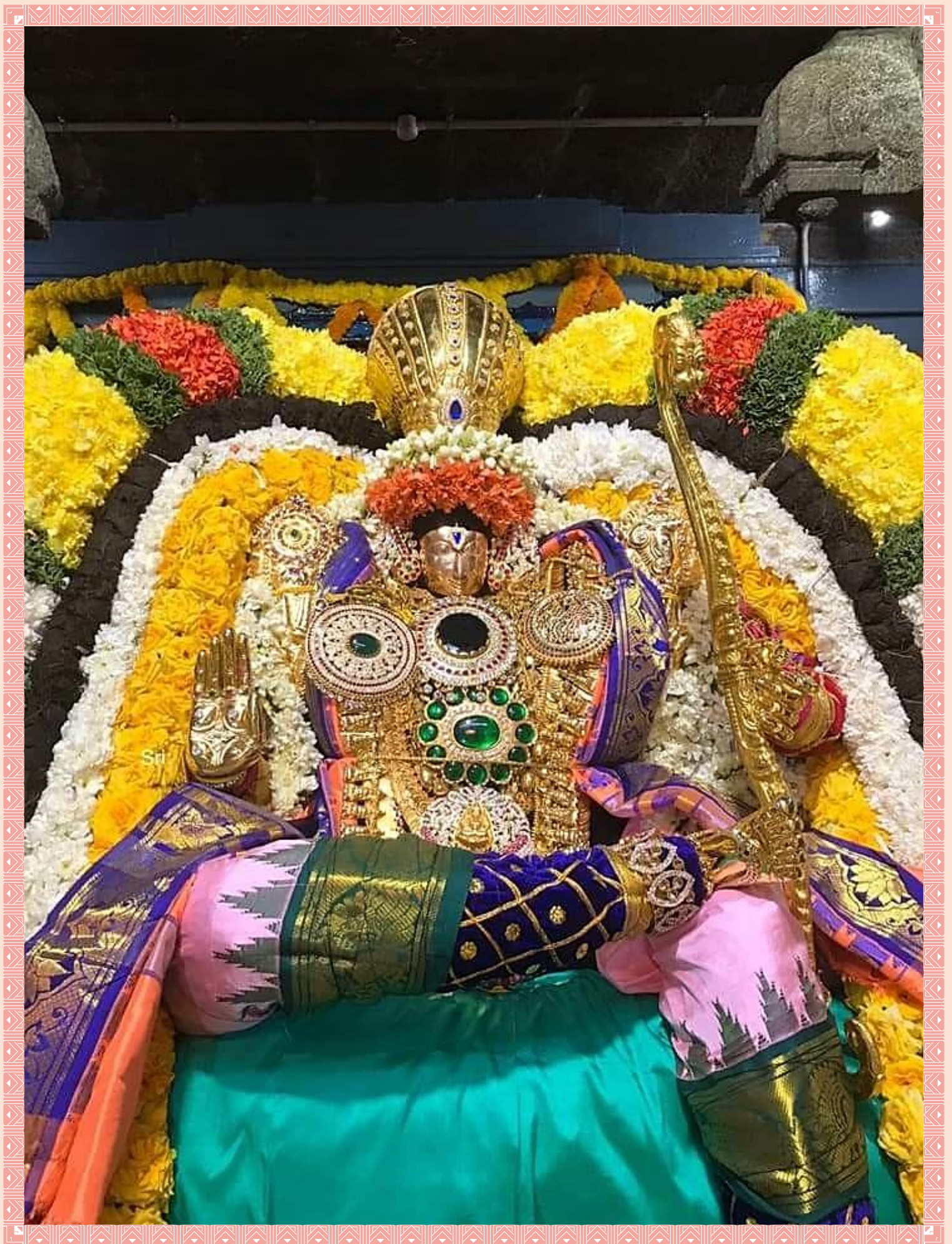


bhlma samkAsham jvalantam iva pAvakam”

(Parashurama’s radiance was like that of the raging fire at the end of time - *kAlAgni*. This is quite blinding and cannot be seen with bare eyes.)

The Ramayanam salutation “*vasiShTha pramukhA viprA japa homa parAyaNAH*” reflects the worry of everyone in the retinue (Vasishta, who had distinguished himself as the foremost among those who had undertaken, Tapas, and other austerities was wondering in a grave manner “Parashurama has arrived. What is he going to do next?”) Others too in the retinue are left wondering “Here comes Parashurama, the sworn

enemy of Kshatriyas! What harm is going to befall us now?" Nevertheless, the Rishis in the gathering welcome Parashurama with sweet words as reflected by the Ramayanam tribute "RⁱShayo rAma rAma iti madhuraM vAkyam abruvan". However, Parashurama, disregarding these words of welcome from the Rishis, directly comes in front of Lord Rama and addresses him through the salutation from the Valmiki Ramayanam "rAma dAshaRathe vIra vIryam te shrUyate adbhutam dhanuSho bhedanam caiva nikhilena mayA shrutam tat adbhutam acintyam ca bhedanam dhanuShaH tathA" (Oh Rama, son of Dasharatha! I have heard that You are hailed as one of great valor in the world due to breaking the bow of Shiva.). He then continued through the statement "tat idam ghora sankAsham jAmaDagnyam mahat dhanuH pUrayasva shreNa eva sva balam darshayasva ca" (This is the bow of Vishnu that I have in my possession. Demonstrate Your valor to me by stringing this bow.) It must be noted that Parashurama as an avataram had a purpose that had been served well before his encounter with Lord Rama. Thus, he was leading the life of a BrahmaNa rishi at this time. It is also helpful to recall Svami Desikan's mahAvIra vaibhavam tribute "shatakoTi shataguNa kaThina parashudhara munivara karadhRⁱta duravanamatama nija dhanurAkarShaNa prakAshita pArameShThya" (Lord Rama revealed that He was the Supreme Being by effortlessly stringing the bow of Parashurama and mounting an arrow.) Meanwhile the encounter between Parashurama and Lord Rama is being observed with great trepidation by Dasharatha and others in the retinue. It may be recalled that Parashurama exterminated twenty-one generations of the kshatriya clan due to the fact that one kshatriya killed Jamadagni (Parashurama's father), while Parashurama was away performing Tapas. Thus, his anger was somewhat satiated, and he had come to tolerate kshatriyas. However, what he could not bear was the fact that the universe was celebrating Lord Rama as the matchless warrior due to His heroic exploits. This was a case, of pure jealousy on the part of Bhargava Rama. The Lord can never tolerate those who bear envy towards Him. A related upadesham from the Bhagavadgita Chapter 18 is worth recalling here. "idam te nAtapaskAya nAbhaktAya kadAcana na cAshushrUShave vAcyam na ca mAm yobhyasUyati" (The concept of sharaNagati elucidated upon in the charama shloka, Bhagavadgita 18.66, should not be explained to one who is devoid of austerity, who lacks Bhakti, who does not wish to hear it, or is envious of Me.) In chapter 3 of the Bhagavadgita, Lord Krishna further elaborates upon those who bear envy towards Him through the verse "ye tvetad abhyasUyanto nAnutiShThanti me matam sarva-j~nAna-



vimUDhAns tAn viddhi naShTAn achetasaH” (Those who bear envy towards Me, those who cannot stand to hear My glory, they are verily fools who do not possess even an ounce of knowledge. They are truly the nashta prayas - they bring about their own ruin since they cannot bear to hear My instruction.) It is important to have this background while discussing Lord Rama’s demeanor towards



Parashurama. Normally, Lord Rama would prostrate before any Brahmin that arrived in His presence. Given Parashurama’s distinction and tejas, there would be no question about this. However, since Parashurama was envious of Lord Rama being universally celebrated for His unmatched valor, Lord Rama did not salute him and welcome him in His traditional manner. Instead, Lord Rama acted simply as per the command of Parashurama in this instance by requesting him for the bow, stringing it, and mounting an arrow. He then addressed Parashurama as documented in the Ramayanam tribute “vlrya hInam iva ashaktam kShatra dharmeNa bhArgava avajAnAsi me tejaH pashya me adya parAkramam” (Oh Bhargava! You considered Me bereft of valor and a powerless common kshatriya. However, now behold

My strength.) This is expounded upon further in the Ramayanam tribute “Aropya sa dhanU rAmaH sharam sajam cakAra ha jAmadagnyam tato rAmam rAmaH kruddho abravIt idam” (rAma received the bow from Parashurama, strung it and

placed the arrow.) Beholding Parashurama's eyes red with anger, Lord Rama addresses him through the verse "brAhmaNo asi iti pUjyo me vishvAmitra kR^itena ca tasmAt shakto na te rAma moktum prANa haram sharam" (Since you are a Brahmana, I do not wish to use this arrow on you for this arrow is sure to claim your life. That too because I have been instructed about you by Vishvamithra. What do I do now?) This is also the import of the tribute from this verse of the Daya Satakam "asahana munerdharma nigalaM". Parashurama addresses Lord Rama contritely and states "I have understood that You are the supreme being. This arrow that You have mounted on the bow will not go waste." Lord Rama enquires "How so?" Parashurama states "I have accumulated a lot of puNyam through countless years of penance. Please use this arrow to destroy all the accumulated puNyam". This is described in the Valmiki Ramayanam verse "lokAH tu apratimA rAma nirjitAH tapasA mayA jahi tAn shara mukhyena mAbhUt kAlasya paryayaH" The import of these RamayaNam verses pertaining to Lord Rama's encounter with Parashurama is captured in the tribute "asahana munerdharma nigalaM" of this Daya Satakam verse. This gives rise to an important question. Certainly, benefit accrues when one's sins are destroyed. However, what is gained by destruction of one's puNyam? This is a sUkShma vishayam (hidden import). It must be borne in mind that with respect to attaining Lord Narayana both puNyam and pApam are deterrents. Accumulation of puNyam results in several material (aihika) benefits. This causes one to engage in their enjoyment to the detriment of several Bhagavad kaimkaryam opportunities. Similarly, pApam gives rise to grief on account of which one is unable to take part in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Here, Lord Rama only wished the very best for Parashurama. While destroying his puNyam (dharma nigaLam), Lord Rama ensured that his ultimate well-being came about. It is important to note Svami Desikan's Mahaveera Vaibhavam tribute "kratuhara shikharikantuka vihR^ityunmukha jagadaruntudha jitahari danti danta dantura dashavadana damanakushala dashashatabhuj mukha nR^ipatikula rudhira jhara bharitha pR^itutara taTAka tarpita pitR^ika bhR^igupati sugati vihatikara natha paruDiShu parigha" Here Svami Desikan declares that Bhargava Rama attained a good state on account of Lord Rama (bhR^igupati sugati vihatikara). Another important reference in this context is Svami Desikan's tribute to Lord Varadaraja in the Varadaraja Panchasat.

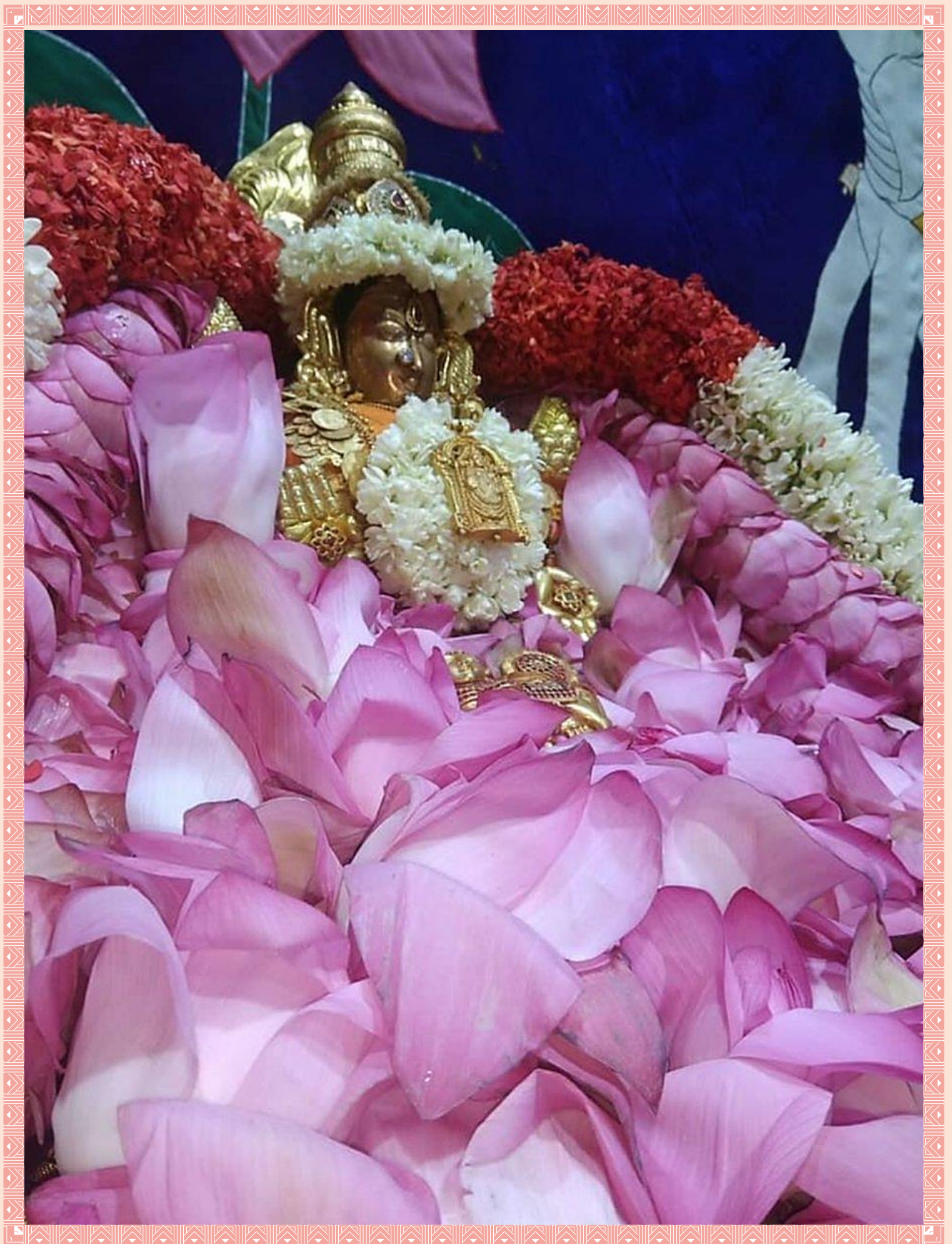


Pleased with Svami Desikan's tribute, Lord Varadaraja is prepared to grant him the status of Brahma, Indra, Rudra and the like. However, Svami Desikan declines this offer through the declaration "Lord Varadaraja! Those who are Your true devotees regard the status of Brahma, Rudra, and Indra as impediments to nitya divya bhagavad svarUpa anubhavam. Therefore these are verily like one who wants to be free, being confined to a prison with golden shackles. Therefore, these are of no use to me." (tvayi baddha bhAvAH paitAmahAdiShu padeShvapi bhAva bandham kasmai svadeta sukhasancharaNotsukAya kAragR^ihe kanakashR^i~nkhaleyApi bandhaH). Thus, it is established by Svami Desikan that even puNyam is an obstacle to paripUrNa Brahma Ananda anubhavam. Sri Kuresha, who rendered himself blind, unable to bear the cruelty of the Chola King Krimikanta Chola towards Svami Bhashyakarar, later on had his vision restored at the Shrine of Lord Varadaraja in the presence of his Acharya, Svami Bhashyakarar. In the same vein as Svami Desikan, Sri Kuresha declares "This vision is good for gaining a darshanam of Lord Varadaraja or to have the darshanam of my Acharyan. However, if this is used for anything else it is a hindrance. Therefore, I desire to be blind". This is reflected in the Varadaraja Sthavam tribute "yadi na bhavati tat pradehi prabho jhaTiti vitara pAdamevAnyathA" (Oh Lord Varadaraja, I absolutely do not desire any benefit that will come in the way of securing Your uninterrupted blessing. I only desire those things which aid in getting Your unceasing anugraham.) Thus, it is established that even puNyam is an impediment to enjoyment of paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam. Therefore, with respect to Parashurama, who was envious of the Lord's valor, Lord Rama relieved him of this impediment, which was for his ultimate good. This completes the elaboration on the second instance quoted by Svami Desikan in this Daya Satakam verse. The final instance in this verse pertains to Kakasura's encounter with Lord Rama. Svami Desikan's tribute in this verse for this instance is "krupE kAkasyalkam hithamihithinasthismanayanam". The anvaya kramam (prose order) for this salutation is "kR^ipe kAkasyaikaM nayanam hitamiti sma" (Oh Daya Devi! You took away one eye for Kakasura out of consideration of "hitamitisma"-the well-being of Kakasura). This last tribute is really central to Svami Desikan's point of ultimate good coming about from punishment. In the first instance, it can be viewed as the Lord not doing anything extraordinary by exterminating the enemies of Samudhra Raja. His essential nature is to run deep and not to allow anyone to cross. Thus, Samudhra Raja did not commit a grave sin by not altering his inherent nature. Due to Lord Rama's command, he altered his



prasabham anukampe samayasi

essential nature and allowed the Vanara army to cross. Thus, Lord Rama's grace for him is not a significant act. Parashurama too was an incarnation of Lord Narayana until he completed the purpose of his avataram. Therefore, Lord Rama ridding him of his puNyam too in view of his envy of the Lord's manner need not count as a significant act. However, Lord Rama's grace for Kakasura is significant. Kakasura committed grave apacharam towards Sita Devi. He was deserving of the death penalty for this offence. However, even for him the Lord demonstrated compassion. This is indeed extraordinary. In fact, the opening verse of **Srimad AbhayapradhAna sAram** by Svami Desikan while discussing the Kakasura SaraNagati reveals this "cOkam tavirkkum curuthi poruL onRu collukinROm nAkam tanakkum irAkkatharkkum namakkum sharaNAm AkaNDalan mahanAkiya AvalippERiyatOr kAkam pizhaitthiDa kaNNazhivE ceita kAkutthanE". It must be borne in mind that this episode took place, while Lord Rama resided in Chitrakuta. However, it is not documented in the AraNya Khandam of the Valmiki Ramayanam. Instead, it is revealed by Sita Devi to Anjaneya in the Sundara Khandam for proof positive of sighting Sita Devi and conveying an incident that was known only to Lord Rama and Her. Sita Devi elaborates to Anjaneya "Oh Hanuman! This is an instance which only Lord Rama and I are aware of and no other. May your narration of this episode to Lord Rama serve as proof that you have indeed seen and conversed with Me. One time during our residence in the Ashramam at the Chitrakuta hill, Lord Rama was resting on My lap. At that time Kakasura pecked at My bosom out of his desire for partaking of My flesh causing blood to ooze. This is captured in the Valmiki Ramayanam salutation "tato mAmsa samAyukto vAyasaH paryatuNDayat tam aham loShTam udyamya vArayAmi sma vAyasam". I did not want to disturb the Lord in His sleep and thus tried to scare the crow by throwing stones and the like. However, this could not deter Kakasura. This is captured in the Valmiki Ramayanam tribute "dArayan sa ca mAm kAkaH tatra eva parillyate". We would take turns at resting. When I was tired I would rest on Lord Rama's lap and while He was tired He would lie down on My lap. This is captured in the Valmiki Ramayanam salutation "paryAyeNa prasuptashca mamA~nke bharatAgrajaH". Awakened by the flow of My blood Lord Rama saw what happened and was greatly angered as documented in the Valmiki Ramayanam verse "sa mAm dR^iShTvA mahAbAhurvitunnAm stanayostadA AshI viSha iva kruddhaH shvasAn vAkyam abhASHathAH" (Lord Rama angrily enquires who was the cause of this distress to Sita Devi and beholds the culprit, Kakasura).



It may be noted that Sita Devi did not point out Kakasura to Lord Rama in keeping with Her essential nature documented in the **Yatiraja Saptati** salutation “**anugrahamaylm vande nityam aj~nAta nigrAhAm**” (Salutations to Thayar in whose dictionary the word punishment does not exist.). Therefore, She only had the well-being of Kakasura in mind and thus did not point the Lord in his direction to spare him from punishment arising from Lord Rama’s anger. Using a blade of grass Lord Rama invoked the BrahmAstra. This is evidenced in the Ramayanam salutation “**sa dharbha sanstarAt gR^ihya brahmaNo astreNa yojyaH**” The BrahmAstra relentlessly pursued Kakasura wherever he went. Finally realizing the futility of his efforts to seek refuge with Brahma, Shiva, and Indra, Kakasura surrendered to Lord Rama’s feet as described in the Ramayanam tribute “**trIn lokAn samparikramya tvAm eva sharaNam gataH sa pitrA ca parityaktaH suraiH sarvaiH maharShibhiH**” Kakasura’s sharanagati is eloquently described in Svami Alavandar’s **Stotraratnam** salutation “**praNata iti dayALuryacca caidyasya kR^iShNa**” (The surrender was not a genuine surrender in the sense of seeking out the Lord for protection. However, realizing that he had no other recourse, he resorted to the Lord. Yet it must be noted that Lord Rama did not spurn him and instead showered His grace). Lord Rama in accepting the Kakasura SharaNagati addressed him “I have invoked the Brahmastra against you. You have fallen at My feet in surrender and hence I am bound to protect you. However, this BrahmAstra cannot go waste. It needs to destroy something. What do I take out with this?” Kakasura states “Lord! I have two eyes. Please take out one of them with this astram. Let me never be overcome with evil intentions like this again.” Thus, Lord Rama graced Kakasura, who deserved punishment by blessing him on account of the surrender. This is seen from the Valmiki Ramayanam salutation “**vadha arham api kAkutstha kR^ipyA paryapAlayaH**” It is also evident from this tribute that Daya Devi alone (**kR^ipayA**) is responsible for transforming the Lord’s seeming act of punishment into ultimate good for the jivan. This is also the import of the tribute “**kR^ipe kAkasyaikaM hitamiti hinasti sma nayanam**” from this Daya Satakam verse. Three instances from the Ramayanam have been highlighted in this verse, where Daya Devi transforms the Lord’s nigrham into anugraham for the jivan. The scriptures are replete with numerous such instances if examined in more detail. For example, in the Trivikrama Avataram, even though Shukracharya tried to prevent Mahabali from completing his act of charity to the Lord himself, Lord Narayana did not punish him (One who comes in the way of performance of a good act accrues sin worthy of punishment

by death). Instead, He lightened the punishment by merely taking out one of Shukracharya's eyes and made it an anugraham for him. The Lord is glorified for this act by the Ahzhwar as "Chakkara kayyan". Thus, Lord's transformation from meting out punishment to eminently deserving beings to bestowing upon them His grace is brought about entirely by Daya Devi. Thus, "is it possible to capture the matchless glory of Daya Devi?" is the rhetorical question posed by Svami Desikan through this verse. An important insight to be gained from this verse is that commoners such as ourselves, who have sinned greatly and accumulated a mountainous sin-pile over aeons, incur the Lord's displeasure. As a consequence,



when He decides to punish us, if we resort to SharaNagati at the Feet of Daya Devi, She is bound to transform this act of punishment into an act of protection for us. Let there be no doubt about this fact. Thus, we need to adopt the feet of Daya Devi as our only refuge to save ourselves from punishment at the hands of Lord Srinivasa. With these thoughts and extreme gratitude to Svami Desikan for blessing us with this wonderful verse, adiyen concludes the exposition of this slokam."

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

"Oh Daya Devi! You played Your sport and influenced the Lord in three cases cited in this verse. Lord Rama became furious with the ocean-king (Varuna Deva) for not agreeing to help in laying the bridge to Lanka. He furiously aimed a never-failing arrow, when the ocean-king came and surrendered. Rama's arrow is infallible and hence cannot be withdrawn, once invoked. Therefore, at the request

of the ocean-king, Lord Rama used the arrow to destroy the ocean-king's enemies instead.

Lord Rama seemed like a young prince, who only had a record of breaking Shiva's bow in Mithila. Parashurama, the son of a Brahmin sage, a jealous hero of valor though, drew Lord Rama into a duel, using a superior bow (Vaishnava bow), to string which Lord Rama was challenged. Lord Rama asked "Where am I to aim this arrow?" Parashurama staked his puNya horde and was thus freed from the shackles of Dharma, as one would call it. (The rule is that one can attain moksham only when freed from the bonds of puNya and papa. If puNya alone remains, one would secure one of the pleasant heavenly worlds and enjoy material pleasure alone. Once the puNya store is exhausted, a return to the world is guaranteed. Hence, Swami Desikan emphasizes the importance of attaining Parama Padam - Sri Vaikuntam from which there is no return.) The third instance is that of Kakasura. The vile being craving for Sita's flesh unrelentingly bit at her bosom causing it to bleed, while Lord Rama was resting on Her lap. Being awakened by the flow of blood, the infuriated Lord Rama aimed an invincible arrow. The crow went all around, chased by the Brahmastra but could not escape. Finally, the crow came to the original site, fell down tired and did not utter a word. However, Lord Rama excused the crow and only caused the arrow to take out one of the crow's eyes-a trifle punishment for a heinous offence.

In all three cases, Oh Daya Devi, I see the influence of Your sportive impact. You made the Lord mete out punishment, though mild, that would indeed generate good for the accused and confer great coveted benefits to the offender! Who else is capable of this?"



Sloka 65

निषादानां नेता कपि कुल पतिः कापि शबरी
कुचेलः कुब्जा सा व्रज युवतयो माल्यकृदिति ।
अमीषां निम्नत्वं वृषगिरि पतेरुन्नतिमपि
प्रभूतैः स्रोतोभिः प्रसभमनुकम्पे समयसि ॥६५॥

niShAdAnAM netA kapi kula patiH kApi shabari
kuchelaH kubjA sA vraja yuvatayo mAlyakR^id iti |
amIshAM nimnatvaM vR^iShagiri paterunnatimapi
prabhUtaiH srotobhiH prasabham anukampe samayasi || 65



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

“The theme of this set of ten verses (61-70) extols the greatness of Daya Devi. It was established in a prior verse by Svami Desikan that Lord Narayana, who is independent and is not under the command of anyone, voluntarily adopts **paratantrayam** (complete subjugation) for Daya Devi. In the previous verse, it was explicated that even if the Lord had made up His mind to punish someone, due to the influence of Daya Devi, this is transformed into something good for the individual. If the Lord has made up His mind to punish someone, nobody can stop Him. This is documented in the Valmiki Ramayanam tribute “**brahmA svayambhUH caturAnanovA rudrastrinetraH tripurAntakovA indro mahendra suranAyakovA trAtum na shaktA yudhi rAmavadhyam**” (The four headed Brahma, the three eyed Rudra who destroyed Tripura, and Indra hailed as the Lord of the devas were powerless to stop Lord Rama’s arrow). In the **para devata pAramArtyadhikAram** of **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** Svami Desikan declares that “when one who has resorted to devatAntaras for seeking trivial benefits, turns to Lord Narayana for begetting moksham, the devatantaras who had previously graced the individual cannot do anything to harm him out of spite. This is due to Lord Narayana’s constant protection.” This is further evidenced in the **aShTabhujaShTakam** tribute “**bhayaM kutasyAt tvayi sAnukampe rakShA kutasyAt tvayi jAtaroShe**” (When You have decided to grace someone with the Kataksham of Daya Devi where is the need to fear? Instead of being receptacles for Your Daya, if they incur Your anger, who

can protect them?) Even this extreme instance of one being subject to the Lord's **nigraha sankalpam** (punishment) is transformed into an **anugraham** (blessing) by Daya Devi. The previous verse highlighted the grace of Lord Narayana to those who surrendered (fearing His punishment) due to the transformation in His disposition brought about by Daya Devi. In this verse, Svami Desikan reveals the blessings conferred by Lord Narayana on His own to commoners due to the influence of Daya Devi. This verse is "**niShAdAnAM netA kapi kula patiH kApi shabarI kuchelaH kubjA sA vraja yuvatayo mAlyakR^id iti amIShAM nimnatvaM vR^iShagiri paterunnatimapi prabhUtaiH srotobhiH prasabham anukampe samayasi**" The enormous ability of Daya Devi in accomplishing the impossible is documented in this verse. She ensures the union between two objects, for example a mountain and a lake, which could never come about. Svami Alavandar in the **Stotraratnam** declares "**komajjatoraNukulAcalayorvisheShaH**" (The import of this tribute is that when it comes to the Lord, who is verily an ocean, it does not matter whether the object before Him is a hill or a plateau. They are both regarded identically.) The inner meaning is that the Lord's glory is so vast, it cannot be completely captured even by great sages like Parashara, or by the Azhvars such as Parankusha Nayaki. When this is the plight of erudite ones such as Parashara or Parankusha, commoners like us stand no chance of providing a meaningful capture of the Lord's glory since we cannot even equate ourselves to dust in their presence. Thus, when it comes to the matter of describing the Lord's glory there is a likeness between learned ones like sage Parashara, Svami NammAzhvar, and ourselves in that it becomes mission impossible! The import here is that even if one stays away from Lord Narayana, due to being an ArdhrAparAdhi (constantly engaged in sinful acts) and the Lord Himself is inclined to punish these beings, Daya Devi brings about a reconciliation and enables the Lord to accept such beings. The concluding part of this Daya Satakam verse "**prasabham anukampe samayasi**" glorifies the act of Daya Devi in rendering these seemingly opposite beings to a common state. The opposites cannot be starker in contrast! Lord Narayana shines forth resplendently due to being blemishless and due to being replete with countless auspicious qualities. Errant baddha jivans are in an extremely lowly state due to being steeped in a mountain of sins on account of their karma. However, Daya Devi brings about a union between these two extremes. This is due to Her balAskaram - that is Lord Narayana enquires "Should I accept these lowly beings?" Daya Devi compels Him to accept them with the words "Most certainly. They have no other refuge besides You!" On the otherhand errant baddha jivans due to being steeped in a mountainous sin-pile accumulated over aeons, may stay away from Lord Narayana.



Sri Daya Devi ensures the liberation of baddha jivans

The Lord too is left wondering if He should accept these beings. However, Daya Devi influences the Lord and reminds Him “Afterall this is Your sankalpam. Why do You wish to alter this nature of Yours which affords protection to all comers? Therefore, please accept them”, thereby bringing about a miracle. In the Bhagavadgita, Lord Krishna declares “bahUni me vyatItAni janmAni tava cArjuna” (You have taken numerous births Arjuna. I too have taken birth alongside You in each of these births.) The purpose for the Lord incarnating is to see if the jivan in one of those births resorts to Him and submits the prayer “I seek Your protection”. This is the expectation of the Lord as attested to in the statement “rakShApekShAm pratIkShate”. Daya Devi reminds the Lord of this Sankalpam, namely incarnating every time the jivan incarnates out of the hope that the jivan will resort to Him. Daya Devi instructs the Lord “Svami! Your very incarnations are intended solely for the purpose of redeeming these errant jivans. If it were not for them, there would be no reason for You to incarnate. Therefore, please accept these jivans and grace them, even though they are absolutely flawed. If You do not rescue them, there will be none available to rescue.” Therefore, Lord Narayana gave up residence in Sri Vaikuntam to take residence in the Venkatam hill to grace all comers so much so that He does not even get a moment’s respite and is on the lookout 24/7 for jivans to redeem. This is as far as the Lord is concerned. For commoners like us, there are some who offer respectful salutations to one who is erudite, and conforms to the shastras, with the view to seeking their blessings. However, there is another class that consider themselves unworthy of going in the presence of the erudite one due to being replete with faults and thus shy away from the erudite one. In the context of their disposition towards Lord Narayana, the salutation “valavEzh ulakin mudalAna vAnOr irayai” (He is the Chief of the Nithya Suris. How can we even be in His presence? Thus, beholding His supremacy, they stay away from Him.) becomes important. Svami Kidambi AppuLLar describes the state of such beings in the salutation “vAzhntu keTTavarkal” (Their life has been wasted!) This is meant to document the fact that the Lord’s paratvam (supremacy) is intended to attract everyone and cause them to seek refuge. However, upon beholding the Lord’s supremacy, if they elect to stay away from the Lord, they have wasted a valuable opportunity. Svami NammAzhvar declares in the TiruvAimozhi tribute “tAnOr uruvE tani vittAi tannil mUvar mutalAya vAnOr palarum munivarum maRRum maRRum muRRumAi tAnOr perunIr tannuLLE tORRi atanuL kaNvaLarum vanOr perumAn mAmAyan vaikuntan emperumAnE” (Behold the glorious Supreme Lord! He is responsible for the tasks of creation, sustenance, and destruction. All beings - sentient and insentient - form part of His body. During the time of

PraLayam, He holds all these beings in their subtle state. He is the Chief of the Nithya Suris and resides in His eternal abode, Sri Vaikuntam.) One who beholds this and yet stays away from the Lord is on the wrong path. This is documented in the Azhvar tribute “cArnta iru val vinaikaLum carittu mAya paRRaRuttu tlrntu tanpAl manam vaikka tirutti vIDu tiruttuvAn” (Both puNyam and pApam are deterrents to attaining Lord Narayana. The Lord ensures destruction of the desires that bind one to samsara. Only to reform us and lead us to Him does He incarnate as Lord Rama, Krishna, and Srinivasa. Therefore, there is no need to run away from Him in fear.) The one who causes Lord Narayana to act in the manner described by Svami NammAzhvar is none other than Daya Devi. A question that arises in this context is that “Is it possible for Daya Devi to accomplish this? Are there instances, where She has demonstrated this?” Svami Desikan illustrates this through a few episodes from the scriptures in this verse. Specifically, Svami Desikan highlights instances from the Rama avataram and Krishna avataram in this context. The enjoyment of these two Avatarams in conjunction is a unique feature of the Azhvar outpourings. Svami Desikan follows the lead of the masters in this regard. Particularly, in the TiruvAimozhi Ulagamunda Pasurams, where Svami NammAzhvar performed SaraNagati to Lord Srinivasa, he declares that Lord Srinivasa is none other than Lord Rama and Lord Krishna. The Pasuram “puNarA ninRa maramEzh anReita oruvil valavAvO puNarEi ninRa maram iraNDin naDuvE pOna mudal vAvO” reflects this fact. This Pasuram refers to the Rama Avataram instance wherein with a single arrow Lord Rama pierced seven sala trees, that were difficult to aim at. The KrishNa avataram reference comes about from the episode where Yashoda tired of His antics tied up the Lord to a mortar. Lord Krishna used the mortar to break through a tight spacing to liberate two Gandharvas, who had been cursed to take the form of two trees. The latter instance is also glorified in Svami Desikan’s Gopala Vimshati salutation “yamalArjuna dR^iShTa bAla keLim”. Tirumangai Azhvar too enjoys Lord Narayana in the form of Lord Rama and Krishna through the salutation “ammAn tannai”. Svami Desikan follows the lead of the Azhvars in this verse of the Daya Satakam. The question that arises in the Valmiki Ramayanam is “konvasmin sAmprataM loke guNavAn kashca vIryavAn” (In this world who is it that is known for his noble qualities and for his valor?). The answer follows in Sage Narada’s reply to Valmiki through his statement that Lord Rama alone is the embodiment of Kalyana guNams. Among the guNams, that which becomes prominent is the saushIlyam as described by the salutation “guNyate Apatsate AshritaiH punaH punaH anusandhlyate” (That quality, which causes the Lord to be glorified repeatedly due to offering refuge is known as saushIlyam).



Purusha vyAgram

This is defined as “sushllam mahataH mandhaiH saha nlrandhra samslesha svabhAvaH” (Regardless of how great one is, and how low another is, the former closely embracing the latter and closely interacting with the latter is defined to be sushllam. One possessed of this trait is called saushllyan). This guNam comes to the fore in the Rama avataram. Svami Alavandar glorifies saushllyam in the Stotra Ratnam tribute “vashI vadAnyo guNavAn R^ijuH shuciH mR^idurdayALur madhuraH sthiraH samaH” (One who is replete with guNams exudes saushllyam). Thus, guNam becomes synonymous with saushllyam. In the case of Lord Rama, if anyone in Ayodhya encountered suffering, it would greatly move Lord Rama, who would share the suffering as documented in the Ramayanam tribute “manuShyANam mR^igam bhavati dukhitaH”. Likewise, if a single being in Ayodhya rejoiced due to some good fortune being visited upon them, Lord Rama would join them almost as if He Himself was the recipient of this good fortune. This is akin to someone from a small village scaling the peaks of a top University in the US and receiving the hard to obtain Ph.D. degree. When this individual is recognized during the convocation ceremony, a fellow resident from the village reasons “This is a fantastic accomplishment. Let me be there to cheer even if I have to incur huge costs to travel to this convocation.” The one who would rejoice most at good fortune coming about to someone would undoubtedly be their father. In this context, Lord Rama being the father of the entire universe partook of the delight arising from the good fortune for “His children”. This is documented in the tribute “utsaveShu manuShyANAm piteva”. One may say, this is only an indirect testimony to the Lord’s saushllyam. Is there something more explicit? Svami Desikan answers this through the tribute “niShAdAnAM netA” (The king of the hunters). The profession of hunters is to kill. Normally one would not even seek the status of a mere hunter let alone the king among them. Even with such a person, Lord Rama had nlrandha samslesham. The reference here is to the encounter of Lord Rama with Guha, the hunter king. Lord Rama arrives at the bank of the Mandakini River. The conversation between Lord Rama and Guha in this instance is noteworthy. Rama, Lakshmana and Sita arrive at the banks of the Ganga river and upon taking leave of the charioteer Sumanthara, they are wondering what to do next. Hearing the news of their arrival, the hunter king Guha rushed to their presence as documented in the Valmiki Ramayanam salutation “sa shrutvA purusha vyAghram rAmam viShayamAgatam vR^iddhaiH parivR^itaH AmAtyaiH j~nAtibhiH cApi upAgataH” (Beholding Lord Rama’s arrival from a distance, the hunter-king, Guha, decided that it would not be appropriate for him to go alone to see Lord Rama. Therefore, he gathered all elders of the hunter clan including his own relatives and

arrived in the presence of Rama with all of them.). The next verse from the Valmiki Ramayanam “tataH niShAdAdhipatim dR^iShTvA dUrat avasthitam saha saumitriNA rAmaH samAgaccad guhena ca” describes Lord Rama’s disposition upon seeing Guha setting out. Specifically, Lord Rama reasons that Guha may halt in his tracks and not come before Him. Therefore, He says to Lakshmana “Guha has set out to come to us. Let us proceed in the direction of his traverse so that we are bound to see him.” The next salutation “tamArtaH sampariShvajya guho rAghavam abravIt” attests to the fact that Guha’s garments were rendered blood stained and dirty due to the various animals he had killed. This Guha embraced Lord Rama and addressed the Lord through the tribute “yathAyodhyaA tathA idam te rAma kim karavANi te” (Please consider this kingdom of the nishAdhas as Your own Ayodhya). “vayam preShyA bhavAn bhartA sAdhu rAjyam prashAdhi naH” is the Ramayanam tribute where Guha offers his own kingdom as a submission to Lord Rama with a request to accept and rule over the land of the nishadhas - completely subjecting himself and the residents of his kingdom to the rule of Lord Rama by way of prayerful prostration. Lord Rama raised Guha and addressed him. This is documented in the Ramayanam tribute “bhujAbhyAm sAdhuvR^ittAbhyAm pIDayan vAkyamabravIt” (Rama gently raised Guha and tenderly massaged his body while addressing him.) This is the import from the salutation “niShAdAnAM netA” of this Daya Satakam verse. It could be asked if Lord Rama, who is Chakravarthi Tirumakan (son of emperor Dasharatha), would engage in contact with one belonging to the hunter clan. The answer is a resounding yes. Most importantly, this is brought about on account of Daya Devi. Svami Desikan’s poetic skills are matchless. So too is his choice of words in conveying the anubhavam of specific scriptural episodes in an unparalleled manner. Even while enjoying the Sri Suktis of Svami Desikan capturing the anubhavam is impossible for all and calls for a special sukrutham. The MahavIra Vaibhavam tribute “niShAdarAja sauhR^ida sUcita saushIlya sAgara” becomes important in this context. (This salutation documents the fact that by embracing the hunter-king, Lord Rama demonstrated that He is the ocean of the guNam saushIlyam). Lord Rama’s message to Guha is captured from Sri Tirumangai Azhvar’s Tiruvarangam Pasuram (Periya Tirumozhi) salutation “yEzhai yEtAlan klzhmakan ennAtiranki maRRavaRkinnaruL curantu mAzhai mAn maDa nOkki un tOzhi umpi empi enRozhintilai” (Lord Rama is the emperor of the entire universe. However, Guha belongs to the lowly hunter clan. Furthermore, he is unskilled and is living in relative poverty. His profession is that of killing animals in the forest. Due to his clan, the inherent nature is not noble. However, completely ignoring all these facts, Lord Rama graced the hunter-king in an extraordinary

manner. Specifically, Lord Rama introduced Sita Devi to Guha with the words “Do not regard Her as a queen or princess. Instead consider Her as your friend.” Similarly, He introduces Lakshmana to Guha with the words “**umbi embi**” to denote the fact “Please consider Lakshmana as your younger brother.”) Finally, Lord Rama introduces Himself to Guha as documented in the Azhvar tribute “**tOzhan nI enakkinkozhi enRa**” (Consider Me as your bosom friend.) It must be noted that from the Azhvar anubhavam that the Lord did not utter these words by way of protocol reciprocity. Instead, it was a heartfelt acceptance of Guha. This is further captured through the Azhvar anubhavam “**coRkaL vantaDiyEn manattiruntiDa Azhi vaNNa nin aDiyiNai aDaintEn aNi pozhil tiruvarankattammAnE**”. This acceptance and equalizing of the status between the lofty Lord Srinivasa (Rama) and the lowly hunter-king, Guha, is brought about entirely by Daya Devi. This is reflected in the “**niShAdAnAM netA**” tribute from this verse of the Daya Satakam.

Next in sequence is the salutation “**kapi kula patiH**” The reference here is to the monkey-king, Sugriva. In this instance, Lord Rama accepted Sugriva, who was a monkey, as his bosom friend. The nature of a monkey is the lack of firmness in anything. So much so there is the Tamil saying “kuranku buddhi” denoting the fickleness of mind. Even for such a being, Lord Rama demonstrates His compassion through His vow of friendship before the sacred fire. These days it is common to encounter divorces, which are totally in violation to the invocation uttered in front of the sacred fire during weddings. However, Lord Rama did not for once entertain the thought of revoking His friendship with Sugriva. On the otherhand Sugriva had second thoughts about Lord Rama’s intentions, when he submitted his appeal upon being beaten up soundly by Vali in their fight. He in fact asked Lord Rama “Did you befriend me only to expose me to the brutal beating from Vali? If this was Your intent, You should have let me know. Being aware of Vali’s prowess, I would not dare to challenge him to a fight. You swore friendship to me with the sacred fire as the witness. However, You did not remain true to Your words.” In the **abhayapradhAna sAram**, Svami Desikan describes Rama’s address to Sugriva as “Maharaja”. This is significant in that the emperor for the whole universe elects to address a mere monkey as Maharaja due to the fact that Sugriva had been crowned as the king of Kishkinda, whereas Lord Rama’s coronation ceremony had been stalled. Such is Lord Rama’s compassion that if Sugriva was saddened on account of something it would greatly sadden Lord Rama. In a moment of anger, when Sugriva went alone to fight Ravana and then returned with great difficulty after a duel with Ravana, Lord Rama advised him with extreme concern “You should not have acted hastily and rushed to fight with Ravana. If something had happened to



prabhanjana tanaya bhAvuka bhAShita ranjita hr^idaya

you and you did not return alive, grave consequences would befall us.” Thus, it is another instance of Lord Rama engaging in nrandha samslesham with a monkey. This aspect is captured in Sri Kuresha’s **SundarabAhu sthavam** salutation “**yajjAtIyo yadR^isho yatsvabhAvo pAdhacCAyAM samshrito yopi kopi tajjAtIyastAdR^ishAstatsvabhAvaH shliShyatyenaM sundaro vatsalatvAt**” (Regardless of one’s caste, one’s nature or one’s looks if one surrenders to the feet of Lord Narayana, the Lord transforms Himself to adopt the same exact characteristic as the individual and engages in nrandha samslesham with the individual.) This anubhavam is the import of the tribute “**niShAdAnAM netA kapi kula patiH**” from this verse of the Daya Satakam. This is brought about entirely due to the work of Daya Devi. Here again it becomes important to note Svami Desikan’s **MahavIra Vaibhavam** salutation “**prabhanjana tanaya bhAvuka bhAShita ranjita hR^idaya**” (Lord Rama derived great delight by hearing the words of the monkey, Hanuman). “**bahu vyAharatA anena na kincit apa shabditam**” is the Valmiki Ramayanam glorification describing the speech of Hanuman when he first approached Lord Rama as Sugriva’s messenger. It must be borne in mind that even though Lord Rama has taken up residence in the forest, He is the emperor of the entire universe. Protocol demands that conversations take place between people with similar standing. In this instance Hanuman is not a king but a minister of Sugriva. Thus, he engaged in conversation with Lakshmana, who had a similar role with respect to Lord Rama. This sambhAashaNam was enjoyed with great relish by Lord Rama. The reason for this delight is the flawless speech by Hanuman in a lengthy discussion with Lakshmana. The essence of this Valmiki Ramayanam tribute is captured in the MahavIra Vaibhavam salutation discussed herein. When it comes to Sugriva, Svami Desikan again describes the encounter with Rama in the **MahavIra Vaibhavam** salutation “**taraNisuta sharaNagati paratantrIkR^ita svAtantrya**” (Lord Rama in accepting the SaraNagati of Sugriva, the son of Surya, became one with him). This visesham for Bhagavan comes about entirely on account of Daya Devi. Next comes the tribute “**kApi shabarI**” from this Daya Satakam verse. The Lord’s acceptance of Guha and Sugriva can be viewed as a meeting of equals - Lord Rama being a king, Guha being the hunter-king, and Sugriva being a monkey-king. However, the Lord’s grace for Shabari becomes unique. Shabari was a mere commoner. Only Lord Rama can shower His grace on a commoner in the manner He did. How did this come about? Again this is the doing of Daya Devi declares Svami Desikan. “**dadhyAnna pratigR^ihNIyat**” is the Valmiki Ramayanam tribute that glorifies Lord Rama as a giver and one who has never sought anything. However, His acceptance of the fruits offered by Shabari reflects His unique grace

for her. Shabari was waiting for a long time for the arrival of Lord Rama. Lord Rama arrives at her hermitage. She offers Lord Rama the fruits that she has carefully gathered for Him. This is described in the Valmiki Ramayanam glorification “arcitoham tvayAbhadre gacCa kAmam yathA suhham ityevamuktA jaTilA clra kR^iShNAjinAmbarA” (Oh Lord Rama! I have been waiting a long time for Your arrival.). Shabari continues with the salutation “tavAham cakShuShA saumya pUtA saumyena mAnada gamiShyAmi akShayAn lokAn tvat prasAdAt arindama” (Because, You have graced me with Your divine kataksham, I have become sanctified. I therefore proceed to the lokam which knows no destruction. This is entirely due to Your blessing.) Upon beholding Lord Rama, she also submitted the tribute “adyame saphalam janma guravashca supUjitAH adyame saphalam taptam svargashcaiva bhaviShyati tvayi deva vare rAma pUjite puruSharShabha” (Oh Lord Rama! I have submitted by way of worshipful offering what is possible for me. Out of Your grace You have accepted this offering and graced me. You who are known for giving has accepted my humble offering. This is a great bhagyam for me.) It must be noted that Shabara is a clan that arises on account of the union of a king with a Vaishya. Shabari belonged to this clan. Their profession is to collect items available in the forest (honey etc) and sell them in the open. Thus, as far as Shabari is concerned, her origin (parentage) is unknown. Even her name is unknown. She merely goes by Shabari - a lady belonging to the Shabara clan. Thus, even for someone of this background Lord Rama exuded compassion. This is documented in the MahavIra Vaibhavam salutation “avandhya mahima munijana bhajana muShita hR^idaya kaluSha shabarI moksha sAkShi bhUta” (Due to her tapas, Shabari had established her eligibility for moksham. The Lord’s grace came about in that He was a witness to her attaining moksham.) It must be noted here that people like Dharmavyadha, who had adopted Bhakti yogam attained moksham. Also, it is helpful to remember the fact that there is a difference between Bhakti yogam and prapatti in that the former requires a complete exhaustion of all prArabdha karma, resulting in a zero balance of Karma at which point moksham is attained. This requires an unspecified number of births for the Bhakti yogam practitioner. However, for a Prapanna, all prArabdha karma is destroyed at the time of performance of Prapatti. The only residue is the abyupagata prArabdha karma, that prevails for as long as the Prapanna lives after the performance of Prapatti. For one seeking moksham the instant Prapatti is performed (Artha prapatti) even this is destroyed and moksham is obtained duly upon completion of Prapatti. In the case of Shabari, her Bhakti yogam had fructified. The only task that remained for her as a result of Acharya anugraham due to her devoted service was to wait for the arrival

of Lord Rama and for Him to grace her with Bhagavad Sakshatkaram. “avandhya mahima” from the Mahavira Vaibhavam glorification of Shabari denotes the fact that her glory was immeasurable and her conduct was flawless. The Mahavira Vaibhavam tribute “munijana bhajana muShita hR^idaya kaluSha” describes that due to her distinguished service for Rishi Matanga, she had attained purity of heart. In a state of extreme naichyam (self deprecation), Shabari would wonder “My birth is extremely lowly. I am full of faults. Would Lord Rama arrive to grace me? Would I be fit to attain moksham?” However, on account of her flawless service to Rishi Matanga, all these doubts were banished. Instead, she was blessed with great clarity of purpose and was assured of Lord Rama’s arrival on account of the grace of her Acharya, Rishi Matanga. It is helpful to recall the Valmiki Ramayanam tribute from Shabari “tvayi devavare rAma pUjite puruSharShabha gamiShyAmyakShayAn lokAn tvat praSAdAdarindama” (Oh Lord Rama! On account of Your grace, I am sure to attain the elevated lokam that knows no destruction - Sri Vaikuntam is implied here). It is also helpful to recall the Valmiki Ramayanam tributes “adya me saphalam janma” and “adya me saphalam taptam” (My penance all these years through service to my Acharya and my birth itself have been fructified due to Your grace falling upon me at this moment). The visesham for Shabari is that Lord Rama, who is known for giving, accepted her offering of fruits. This came about entirely on account of Daya Devi. Thus, equalizing the status between Shabari (as a giver) and Lord Srinivasa (who is a universal benefactor in this instance transformed into a receiver) is a unique status accorded to Shabari on account of Daya Devi. In the first line of this Daya Satakam verse Svami Desikan covers three instances from Srimal Ramayanam and brings out the glory of Daya Devi in the context of Lord Rama. Next, he turns his attention to the Krishna avataram through the salutation “kuchelaH kubjA sA vraja yuvatayo mAlyakR^id iti”

In the case of Lord Rama, He demonstrated his saushllyam as a king. In the Krishna avataram, He incarnated in the cowherd clan and subjected Himself to rendering numerous menial tasks to demonstrate His saushllyam. The first instance highlighted by Svami Desikan in this context is Lord Krishna’s grace for Kuchela. The name Kuchela itself is indicative of one who adorns himself with torn garments. Although his name was Sudama, he was commonly referred to as Kuchela due to wearing torn garments. Srimal Bhagavatam describes the meeting of Kuchela with Krishna in considerable detail. Kuchela sets out on the journey to see Lord Krishna much against his own will and entirely due to the compelling request from his wife to get them out of poverty and support his large family through the words “Lord Krishna was your saha AdhyAyi at the Ashramam of sage Sandipani. He is now the



yosau triloka guruNA shrinivAsena sambhR^itaH

Lord of Dvaraka. Can you not go to see Him and find a means to feed this family that is suffering from hunger and living in abject poverty?" Kuchela responds "I cannot go to see Him empty handed! We have nothing that I can take for Him. What do I do?" Kuchela's wife packs flattened rice, which he covers with his torn garments and proceeds to Dvaraka. Upon reaching Dvaraka, he realizes that it is not easy to see Lord Krishna. There is an elaborate protocol involving several barriers. We commonly see the security detail for VIPs like when the President of the USA visits India. It becomes impossible to gain access to the VIP due to multiple layers of security that is in place. If this is the case for a mere mortal VIP, what to speak of the security detail for Paramatma, Lord Krishna? Kuchela is stupefied by the thought of the barrier that is in his way to see Lord Krishna. However, Lord Krishna sees him from a distance and immediately recognizes him. The Srimad Bhagavatam tribute "kR^iShNa sandarshanam mahyam kathamsyAt iti cintayan" reflects the thought of Kuchela (How do I get to see Lord Krishna?). The tribute "trINi gulmAnyatIyAya tisraH kakShAyashca sadvijaH viprogamyAndha vR^iShNIInAm gR^iheShvacyuta dharmiNAm " (It is virtually impossible to cross this elaborate multi-layered security detail that has been put in place for Lord Krishna.) The next Srimad Bhagavatam tribute "viveshalkatamam shrImad brahmAnandaM gato yathA tam vilokyAcyuto dUrAt priyAparya~NkamAsthitaH" documents the fact that Kuchela sees Lord Krishna from a distance lying on His bed. Immediately on beholding Kuchela, Lord Krishna gets up and rushes to welcome Kuchela as documented in the tribute "sahasoyatthAya cAbhyetya". Next, Lord Krishna respectfully welcomes Kuchela and affectionately massages him with both hands as described in the tribute "dyorbhyAM paryagrahIn mudA". Lord Krishna leads Kuchela and seats him on the same bed that the former used for resting. Furthermore, Lord Krishna turns to His consort, Rukmini, and instructs Her to offer arghyam, padhyam to Kuchela. Additionally, He asks Rukmini to apply Sandalwood paste for Kuchela. Lord Krishna and Kuchela engaged in a moving conversation fondly recounting the numerous experiences that they shared while in residence at the Ashramam of their Acharya, sage Sandipani. While this took place, Lord Krishna instructs Rukmini to render Chamara Kaimkaryam to Kuchela, which Rukmini dutifully performs. People observing this remark "kucailaM malinaM kShAmaM dvijaM dhamanisantatam devI paryacarat sAkShAccAmaravyajanena vai" The residents of the inner apartments of Lord Krishna remark "antaHpurajano dR^iShTvA kR^iShNonAmalakIrtaNa vismitobhUdatiprItya avadhutaM sabhAjitam kimanena kR^itaM puNyaM avadhUtena bhikShuNA shriyAhInena lokesmin garhitenAdhamena ca" (What puNyam has this beggar accrued? He is adorning

himself with torn garments. However, he has the great Bhagyam of occupying the seat of Rukmini Devi, who is Mahalakshmi incarnate. Not only that she is a princess by virtue of being the daughter of King Bhishmaka. She is rendering fan service to him. One who lacks wealth and wears torn garments is the object of ridicule for all and even the lowliest of people stay away from him. However, on the other hand, Lord Krishna has seated him on His own bed. What a great fortune! Indeed, this BrahmaNa has performed some great act to receive these upacharams from Lord Krishna and Rukmini.) Furthermore, the Srimad Bhagavatam continues with the tributes “yosau triloka guruNA shrinivAsena sambhR^itaH” (The Bhagavatam itself establishes in this salutation that Lord Srinivasa is none other than Lord Krishna.) “parya~NkasthAM shriyaM hitva pariShvaktograjo yathA” (Lord Krishna further warmly embraces Kuchela in the manner of a younger brother embracing his older sibling). Thus, it is clear that all this satkAram rendered by Srinivasa is entirely the doing of Daya Devi. This is captured in the tribute “kucelaH” of this Daya Satakam verse. In this regard, adiyen highlights an instance from the life of Sri Navalpakkam Svami (Sri Nrusimha Tatacharya), a great Acharya who lived in Navalpakkam. There lived a famous Bruhaspati named Bhudheri Vadyar, who took residence in Mumbai. He had performed veda adhyayanam in the traditional manner and became quite proficient. Once, during his young age, he came to Navalpakkam for a Veda Parayanam and was wearing torn garments. To save himself the embarrassment of revealing his body due to the torn garment, he was swaying from one side to another while rendering the Vedam. Sri Navalpakkam Svami observed this and at once tossed a new vastram that he had just used and instructed the boy “Please wear this”. Sri Bhudheri vadyar would fondly recall “this is the vastram that came as anugraham from Navalpakkam Svami. I came to Mumbai adorning myself with this Vastram. Thanks to the blessings of this mahan, I own four houses in Mumbai today. Now I have no dearth for anything. Numerous vastrams are stocked up in my house.” Thus, Sri Navalpakkam Svami’s anugraham to Sri Bhudheri vadyar was very much in the spirit of Lord Krishna gracing Kuchela. Again, it must be noted that the anugraham of Lord Krishna to Kuchela came about entirely on account of Daya Devi. The next tribute from this Daya Satakam verse is “kubjA sA”. Lord Krishna went to Mathura from Gokulam. It must be noted that Lord Krishna lived in the village and was coming to the city of Mathura for the first time. Naturally, He was curious to see everything that the city had to offer. While walking through the streets of Mathura, Lord Krishna and Balarama encounter a washerman, who was dutifully laundering and cleaning clothes. They asked him whose clothes are being meticulously washed and cleaned. He answered that some of them belonged to the



adya me saphalam janma jlvitaM sujlvitam

king, while a few others belonged to ministers and the like. Lord Krishna and Balarama requested the washerman to lend them a couple of clean clothes, which they wanted to use while going to the court of Kamsa, and promised to return them as soon as they were finished with the visit. However, the washerman refused on the grounds that they were lowly and unfit for wearing these clothes belonging to the king. Lord Krishna and Balarama overpowered the washerman and adorned themselves with the kingly garments. As they continued their sojourn through Mathura, they encountered a lady **kubja** - a hunchback lady whose body had been deformed in three places selling sandalwood balls. They enquire of her what is it that she is selling. “**prasanno bhagvAn kubjAM trivakrAM rucirAnanAm R^ijvIM kartuM manashcakre darshayan darshane phalam**” is the **Srimad Bhagavatam** tribute, which describes Lord Krishna’s grace for the kubja. A mere glance of Lord Krishna transformed her from a deformed old lady to a beautiful young woman. Lord Krishna and Balarama enquired of her “Who are you selling these scented balls to?” She points to her wares and states that some of them go to the king, while others are purchased by ministers and courtiers, while still some others are purchased by common folk. Lord Krishna asks if He can get a ball of sandalwood to which the lady says “Absolutely. I shall give You the sandalwood balls reserved for the king. Not only that, You seem to be a villager unskilled in the art of applying sandalwood paste. Therefore, I shall personally apply the sandalwood paste on You.” When Kubja applies the sandalwood paste, she was in a bent posture. Lord Krishna raises her with His arms, at which point the deformed lady is transformed into a beautiful young woman. This transformation from a deformed lady to a beautiful woman came about entirely on account of Daya Devi.

Next the tribute “**vraja yuvatayo mAlyakR^id iti**” from this Daya Satakam verse is considered. “**vraja yuvatayaH**” denotes the ladies of Gokulam. Sri Andal refers to them in the **Tiruppavai** salutation “**aRivonRum illAta Aikulattu**”. The implication here is that Andal first refers to Lord Krishna as the Supreme Being, one without a second, one replete with auspicious qualities, one who is all pervading, one who is omniscient and the like and then enquires of the ladies of Gokulam if they are aware of any of this. To this the ladies of Gokulam answer “We do not know any of this. We only know that Krishna is the son of Yashoda and Nandagopa. He is a cowherd just like any of us.” To these ladies of Gokulam, Lord Krishna confers a visesha anugraham. Sri Kuresha enjoys every limb of Lord Varadaraja in the **Varadaraja Sthavam**. Therein, while focusing on the cheeks of Lord Varadaraja, Sri Kuresha declares “These appear puffed up due to joy that is being currently experienced or due to recalling a delightful experience from the past.” The tribute

capturing this is “parimaNDita rAsamaNDaIAbhiH varadAghratam abhiShTa gopikAbhiH anuvartitadAtanapraharShAd iva pullaM hi kapalayoryugaM te”(Lord Varadaraja in His Krishna avataram engaged in rAsakrIda with the Gopikas of Gokulam described in the manner (from Krishna Karnamrutham of Svami Leela Sukar) “a~NgaNAm a~NgaNAm antare mAdhavo mAdhavaM mAdhavaM ca antareNA~NgaNA”. As a consequence, the Lord was filled with great joy. Recalling this experience Lord Varadaraja is exuding happiness as reflected in His puffed up cheeks.) Next comes the salutation “mAlyakR^id iti” from this verse of the Daya Satakam. This the experience of Lord Krishna with the florist, who delivered garlands for Kamsa. This is treated in great detail in the Vishnu PuraNam. In keeping with the declaration “srak chandanam”, Lord Krishna seeks out a garland to wear while going to the court of Kamsa. The florist operated in a by-lane off from the main street that Lord Krishna and Balarama were walking on. In the case of the washerman, Lord Krishna’s request for the clothes was refused and had to be gained by force. In the case of Kubja, Lord Krishna asked for the Sandalwood paste and this was duly submitted to Him. However, in the case of the florist, all Lord Krishna did was to walk down the alley to see the florist, who remarked “adya me saphalam janma jIvitaM sujIvitam” (Oh Lord Krishna! You have come to the humble dwelling of this poor florist. What a Bhagyam that You have chosen to grace this poor soul!) Without uttering another word, the florist submitted to Lord Krishna the garland meant of the king and repeatedly performed pradakshinam and prostration. The Vishnu puraNam glorifies this episode in great detail but limitations of time preclude adiyen from a more detailed discussion of the many shastrArthams embedded therein. Very briefly, certain professions are considered inappropriate and downright flawed. For example, selling food to make a living tops the list. This is in fact forbidden by the shastras. Similarly, making flower garlands from flowers meant for exclusive use for Lord Narayana and selling these garlands is not considered a good profession. However, even for one adopting this profession, Lord Krishna decided to confer His grace. Lord Krishna’s total disregard for the profession while gracing the florist was a tribute to the latter’s Bhakti. This again is entirely due to Daya Devi causing the Lord to act thus. The tribute “iti’ from this verse of the Daya Satakam is meant to illustrate the fact that the scriptures are replete with numerous such instances if one examines them carefully. Jatayu would be another case in point. In fact, Lord Krishna declares in the Bhagavadgita “ye yathA mAM prapadyante tAmstathaiva bhajAmyahaM mama vartmAnuvartante manuShyaH pArtha sarvashaH” (Oh Partha! In whatever manner My Bhaktas seek to attain Me, I grant them their wish in the same exact manner).



kaTTuNNa paNNiya perumAyan

In the **Tatparya Chandrika** commentary of the Bhagavadgita, Svami Desikan declares this to be a tribute to the Archa form. In this context Madhurakavi Azhvar's **Kanninun Siruthambu** tribute "kaTTuNNa paNNiya perumAyan" becomes relevant. This is meant to describe the fact that the Lord fulfills the wishes of His Bhaktas in the exact manner they desire. For example, if they wish to enjoy Lord Rama, who normally has two hands, as the four-handed one, He grants their wish. If they want Lord Rama as Raja Rama, who has Sita Devi on His left side, or to grant them

darsanam with Sita Devi on His right side, He grants their wish as Bhagavan Rama. Lord Krishna highlights in this slokam that as per the wishes of His Bhakta “**surUpam prathimAm viShNu**” (be it in stone form or image form) He fulfills their desires to enjoy Him. Thus, for this lofty Bhagavan, Lord Narayana, who has eternal residence in Srivaikuntam, to engage in samslesham with lowly beings like us, the unmistakable cause is Daya Devi. The inner meaning is that the torrential flow of Daya Devi equalizes hills and plateaus.



amIShAM nimnatvaM vR^iShagiri paterunnatimapi

First off the Venkatam hill peak can never be the same as the flat land at the foothills. However, the torrential flow of Daya Devi brings about the appearance of such an equalization. Therefore, Svami Desikan even declares in the tribute “**amIShAM nimnatvaM vR^iShagiri paterunnatimapi**” that Daya Devi is even superior to Lord Srinivasa, the matchless one without a second. This is due to the fact that even if someone decides to stay away from the Lord under the excuse that they are unfit for gaining His grace due to their sin-pile, Daya Devi brings about a transformation ensuring that they gain samslesham with Lord Srinivasa. Accordingly adiyen submits a prayer to Daya Devi and Svami Desikan to make us receptacles for their anugraham and concludes the exposition of this verse.”

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

“Oh Daya Devi! What a forcible equalization You brought about between the Highest (Lord Srinivasa) and the lowliest, by Your floods that level down the mounds and level up the pits as in a rain or river-flow. The Lord is at the top. He is the Supreme Being. He is at the very top of Vrushadri (Venkatam Hill). When He took the avataram as Rama, He moved freely and indistinguishably with all and sundry-the lowliest too. He repeated this in the Krishna avataram. I provide a quick list: Guha, Sugriva, Shabari, Kuchela, Kubja, the unlettered Gopa women, and the garland maker, as well as many others. What is all this? Why did the Lord move freely, condescendingly, and indistinguishably with all and sundry? This is indeed the virtue, the one guNa, that is superb top quality, fittingly named as saushllyam. It means a high personage making no fuss about mixing up with mere commoners-even the lowliest of them. This is entirely because of You - Oh Daya Devi!”



Sloka 66

त्वया दृष्टस्तुष्टिं भजति परमेष्ठी निज पदे
वहन् मूर्तीरिष्टौ विहरति मृडानी परिवृढः ।
बिभर्ति स्वाराज्यं वृषशिखरि शृङ्गारि करुणे
शुनासीरो देवासुर समर नासीर सुभटः ॥६६॥

tvayA dR^iShTastuShTiM bhajati parameShThI nija pade
vahan mUrtIraShTau viharati mR^iDAnI paribR^iDhaH |
bibharti svArAgyaM vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri karuNe
shunAsIro devAsura samara nAsIra subhaTaH | |66



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

“Adiyen has the bhagyam of delivering this upanyasam on day of Makha nakshtram in Thai (Makara) mAsam, the avatara dinam of Sri Tirumazhisai Azhvar. Svami Desikan captures the Azhvar anubhavam with YathokthakAri Bhagavan in the **Vega Sethu** stotram tribute “**bhaktAnuganturiha yasya gatAgatAni**”. Specifically, Bhagavan Yathokthakari implicitly heeded the Azhvar’s request to fold up His serpent bed and follow the Azhvar on his way out of Kanchipuram to comply with the instruction of the king of the land. Later on, when the king apologized for his apacharam and requested the Azhvar to return to Kanchipuram, the Azhvar again submitted his appeal to Yathokthakari Bhagavan to return to Kanchipuram along with him and roll out His serpent bed to take residence at the shrine in His reclining form. The Azhvar was known for his clarity in establishing Lord Narayana as the supreme being as declared in his Pasuram “**NAnmukanai NArayaNan paDaithan**”. In the previous verse of the Daya Satakam, Svami Desikan illustrated the saulabhya guNam of Lord Srinivasa in freely mingling with common beings through quoting from a number of episodes from the scriptures, pertaining to the avatarams of Rama and Krishna. Most importantly, the elevated role of Daya Devi in bringing out this guNam of Lord Srinivasa was highlighted. This brings up an important question. Lord Srinivasa has taken root at the Venkatam hill. He is accompanied by Daya Devi and as a result graces the lowliest of the low with nIrandha samslesham. However, is this meant exclusively for the lowly ones? Do others who are slightly elevated



tilatam ulakukkAi ninRa tiruvEnkaTatemperumAnE

also become privy to His grace? Svami NammAzhvar declares in the **Tiruvaimozhi** “eNNil thol pukazh vAnavar lcanE” (Just because Lord Srinivasa has taken residence on top of the Venkatam hill, do not regard Him as a mere commoner). Instead, He is “amarkal tozhum perumAn” (The chief of Nithya Suris in Sri Vaikuntam). Svami NammAzhvar then glorifies Lord Srinivasa as “lcan vAnavarkku enpan enRAI atu tEcamO tiruvenkaTattAnukku nlcen niraionRumilEn en kaN pAsam vaitta parancuDar cotikke” (The Lord of the Nithya Suris of course is a great title! However, it does not bring any credit to Lord Narayana. This is due to the fact that the Nithya Suris do not lack anything and thus, the Lord’s role in rendering something for them becomes a non-issue. His true greatness comes to the fore only when He takes root at the Venkatam hill and graces the lowliest of beings like me.) Svami Desikan documents a similar sentiment in the **Varadaraja Panchasat** verse: “sa tvam sa eva rabhaso bhavadaupavAhyah cakram tadeva shitadhAramaham ca pAlyah sAdhAraNe tvayi karlsha samastajantoH mAtangamAnuShabhida na visheSha hetuH” (**Meaning:** Oh Lord Varadaraja! You need to grace me with Your divine weapons! Please ensure that any sins and their root cause are completely eliminated. Is Your grace meant for beings such as the elephant Gajendra and not for mortals? In response Lord Varadaraja assures him that He makes no distinction whether it be man or beast. He graces them both equally.) Therefore, Lord Narayana confers His grace equally on the highest of the high as well as the lowliest of beings. This comes about entirely due to the work of Daya Devi. His grace for the lowliest of beings is described as saulabhyam, whereas His anugraham for elevated beings is described as audhAryam. In this instance Svami Desikan states even audhAryam comes about due to the influence of Daya Devi. In Tamil, audhAryam is described as “vaLLal thanmai”. atyudhAraH is a name for Lord Narayana attesting to this fact. In the **Gadyatrayam** commentary, Svami Desikan defines audhAryam to be “pAtralAghavam deyagauravam ca anAhR^itya dAyavibhAga nyAyena pratyupakArAdi nirapekShya vitaraNa rasikatvam”(pAtra lAghavam deyagauravam is understood from an example. If a beggar, who is normally given a small sum of money, is one day given a large sum of money, it is common to ask, whether it is appropriate to give such a large sum of money.) However, one who does not consider either the value of what is given or the suitability of the recipient of this gift, is defined to be audhAryan. Not only that. When parents apportion their assets as inheritance for their children, they are not looking for anything in return from the children. Instead, they regard it as their duty towards their children. In a like manner, Lord Narayana only gives generously to “His children”- all beings in the universe, without expecting anything in return. This

is defined to be audhAryam. Furthermore, Lord Narayana takes delight in such acts of giving. If on a given day, He gives away in this manner to several of “His children” He considers this as a cause for celebration and only craves for more such seekers.



Sri Parashara Bhattar declares in the [Gunaratnakosham](#) tribute “[kasmai](#) [cidanjali bharam vahate vitlrya aishvaryaM akSharagatiM paramaM padaM vA](#)” (While passing by one person offered salutation to Ranganayaki Thayar with folded hands. As a consequence, Thayar was greatly moved and thought to Herself “He has performed a great act of saluting Me with folded hands. What should I confer upon him? Should this be worldly riches, kaivalyam - enjoyment of the Atma or even Moksham?”) Furthermore, Thayar seems to suggest “[asmai na kinciducitaM](#)

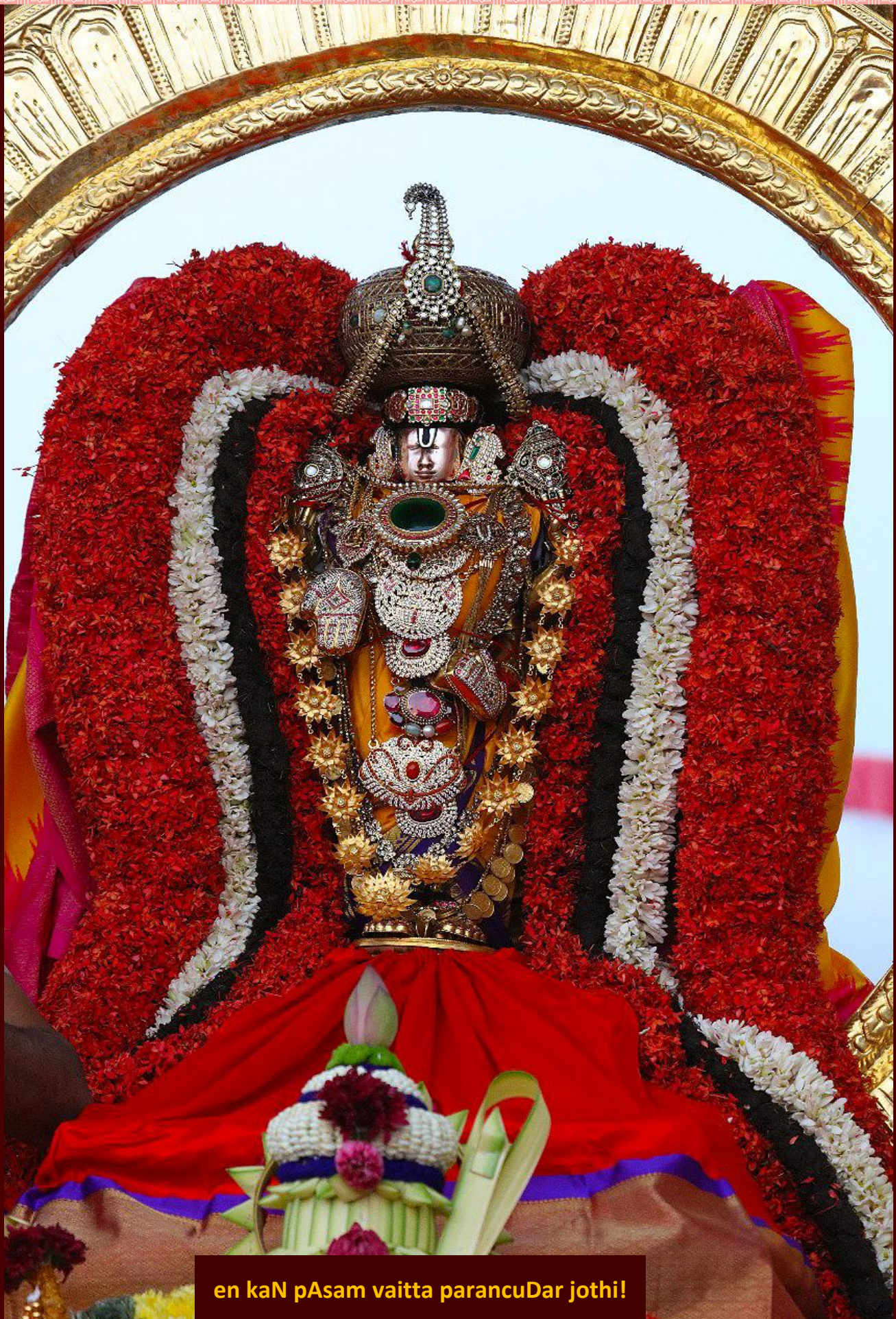
kR^itamityathAmba” (For the trouble he has taken to submit his prayer with folded hands, what I have conferred upon him is trivial). The concluding part of this tribute is “tvaM lajjase kathaya koyamudAra bhAvaH” (I am at a loss of words to describe Your compassion for this being. This is the audhAryam of Thayar).



tvaM lajjase kathaya koyamudAra bhAvaH

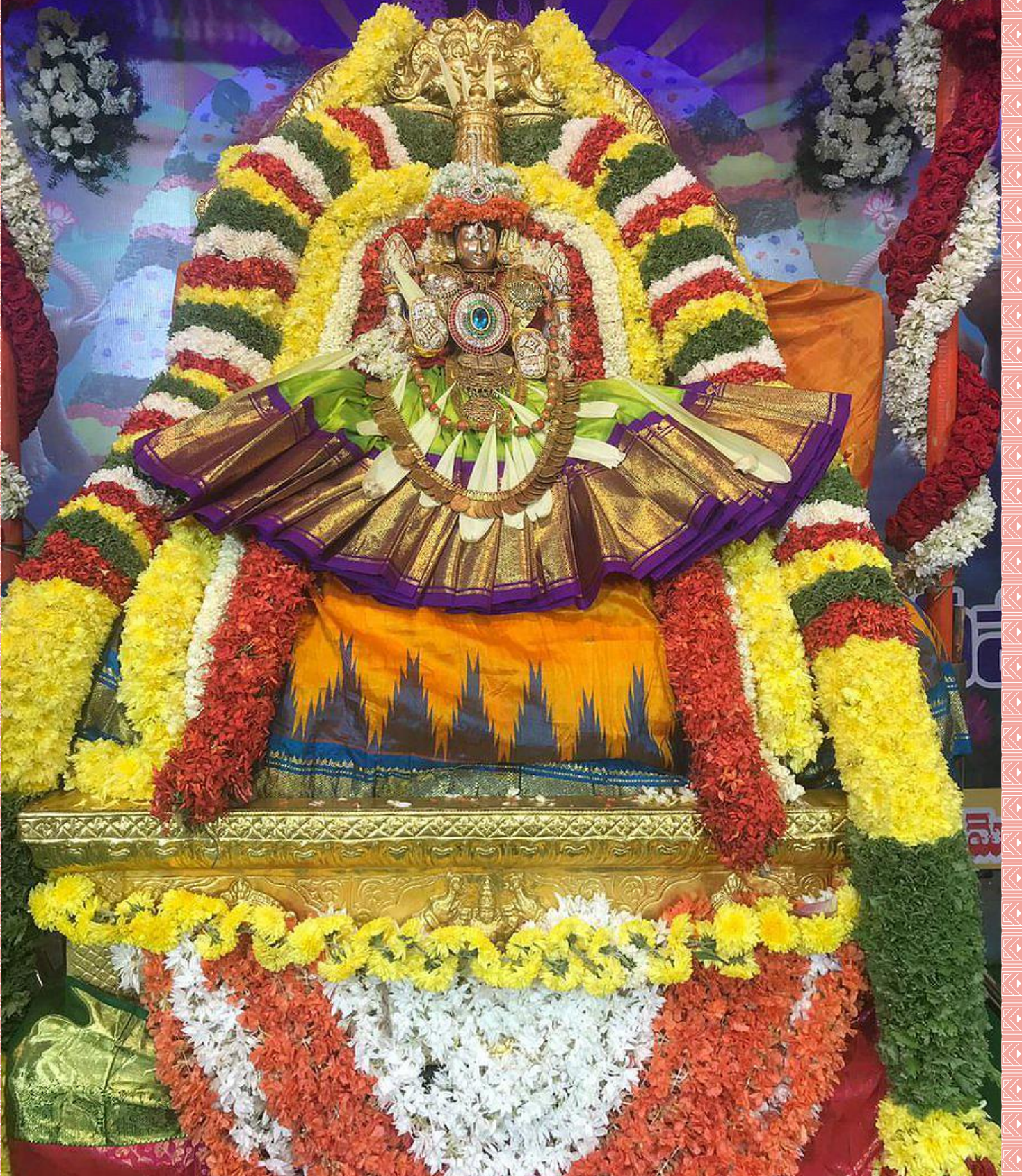
Thus, it becomes clear that Daya Devi, who is none other than Thayar, possesses audhAryam in even greater measure than the Lord Himself! This verse of the Daya Shatakam “tvayA dR^iShTastuShTiM bhajati parameShThI nija pade vahan mUrtIraShTau viharati mR^iDAnI paribR^iDhaH bibharti svArAjaM vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri karuNe shunAsIro devAsura samara nAsIra subhaTaH” documents this fact. Here Svami Desikan employs a unique sambodhanam for Daya Devi in the form of “vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri karuNe” (“mAyAvi paramAnandham tyaktvA vaikuNThamuttamam svAmi puShakaraNitIre ramayA sahamodhate” is the tribute that Lord Narayana gave up residence in His eternal abode Sri Vaikuntam, which is replete with unmatched bliss as documented in the Upanishad statement “Anando

BrahmetivyajAnAt” and is ultimate (**uttamam**-superior to everything else), to take root at the Venkatam hill on the banks of Svami PushkaraNi along with His consort, RamA. This was entirely to take delight in gracing all comers to Tirumala.) It must be noted that although the pushkaraNi at Tirumala appears as a single body of water, there are two pushkaraNis there. One is Varaha PushkaraNi opposite to the Varaha Sannadhi and the other is Svami PushkaraNi. However, now there is a common entrance which has resulted in the combination of the two PushkaraNis. Only when the floodgates are opened and the water from these PushkaraNis is emptied, does the gap between them become apparent. Lord Srinivasa begets a sense of happiness, on account of taking root at the Venkatam hill, which He does not experience even in Sri Vaikuntam. This is the import of the tribute “**vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri**”. In the **Rangaraja Sthavam**, Sri Parashara Bhattar refers to Lord Rangantha as “**Sriranga ShrungAri**” to denote the fact that Lord Ranganatha took root in the middle of the Ubhaya Kaveri, in His reclining posture. Following Sri Parashara Bhattar’s lead, Svami Desikan employs the usage “**vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri karuNe**” in this verse to depict the fact that Lord Srinivasa out of shrungAram for the seven hills arrived on top of the Venkatam hill. Namely Lord Srinivasa stands majestically on top of the Venkatam hill and beautifies the hill. It is worthwhile recalling Svami NammAzhvar’s Tiruvaimozhi tribute, which captures the glory of the sacred Venkatam hill “**tilatam ulakukkAi ninRa tiruvEnkaTatemperumAnE**”. This reflects the fact that the Venkatam hill stands like a tilakam for the entire universe. No matter how beautiful one looks, in the absence of the Tilakam, it becomes readily apparent that something is missing. However, the Tilakam fills this gap and enhances the person’s beauty. In a like manner, the Venkatam hill enhances the beauty of the entire universe. Similarly, Lord Srinivasa functions as the tilakam for the Venkatam hill as described in the salutation “**vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri**”. Thus, the sambodhanam for Daya Devi in this verse is “**vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri karuNe**”. The work of Daya Devi is captured in the salutation “**tvayA dR^iShTastuShTiM bhajati parameShThi nija pade**”. This refers to the fact that Daya Devi is responsible for Brahma, Rudra, and Indra to gain their respective elevated positions. All occupants of elevated positions seek a continuation of the same status. It may be possible to attain the elevated status after great effort. However, retaining that status is a difficult task indeed. Sometimes the demands of these elevated positions may be so burdensome that it may cause the occupant of these positions to wonder why is it that they even attained this position. Thus, even an elevated position acquired through great effort can be quite challenging. The Prashnopanishad has an important statement



en kaN pAsam vaitta parancuDar jothi!

vR^iShashikhari shR^i~NgAri karuNe

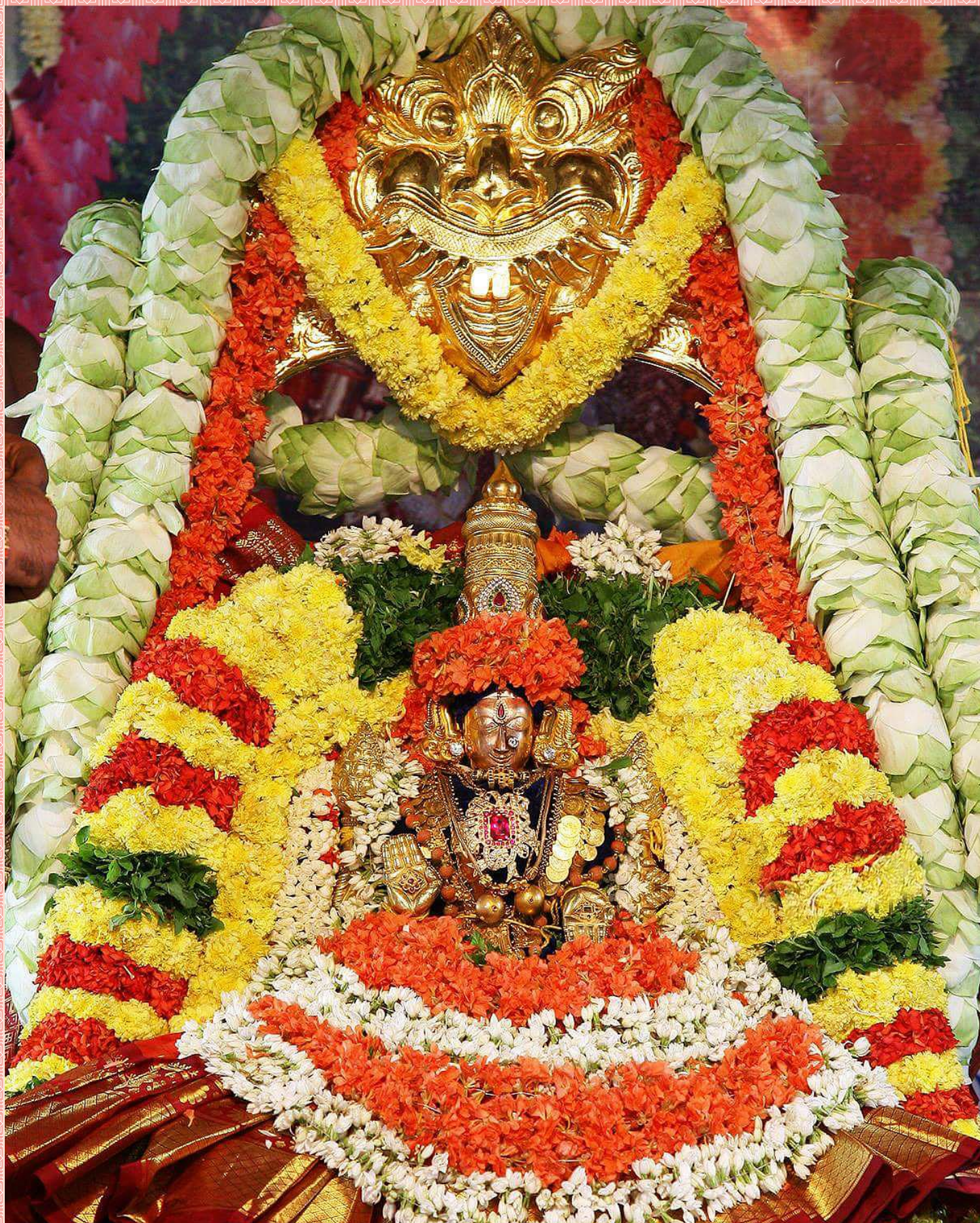


relevant in this context in the form of a question from Satyakama, “What is the means for begetting things of material value as well as the means for attaining Sri Vaikuntam?” The answer to this comes in the form of the statement “engage in **ekamAtra praNava upAsana**”. “**shraddhayA sampanno mahimAnam bhavati**” is the statement reflecting the fact that the practitioner of this upasana begets a state that is matchless in the universe. For one who engages in **dvimAtra praNava upAsana**, the result is declared to be “**somaloke vibhUtim anubhavati**” (He begets residence in the Soma Loka - Svargam and the like.) Having enjoyed the rare comforts of this lokam, when his puNyam store is exhausted he returns to the earth as documented in the Upanishad statement “**punarAvartate**”. For one who engages in **trimAtra praNava upAsana**, he attains Brahma lokam (Sri Vaikuntam), enjoys unlimited bliss in the company of Lord Narayana and never returns to the earth again as documented in the salutation “**na ca punarAvartate na ca punarAvartate**”. Here the residence in Sri Vaikuntam is glorified. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, the lokam of Chaturmukha Brahma is considered. This position is acquired after a great deal of effort and upasanas undertaken by its occupant. However, even this position is for a finite amount of time although it may be a long time when viewed from a human perspective. Nevertheless, even this elevated position is not lasting for the occupant, who returns to the earth upon exhausting the puNya karma, that enabled the acquisition of this elevated position. It must be remembered that begetting this position calls for extraordinary tapas, and enormous effort to undertake numerous yagams requiring indefatigable will. Even the individual that begets this elevated position after one day at the helm is consumed with the thought that this is one day less in the seat. This is the case with people who beget the status of Prime Minister, President and the like. When one is consumed with such thoughts is it possible to remain happy in these positions? However, the occupant of the Brahma position is able to experience joy due to the grace of Daya Devi. This is referenced in the tribute “**parameShThI nija pade bhajati tvayA dR^iShTastuShTiM**”. For this Brahma to maintain his current position he needs to perform even more arduous tasks as documented in the statement “**yuga koTi sahasrANi viShNuM ArAdhya padmabhuH punastrailokya dhatR^itvam praptavAn iti sushR^ima**” (After worshipping Lord Vishnu for billions of chaturyugas, Brahma begets his status as the creator of the universe, which is a sought after position.). This effort is facilitated by the grace of Daya Devi. Not only that, in performing his duties as the creator rather than getting care-worn, Brahma experiences a certain delight. This comes about due to the grace of Daya Devi as evidenced by the salutation “**tvayA dR^iShTastuShTiM**”. Next, the position of Shiva



tvayA dR^iShTastuShTiM bhajati parameshThI nija pade

is described through the tribute “vahan mUrtIraShTau viharati mR^iDAnI paribR^iDhaH”. The usage “mR^iDAnI paribR^iDhaH” denotes one who is the consort of Uma (Parvati), namely Shiva. This Shiva is engaged in sport taking eight forms as per the tribute “vahan mUrtIraShTau viharati” of this verse. The reference here is to the ardhanArIshvara form of Shiva, who has transformed his body such that one half is in male form and the other is in female form depicting the fact that Shiva and Parvati exist as one in a single body. This joy of Shiva in eight forms comes about due to the grace of Daya Devi as is seen from the salutation “tvayA dR^iShTaH” of this Daya Satakam verse. How does Shiva beget this state? This is accounted for by the declaration “vishvarUpo mahAdevaH sarvamedhe mahAmakhe juhAva sarvabhUtAni tathaivAtmAnamAtmanA”. (Due to undertaking the performance of a Yagam known as Sarva Medhe, wherein he offered himself as the havis, Shiva came to be known as Mahadevan). This is documented in the declaration “mahAdevaH sarvayaj~ne mahatma hutvAatmAnaM devadevo babhUva” (Due to his act of submitting himself as the havis in the yagam for Lord Narayana, he came to be celebrated as deva deva and occupies the position of destroyer.). The salutation “vishvANIllokAnvyApya viShTabhya kIrtyA virAjate dyutimAnkR^ittivAsAH” documents the fact that Shiva is celebrated in the universe as sarvaj~nyan (all knowing one), on account of his fame (as a result of the yajnam he performed) and is recognized through the adornment of the elephant skin. Shiva seeks to continue in his position as Rudra - the destroyer. This is granted on account of Daya Devi as is evident from the salutation “tvayA dR^iShTaH”. Rudra is known as ashta murthys - earth, water, tejas, thAdhrupa, sky, sun, moon, and the performer of Yagas. In kAlahasthi, Rudra manifests in the form of vAyulingam. In Chidambaram, he is celebrated as AkAsha lingam. In some other places he manifests as jyothirlingam. In Gokarna, he is worshipped as aplingam (water lingam). Thus, in these eight forms he has transformed himself into ArdhanarIshvara symbolizing his union with Uma, and is living in bliss. This comes about entirely on account of the grace of Daya Devi as documented in the tribute “tvayA dR^iShTaH”. Finally, Svami Desikan discusses the role of Indra in the salutation “shunAsIro devAsura samara nAsIra subhaTaH” The tribute “shunAsIraH” denotes Indra, who attains this position as a result of performing a hundred Ashvamedha yaj~nams. He accepts and rules over his kingdom with great joy as depicted in the eulogy “bibharti svArAjyaM”. This again comes about due to the grace of Daya Devi as outlined in the tribute “tvayA dR^iShTaH” The position of Indra too comes with its share of travails such as constantly battling the Asuras. However, on account of Daya Devi’s grace, Indra emerges victorious in his battles



The demigods beget their elevated positions on account of the compassionate eye-glances of Daya Devi!

with the Asuras as can be seen from the salutation “shunAsIro devAsura samara nAsIra subhaTaH” and this is the cause for him to be celebrated in the manner of “bibharti svArAjyaM”. Indra is known for zealously safeguarding his position as the king of the Devas and ruthlessly eliminating all perceived threats. In days of yore, there lived a king named MAndhAtha, who was an ancestor of Lord Rama. He was known for his righteousness and thus came to occupy a status on par with that of Indra. He occupied a throne in Svarga Lokam similar to that of Indra. However, the latter was absolutely intolerant of any competition for his position. Thus, one day he posed a trick question to MAndhAtha asking, “Who was celebrated as the foremost among virtuous men on earth while you lived there?”. The honest answer would be “MAndhAtha” himself. Anything else would be lying. The former would incur the exclusion from Svargam on the basis of engaging in self-praise, while the latter would result in exclusion on the basis of lying. Realizing this predicament, MAndhAtha provided the honest answer. This was sufficient for Indra to expel him from Svarga lokam. Thus, for Indra to remain secure in his position, all that is needed is the grace of Daya Devi. There are four types of people who engage in worship of Lord Narayana as documented in the Bhagavadgita salutation “chaturvida bhajantyemAm”. These are Arta (one encountering suffering), arthArthi (one seeking material benefits repeatedly), jij~nAsu (one who seeks enjoyment of the Atma-Kaivalyam) and j~nAni (those that seek moksham). Lord Narayana due to His audhAryam grants them what they seek. This audhAryam comes about on account of Daya Devi. This is the import of this Daya Satakam verse.”

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

“Devas like Brahma, Rudra, and Indra rule over their respective domains on account of Your compassionate eye glances, oh Daya Devi!” is the crux of this verse. Other usages in this verse are due to the poetic genius of Svami Desikan.

1. Parameshti is a designation for Lord Vishnu. Hence, Svami Desikan has carefully employed the term “nijapade” to denote the position of Brahma.
2. It is more attractive to depict Lord Srinivasa as a decoration for the Hill rather than saying that He adorns the hill.
3. It must be noted that Devas like Brahma, Rudra, and Indra beget their elevated positions on account of the compassionate eye-glances of Daya Devi. Hence the message is offer salutations to Daya Devi. Abjure all lesser beings portrayed as Gods by laymen.

Slokam 67

दये दुग्धोदन्वद्वयति युत सुधा सिन्धु नयतः

त्वदाश्लेषान्नित्यं जनित मृत सञ्जीवन दशाः ।

स्वदन्ते दान्तेभ्यः श्रुति वदन कर्पूर गुलिकाः

विष्णुवन्तश्चित्तं वृषशिखरि विश्वम्भर गुणाः ॥ ६७ ॥

daye dugdho danvad vyati yuta sudhA sindhu nayataH

tvad AshleShAnnityaM janita mR^ita sa~njIvana dashAH |

svadante dAntebhyaH shruti vadana karpUra guLiKAH

viShuNvantashchittaM vR^iShashikhari vishvambhara guNAH | 67



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

“This verse is “daye dugdho danvad vyati yuta sudhA sindhu nayataH tvad AshleShAnnityaM janita mR^ita sa~njIvana dashAH svadante dAntebhyaH shruti vadana karpUra guLiKAH viShuNvantashchittaM vR^iShashikhari vishvambhara guNAH” The previous two verses highlighted Lord Srinivasa’s saushIlyam and audhAryam. These traits acquire great fame on account of the work of Daya Devi. In this verse, Svami Desikan emphatically states that all other guNams of Lord Narayana, acquire their status as guNams only on account of association with Daya Devi. It may be recalled here that in verse 15, Svami Desikan laid out the case that the kalyANa guNams of Lord Narayana, acquire their status as guNams on account of association with Daya Devi. If not, they would verily be doshams. Here, Svami Desikan dwells on the elevated status gained by these guNams on account of association with Daya Devi. In verse 65, Svami Desikan described the grace of Daya Devi for the lowliest of beings, while in verse 66, he described Her anugraham for beings that occupy elevated positions of Brahma, Rudra, and Indra. Here Svami Desikan focuses on the grace of Daya Devi for Maharishis engaged in constant contemplation of Lord Narayana. The Sambodhanam (call out) in this verse is “daye”. Lord Srinivasa is the ocean of non-countably infinite kalyANa guNams (auspicious qualities). The extent of these auspicious qualities too is immeasurable. For example, beings bound to samsaram, exhibit the guNams of **satva**, **rajas**, and **tamas** in direct proportion to their accumulated Karma. Those that have

accumulated puNyam exhibit a great deal of satva guNam, while ordinary beings predominantly demonstrate rajo guNam. Those who have sinned greatly, exhibit tamo guNam. However, Lord Narayana, who is replete with **shuddha satvam**, possesses limitless (**ananta**) kalyANa guNams.



The union of the kalyANa guNams of Lord Narayana with Daya Devi

These kalyANa guNams find their abode in Lord Narayana, who is verily an ocean that is impossible to measure. In this verse, Svami Desikan visualizes this ocean as an ocean of milk. Daya Devi is described as a river/ocean of amrutam (life-giving elixir). This is described in the salutation “**sindhu**” of this Daya Satakam verse. Specifically, Svami Desikan captures the beauty arising from the union of this river/ocean with the ocean of milk known as Lord Srinivasa. This is the union of the kalyANa guNams of Lord Narayana with Daya Devi, which is captured in the tribute “**daye dugdho danvad vyati yuta sudhA sindhu nayataH**”.



Milk by itself is refreshing. When mixed with sugar, it imparts a sweet taste to the milk. However, when heated and stirred into a paste and mixed with cardamom, saffron, and sugar, it acquires an even more pleasing taste, and the dish is known as “**thiraTTi pAl**” in Tamil. The inner meaning is that no matter what form Lord Narayana is visualized (**para**, **vyUha**, **vibhava**, **archa**, or **hArdha**), only when enjoyed in the context of His union with Daya Devi does the anubhavam become complete, fulfilling, and tasty. This is documented in the Azhvar anubhavam of Lord Narayana in the Pasuram “tEnum pAlum kannalum amutumaki tittippa” (Honey, milk, sugarcane juice, and amrutham when enjoyed in a mixture yields a unique flavor). In the month of MarghashIrsha (Margazhi in Tamil), during tiruvaradhanam, madhuparkam is submitted by way of naivedyam to Lord Narayana. This is usually

a mixture of milk, honey, and jaggery. The flavor for this madhuparkam is quite unique and unmatched. Likewise, if the kalyANa guNams of Lord Narayana, which exist in a manner analogous to milk, honey and the like, are mixed with the amrutam of Daya Devi it yields a matchlessly delectable flavor.

Four important benefits arising from this mixture are highlighted in this verse. First is “mR^ita sa~njIvana dashAH” namely that of reviving a dead man. Next, it causes “shruti vadana karpUra guLiKAH”. The head of the Vedam so to speak are the Upanishads. This causes the “karpUra guLiKAH” for the Upanishads. Then follows “chittaM viShuNvantaH” that is one which greatly moves the mind and soul. Finally, “dAntebhyaH svadante” arises. Namely, it is a source of great delight for those engaged in constant contemplation of Lord Narayana. These are examined one by one. The term mR^ita sa~njIvanam has been employed by Svami Desikan in an earlier verse (Sloka 22) “kalashodadhisampado bhavatyAH” which concludes with “mR^ita sanjIvanamanjanAchalendoH” The earlier usage refers to the fact that Lord Srinivasa arose as a result of churning the ocean known as Daya Devi. This Divya mangala vigraha of Lord Srinivasa confers “mR^ita sa~njIvanam” namely, reviving the dead. The usages jIvanam, sanjIvanam, and mR^ita sanjIvanam need to be considered in this context - jIvanam denotes existence in some form, perhaps even in a comatose state but still alive, while sanjIvanam denotes a healthy person with sturdy limbs, who is engaged in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam by putting his senses to proper use, whereas mR^ita refers to one whose sense organs have failed but is clinging on to life simply on account of breath. The Divya mangala vigraha of Lord Srinivasa is capable of reviving such a dead person as denoted by the usage mR^ita sa~njIvanam. This is an act brought about by Daya Devi. It helps to examine who are the mR^itas and how they are revived by Daya Devi. In this context the mR^ita prAyas are those who are bereft of the knowledge that they are the sheShAs (eternal servants) of Lord Narayana, who is the Lord and Master of all sentient and insentient beings in the Universe. Thus, all beings in the Universe are dAsabhUtAs for Lord Narayana as described by the MantrarAja pada Stotram salutation “dAsabhUtaH svataH sarve hyAtmAnaH paramAtmanaH” Hence, those who are not endowed with the knowledge that they are inherently dAsabhUtAs of Lord Srinivasa and act in a manner contrary to this fact are mR^ita prAyas. However, due to the grace of Daya Devi, they gain knowledge of their inherent nature (svarUpam) of being dAsabhUtAs for Lord Srinivasa and become engaged in His Kaimkaryam. On account of contact with Daya Devi, the kalyaNa guNams of Lord Narayana cause these mR^ita prAyas to become mR^ita sanjIvanas. This is captured in the tribute “tvad AshleShAnnityam” (due to contact of the kalyaNa guNams with Daya Devi).



Daya Devi is the sole reason for reviving, rejuvenating, and re-activating us!

Even atheists (mR^ita prAyas), who but once come to the Venkatam hill and prostrate before Lord Srinivasa are transformed into mR^ita sanjlvanas at that very instant on account of Daya Devi's contact with the Lord's kalyaNa guNams. They then begin to yearn for repeated opportunities to offer prayers to Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill. Next the tribute "shruti vadana karpUra guLiKAH" is examined. The Vedas acquired a state, where people were engaged in gross misinterpretations and propagation of incorrect/flawed positions contrary to the true import of Vedic statements. This is another form of mR^ita prAyas. If one who is suffering greatly from health issues and is almost in a dead state, offering a small amount of edible camphor (pacchai karpUram in Tamil) will cause his tongue to become wet thereby resulting in a mR^ita sanjivana position. The Upanishads extol the glory of Lord Narayana and highlight the loftiness of His numerous auspicious attributes. However, if these attributes are glorified without the association of Daya Devi, they do not fit. The greatness of Lord Narayana can be understood from the Upanishads alone. That which lends loftiness to the exposition of the Upanishads in the manner of the Lord's kalyaNa guNams being associated with Daya Devi is like the offering of edible camphor, which brings moisture to the parched tongues and causes them to engage in the correct interpretation of the Upanishads. This is again due to the kalyaNa guNams of Lord Narayana coming in contact with Daya Devi. Sri Andal seeks to understand and appreciate every limb of Lord Narayana. She wonders how to go about this task. "matuvin tuzhAi muDi mAIE! mAyanE! enkaL amutE" is the relevant salutation for Andal seeking to appreciate the face of Lord Narayana. We know that delicacies like jilebi, and tiraTTu pAl, taste sweet. The question that Sri Andal poses is "Does Lord Narayana's face taste sweet in the manner of these delicacies?" Accordingly, She addresses the Lord's shankham, which enjoys close contact with Lord Narayana's lips and submits the salutation "karpUram nArumO kamala pU nArumO". (Does Lord Narayana's face exude the fragrance of edible camphor, lotuses, or jasmine flowers). She then enquires "tiru pavaLa chevvaAi tAn tittittirukkumO" (Oh Panchajanya! You enjoy close contact with the lips of Lord Narayana. Please enlighten Me on the scent exuded by these lips). In a like fashion, for the Upanishad vadanam (lips that render the Upanishad), a mere contemplation of the task should result in a sweet taste. For example, one may enjoy the teppOtsavam (Lord Narayana and Thayar in utsavam in a boat) during certain occasions. The mere thought of this utsavam causes one to salivate at the mouth at the prospect of the beauty that awaits. Just as one salivates at the mouth in anticipation of enjoying delicacies such as jilebi, jAnghri, and Mysore pAk, the very thought of rendering the tributes pertaining to



Daya Devi is the elixir praised by Vedas and Upanishads

the Lord's kalyaNa guNams must cause the Upanishads to enthusiastically look forward to the task. In this context, Daya Devi functions as the edible camphor offering for these lips causing them to become moist. Next, the tribute “chittam viShuNvantaH” is examined. This is a reference to the fact that the association of Daya Devi with the kalyaNa guNams of Lord Narayana, causes the mind to be greatly moved. “rUpameva setum mahimAnam vyakaste” is the vedam salutation that glorifies the anubhavam of offering prostrations to Lord Narayana. Upon saluting him in this manner, is it “satyam (truth) j~nAnam (knowledge) anantam (infiniteness) brahma” that comes to mind? No instead we are overwhelmed by the darsanam and left quite bedazzled by the experience. In the manner of the thorny exterior of a jackfruit yielding a sweet tasting kernel, there are several stages of enjoying the Upanishad glorification of Lord Narayana. One is the prima facie meaning of satyam, j~nAnam, anantam, amalativam, and Anandam. The next stage is to appreciate these through a formal study of granthams such as Sri Bhashyam. Another manner of such enjoyment is illustrated through the analogy to a banana, which needs to be peeled in order to enjoy the sweet taste. This manner of enjoyment comes about on account of reciting Stotrams. In this context, the Sri Sooktis of Azhvars, and Acharyas such as Svami Alavandar, Svami Bhashyakarar, and Svami Desikan are inherently sweet and do not require peeling of any external layers. This provides a delectable flavor. Needless to say, this comes about due to Daya Devi. Thus, She causes the sweet taste to the tributes that glorify Lord Srinivasa and highlight His kalyaNa guNams. The tribute “dAntebhyaH svadante” refers to those, who are engaged in constant contemplation of Lord Narayana. These are the Maharishis, who are forever pursuing tapas and dhyanam of Lord Narayana. The association of Daya Devi with the kalyaNa guNams of Lord Narayana, results in a unique sweetness for their endeavors. The opening Pasuram of Svami Madhurakavi Azhvar “kaNNiNun ciRutthAmpinAl kaTTuNna paNNiya perumAyan ennappanil naNNi tenkurukUr nambi enRakkAl aNNikkum amutURum ennAvukke” declares that merely uttering the name tenkurukUr nambi causes the Azhvar's mouth to water. This is the manner of the tribute “svadante dAntebhyaH” of this Daya Satakam verse, which captures the delectable anubhavam of the Maharishis. Thus, the association of Daya Devi with the kalyaNa guNams of Lord Narayana, gives rise to the four benefits that are stated in this verse and lends a sense of loftiness to the kalyaNa guNams themselves. Thus with a prayerful submission to Daya Devi for increase in our ruchi for Lord Srinivasa and Svami Desikan, adiyen concludes this upanyasam.”

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



chittam viShuNvantaH

“Try separating the Daya quality from all the other kalyaNa guNams of Lord Srinivasa, which are no doubt auspicious, delicious, and heartening. Yet such an exercise is interesting. It looks like the union of the vast ocean of nectar of Daya with the ocean of milk representing the numerous, countless and sweet-to-contemplate upon auspicious attributes of Lord Srinivasa is indeed an ambrosia that can revive a dead being. Hence it is denoted by amrutham.

We are indeed dead beings as long as we have not imbibed the seshatva spirit that marks our soul. Daya Devi is the sole reason for reviving, rejuvenating, and re-activating us as conscientious strivers for the Lord’s bliss. This unusual mixture is the content of all Vedas and Upanishads, especially. The Vedic damsels (personified and humanized as lovely ladies) have fragrant cool pills of karpUra; yes; the qualities are so lascivious for the tongue as well as heart-warming. They please the hearts of men. Men do not require any other vitalizing nutrient for the heart and body besides Daya and other qualities praised by the Vedas.

1. The one criterion that is also mentioned for such blissful enjoyment is that one ought to be disciplined, desireless, free from incessant lustful chasing of pleasures. As the saying goes when one withdraws tastes from un-godly objects, one becomes hinged to divine bliss.

2. The delineation of Daya as an ocean instead of as a flowing flood (sindhu) is not a serious error. Other commentaries too render the verse in this manner.”



Sloka 68

जगज्जन्म स्थेम प्रलय रचना केलि रसिको
विमुक्त्येक द्वारं विघटित कवाटं प्रणयिनाम् ।
इति त्वय्यायत्तं द्वितयमुपधी कृत्य करुणे
विशुद्धानां वाचां वृषशिखरि नाथः स्तुति पदम् ॥ ६८ ॥

jagjjanma sthema pralaya rachanA keli rasiko
vimuktyeka dvAraM vighaTita kavATaM praNayinAm |
iti tvayyAyattaM dvitayam upadhI kR^itya karuNe
vishudhdAnAM vAchAM vR^iShashikhari nAthaH stuti padam | |68



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

“We commence this exposition with a prayer from Svami Kumara Varadachariar’s **PrArthanAShTakam** “shrIIsaMyamIndra siddhAnta nidhirakShaikadIkShita nityaM kuru dAsaM mAM sarvatantra svatantra te”. Svami Desikan has declared that it is his sacred duty to protect the Darsanam of Svami Bhashyakarar. This is evidenced by the **AbhItisthavam** tribute “yatipravarabhAraT rasabhareNa nItaM vayaH” (I have spent my time in the most worthwhile manner by engaging in repeated recitation and contemplation of the Sri Suktis of Svami Bhashyakarar.) Svami Kumara Varadachariar expresses his desire to be forever engaged in having as his sole objective of service Svami Desikan, whose motto was to safeguard the tradition of Svami Bhashyakarar as reflected in the salutation “nityaM kuru dAsaM mAM sarvatantra svatantra te”. This verse is “jagjjanma sthema pralaya rachanA keli rasiko vimuktyeka dvAraM vighaTita kavATaM praNayinAm iti tvayyAyattaM dvitayam upadhI kR^itya karuNe vishudhdAnAM vAchAM vR^iShashikhari nAthaH stuti padam”. The previous verse was devoted to the other kalyaNa guNams of Lord Narayana being rendered complete on account of association with Daya Devi. This was illustrated through a beautiful analogy of Daya Devi being depicted as the ocean of amrutham, while the remaining kalyaNa guNams were represented in terms of the ocean of milk. The four benefits arising from this association were also highlighted therein. Daya Devi hearing Svami Desikan’s tributes thus far, seems to suggest “Oh Svami! You have glorified Me beyond measure in these seven verses.

Why don't you render praise for Lord Srinivasa, in whom I have sought refuge?" Accordingly, Svami Desikan undertakes this task in this verse. Daya Devi continues "Svami! You have stated that the Vedas praise Me. However, it is only Lord Srinivasa that is glorified by them. It is also seen from the Azhvar tribute **nAnmaRaikal tEDiyODum selvam**. When this is the case, why are you glorifying Me?" Svami Desikan answers this as "Oh Mother Daya Devi! It is true that the Vedam pays homage to Lord Narayana. There are two reasons for this. Central to both of them is Your role." The first reason is that Lord Narayana is responsible for the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the universe. The second reason is that He ensures the upliftment of errant baddha jivans, who are subject to a seemingly interminable cycle of births and deaths, resulting in constant samsaric afflictions, by granting them moksham and guaranteeing that they never return to samsaram. However, these functions are carried out at Your command. Hence, You are the reason for the Vedam paying extensive tributes to Lord Narayana." This is the summary of this Daya Satakam verse. The Vedic tributes are described as "**vishudhdAnAM vAchAM**" in this verse. These are blemishlessly pure words. Therefore, they beget the status of "**stuti padam**". Due to this fact, Lord Narayana becomes the object of their tributes. In this context it becomes important to understand what is meant by stotram and how the Vedam words become "**vishudhdAnAM vAchAM**". Stotram is characterized through the usage of Sri Kuresa in his glorification of Thayar in the Sri Sthavam "**stotraM nAma kimAmananti kavayo yadyanyadlyAn guNAn anyatra tvasato(a)dhiropya phaNitissA tarhi vandhyA tvayi**" (A trait or attribute that cannot be found in a person or thing, when identified is defined to be Stotram). For example, when one is offered an edible item, even though it may border on being stale, the offeror needs to be appreciated or praised with the words "What an excellent offering!". Here something that is not good is being described as good. This constitutes Stotram. A bald man having two or three strands of hair being praised as being beautiful like Lord Krishna's flute is Stotram due to the fact that something that is non-existent is being invoked through this person. This is in the manner of "asataH" (that which does not exist being used to describe this person) is known as stotram. Note that Stotram only has a positive connotation. Any non-existent negative trait attributed to a person or thing does not constitute Stotram. Svami Desikan expounds on the tribute to the bald man in SrImad RahasyatrayasAram through an interesting anecdote. There lived a bald man, who was engaged in weighing the grains harvested from his land. A passerby observed this and rendered the tribute "Your manner of weighing the grains is itself beautiful. Your hair looks beautiful too." Upon hearing this, the former gave away a large

amount of his grain to the latter. Seeing this, a neighbor remarked to the bald man that he had been ridiculed by the passer by and not realizing this, he had gifted the passer by a large amount of grain. Furious at this, the bald man pursued the recipient and having caught up with him angrily asked “How dare you ridicule me? Do you think I am so naive that I do not realize this and can be taken for a ride?” Unfazed by this confrontation the individual calmly responded “Sir! I forgot to add that the praise I rendered for you is befitting only for Lord Varadaraja. However, even Lord Varadaraja’s beauty pales in comparison to your locks moving back and forth while you weigh your grain. It is perhaps this point that your neighbor was upset about. Hence you are angry. I apologize for not mentioning this earlier.” Extremely pleased by these words, the bald man gave him an equivalent measure of grain that he had already gifted. Thus, it is quite common for one to be pleased by words of praise in the manner of Stotram. Lord Narayana is no exception to this rule. However, when it comes to Lord Narayana, it is impossible to glorify Him with attributes that do not exist. This is due to the fact that He is the ocean or repository of innumerable auspicious qualities. So too is Mahalakshmi Thayar, who is never separated even for a moment from Lord Narayana. Thus Sri Kuresha concludes in his tribute that if stotram is defined to be a glorification of something non-existent in a person, this definition does not hold for Thayar as reflected in the salutation “*tvasato(a)dhiropya phaNitiH*”. This is due to the fact that any auspicious attributes that do not exist in Mahalakshmi Thayar cannot be found elsewhere. Since Thayar is the treasure-house of all auspicious attributes, this definition of Stotram does not apply in Her case. However, Sri Kuresa continues in his tribute “*samyaksatya guNAbhivarNanamatho brUyuH kathaM tAdR^ishI vAgvAcaspatinApi shakyaracaN tvatsadguNANornidhau*” to provide an alternate definition of Stotram. The import of this tribute is that even a heartfelt characterization and appreciation of qualities that one truly possesses qualifies as Stotram. Sri Kuresa continues “However, so numerous are the auspicious attributes of Thayar that even the four-headed Brahma, who is constantly engaged in reciting the Vedas with his four mouths cannot describe all these auspicious attributes. When this is the plight of the four-faced Brahma, is it not a case of daring born out of ignorance that causes me to glorify You? Therefore, I am unfit to render Your praise and thus cannot attempt this task.” Thus, in a wordly sense Stotram could mean citing something non-existent in a person or thing. However, when it comes to Lord Narayana, a factual rendition of praise in terms of auspicious attributes that exist in Him is a valid definition for Stotram. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, it must be noted that the praise is rendered by the salutations of the sacred Vedas in the manner of

panegyrists. In the old days it was common practice to awaken kings with a rendition of praise by his panegyrists. They glorify the heroic deeds of king as well as his noble traits to wake up the king from sleep. In this process, there may be exaggeration as well as a rendition of tributes in terms of qualities that the king may not possess (downright falsehood!). Therefore, this denotes “ashuddha vAk” (impure speech). Since praise of kings and famous personages are man-made, they are subject to flaws of exaggeration and falsehood. However, the Vedas (that have no authorship, that are eternal, and blemishless) render praise of Lord Narayana. Therefore, they are saluted as “shuddha vAk” in this verse. Specifically, the implication here is that the Vedas render their praise of Lord Narayana, who is never separated from Sri, in the manner of panegyrists. The Vedam begets the status of “vishudhdAnAM vAchAM” due to the fact that it only broadcasts the truth and does not contain even a single false statement. Svami Desikan while highlighting the glory of Svami Bhashyakarar’s Sri Bhashyam states “satyaikAlambibhAShyam yatipati kathitam” (The commentary of Svami Bhashyakarar in the Sri Bhashyam is filled with truth and nothing else.) This could have the implication that falsehood exists elsewhere. For example, some subscribe to the doctrine “brahma satyam jagan mitya” (Brahman alone is truth. The Universe is illusory.) This naturally leads to the question “We are able to behold the universe with our eyes. How then could this be false?” The school subscribing to this doctrine affirms that the existence of the universe is indeed false. However, Svami Bhashyakarar posits that everything that one sees, hears and utters is very much real and true. One may ask “Where is this documented?” Svami Bhashyakarar answers this through the statement that it is documented in the Vedam. Svami Bhashyakarar also states that even one’s dreams are also real, which invites the question “How could this be so?” Due to the fact that at the time of the dream, one’s fear or joy is real, the dream capturing these experiences is a valid reality/truth. If one has a small accumulation of puNya karma, one’s experience of the resulting joy is limited to dreams. Likewise, if one has accumulated significant puNya karma and very little pApa karma, the fears coming about as a result of the pApa karma is restricted to dreams and does not occur in practice. Hence, even dreams are real. However, other philosophies may disagree on the basis that these dreams prevail only for a short duration of time and do not translate into anything that transpires in reality. Therefore, how could dreams be true? Svami Bhashyakarar answers this through the statement that such reasoning is flawed. Every sentient being exists with a bodily form for a prescribed lifespan in accordance with their karma. Some may have longer lifespan than others, while

The VedAs emphatically state that Lord NARayaNa is the Supreme Being



beings like insects, and animals have a shorter lifespan. However, this does not mean that the being having a certain body and living for a finite amount of time makes its existence false. In a like manner, dreams too that prevail for a short duration are true. This is the import of the tribute “**satyaikAlambibhAShyam**”. In a like manner the Vedas utter the truth and nothing else. The Vedam glorifies Lord Narayana, who is never separated from Sri. “**matApitA sahasrebhyo vatsalataram shAstram**” is another important statement that documents the fact that the Vedas exude affection for all that is thousand times the love of parents for their offspring. Again Sri Veda Vyasa declares “**vedAcChAstrAM paraM nAsti na daivaM keshavAt param**” (There is no shastram greater than the Vedas and there is no deity greater than Keshava) in the manner of “**satyaM satyaM punaH satyaM utddhR^itya bhujamucyate**” (He solemnly declares with raised hands that this is the truth not once but three times). Due to this fact, Vedam becomes “**vishudhdAnAM vAchAM**” (extremely pure speech). This Vedam only affirms the Truth. Its instructions are exclusively for our benefit. Since the Vedam exudes affection for all that is thousand times that of the love of parents for their children it becomes “**vishudhdAnAM vAchAM**”. When it comes to the Vedam the statement “**vedAkSharANiyAvanti patitAni dvijAdhibhiH tAvanti harinAmani klrtitAni na samshayaH**” (Each alphabet of the Vedam glorifies Lord Hari. Let there be no doubt about this.) Due to this fact, the Vedam, which is blemishless and glorifies the blemishless one, Lord Narayana, with every alphabet, it acquires an extremely pure character as described by the tribute “**vishudhdAnAM vAchAM**”. In the **VaradarAja Panchashat** tribute “**trAt(aa)padi sthihipadaM bharaNaM prarohaH ChAyA karIsha sarasAni phalAni ca tvam shAkhaAgata tridashabR^inda shakuntakAnAM kiM nAma nAsi mahatAM nigamadrumANAm**” Svami Desikan describes the Vedam as a tree. Once a tree is grown, it needs to be nurtured and protected. One who performs this task for the Vedam is again Lord Narayana. He is also responsible for its propagation. One who exists as a shadow for the Vedam as well as the shelter for the Vedam is Lord Narayana. He is also the one that grants the fruits elucidated in the Vedam. Not only that the bird seated on this tree is also Lord Narayana. Are You missing from any aspect associated with this Vedam tree Oh Lord Varadaraja? This is a rhetorical question posed by Svami Desikan. The import of this verse is that Lord Narayana functions as the protector of the Vedam, as one who nurtures the Vedam tree, ensures its propagation, serves as a shadow and shelter for the Vedam, and serves as the grantor of the fruits documented in the Vedam. Thus, is there any doubt that the Vedam is extremely pure speech? Sri Kuresha describes the Vedam as “**yasya nishvasitam vedaH**” (The Vedam functions as the life breath of Lord Narayana). The

Vedam is “apauruSheyam” (does not have any authorship). If it is authored by a specific individual, there could be lapses on account of confusion or incorrect understanding. However, this becomes a non-issue for the Vedam due to lack of authorship. Hence it is “parishuddha vAk” (extremely pure speech). Lord Srinivasa is the object of glorification for the Vedam. The reason for Lord Srinivasa becoming the object of worship for the Vedam needs to be understood. The manner of the Vedam salutation of Lord Srinivasa is seen from the Rks “tad viprAso vipanyavo jAgR^ivAguM sassamindate”, “nAnyAH panthA vidyate anAya”. The reason for this manner of the Vedam tribute is documented in the salutation “jagjjanma sthema pralaya rachanA keli rasikaH” (Lord Narayana is responsible for creation, sustenance, and destruction of the Universe). Next, He is the only one that can grant moksham. When it comes to making an important point about established truths, the Vedam always adopts the mode of description in a question and answer form through a discussion between two individuals or through the narration of an anecdote. Usually in these instances, the Vedam starts out with common usages and builds up to a significant point to establish these truths. This is illustrated through an example from Bhuruguvalli of the Taittiriya Upanishad. The salutation “bhrigurvai varuniH varuNam pitaramupasassAra adhi hi bhagavo brahmeti” (Bhrugu is the son of VaruNa. He approaches his father, VaruNa and requests to be instructed in the nature of the Brahman – the Supreme Being). Even though VaruNa is his father, in keeping with the Bhagavadgita instruction “tadviddhi praNipAtena pariprashnena sevayA”, Bhrugu realizes the lofty nature of the Brahman, offers his respectful salutations to his father and humbly requests to be instructed in the nature of the Brahman. Specifically Bhrugu submits “annam prANam cakShuH shrotram, mano vAcAm iti ta(gum) ho vAca” (food, air, eyes, ears, mind, speech exist. Is Brahman any of these?) VaruNa replies “yatova imAni bhUtAni jAyante ena jAtAni jIvanti yat prayantyabhishamvishamIt tad vijij~nAsasva tad brahmeti” (He by whom this entire universe is created, He who sustains the universe thus created, He who engages in the task of dissolution of the universe at a prescribed time, should be recognized as Brahman - the Supreme Being.) Thus, in a very simple manner VaruNa provided an important instruction to his son Bhrugu Maharishi. Elsewhere it is stated “satapo tapyata satapastaptvA” (Lord Narayana engaged in the task of creation by undertaking penance.) The tapas in this context was required to bring about the proper order of creation in accordance with one’s karma. Good accruing to those who had puNyasa and punishment meted out to those that had sinned. Also, an order needed to be established to determine the sequence in which one endures the consequences of their puNyams and sins in a

specific birth. After the tapas, the task of creation comes about on account of Lord Narayana's sankalpam as documented in the tribute "ida(gum) sarvamasR^ijata" (All sentient and insentient beings are created thus.) The salutation "tadsR^iShTvA tadevAnupravishat" describes the fact that Lord Narayana completes this creation and enters these beings as their in-dweller. This is the import of the tribute "jagjjanma sthema pralaya rachanA keli rasikaH" of this Daya Satakam verse. This is also an encapsulation of the opening verse of Svami Bhashyakarar's Sri Bhashyam "akhila bhuvanajanmasthemabha~NgAdhillle", which documents the fact that Lord Srinivasa engages in the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the universe as a sport. The opening line of this tribute is the essence of all Vedantam. This message is echoed verbatim by Svami Desikan in this tribute "jagjjanma sthema pralaya rachanA keli rasikaH" A distinct feature of Svami Desikan's Sri Suktis is an emphasis on the fact that he is not stating anything new. Instead, he is merely reproducing the words of his pUrvacharyas. Bhagavad anubhavam too is no exception to this rule and is thus greatly enhanced as a result. Again, returning to the Vedam salutation "tad vijij~nAsasva tad brahmeti satapo tapyata satapastaptvA ida(gum) sarvamasR^ijAta", wherein it is expounded that Brahman is responsible for creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe, an important question that arises is who is this Brahman? This is answered through the statements "ekohavai nArAyaNASIt na brahma na IshAnaH", "ne medhyAva pR^ithivi" Only one person existed as documented by the Chandogya Upanishad tribute "sadeva saumya idamagra AsIt". Therefore, on the basis of these statements, we can reasonably conclude, that Brahman alone denoted by "sat" existed prior to the creation of the universe. Furthermore, on the basis of the statement "ekohavai nArAyaNASIt na brahma na IshAnaH", it is established that the sat alludes exclusively to Lord Narayana. This is further evidenced by the Upanishad statement "nArAyNAdbrahma jAyate nArAyaNAdrudro jAyate nArAyaNAdindro jAyate" (Brahma arose from Narayana. Rudra arose from Narayana. Indra arose from Narayana). The statements "nArAyaNadevasamutpadyante nArAyaNe pravartante nArAyaNe praliyante" attest to the fact that Lord Narayana is responsible for creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe. Consequently, all the Vedas are devoted to the glorification of Lord Narayana. The Vedam goes to great extents to document the fact that creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe comes about on account of Brahman, and that Brahman is denoted by sat and that the sat is none other than Lord Narayana. Svami NammAzhvar echoes this sentiment in a simple manner through the Tiruvaimozhi Pasuram "onRum tEvum ulakum uyirum maRRum yAtum illa anRu nAnmukhan tannoDu tevar ulakODuyir



mokSham icChet janArdanAt!

paDaittAn kunRam pOl maNi mADa nIDu tirukkurukUr adanuL ninRa AtipirAn niRka maRRaittaivam nADutirE” (Lord Narayana created Brahma, and the other devas as well as the entire universe with all its beings and remains as their indweller). This is again a reflection of the Vedam tribute “tadsR^iShTvA tadevAnupravishat” Tirumazhisai Azhvar too describes the act of creation in the NAnmukhan tiruvantAti pAsuram “nAnmukhanai nArAyaNan paDaittAn nAnmukhanum tAnmukhamAi sankaranaittan paDaittAn yAn mukhamAi antAti mElittu aRivittEn Azh poruLai cintAmal koNmin nlr tErntu” (Lord Narayana created Brahma. Brahma in turn created Rudra). It may be enquired on what basis is the Azhvar making this declaration. The Azhvar solemnly vows that this the truth and nothing but the truth, which cannot be altered no matter how many others may proclaim the supremacy of Brahma or Rudra. This is further evidenced by the Azhvar’s tribute “ini arintEn lcarkkum nAnmukharkkum taivam ini arintEn emperumAn unnai ini arintEn kAraNan nI kaRRavai nI kaRpavai nI nar kiricai nAraNan nI nankarintEn nAn” (I have understood that the Daivam for Shiva, who is universally celebrated and Brahma, who occupies the elevated position as the creator, is Lord Narayana. This is because He is celebrated as the one who is responsible for creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the entire universe. This is my firm unshakable position.) The Mahabharata tribute “abhUta samplave prApte praLine prakR^itau mahAn ekas tishTati vishvAtma sa tu nArAyaNaH” states that the only one that exists at the time of dissolution of the entire universe is Lord Narayana, who holds all the beings of the universe in their subtle state within His body. The import of these statements is captured in the “jagjjanma sthema pralaya rachanA keli rasikaH” tribute of this Daya Satakam verse. The next question that arises is whether Lord Narayana has anything to gain on account of engaging in the activities of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe in this manner. The answer is an unequivocal ‘no’. This is captured in the salutation “keli rasikaH” of this Daya Satakam verse, which reflects the fact that Lord Narayana engages in these tasks as a mere sport. This is also evidenced in the salutation “lokavat Illa kaivalyam”. He is glorified as “avApta samasta kAman”. He does not need anything. All His desires are completely satisfied. All He requires for something to happen is merely His sankalpam and lo and behold the task is effected! Thus, the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe are carried out as a sport by Lord Narayana. It is important to note that clay (an insentient form) can be transformed into a pot (another insentient form) only through the act of a sentient being (a potter). Likewise, the creation of the universe can be brought about only by a sentient being - in this case Lord Narayana. This is alluded to in the “rachanA” tribute of this Daya

Satakam verse. Sri Parashara Bhattar too refers to this fact in his **Gunaratnakosham** tribute “shriyai samastacidacidvidhAnavyasanaM hareH a~NgIkAribhirAlokaiH sArthayantyai kR^itonjaliH” (Lord Narayana engages in the task of creation with a great deal of effort.) Srushti is carried out in accordance with one’s karma. This gets complicated when it comes to even a single sentient being. What should be the ordering of the karma. How much of the effect of the puNyas and pApas does the individual have to endure? In what sequence and what time? Should the individual be afforded a chance at redemption? All of these issues pose considerable challenges when it comes to the creation of a single sentient being. What then would be the complexity that comes about in the process of creating the entire universe with millions and millions of sentient and insentient beings, their numerous pre-determined interactions on the basis of karma? This is indeed a gargantuan task carried out by Lord Narayana and hence the descriptor “with a great deal of effort”. Once this is determined, He looks at Mahalakshmi Thayar for Her approval. Only upon gaining Her approval does the Lord complete His task of creation. Sri Parashara Bhattar states that only to gain the approving eye-glances of Thayar does Lord Narayana undertake the task of creation of the universe with a great deal of effort. Thus, it is established beyond reasonable doubt that the task of creation of the universe is a task jointly undertaken by Lord Narayana and Mahalakshi Thayar. This is the cornerstone of the Sri Vaishnava tradition that has been highlighted by Svami Bhashyakarar in his Sri Suktis. Furthermore, noting that Daya Devi is no different from Mahalakshmi Thayar, Svami Desikan succinctly conveys the point that the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe are jointly undertaken by Lord Narayana and Daya Devi, through the salutation “jagjjanma sthema pralaya rachanA keli rasikaH” of this Daya Satakam verse. This is the first reason for the Vedam glorifying Lord Narayana. The second reason is that Lord Narayana paves the way to attain Him (moksham resulting in eternal bliss). It must be borne in mind that attaining Moksham, which results in ceaseless unlimited bliss is the ultimate purushArtham, which is indestructible. All else is transient in nature. He who reveals the means for attaining this lasting bliss is Lord Narayana alone. This too is documented in the Vedam through the **Purusha Suktam** tribute “nAnyaphanta ayanAya vidyate” (There is no other path to moksham besides Lord Narayana.) “amR^itasya esha setuH”(Lord Narayana is the bridge that facilitates moksham, which is in the form of the nectar of immortality- namely moksham resulting in ceaseless kaimkaryam for the Divya Dampatis in their eternal abode Sri Vaikuntam is indestructible) is another tribute from the Vedam documenting this fact. The glorification “etam setum tiyitva andastan anando



The reason for the Vedam glorifying Lord Srinivasa is entirely due to Daya Devi

bhavati” documents the fact that by clinging onto this bridge even a blind one is transformed into one having perfect vision. This transformation is brought about by Lord Narayana alone. **“yamevaiSha vR^iNute tena labhyastasyaiSha Atma vivR^iNute tanUM svAm”** Only one that the Lord wills can attain moksham. The tribute **“vimuktyeka dvAraM”** of this Daya Satakam verse documents the fact that the Lord is the sole means for gaining moksham, eloquently reflecting the message of the Vedam tribute **“nAnyaphantA ayanAya vidyate”**. Let’s say one sets out to seek something from someone. If the door to the individual is closed then it denotes aniShTam (unfulfilled desire). On the other hand, Lord Narayana welcomes moksham seekers with an open door suggesting that “I have kept this door open only for you. Welcome aboard!” Who is this meant for? This question is answered through the salutation **“praNayinAm”** (one who develops love for Lord Narayana). The **Purusha suktam** tribute **“tamevam vidvAn amR^ita iha bhavati”** documents the fact that those learned ones realize Lord Narayana to be the amrutham. This refers to the state of Bhakti Yogis, who recognize that Lord Narayana alone paves the way for moksham and accordingly adopt one of the prescribed upasanas for Bhakti yogam. In the **VaradarAja PanchAshat** salutation **“mata~Nga mAnuShabhida na vishESha hetuH”** Svami Desikan refers to the fact that Lord Varadaraja uniformly showers His grace on all those who adopt the means of Bhakti yogam without making any distinction - man or beast. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, the tribute is intended to convey the fact that those who engage with singular focus in Bhakti yogam for Lord Srinivasa are unfailingly graced with moksham. This is documented in the tribute **“vighaTita kavATaM praNayinAm”**. Thus, this exclusive route with open door to Lord Srinivasa highlighting the Vedam tribute **“nAnyaphantA ayanAya vidyate”** is captured in this Daya Satakam verse. The “open door” description by Svami Desikan is uniquely suited for Lord Srinivasa. How so? As far as we know, the door to the shrine of Lord Srinivasa in the Venkatam hill is never closed. In all other Divya Desams, the main door to the sanctum sanctorum is closed at a certain time. However, the door to Lord Srinivasa’s shrine never closes. Only for formality, the door is closed for a few moments during rendering of suprabhAtam and immediately re-opened. That too only the inner door to the Sanctum Sanctorum but not the main door. The open door is alluded to in the salutation **“vimuktyeka dvAraM”**. Even if the door remains open always, another question that arises is whether the path to the door is easily accessible and is not hard to traverse. This is answered by the Vedam statement **“esha amR^itasya setuH”** (He is the bridge, the means, the prApakam for attaining the amrutham that is represented by this open door. In other words the path is



Daya Devi is responsible for all the fame and glory accruing to Lord Srinivasa

extremely pleasant to traverse. It may be helpful to review the summary of verse 51 of the Daya Satakam, that documents this fact.) Earlier it was stated that only ones chosen by the Lord can gain moksham. Does that mean it is not possible for others to beget moksham? What about such beings? The answer to this question comes from the Vedam tribute “nAnyaphantA” (there is no other path). This is captured in the “eka dvAram” glorification of this Daya Satakam verse. The Slokam “Arogyam bhaskarAt icChet shriyam icChet hutAsanAt ishAnAt j~nAnam icChet mokSham icChet janArdanAt” attests to the fact that good health can be obtained through worship of Surya, while wealth can be gained through the worship of Agni, knowledge arising from the worship of Shiva and moksham obtained through the worship of Janardhana (Lord Narayana). This leads to the question whether Lord Narayana grants moksham only and nothing else? The import of this slokam is that the ability of deities like Surya, Agni, and Shiva is limited to grant only a specific benefit. For example, Surya grants good health alone but not wealth, or knowledge let alone the elevated benefit of Moksham. Similarly, Agni can grant wealth alone but not health or knowledge. Likewise, Shiva can grant knowledge but not health or wealth. Therefore, it must be understood that these other deities are capable of granting only specific benefits in accordance with the statement “ekaikamapi phalam” whereas Lord Narayana grants all benefits in the manner of “sarvaphala pradoyi viShNuH” Thus, there is no benefit that cannot be gained by worship of Lord ViShNu - be it good health, wealth, or knowledge and of course moksham. The “vimuktyeka dvAraM” tribute is a reflection of the statement “svarga dvAram apAvR^itam” in that for those who resort to devathantaras with the objective of begetting moksham, the door to Vaikuntam remains closed. However, for those who resort to Lord Srinivasa in order to gain moksham, the door to Sri Vaikuntam remains wide open. This is the import of this tribute from the Daya Satakam. This completes our discussion of the two reasons for the Vedam glorifying Lord Narayana and is universally agreed upon. As a consequence, Daya Devi enquires of Svami Desikan “Due to the reasons outlined herein, the Vedam glorifies Lord Srinivasa. Why then are you paying homage to Me?” The answer is provided by Svami Desikan through the tribute “iti tvayyAyattaM dvitayam upadhI kR^itya karuNe” of this verse. The import of this salutation is that both reasons for the Vedam glorifying Lord Naryana is verily due to their being subservient to You. That is, the Lord engaging in the tasks of creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe as well as being the sole mechanism for granting moksham come about due to His subservience to Daya Devi. Thus, the two reasons for the “vishuddhAnam vAcam” (Veda Vak) glorifying Lord Srinivasa come about entirely on account of the

Lord's Paratantryam to Daya Devi. Therefore, even though the Vedam may offer homage to Lord Srinivasa, in reality it is a tribute to Daya Devi alone!



shraddhayA devo devatvam ashnute

Hence, Svami Desikan tosses the ball back in Daya Devi's court to make a determination for Herself as to who the Vedam is truly paying its tributes. One may ask where is this stated? Svami Desikan underscores his point by noting that the verse 17 salutation "achida vishiShTAn praLaye jantUn avalokya jAta nirveda karaNakaLebarayogaM vitarasi vR^iShashailanAtha karuNe tvam" eloquently documents this fact. A quick recap of verse 17 is in order. Due to the insistence of Daya Devi that these beings of the universe deserve an opportunity to redeem themselves rather than being left in their inert state during praLayam, Lord

Narayana undertakes the task of creation and endows these beings with sense organs with the intention that they be put to proper use in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Of course, this task is carried out in accordance with the Sastras in that each being begets a form in accordance with their karma. This documents the fact that Lord Srinivasa engages in the task of creation at the behest of Daya Devi. When it comes to sthiti (sustenance), one can recall a prior verse from the Daya Satakam “shamayasi tamaH prajAnAM shAstramayena sthira pradIpena rUDhA vR^iShAcalapateH pAde mukhakAnti patraLacChAya” (Daya Devi bestows the undying lamp of the Sastrams in order to lead our lives in the proper manner and thereby ensure that we are protected by Lord Srinivasa). Again, a prior verse (Verse 16) documents the role of Daya Devi in causing praLaya. The relevant tribute is “pratisancarakeLimAcarasi”. In this verse Svami Desikan therefore concludes that since the two reasons for the Vedam glorifying Lord Srinivasa are entirely dependent on Daya Devi, She is truly the object of reverence for the Vedam. Thus, it is established that Lord Srinivasa acquires His loftiness, and glory only on account of Daya Devi’s doing. The Vedam offers a further glorification in the statement “shraddhayA devo devatvam ashnute” (Shraddha is the name for Mahalakshmi Thayar, who is none other than Daya Devi. Due to eternal association with Her, Lord Narayana acquires His status as a deva). This tribute is most appropriate for Lord Srinivasa. His name itself is inseparably associated with Sri. The term nivAsan would otherwise make no sense. Svami NammAzhvar in the pasuram “akala illEn iRayum enRu alarmElmankai uRai mArbA” refers to the fact that Lord Srinivasa is not for a moment separated from Thayar, who always resides in His Vakshasthalam. Svami Desikan follows the lead of the master, Svami NammAzhvar, by stating that Lord Srinivasa is never separated from Thayar in the verse “samastajananIM vande caitanyastanyadAyinIm shreyasIM shrInivAsasya karuNAmiva rUPiNIm”. Herein, he also establishes that Daya Devi is none other than Sri. Namely, if a suitable form is assigned to the Daya Gunam it would be none other than Mahalakshmi Thayar. In conclusion, this Daya Satakam verse unambiguously brings out the fact that Daya Devi is responsible for all the fame and glory accruing to Lord Srinivasa. She is instrumental for Lord Srinivasa to undertake the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe. She is also responsible for Lord Srinivasa to be the singular path (vimuktyeka dvAram) for moksham for those who seek this benefit from him. This is the reason for the Azhvar tribute “nAnmaRaikal tEDi ODum celvam” (The reason for the Vedam glorifying Lord Srinivasa is entirely due to Daya Devi). Thus the satya vAk (true speech) of the Vedam coming about on account of the glorification of Lord Srinivasa, as documented by the truth-speaking (recall the

iti tvayyAyattaM dvitayam upadhl kR^itya karuNe



shobate satya vAdi tribute from the Devanayaka Panchasat) Svami Desikan is entirely due to the grace of Daya Devi is the import of this Daya Satakam verse. We complete the exposition of this verse seeking the compassionate eye-glances of Daya Devi and Swami Desikan for all.”

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

“ Oh Daya Devi! The Lord himself takes on the the following tasks:

(i) The three-fold duty of creation, maintenance, and termination of the universe and discharges it as if it were a mere child’s play with great relish

(ii) The duty of functioning as the ONLY transporter of His dear ones - those who have obtained this preferential status on account of performing Prapatti - to deliverance-world for which He is the ONLY path, the ONLY doorway so to say. He keeps the doors of His eternal abode-the moksha-domain, Sri Vaikunta, wide open for His dear Prapanna to enter freely.

That these two favors He renders are but due to Your motivating Him. Shall I then say that if the flawless Vedas concede to Your Lord, Srinivasa, the Head of Vrushadri, a worth to be praised by them, they being the embodiments of Truth and Eternity, just like the Lord, it is because You encourage Him in these directions. Therefore, the Vedic tributes to the Lord, are in fact tributes to You, Oh Daya Devi! You provide a pretext for Him to be praised for what You have accomplished through Him.”



Sloka 69

कलि क्षोभोनमिलत्क्षिति कलुष कूलङ्कष जवैः

अनुच्छेदैरैतैरवट तट वैषम्य रहितैः ।

प्रवाहैस्ते पद्मा सहचरपरिष्कारिणि कृपे

विकल्पन्तेऽनल्पा वृष शिखरिणो निर्झर गणाः ॥ ६९ ॥

kali kShobhon mllatkShiti kaluSha kUla~NkaSha javaiH
anuchcChedairetaiH avaTa taTa vaiShamya rahitaiH |
pravAhaiste padmA sahachara pariShkAriNi kR^ipe
vikalpante(a)nalpA vR^iSha shikhariNo nirjhara guNAH | 69



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

“The previous verse highlighted the two principal characteristics (undertaking the tasks of creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe as an act of sport, and being the sole grantor of moksham to His seekers so to speak by means of a single doorway “**vimuktyeka dvAram**”) of Lord Srinivasa, as a result of which He is glorified by the Vedam. Furthermore, it was established that the reason for the Vedam tribute is solely on account of Daya Devi, who causes the Lord to act in this manner befitting glorification by the Vedam. It is impossible to directly behold the Daya of Lord Srinivasa. It can only be experienced at appropriate times. This verse is meant to illustrate a direct view of Daya Devi. It is also meant to illustrate the fact that Daya Devi’s grace is not restricted to those who were fortunate to be born in the Krita yugam, Treta yugam, and DvApara yugam. It is very much present even for common people like us in the present Kali yugam. This verse is “**kali kShobhon mllatkShiti kaluSha kUla~NkaSha javaiH anuchcChedairetaiH avaTa taTa vaiShamya rahitaiH pravAhaiste padmA sahachara pariShkAriNi kR^ipe vikalpante(a)nalpA vR^iSha shikhariNo nirjhara guNAH**” is meant to illustrate how Daya Devi is present. Specifically, Svami Desikan states here that Daya Devi is present in the form of copious streams of water flowing from the mountains of Venkatam. In a prior verse, Svami Desikan alluded to Daya Devi in terms of the streams flowing from the Venkatam hill through the salutation “**vAridhAra visheShaiH**”. In this verse, Svami Desikan completes the analogy by

making a one-to-one association between the characteristics of the streams and Daya Devi. It is common practice to describe something that cannot be visualized in terms of something that can and establish the equivalence. For example, those of us who have never visited USA but want to know how cold the weather gets in the winter, can readily relate to the statement that it is ten times as cold as the winter in New Delhi. Thus, those who have experienced the New Delhi winter can imagine how cold the winter is in the USA. In a like manner, Svami Desikan expounds on the characteristics of Daya Devi, which cannot be perceived directly, in terms of the characteristics of the streams at the Venkatam Hill which can be readily seen. In the process, Svami Desikan provides a comparison of between Daya Devi and the water streams at the Venkatam hill. The streams at the Venkatam hill flow torrentially all the time without exception. The flow of the streams is so forceful that it washes away any dirt that sticks firmly to the ground. Furthermore, the stream waters make no distinction between hills and plateaus. Consequently, they flow uniformly in the same manner, regardless of the terrain. The volume of water flow too remains constant and does not selectively change with the type of terrain. An important point of note is that during the time of Svami Desikan, the water from the streams at the Venkatam hill were flowing constantly without interruption and is hence described as it prevailed at that time. However, due to our papa rAshi, we are only able to behold the flow of these streams selectively (sometimes we may see them and at other times we may not). Thus, the present time does not in any way negate Svami Desikan's outstanding anubhavam. However, even today in some places like Akasha Ganga, and Papavinashani tirtham, the water streams are constantly flowing. For example, in Azhvar tirtham, which adiyen has personally seen, the water from the stream flows for a long time after the rainy season ends. The water flow is torrential here. Furthermore, the water quality is extremely pure. If one engages in snAnam at this place, one can actually experience a heavy load (due to the falling water) on one's head on account of the copious flow of water. The place where the stream lands is pristinely clean since all dirt from the region is washed away due to the torrential flow of water. This phenomenon, which is readily seen by all is used by Svami Desikan to illustrate the flow of Daya Devi. The water streams of the Venkatam hill cleanse the earth of dirt due to the torrential flow. In a like manner, Daya Devi cleanses all Her seekers of their mountainous sin-pile with their roots. It must be remembered that this sin-pile is accumulated over aeons and is impossible to get rid of. The tribute "kali kShobhon mIlatkShiti kaluSha kUla~NkaSha javaiH" denotes the fact that due to the prevalence of Kali, residents of the earth accumulate great sins. However, these are

instantaneously destroyed by the Daya Devi flow. The sambodhanam for Daya Devi from this verse is “**padmA sahachara pariShkAriNi kR^ipe**” The reference here is Padma (Mahalakshmi Thayar) is constantly by the side of Lord Srinivasa as evidenced by the tribute “**akalakillEn iRaiyum enRu alarmElmankai uRai mArbA**”. Due to the eternal association with Padma, Lord Srinivasa becomes Nitya Shri - **tiruvODukUDu**, whereas all other devatas cannot lay claim to this status (**tiruvillAtavar**). The eternal association with Thayar (**shriyaH patitvam**) confers a unique status on Lord Srinivasa, which sets Him apart from other devatas. It is helpful to recall Svami NammAzhvar’s tribute “**tilatam ulakukkAi ninRa tiruvE~NkaTattemperumAnE**” in this context.



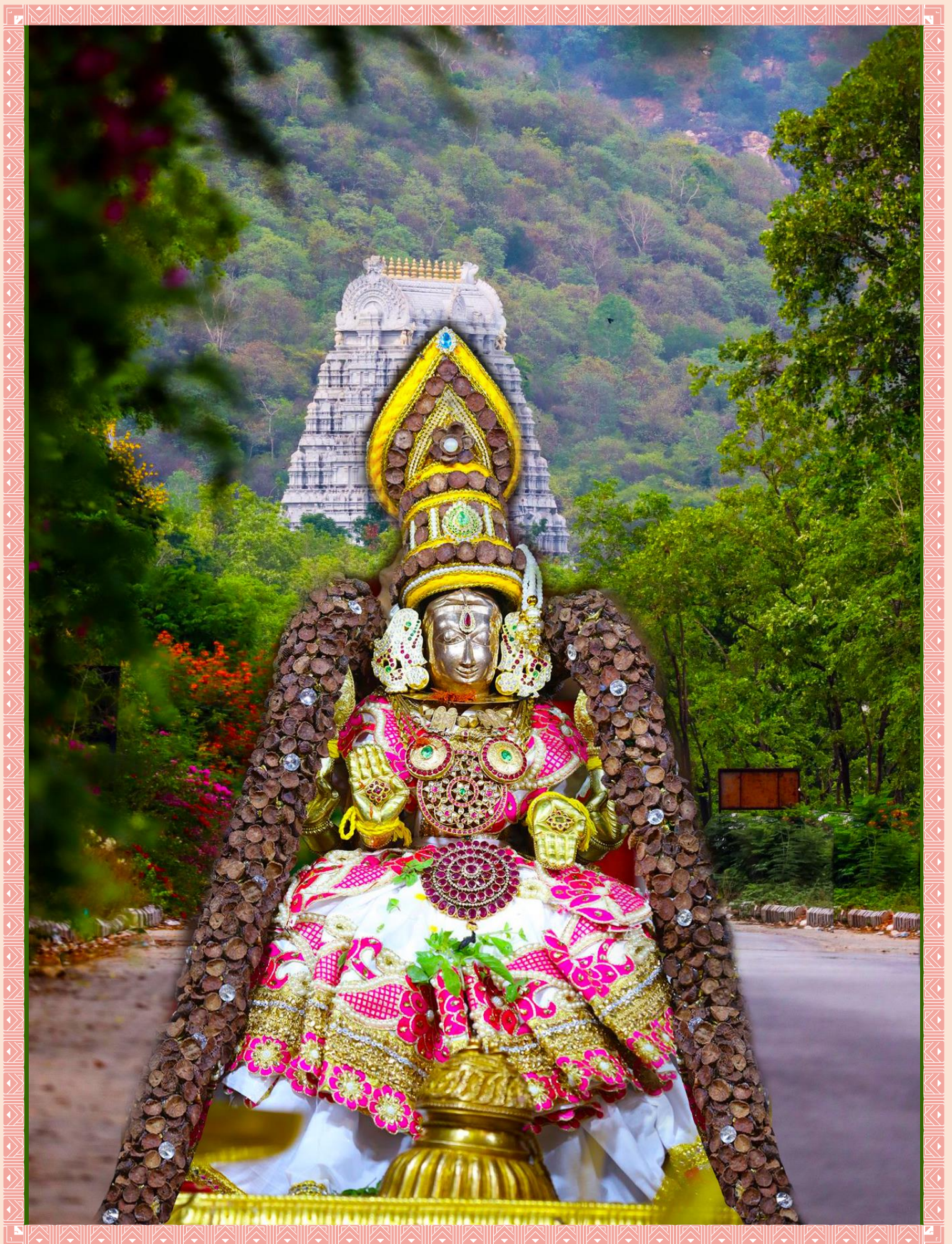
Lord Srinivasa serves as the alankaram for the Venkatam Hill

Lord Srinivasa serves as the alankaram for the Venkatam Hill. Now the alankaram for Him and Thayar needs to be special. This may include a number of ornaments and jewelry. However, these are merely external decorations. In this instance the special alankaram for any person is the guNam. First guNam is **ahimsa** (a position of non-violence). Next comes **sarvabhUta dayA** (compassion for all beings). Then

follows **indriya nigraham** (control of the senses), **kShama** (forgiveness), **sarvam saha** (forbearance), and **dAnam** (charity). These are the eight varieties of flower offering preferred by Lord Narayana as documented in the Bhagavadgita. These are the eight guNams that embellish a person. Likewise, when it comes to Lord Srinivasa, the special alankaram for Him comes about on account of His innumerable and limitless kalyANa guNams (auspicious qualities). No matter, what vajra, vaiDUrya, and kirITa adorn Lord Srinivasa and regardless of how dazzling the ornaments, Lord Srinivasa shines forth resplendently entirely on account of His kalyANa guNams. These include, **mAdhuryam** (sweetness), **gAmbhiryam** (majesty), **vAtsalyam** (unconditional love like that of a cow for its calf). Svami Desikan makes the analogy that these auspicious qualities could be viewed as ornaments. After the Lord has adorned Himself with these, Daya Devi serves as the tilakam on His forehead, which renders a sense of completion to all His decoration. The inner meaning is that the Lord would be lacking bereft of the Daya-Devi adornment on His forehead even though the other kalyANa guNams are dazzling in their own right. Thus, the tilakam denoted by Daya Devi confers loftiness to Lord Srinivasa. Hence, Daya Devi serves as the crown jewel for alankarams in this context as evidenced by the tribute “**padmA sahachara pariShkAriNi kR^ipe**”. A common world example to illustrate the sense of completeness of alankaram conferred by Daya Devi is provided in the context of cooking food for **neivedyam**. After the delicacies are prepared, the final step includes the seasoning that is added to enhance the taste. This is the role of Daya Devi with regards to alankaram for Lord Srinivasa. This merely narrated by adiyen with the intent of illustrating the elevated role of Daya Devi. However, this mundane illustration is not to be associated directly with Daya Devi or attributed to Svami Desikan. Why does Daya Devi beget the status of tilakam as alankaram for Lord Srinivasa? It is entirely due to Her actions documented in the tribute of this verse “**kali kShobhon mIlatkShiti kaluSha kUla~NkaSha javaiH**” (She roots out all the sins that cling on to Her seekers. This task is rendered onerous due to the work of Kali, which causes indulgence in sinful acts.) Here it may be asked “**kShobhon**” (denoting confusion) apply to every yugam, what is so special about Kali? In the dvApara yugam, Arjuna enquires of Lord Krishna in the **Bhagavadgita** “**kArpaNya doShopahatasvabhAvaH pR^icChAmi tvAM dharmasammUDhacetAH yacChreyaH syAnnishchitaM brUhi tanme shiShyaste(a)haM shAdhi mAM tvAM prapannam**” (Oh Lord KrishNa! I have the dosham of karpanyam (inability). I do not know if I can engage in war with these many near and dear ones. Bhishma, my grandfather, Drona, my Acharya are in the adversary army. How could I wage war against them? Even if I become victorious,



is the enjoyment of kingdom gained by killing revered ones worth the price? On the other hand, I am known as a valorous one who is skilled in archery. If I withdraw from this war, would I not be forever carrying the stigma of retreat from a pivotal war? Therefore, I am unable to make the distinction between dharma and adharma. Submitting my weakness to You, I request You through a formal surrender to accept me as Your disciple.) While this is no doubt true of other yugams, the magnitude and frequency of such confusions increase several-fold in Kaliyugam. In the Mahabharata, there is a **moksha dharma prakaraNam** (documentation), wherein it is stated “tatha kaliyuge prApte chaturyuga paryaye alpa toyAH tatho meghAH alpatasya vasundhara” (In kaliyugam, rainfall will be scarce, and even when it rains, the waters will not be in large volume. The growth of crops on the earth as a result will be diminished.) The salutation continues “alpakShIrA tatho gAvaH alpavIryAshcha brAhmaNAH” (The yield of milk from cows will be reduced so too would the radiance of Brahmanas). This needs to be contrasted with Sri Andal’s “**vaLLal perumpacukkaL**” tribute, wherein She declares that the yield of milk from the cows at Gokulam during the time of Lord Krishna was plentiful so much so that there was a shortage of storage containers. Unlike this, the yield of milk in Kaliyugam will be limited. Even in adiyen’s own lifetime, we have witnessed a decline in the yield of milk. Forty years back, adiyen’s thayar would milk the cow after being kicked by the cow a lot but would bring back a lot of milk. However, now the yield is not as plentiful. When this is observed over a span of forty years, what to speak of the decline in yield over aeons of time? The radiance of Brahmanas too will be greatly diminished as documented in the Mahabharata salutation. Furthermore, in keeping with the Mahabharata salutation “nivR^itta yaj~nAH svAdhyAya pinDodhaka vivarjitAH anadhyAyeShu dhIyante brAhmaNAH sauca varjitAH” (BrahmaNas will give up the performance of yajnyas. Even if this be so at least they can engage in Veda adhyayanam. However, even this will not be possible. Not only that they will readily give up the prescribed acts of shraddham, which involve the offering of pinda and water. There will also be violations in the form of undertaking the study of scriptures during forbidden times and lack of study during the prescribed times.) There will be a further decline of norms. Also the Mahabharata documents in the salutation “agnihotrArcha shidanti guru pUjA praNashyati” that there will be a decline in agnihotram and a stoppage in salutation of Acharyas. One may ask, how are these relevant in day-to-day life? Is there something that impacts this? This is answered in the **Mahabharata** salutation “**na shR^iNvanti pituH putrAH na snuShA na sahodharaH na bhrutya na kaLaatrANi bhaviShyati adharottaram**”(Children will not heed the words of their



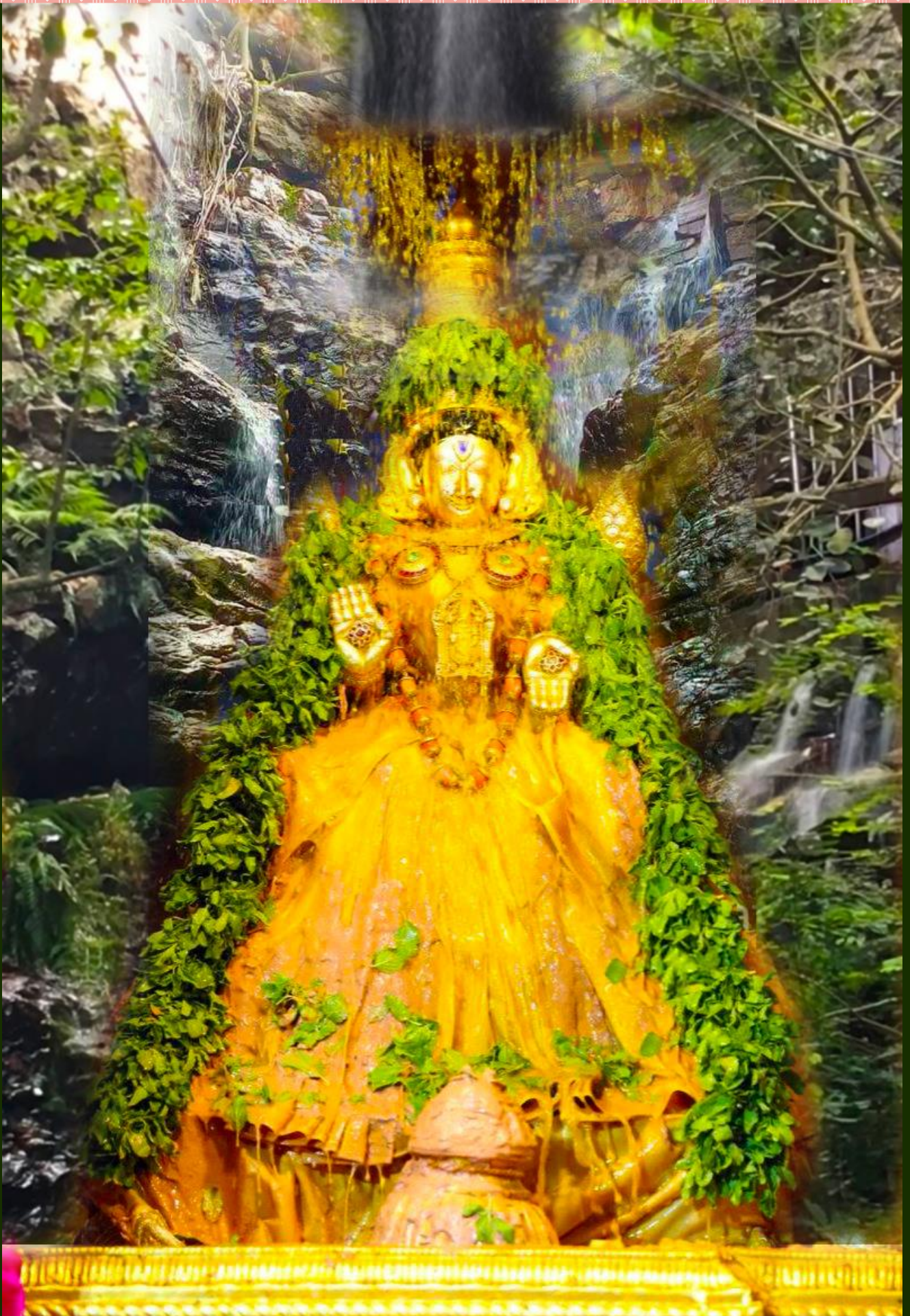
father. They would respond with the statement “Father you belong to a different generation and thus cannot relate to this matter. I know this quite well. Therefore, please do not intervene in this matter.” This is the lot of children. Now examining the position of daughters-in-law they respond with the argument “Your own son does not heed your words. How could I be expected to follow them?” Brothers and sisters would not heed one’s words. Even servants, who render service would not behave in accordance with their role. Moreover, one’s wife would not heed their words.) The summary of the Mahabharata tributes is captured by Swami Desikan through the usage “kali kShobhon” in this Daya Satakam verse. This “kali kShobhon” leads to a total disregard for elders and an end to the practice of seeking sagely advice from wise elders, enriched by experience. In the SharaNagati Deepika verse “kartavyamityanukalaM kalayAmya kR^ityaM svAminnakR^ityamiti kR^ityamapi tyajAmi anyadvayatikramaNa jAtamanantamartha sthAne dayA bhavatu te mayi sArvabhaumi” (Thinking of forbidden acts as required acts, I engage in them quite vigorously. I readily give up the prescribed acts under the pretext that they can be given up.) Svami Desikan describes the egregious violation of the Lord’s commands on his part. However, Lord Deepaprakasha exudes compassion despite these violations. The acts that are prescribed and those that are forbidden deserve to be examined further. Svami Bhashyakarar documents in the Gadya Trayam salutation, five kinds of forbidden acts in increasing order of seriousness “manovAk kAyaiH anAdikAla pravR^iutta anantha akR^itya karaNa kR^itya akaraNa bhagavad apachAra bhAgavatApachAra asahyApacAra rUpa nAnAvidhAnanta apAchara”. The salutation “manovAk kAyaiH anAdikAla pravR^iutta” denotes the fact that these transgressions have not come about in the past day or two but have prevailed over aeons as a consequence of actions arising from the mind, body, and speech. Next “akR^itya karaNa kR^itya akaraNa” (Engaging in forbidden acts and giving up prescribed acts) are examined. For this it is useful to gain an understanding of “kR^ityam” and “akR^ityam”. In keeping with the statement “kR^ityam svavarNAshramAdi” DharmAnushtanam becomes kR^ityam (something that must be followed). That which is opposed to varNAshrama dharmam becomes akR^ityam. We are constantly engaged in “akR^ityam”. Specifically, we are required to perform Veda adhyayanam. However, we readily give up this duty and engage in forbidden tasks. In conformance with the SharaNagati Dipika tribute “kR^ityamapi tyajAmi” we readily give up the prescribed tasks. For example, we do not have the requirement to gain large amount of wealth. If one is engaged in one’s prescribed duties, Lord Narayana will ensure that there will be enough wealth for the individual to sustain himself.

However, our reasoning is that those engaged in adhyayanam do not have a future. Therefore, we actively discourage our children from adopting the means of Veda adhyayanam. Thus, under the pretext (on flimsy grounds) that this should not be engaged in, we give up the important duty of Veda adhyayanam. Thus, we cause our offspring to seek alternative careers. Not only that we too actively seek those means. This is engaged as “anukalam” (not just for a day or so but as a matter of routine practice). This is merely one example. In a like manner, there are numerous such violations. Next, when it comes to “anyadvayatikramaNa jAtamanantamartha” we repeatedly engage in violations of this type leading to an accumulation of Bhagavad apacharam and BhAgavata apacharam. Nevertheless, even for us of such disposition, Lord Deepa Prakasha’s Daya, which functions as the Empress of the universe, comes to our rescue by correcting this errant behavior and causing us to come back on the right path. Likewise in the context of this Daya Satakam verse “kali kShobhon” refers to the confusion resulting from Kali. However, the tendency is to blame Kali even for things that are very much under one’s control. It is very easy to lament that the time is very bad and Kali is responsible for all the atrocities that come about. In the **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** Svami Desikan describes the fact that at the time of performance of SharaNAgati, all karma that is yet to yield results (known as sanchita karma) is destroyed. Only the karma that has begun yielding consequences pertaining to the sharaNAgata’s present birth continues on. Additionally, Svami Desikan also treats the issue of sins that accrue after performance of sharaNAgati. Those sins that are unknowingly committed do not bear any consequences. Those that are knowingly engaged in, will result in light punishment during the lifetime of the sharaNAgata. This can be in the form of loved ones not heeding the words of the sharaNAgata or it can cause the loss of eyesight, or limbs. Thus, these consequences come about as a result of sins committed willfully. Upon hearing this, one of adiyen’s friends remarked “We are seeing before our very eyes the fact that loved ones do not heed our words. Since we have performed sharaNAgati at the feet of Acharya, and since we have been taught that sins knowingly committed will yield fruits in this manner during our lifetime, it is certain that our Prapatti has been successful and that we will be guaranteed moksham at the end of our life.” However, the tendency is to attribute all of one’s sinful actions to Kali. In this context, the salutation “kali kShobhon” denotes the fact that the yugam of Kali facilitates an increase in sinful tendencies. For example, if one is given to a sinful disposition, the yugam of Kali would encourage the individual to engage in more of the same. The tribute “kShiti kaluSha kUla~NkaSha javaiH” of this Daya Satakam verse indicates that the torrential flow

of Daya Devi exterminates the sinful tendencies that are deeply entrenched on the earth as a result of “kali kShobhon” at their very root. This is in the manner of the powerful flow of a copious waterfall, that sweeps away all dirt on the earth in its wake. However, not everything that is associated with Kali yugam is necessarily bad. One need not regret that that one is born in this Kali yugam which offers fertile breeding ground for exacerbating evil tendencies. This is evidenced in the statement “kalou kR^ita yugam tasya kaliH tasya kR^ite yuge yasya cetasi govinda hR^idaye yasya na acyutaH” (For one who is engaged in constant contemplation of Govinda, the yugam of Kali is verily transformed into Krita yugam. For one born in Krita yugam, bereft of the thought of Achyuta, even Krita yugam verily becomes Kali yugam.) Kali yugam has a few salient benefits as evidenced in the declaration “dhyAyan kR^ite yajan yaj~naiH tretAyAm dvAparayArchayan yadApnoti tadApnoti kalau sanklrtya keshavam” (The benefit of unceasing contemplation on Lord Narayana gained through dhyAnam in Krita yugam, the benefit of undertaking yagams in Treta yugam, the benefit of performing archana to Lord Narayana in DvApara yugam, can be gained very easily in Kali yugam by mere recitation of the names of Keshava.)



This is further illustrated in the salutation “kaleH doShanidhe rAjan asti eko mahAguNaH klrtana deva kR^iShNasya mukta bandhaH param vrajet” (While the yugam of Kali has several flaws, it has one significant good trait. Mere recitation of the names of Lord Krishna confers the boon of destruction of one’s sins and helps them attain the elevated state of Muktha.) The tribute “sarveShAm kila dharmANAm uttamo vaiShNavo vidhiH rakShate bhagavAn viShNuH bhaktAn Atma sharIrat” discusses the loftiness of the Vaishnava following. (Among the numerous Dharmas that are in existence, the way of the Vaishnava is supreme. Singing the praise of Lord Narayana, contemplating on His glory, reciting the stotrams of purvacharyas, engaging in kalakshepam, performance of sharaNAgati at Lord Narayana’s feet are all part of the Vaishnava vidhi. Those who adopt this path are guaranteed of protection by Lord Narayana.) The way such protection comes about needs to be understood in a simple-to-relate manner. In the era of computers, it is very easy for a message to get garbled in transmission or to be lost in cyberspace. However, in this instance the perspective is presented in an unambiguous and readily understood manner. The Lord’s protection comes about in the same manner as one safeguards one’s body. Tirumangai Azhvar in the **Ciriya TirumaDal** declares “erAr muyalviTTukkAkaipin pOvatE” (Since Tirumangai Azhvar was a king, he knew the different tastes of meat. Thus, in this Pasuram, he states that it is equivalent to chasing a crow instead of a rabbit. The latter’s meat is quite tasty but the former is not palatable at all. The reference here is to the fact that the Archa murti is like the rabbit. Forsaking this and chasing Sri Vaikuntam is like the act of giving up rabbit meat for a crow’s meat. This is a case in point of presenting a message in a context that is unique and can be readily understood.) Likewise, in this instance, the Lord’s protection is illustrated in a readily understood manner of protecting one’s own body. Svami Desikan treats the subject of gaining Moksham at length in **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram**, wherein he cautions that mere recitation of the name Rama, Krishna, Narayana, does not grant Moksham. Instead, it paves the way for one to adopt the means documented in the Vaishnava vidhi (performance of sharaNAgati) to gain Moksham. The destruction of the sins coming about on account of “kali kShobhon” by the torrential flow of Daya Devi, verily transforms kali yugam to Krita yugam. The motivation for this Daya Satakam verse lies in the **TiruvAimozhi** pasuram “polika polika polika pOyiRRu valluyir cApam naliyum narakamum nai~nta namanukkinku yAtonRumillai kaliyum keDum kaNDu koNmin kaDalvaNNan pUtankal maNmEl maliya pukunticai pADi ADi uzhitara kaNDOm” . The poliga poliga poliga tribute is a reflection of the Vedam tribute “shAnti shAnti shAntiH”. This is the mangalasasanam for Lord Narayana by



Bhagavatas. Nithyasuris from Sri Vaikuntam descend to the earth to witness this sight. This is particularly appropriate for Lord Srinivasa. There is a constant crowd of Bhagavatas, who throng in large numbers to gain a darsanam of Lord Narayana. All of them are engaged in reciting the Govinda namam by way of mangalasanam for Lord Srinivasa in the spirit of the “kalou sa~Nklrtya keshavaH” tribute. The reference here is specific to sharaNagatas, who gather in large numbers to offer mangalasanam to Lord Srinivasa. Rather than going alone by oneself, the company of Bhagavatas rushing to gain a darsanam of Lord Srinivasa offers a unique experience. As a result, Svami Nammazhvar declares “pOyiRRu valluyir cApam”. The cApam (curse) here is a reference to “avidya” (nescience) and karma vAsana. These are destroyed as a consequence. False knowledge leading one to believe in the permanence of the material world and striving to increase their accumulation of material comforts is the implication here. It is important to note the difference between shApam (curse) and pApam. The consequences of the former have to necessarily be endured in order to be redeemed, whereas the latter can be overcome through performance of prAyashchittam. However, the greatness of the Venkatam hill comes about due to the fact that a mere visit to the hill destroys both the shApam and pApam. This again comes about entirely on account of Daya Devi. What happens as a result of this act of Daya Devi? There is no work to do for Yama in Narakam (hell)! The inner meaning is that Bhagavatas, who visit the Venkatam hill are freed of their curses and their sins on account of the grace of Lord Srinivasa coming upon them due to Daya Devi. It must be remembered that the torrential flow of Daya Devi destroys the sins of these Bhagavatas at their very roots. Thus, these Bhagavatas are freed from sins once and for all. Consequently, they do not have to endure residence in naraka lokam resulting in Yama’s joblessness! This is the import of the tribute “naliyum narakamum nai~nta” of Svami Nammazhvar. The salutation “kaliyum keDum” refers to the fact that Kali offers fertile breeding ground for sinful behavior. It may be remembered that the kAla visesham for Kali is described in the salutation “apUjyastra pujyaste pUjyasyatra avamAnitAH tatra trINi vardhante durbikShaM maraNam bhayam” (Unworthy ones are offered worship, whereas those that need to be respected- great seers, Acharyas, learned ones and the like are treated with gross disrespect and insulted. Three things flourish as a result- a state of abject penury, death, and fear.) However, the torrential flow of Daya Devi which roots out the sins, also destroys the evils inherent to Kali as described by Svami Nammazhvar. This is reflected in the tribute “kali kShobhon mllatkShiti kaluSha kUla~NkaSha javaiH” of this Daya Satakam verse. It may be enquired if the Svami Nammazhvar is referring to Sri Vaikuntam as

the place where one is bereft of sins. However, this is answered by the Azhvar salutation of “maNmEI” (on this earth), which is a direct reference to the Venkatam hill. This is reflected in the “etaiH” tribute of the present Daya Satakam verse and attests to the fact that this can be seen through the copious water streams flowing from the Venkatam hill, which wash away hard-to-expunge dirt that is adhering firmly to the earth. The Azhvar salutation “maliya pukundicai pAdi aDi uzhitara kaNDom” refers to the fact that cleansed of sins in the manner described above, we behold the joyous glorification of Lord Narayana by these Bhagavatas reflecting a Sri Vaishnava samR^iddhi (fulfillment/completeness). Normally, such an instance would be viewed as a gathering of Srivaishnavas adorned in the traditional attire, wearing the 12 tiruman symbols on their body, displaying the hallmark of samashrayaNam, engaged in rendering Acharya Shri sUktis, which glorify Lord Narayana. In the instance of Lord Srinivasa, it denotes the Bhakta samR^iddhi. During Brahmotsavam for Lord Srinivasa for example, the galleries in the mADa veethis would be overflowing with scores of Bhaktas lining up for darsanam. These Bhaktas throng to the Venkatam hill with the firm belief that they are assured of the grace of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi. It is well known that the Lord never spurns Bhaktas, who have this firm conviction. This is due to the fact that Lord Srinivasa is hailed as the pratyakSha (readily perceived) daivam (deity) reflecting the tribute “kalau VenkaTa nAyakaH” This is reflected in the tribute “kali kShobhon mIlatkShiti kaluSha kUla~NkaSha javaiH anuchcChedaiH” Here another question comes up. Is the cleansing of sins coming about due to the grace of Daya Devi a one-time act or is it constant for all time? Svami Desikan answers it again through the analogy of the water streams. More precisely, just like the water streams flowing from the Venkatam hill are replete with copious water flow regardless of the season (summer, rainy season, autumn, winter, and spring) cleanse the dirt adhered firmly to the earth, the torrential Daya flow too is constant regardless of the time/day/season and unfailingly cleanses Bhaktas of their sins. This is reflected in the tribute “anuchcChedaiH” of the present Daya Satakam verse, capturing the fact that the torrential flow of Daya Devi brooks no stopping by obstacles and is always existent. We may lament that in the present time of Kali, there is a decline in Bhakti and people’s inclination towards anything to do with Bhagavan. However, if one visits the Divya Desams in Tamil Nadu, one only witnesses an increase in the crowd of Bhaktas eagerly thronging to the Temple to gain a Darsanam of Lord Narayana. Tirumala no doubt is always crowded. However, during the time of SaRRumuRai Sevai, Sri Vaishnavas in svarUpam can gain entry and have a beautiful darsanam. However, to gain a darsanam of Lord Ranganatha in the face of the large



crowds becomes a daunting challenge. The reason for these massive crowds is undoubtedly Daya Devi, whose constant flow ensures a brimming presence of Bhaktas at the Divya Desams. Next the glorification “etaiH **avaTa taTa vaiShamya rahitaiH**” from this verse of the Daya Satakam is examined. This salutation is intended to address the concerns of those who may think of themselves to be extremely lowly in status and thus may wonder if they can be privy to the grace of Daya Devi. For example, one may wonder “Svami Desikan’s sharaNagati Deepikai tribute **kartavyamityanukalaM kalayAmya kR^ityaM svAminnakR^ityamiti kR^ityamapi tyajAmi anyadvayatikramaNa jAtamanantamartha sthAne dayA bhavatu te mayi sArvabhaumI** is meant exclusively for me. I am notorious for readily giving up the prescribed acts and take vicarious delight in engaging in forbidden acts under the pretext that these are mandatory. I may hear the upanyasam and wonder for a moment that I should give up these evil tendencies and reform myself. However, I cannot guarantee that I will reform and turn a new leaf. Come tomorrow, I would again resort to my familiar routine of engaging in sinful acts. If I look to see whether there is even an iota of good quality in me, I am unable to find it. Given this pitiable condition of mine, would Daya Devi grace me?” It is reasonable to expect Daya Devi to grace one that has a trace of goodness in them, which causes them to adopt the means prescribed by the shastras and engage in acts that please Lord Srinivasa (Aj~na kaimkaryams and anuj~na kaimkaryams). However, for one bereft of any goodness would the grace of Daya Devi prevail? Svami Desikan answers this question in the salutation “**avaTa taTa vaiShamya rahitaiH**” of this Daya Satakam verse. The water streams at the Venkatam hill make no distinction in the type of terrain (hills, valleys, or plateaus) that they flow upon. The torrential flow of these water streams cleanses the earth of dirt that adheres firmly. Likewise, Daya Devi makes no distinction on who comes out to seek Her grace. They may be the worst sinners. However, if they come to the place where She flows (Venkatam hill), She unfailingly graces them. As far as Daya Devi is concerned She makes no distinction on the basis of caste, creed, affiliation, gender, illiterate or extremely learned, wealthy or poor, one who has performed several acts of puNya or one who has sinned greatly. She uniformly graces all Her seekers with the torrential flow. Thus, in the eyes of Daya Devi all Her seekers are equal. The tribute “**analpA**” from this Daya Satakam verse refers to the copious flow of the Daya Devi stream much in the same manner as the water streams at the Venkatam hill. For example, at Azhvar teertham, one of the waterbodies at the Venkatam hill, supporting chains are provided for the purpose of assisting in performance of snanam due to the strong currents caused by the torrential flow of



water. The Daya Devi stream too is plentiful, overflowing, torrential, and lofty. This is captured in the salutation “vR^iSha shikhariNo nirjhara guNAH” of this Daya Satakam verse. Here a question arises. Is the Venkatam hill the place of residence for the water streams or for Daya Devi? Does Daya Devi cleanse us of our sins or would the water streams take care of this? Who then should be resorted to for the purpose of destruction of one’s sins-the water streams or the Daya flow? This is answered again by Svami Desikan through the tribute “vikalpante(a)nalpA” (vikalpante denotes tulya phalam or non-difference of benefit granted by the water stream and the Daya stream of the present Daya Satakam verse. Therefore, it makes no difference whether one resorts to the water stream or the Daya stream. They both yield identical benefits. The only difference is that the water streams at the Venkatam hill are

visible but the Daya flow remains invisible. Thus, by making the analogy of Daya Devi flow, which remains invisible, to the water stream, which is readily perceived, Svami Desikan motivates us to resort to Daya Devi for destruction of our sins at their root, caused by Kali and render us as fitting receptacles for the grace of Lord Srinivasa. Thus, one need not have any regret for being born in the Kaliyugam and lament on their lowly status given to a sinful disposition. The pratyakSha Daivam for Kaliyugam, (kalau Ve~NkaTa nAyaka) Lord Srinivasa, stands ready to grant Moksham. In keeping with Svami Desikan’s **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** glorification “viNNavarum maNNavaram virumpum verpE”, this Daya Satakam verse instructs us to seek refuge at the Venkatam hill which is resorted to by inhabitants of the

earth as well the Nityasuris of Sri Vaikuntam. Mere beholding the sight of the Bhagavata samR^iddhi caused by the overflowing crowd of Bhagavatas replete with absolute faith in Lord Srinivasa is sufficient to destroy our sins and curses due to the paripUrNa kaTAKSham of Daya Devi. This message illustrated by Svami Desikan through the equivalence between Daya Devi and the water streams at the Venkatam hill is the import of this Daya Satakam verse. Thus, seeking the grace of Daya Devi to destroy our sins at their roots, for which Acharya anugraham is essential, and seeking the grace of Svami Desikan, who revealed this path to us, so that we may be filled with Bhakti for Lord Srinivasa, Daya Devi and Svami Desikan, we conclude this exposition. ”

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

“Svami Desikan relishes the equivalence between the Daya floods and the forceful water falls at the Venkatam hill. We readily see the streams like Akashaganga, Papavinashini etc. relieve us of the heat and sweat. They also destroy our sins. Hence, they are like the Ganga river in this regard. Svami Desikan uses the concept of **vikalpa** - equality, replaceability, or interchangeability to make his point.

Oh Daya Devi! You are the jewel bedecking Lord Srinivasa much like his consort Padma. The huge mounds of sin-dirt that the Kali age hoards (with respect to all of us) are all shattered, washed away and nullified by Your floods just as a bank shattering flood stream of the perennial water fall on the Venkatam hill. I would assert that whether it be the natural waterfalls or Your flow, the effect is the same. Our sins are washed away without distinction or discrimination between high and low-a beautiful parallelism; a set of two equal alternatives for sin removal.



Sloka 70

खिलं चेतोवृत्तेः किमिदमिति विस्मेरभुवनं

कृपे सिंहक्षमाभृत्कृतमुखचमत्कारकरणम् ।

भरन्यासच्छन्नप्रबलवृजिनप्राभृतभृतां

प्रतिप्रस्थानां ते श्रुतिनगरशृङ्गाटकजुषः ॥ ७० ॥

khilaM ceto vR^itteH kimidamiti vismera bhuvanaM
kR^ipe siMhakShamAbhR^itkR^itamukhacamatkAra karaNam |
bharanyAsacChannaprabalavR^ijinaprAbhR^itabhR^itaaM
pratiprasthAnAM te shrutinagarashR^i~NgATakajuShaH | | 70



Daya Devi guarantees the lofty benefit of moksham to those seeking it and also grants material benefits to those that seek them.

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

“We now commence the exposition on verse 70 which is “khilaM ceto vR^itteH kimidamiti vismera bhuvanaM kR^ipe siMha kShamAbhR^it kR^itamukha camatkAra karaNam bharanyAsacChanna prabala vR^ijina prAbhR^ita bhR^itAM pratiprsthAnAM te shruti nagara shR^i~NgATaka juShaH” This entire decad (verses 61-70) glorifies Daya Devi’s loftiness in terms of Her extraordinary upakaram (acts of help) for us.



“Oh kR^ipe!”

In the first verse of this decad Svami Desikan highlights the fact that Daya Devi is greater than limitless svarUpam of Lord Srinivasa due to the fact that She transforms the nigraha sankalpam (Punishment) of Lord Srinivasa into one of anugraham (blessing). In a subsequent verse Svami Desikan documents the fact that Lord Srinivasa is a Paratantran for Daya Devi. As a result, even His light punishment results in something good for the recipient. In another verse, Svami Desikan highlights the fact that due to Daya Devi's doing, the Lord showers His grace on commoners like Guha, Sugriva, Shabari, Kuchela, Trinavakra, the damsels of Vraja, and the garland maker at Mathura to demonstrate His saushllyam and vAtsalyam. In another verse Svami Desikan expounded on the fact that once an individual performs sharaNagati, Daya Devi stands ready to come to the rescue. Elsewhere Svami Desikan documents the fact that not only does Daya Devi guarantee the lofty benefit of moksham to those seeking it, She also grants material benefits to those that seek them. Even the elevated positions of Brahma, Rudra, and Indra, are granted to their occupants entirely on account of the grace of Daya Devi.



The kalyANa guNams of Lord Srinivasa gain a sense of completeness only due to their association with Daya Devi. Daya Devi functions as the camphor for the throats of the Veda Rks on account of which they become extremely pure. The Lord has two salient characteristics - one is that He performs the functions of creation, sustenance, and destruction of the universe and the other is that He alone grants moksham. This too is carried out at the behest of Daya Devi. Therefore, She is responsible for Lord Srinivasa's glorification by the Vedas. The previous verse highlighted the fact that the Daya Devi flow destroys all the evils arising due to Kaliyugam and graces Her seekers without distinction of any kind. In this verse the root cause of all the tributes rendered to Daya Devi in this decad is highlighted. The primary reason for this is the fact that Daya Devi destroys all sins. The sambodhanam for Daya Devi in this verse is "Oh kR^ipe!".



The Empress of the Universe!

To understand this verse, it is helpful to make an analogy. Let's say there exists a palace at the intersection of four streets. The palace is replete with inner apartments. The queen, who resides in the palace observes someone that arrives at the intersection of the four streets with a desire to see her. He bears in his hand an offering in a plate that is covered. The queen discerning this welcomes him and ensures that she gets his offering. This analogy will become clear as we delve into the exposition of this verse. The city described in this verse is the majestic city known as the Vedas. The "shR^ingaTakam" tribute of this verse is a reference to the four-street intersection. This denotes the Upanishad section of the four Vedas. The four Vedas denoting the four streets are Rg, Yajus, Sama, and Atharvana. The concluding part of each of these Vedas is the Upanishad section denoted by the intersection. Lord Srinivasa and Thayar are glorified by all the Upanishads. In a prior verse, Svami Desikan has established that it is not Lord Srinivasa but His Daya that

is glorified by the Vedas. The palace at the intersection of the four streets is the residence of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi. Next the salutation “bharanyAsacChanna prabala vR^ijina prAbhR^ita bhR^itAM” is examined. “bharanyAsacChanna” can be appreciated from the experience of Bhaktas who arrive at the Venkatam hill to offer prostration to Lord Srinivasa. They usually bring something by way of upahAram (food offering) to Lord Srinivasa in a plate that is covered. This would be in the form of dry fruits or coconut ready for offering to Lord Srinivasa. The mADa vldhis (streets adjoining the Temple) are lined up with these BhAgavatAs. This offering is usually covered by a silk cloth. Only when the Lord arrives do these BhAgavatAs open the covering and submit their offering to Lord Srinivasa. During SaRRumuRai Sevai, it is the routine practice from various Mathams to submit an offering in a covered plate to Lord Srinivasa. Likewise, a person arrives from a remote place carrying a covered plate with an offering for Daya Devi. Now the focus is on what is the silk covering and what is the offering. In the context of this verse, the silk covering on the plate is the act of BharanyAsam. The offering in the plate is the mountainous sin-pile. These sins constituting the sin-pile have been accumulated over aeons and are denoted by sancita pApam. It must be remembered that after innumerable births, we have gotten birth in human form. Given this, the only options for attaining Lord Narayana is the adoption of either Bhakti yogam or Prapatti. This is described by Svami Desikan as sadvAraka prapatti and advAraka prapatti.



Bhakti yogam or Prapatti are the only means of attaining Her

sadvAraka prapatti denotes the performance of sharaNAgati by Bhakti yogam practitioners, which is done before commencing their upasana of Bhakti yogam. The purpose of this sharaNAgati is to ensure successful completion of their upAsana in an obstacle-free manner. **advAraka prapatti** is meant for those who are unable to adopt the means of karma yoga, j~nAna yoga, or bhakti yoga. Instead, they resort to sharaNAgati to Lord Narayana to serve in place of these practices and for having accomplished their arduous prescriptions for obtaining the same benefit as one who has undertaken these means (Bhakti yogi). Thus, Svami Desikan affirms that one who has not adopted the means of **sadvAraka prapatti** or **advAraka prapatti** cannot gain moksham as evidenced by his declaration “**prapannAd anyesham nadishati mukundaH nija padam**”. The import of this declaration is that Lord Mukunda does not grant the refuge and bliss of service to His feet to those who have not performed sharaNAgati. That is, they will not have the opportunity to render nitya kaimkaryam in Sri Vaikuntam.



Seek Her Sacred Feet to attain Moksham

The karma accumulated by an individual over aeons comprising innumerable births is of two kinds - **prArabdha karma** (that which has begun yielding fruit) and **sancita karma** (that which has not begun yielding fruit). Due to the large number of

sins committed, it is impossible for one to endure concurrently, the consequences for these sins. Thus, it has to be experienced in sequence. Therefore, at the appropriate time (**paripaka dashai**), one endures the consequences of one's actions (good or bad) in a pre-determined manner. Consequently, what we endure at a given time is the result of karma that has begun yielding fruit. This is known as **prArabdha karma**. For the practitioners of Bhakti yogam, only the sancita karma is destroyed. However, they have to necessarily endure the consequences of prArabdha karma. The sins committed after the adoption of the practice of Bhakti yogam is termed as **uttarakR^itam**. If these sins are committed unknowingly (**abuddhipUrvakam**), there will be no consequences for them. However, if these sins are committed knowingly (**buddhipurvakam**), there will be some form of light punishment, which would have to be endured in the duration it takes to expend all the prArabdha karma, after which they will be granted moksham. This has been established by Svami Desikan in **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram**.

For a sharaNAgata (one who has adopted advAraka prapatti), even the prArabdha karma pertaining to future births in addition to sancita karma are destroyed. The only remaining component is that portion of the prArabdha karma that prevails until the end of the lifespan of the sharaNAgata. This is known as **abyupagata prArabdha karma** -that which has been agreed to at the time of performing BharanyAsam. Again, the rules pertaining to the consequences of post prapatti sins for the sharaNAgata are similar to that for the Bhakti yogam practitioner. In the context of the offering on a plate covered by the silk cloth, it pertains to the mountainous sin-pile. The covering denotes the act of Bharanyasam. In verse 29 of the Daya Satakam it is helpful to recall Swami Desikan's declaration "mayi tiShTati duShkR^itAM pradhAne mitadoShAnitarAn vicinvatl tvam aparadhagaNaIrapUrNa kukShiH kamalakAnta daye kathaM bhavitrl". (I am the foremost among those who have committed grave sins. Do not look elsewhere, I have the appropriate quota of sins to satiate Your hunger, oh Daya Devi!). Thus, it becomes clear from this tribute that Daya Devi devours the sins of Her seekers. However, Daya Devi has an insatiable appetite for the sins of Her seekers. No matter how mountainous the sin-pile, Daya Devi consumes it as if it were a mere trifle. This same sentiment is echoed in greater detail in this Daya Shatakam verse through the tribute "**bharanyAsacChanna prabala vR^ijina prAbhR^itabhR^itAM**".

When one approaches Daya Devi in the spirit of utter helplessness, unable to undertake any of the prescriptions of karma yogam, j~nAna yogam, and Bhakti yogam, and submits the appeal that Lord Srinivasa's feet are the sole refuge -



Daya Devi ensures the upliftment of the sharaNAgata, who arrives with mahAvishvAsam

seeking the kataksham of Daya Devi is the sole objective, the offering of one's sins is made by way of upaharam to Daya Devi.

The salutation “prabalavR^ijina prAbhR^itabhR^itAM” refers to the fact that the sins are not one or two in number but countless. Their magnitude is not trivial either but remains enormous. This is submitted as the offering of food. This raises the question that any offering of food to the Lord must be tasty, sweet, and fit for consumption. Instead, offering of sins (which is the lowest form of any kind of offering) goes against this principle. To this Svami Desikan answers “One can only submit by way of offering what one has in one's possession. In this case the individual has an abundance of sins to offer.”

When Lord Rama took up residence in an Ashramam at the Chitrakuta hill, Bharata arrived with a large retinue with the intent of taking Rama back to Ayodhya. Lord Rama seats Bharata by His side and enquires whether all is well in Ayodhya, whether the treasury is running full and whether Bharata is undertaking all expenses after carefully examining the causes for such expenditure. *eka svAdhIna bhunjita* is the statement used by Lord Rama to enquire if edible delicacies are being partaken of by a large group rather than a single individual. Finally, Lord Rama enquires if His father Dasharatha is keeping well. Bharata responds that upon Rama's departure to the forest, Dasharatha breathed his last and attained svarga lokam. As a result, Ayodhya has been orphaned. Since Lord Rama was the jyeShTa putran for Dasharatha, he had to submit the offerings of water (*udaka dAnam*) and other items to the departed man. Lord Rama performed this as permitted for residents of the forest. The term *ingudhi pungyAkam* refers to offerings from the trees *ingudhi* and *pungam* that are available in the forest. Thus, the declaration “*yadanna puruSho bhavati tadannAsvasya devataH*” refers to the fact that Lord Rama offered what was available to Him in the forest by way of submission to the departed pitru. As a king, Lord Rama would have made offerings of *piNDam* prepared from rice. However, due to its unavailability in the forest, He had to offer what was readily available to Him in the forest. Therefore, Lord Rama used the *ingudhi* and *punga* tree offerings for performing *shrAddham* and *tarpaNam*. Likewise, in the context of this Daya Satakam verse, one can only offer what one has at one's disposal. In this case it is the abundance of sins.

Hence, this is submitted as the offering of food for Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi. This is the import of the tribute “*bharanyAsacChanna prabalavR^ijina prAbhR^itabhR^itAM*”. The offering of sins is done without hesitation. Daya Devi beholds the individual arriving with this offering from the inner apartments of Her



Daya Devi rushes out of Her Palace to meet Her sharaNAgatas.

palace and immediately recognizes what is transpiring. Therefore, while the individual has barely taken a couple of steps, Daya Devi rushes out to meet him. Then follows an astonishing act as described by the salutation “pratiPrasthAnAM te shruti nagara shR^i~NgATaka” “te pratiPrasthAnAM” is the anvaya kramam (prose order). This act of Daya Devi (coming out of Her palace to receive the sin-pile offering of the sharaNAgata) is met with a look of surprise on the part of the residents of the entire universe as described in the salutation “khilaM ceto vR^itteH kimidamiti vismera

bhuvanaM”. It must be noted that Daya Devi is the Empress of the entire universe. She never leaves the inner apartments of Her palace as a result. Therefore, let alone leaving the palace, Her arrival at the intersection of the four streets near the palace to receive the sin-pile offering of the SharaNAgata is quite unusual and surprising.

In the **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram**, Svami Desikan describes the act of sharaNAgatas of Lord Narayana seeking favors from devatantaras. Specifically, he states that this is akin to a queen taking to streets and begging for alms not even with a begging bowl but with a piece of cloth as described in the salutation “rAja mahiShi madiDipicchai pOkumApOIE”. The implication here is that sharaNAgatas of Lord Narayana beget the status of the queen/empress. Is it appropriate for the empress to take to the streets with a cloth and beg for alms? Such is the state of sharaNAgatas of Lord Narayana, requesting protection from devatantaras. This is “avadhyamAm” (inappropriate). In the instance of the present Daya Satakam verse,

the Empress in the palace merely needs to instruct the supplicant to leave the covered offering outside Her palace and ask one of Her attendants to bring this to Her inner apartments. Instead, Daya Devi steps out of the palace to the four-street intersection to accept the offering, which is an unusual act. When Kuchela arrived at the precincts of Lord Krishna's palace, the gatekeepers took one look at him and were wondering who is this man? He does not belong here and must leave immediately. Kuchela pleads his case with the guards and mentions to them that he is a saha-adhyayi of Lord Krishna at the gurukulam of sage Sandipani and all he needs to do is see Lord Krishna for a few minutes. Kuchela further states that he has not come to ask any favors from Lord Krishna. He does not desire to gain wealth or any other material benefit from Lord Krishna. Nevertheless, the guards remain unmoved and firmly respond to Kuchela that Lord Krishna is resting in the inner-apartments of His palace and is therefore inaccessible. However, Lord Krishna who was in the company of Rukmini, saw the arrival of Kuchela from His inner apartments and rushed out to meet Kuchela. Not only that, He had by His side Rukmini, whom He instructed to offer arghyam, padyam, and achamanlyam to Kuchela. It must be observed that Rukmini is dedicated to serving the lotus feet of Lord Krishna and no one else. Thus, it was quite significant that She rendered upacharams to Kuchela. Rukmini performs this in a devout manner using a golden plate and golden bowl filled with water. The reason for Kuchela receiving the upacarams in the said manner as documented in the Srimad Bhagavatam is entirely due to his mahAvishvAsam in Lord Krishna. What did Kuchela bring for Lord Krishna? It is the flattened rice as documented in the VairAgya Pancakam tribute "dhAnamuShTimuce kucelamunaye datte sma vitteshatAm" (For offering a handful of flattened rice to Lord Krishna, Kuchela gained untold wealth). Svami Desikan asks in this tribute "When I have Lord Krishna of such munificence, I do not desire to glorify mere kings for the sake of gaining material wealth." For common folk like us, what is it that we can offer when we go to prostrate before Lord Srinivasa? It is the mountainous sin-pile. However, this is covered by the beautiful silk cloth, known as Bharanyasam as documented in the tribute "bharanyAsacChanna prabala vR^ijina prAbhR^ita bhR^itAM pratiprasthAnAM te". Daya Devi rushes out to receive this offering covered by the silk cloth. This is eloquent testimony to the loftiness of BharanyAsam that Daya Devi Herself, giving up all protocol for the Empress, rushes out to receive the offering of the supplicant. It is common practice to offer neivedyam (offering of food) in a shiny vessel covered with a vastram (cloth). The content of the vessel may be lacking in salt, tanginess, and other tastes. However, only Lord Srinivasa knows what is missing. The vessel and the cloth



Daya Devi's vAtsalyam overflows for Her devotees!

covering cause Him to enthusiastically partake of the offering. Andal describes this act on the part of the Lord through the Tiruppavai tribute “pAl sORu mUDa neipeitu muzhankai vazhivAra” (the delicacy of rice cooked in milk, covered by a layer of ghee is the offering to Lord Narayana). As soon as the Lord beholds the covering of ghee, He desires to partake of the offering. Likewise, the silk covering of Bharanyasam causes Lord Srinivasa to accept the offering of the supplicant, in the context of the present Daya Satakam verse. This causes Daya Devi to rush out of the palace to the four-street intersection to receive the offering covered by the silk cloth of Bharanyasam as evidenced by the salutation “bharanyAsacChanna prabala vR^ijina prAbhR^itabhR^itAM pratiprasthAnAM te shruti nagara shR^i~NgATaka” of this Daya Satakam verse. The four-street intersection in this case is the Upanishad section of the four Vedas. Some may easily interpret this act of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi as “doSha bhogyatvam” (enjoyer of the offering of sin-piles). Due to this fact it could be viewed as the Lord and Daya Devi having an insatiable appetite for the supplicant’s sins and therefore can have the connotation of a license to engage in committing sinful acts. However, there is no room for such an interpretation due to the fact, that Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi destroy the sin-pile of the supplicant thereby ensuring that these do not yield fruit for the sharaNagata. Hence, it is in no way an implication that the sharaNagata can continue to vicariously engage in performance of sinful acts. Daya Devi rushing to receive this offering is an indication of the Lord’s vatsalyam (love of a cow for its calf) for the sharaNagata. In the TirukATkarai pAsuram of the Tiruvaimozhi Svami NammAzhvar declares “vArikoNDu unnai vizhunkuvan kANil enRu arvuRRa ennai ozhiya ennin munnam pArittu tAn ennai muRRa parukinan kAr okkum kATkaraiappan kaDiyanE” Svami NammAzhvar approaches the Lord of TirukATkarai with the intent of enjoying Him by devouring Him. However, the Lord at this Divya Desam would like to enjoy the Azhvar in the same manner. Svami NammAzhvar affirms that if the separation between him and the Lord was 100 feet, and if he took steps that brought him ten feet closer, the Lord rushed out and covered the remaining 90 feet to get near the Azhvar. Svami NammAzhvar employs the salutation “kaDiyan” (hard-hearted one) and thus the Lord’s position towards such a kaDiyan is even more astonishing, reflecting the Lord’s abundant vatsalyaam. This Daya Satakam verse echoes the sentiment from the Azhvar tribute through the description of Daya Devi rushing out of Her palace to the four-street intersection to accept the sin-pile offering of the sharaNagata even though, the latter is totally unfit for such a welcome. The reason for this disposition of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi towards the sharaNagata is the silk covering - BharanyAsam. This act on the

part of Daya Devi is meant exclusively for sharaNAgatas and none else. All others would necessarily have to endure the consequences of their sinful actions. The inner meaning is that the Lord's **nirhetuka kR^ipa** (inherent mercy) causes Him to destroy the sins of the sharaNAgata as a result of the act of BharanyAsam, which serves as a pretext to invoke the grace of the Lord. However, this does not mean that the Lord enjoys partaking of the sins of sharaNAgata (**doSha bhogyatvam**). It is merely reflective of the Lord's anxiety to rid the sharaNAgatas of their sins out of His abundant vAtsalyam. Here, there is also a submission of **gurudakShiNa** to Daya Devi. This is again the offering of the sin-pile due to the fact that one can only offer what is in one's possession. One does not possess the supernatural powers of Lord Krishna, who retrieved the dead son of His Guru, as His Guru dakShina offering.



kR^ipe siMha kShamAbhR^it kR^itamukha camatkAra karaNam

Beholding the act of Daya Devi in Her manner of coming out of Her palace to accept the offering of the sharaNAgata's sin-pile causes Lord Srinivasa great joy as described in the salutation "**kR^ipe siMha kShamAbhR^it kR^itamukha camatkAra**

karaNam” of this Daya Satakam verse. An important point to be noted here is that the sharaNAgata must have mahAvishvAsam (namely firm belief that Lord Narayana will protect him at all times under all circumstances). Bereft of mahAvishvAsam, the sharaNAgati will not fructify. When offering all the sins committed until the moment one performs sharaNAgati, one needs to have firm belief that Lord Narayana will ensure the destruction of these sins. The mahAvishvAsam with which the sharaNAgata arrives near the palace of Daya Devi causes Her to be greatly moved resulting in overflowing vAtsalyam for the supplicant. The inner meaning is that the manner in which Daya Devi ensures the upliftment of the sharaNAgata, who arrives with mahAvishvAsam, in a state of utter helplessness, and submits their sins by way of offering, greatly pleases Lord Srinivasa. This concludes our exposition of this Daya Satakam verse.”



We then quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin: “It is holy city where four thoroughfares meet in a pivotal position. The center constitutes the Vedic nucleus. The four main roads correspond to the four Vedas. A sentient, a poor individual, is walking towards the junction with a large dish (of edibles) covered with a towel as a manner of etiquette. On seeing him, Daya Devi, walks towards him as a kind of cultural response, which She need not have to do by any means. Her actions surprise witnesses, who are heavenly

beings, Muktas, and Nityas. “Why this condescension, excessive courtesy on Her part?” they murmur within themselves. They are not able to believe their eyes. The Lord of the Lion-hill, Sri Srinivasa, who is a great judge and competent connoisseur of human activity, shows His patent admiration of the attitude of Daya Devi. The supplicant has in his hand a dish of his hordes of sins. The cloth covering is a

symbolism for BharanyAsa. He dedicates the sin-meal so to say, to Daya Devi. BharanyAsa is a sanctifying act that extinguishes the Prapanna's sin-heaps. This verse implies that these sins are destroyed as a result of their offering to Daya Devi. A few important points need to be noted here.

1. The Lord swallows all the universe and later recreates it by spitting out. His consuming of the Prapanna's sins is more in a figurative sense.

2. Verse 29 documents the fact that Daya Devi has a voracious appetite for sins and that the offering of other's sins is trivial, whereas Svami Desikan (who is of blemishless conduct) takes it upon himself to offer the large amount of sins that would satiate Daya Devi.

3. The reader needs to be clear about three important issues pertaining to this verse.

a. Is Daya Devi a glutton-ghost-demon to eat all our sin-heaps?

b. Will not Daya Devi, being so merciful, consume all our sins by a mere wish and make us fit for moksha, without necessitating the ritual of Prapatti, however simple and pretext-like it may be?

c. Is it then correct that the Lord or Daya Devi is pleased with our sins and stigmas as to necessitate our dedicating them as food offering? Namely, is doSha-bhogyatva implied?

The answer to all these issues is a resounding NO. Details pertaining to these issues can be found in Svami Desikan's Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram."

