



Chithra Desiklyam

A Pictorial Story of Swami Desikan

A Srivaishnava Guru



By
Sri Lakshminarasimhan Sridhar





śrīmān veṅkaṭanāthāryaḥ kavītārkika-kesari
vedāntācārya-varyo me sannidhattām sadā hṛdī

श्रीमान् वेङ्कटनाथार्यः कवितार्किक-केसरि
वेदान्ताचार्य-वर्यो मे सन्निधत्ताम् सदा हृदी

shrlmAn ve~NkaTanAthAryaH kavitArkika-kesari
vedAntAchArya-varyo me sannidhattAm sadA hRidī





Dear Children ,

Now we are going to see and read a pictorial story of the life of a great Vaishnava Acharya named Swami Desikan. Before that, let me give a brief background about Swami Desikan.

Children do you know the meaning of Desika?

“Desika is a Sanskrit word which means “Acharya” or teacher.

In our Srivaishnava sampradaayam there are numerous acharyas starting from Namm Azhwar to present day acharyas, it is only Swami Desikan, who is addressed respectfully as “Desika”. This is like calling Srirangam Perumal as Namm Perumal (in English “Our Perumal”) and addressing Swamy SaThakopan as Namm Azhwar (“Our alwar”).

Sri Desikan's original name was Venkatanathan. His parents chose this name- Venkatanathan- since Desika was born on a Shravanam day, which is the birth star of Thirupathi Perumal- Lord Srinivasa.

Sri Desika was born in the year 1268 CE (Common Era) about 130 years after Bhagavan Ramanuja attained Moksham.



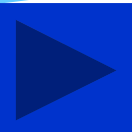
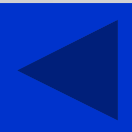


Children you may be aware that Lord Ramanuja appointed 74 Simhasenathipathis to propagate Srivaishnava & Visishtadwaitha philosophy.

Among the 74 Simhasenathipathis was Anantha Somayyaji of Viswamitra Gotram who lived in the Perumal Koil. He had a son named Pundareeka Yajvaa whose son was Ananthasuri.

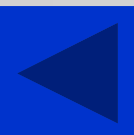
There was a person named AppuLLAr (belonging to the Vamsam of Atreya Ramanuja Kidambi Aachaan). He had a sister named ThotharaammaaL. One fine day, Pundareeka Yajvaa approached AppuLLAr and proposed the marriage of his son, Ananthasuri, to AppuLLAr's sister, ThotharaammaaL. That same night, Lord Devaraja appeared in the dream of AppuLLAr and seconded the proposal saying that by this alliance will be born one who would be the prime torch-bearer of Bhagavad Ramanuja's teachings.

Then marriage of Ananthasuri and ThotharaammaaL was celebrated with great joy and they lived a happy and devout couple.





Ananthasuri and Thotharaammaal were childless for a long time. One day Lord Srinivasa of the Seven Hills [Sapthagiri or Thirupathi] arrived in the dream of Ananthasuri and ordered them to go on a pilgrimage to Thirupathi.

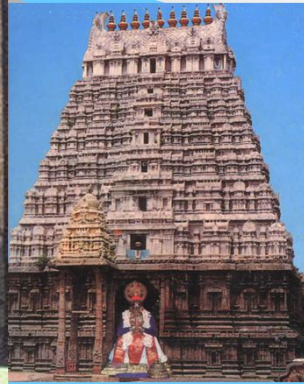




Divine Dream and Command



Thirupathi

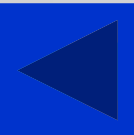


Kanchi





Those days there were no buses or trains to travel so Sri Ananthasuri and his wife, Thotharaammaal walked from Kanchipuram to Thirupathi.

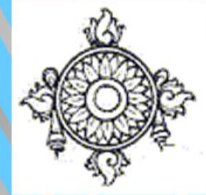




Swami's parents on the way to Thiruvengkatam



Reaching Thiruvankatam



They climbed the Hills and had the darshan of the beautiful Perumal. That night they were resting in a Mantapam near temple.

The Lord appeared in their dreams in the garb of a Srivaishnava youth and handed over a small golden bell which Thotharaammaal swallowed. Next morning, when they woke and both narrated their dreams to each other and they were astonished to find how both of them had the same dream which was matching .





Divine Dream



The next morning when the BhattAchAr opened the doors of the sanctum sanctorum, they found the thiruArAdhana bell missing.

An investigation was ordered into the loss of the bell. The Lord appeared by Avesa (spiritual trance) through Thirumalai Nambi and told that He (the Lord) had himself presented the bell to the Ananthasuri couple and henceforth, the small hand-bell need not be used during thiruArAdhana in the temple. To remind us all of this incident, even today there is no bell in the Perumal sannidhi. Only the huge bell suspended in the front hall is used while doing thiruArAdhana.





Commotion In Temple and
Avesa (spiritual trance)



Following this incident, the Ghantam of the Lord was born as Ghantaavathaara Azhwar. The avataaram of ThUppul Kulamani was in the Kali yuga year 4370 (1268 C.E) Vibhava year, Purattasi month, on the Dasami day of Sukla Paksha, a Wednesday, in the constellation of Shravanam Nakshatram (the same as that of Lord of Tirumalai).



He was born in ThUppul, near Tirutthankaa adjacent to the temple of Deepa Prakashar in Kanchipuram.





Birth of Swami Desikan



Gopuram of Deepaprakashar Temple, Thiru Thanka or Thooppul



**Maragathavalli, Sri Devi, Bhoo Devi Sametha Deepaprakashar or Villakolli Perumal
Of Thooppul**



Swami Desikan's avathara sthalam as seen now



A Mani Mandapam which was constructed recently at Swami's avathaara sthalam



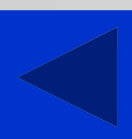
As Swamy was born during the theirThotsavam of Tiruvenkatamudaiyaan, his maternal uncle, AppuLLAr, named him “Venkatanaathan”.

After Abdapoorthi (the first birthday) he took the child to “Per AruLaLan Temple” at Kanchi.

The child Venkatanaathan had his Chowlam in the 3rd year and Aksharaabhyaasam in the 5th year.



The Lord blessed the child to become the "beacon of light" of Srivaishnava Darshanam





Swami Desikan Being Taken to Temple by his parents



Kidambi AppuLLAr, Venkatanathan's Maternal Uncle, one day, took him to the "Kalakshepam" (religious lecture) of Guru NadaathUr ammaaL. On seeing Venkatanathan's "divya thejas" (brilliance), NadaathUr ammaaL stopped the Kalakshepam and asked the boy to come on stage. Recognizing an "Avathara Purusha" (divine incarnation) in the boy and overcome with emotion, he hugged the boy to show his affection. Thereafter, while trying to resume the Kalakshepam and not remembering where he had paused previously, he asked his "Shishyas" (disciples) where he had left the lectures. Much to the astonishment of the assembled audience, young Venkatanathan recalled the exact point where the Kalakshepam was stopped. Astounded by the boy's memory power.

He Blessed the boy

"Pratishtapita Vedaantah
Prati- Kshipta Bahir Mathaa
Bhooyaah Traividya Maanyas
Tvam Bhoori Kalyaana
Bhaajanam"



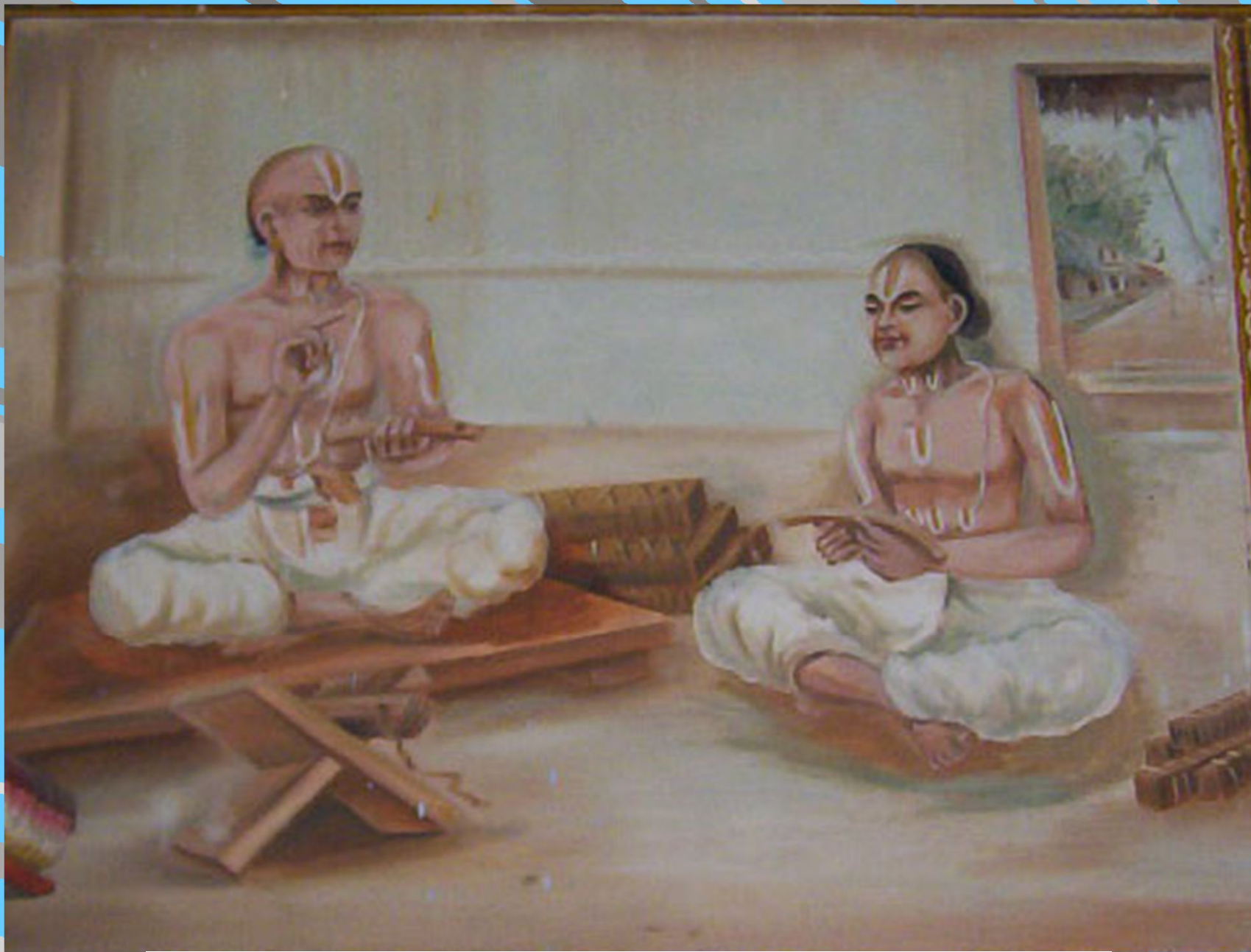


Meaning: “You shall establish Vedanta on a firm footing demolishing their misrepresentation by individuals from other faiths”.

Even today, one can see the painting of ammaal blessing the boy, on the ceiling in front of the Kachi Vaithaan Mantapam in the temple of Lord Varadharajar in Kanchipuram.

NadaathUr ammaal wanted to take the boy under his tutelage, but taking into consideration his own old age, he decided otherwise. NadaathUr ammaal blessed him to become the leading philosopher to preach and spread the glory of Sri Vaishnava Siddhanta in future. He asked AppuLLAr to initiate the boy in all the Sastras and other esoteric doctrines.





Venkatanathan Learning under His Uncle AppuLLAr



His parents performed the routine brahminical rites of passage viz., his “Chowlam” (religious hair cut), at the age of 7 “Upanayanam” (the sacred thread ceremony) etc. Kidambi AppuLLAr took Venkatanaathan under his care and coached him in the fine arts of “Kavyam” (poetry), “Naatakam” (drama), “Shastra” etc. He was surprised at the brilliance of Swami Desikan and the quickness (almost instantly = “Eka Sandha Graahi”) and ease with which he grasped what ever taught to him.

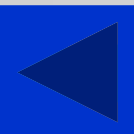
The elders were wondering whether Sri Desika was the combined reincarnation of previous acharyas like Ramanuja, Nathamuni and Alavandar.

At the age of 20, Sri Desika had mastered all the Sastras and become a scholar.





At the age of 21, Sri Desika was married to a beautiful girl called Thirumangai or Kanakavalli. Sri AppuLLAr taught Desika the sacred Garuda mantra. Sri Desika then started his family life as ordained in the Sastras.



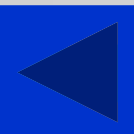


Desikan's Marriage



He was strictly performing all the duties required by a Srivaishnava and living on uncha vritti. i.e. their daily supply of rice and vegetables will be given by his disciples. A brahmana was supposed to do Veda adhyayana and teach every one in the village. They were not supposed to go to work as we do these days.

Their needs would be taken care of by their students who would learn from them. This is the system which was in place 500 years back in India.





Desikan Going for uncha vritti.



**Lord Devanathan - Moolavar
of Thiruvendipuram**



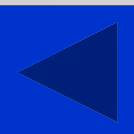
Hemabhujavalli Sametha Devadhi Rajan

Swami Desikan's dear uncle AppuLLAr passed away a little later. Swami Desikan then left Kanchipuram and went to Thiruvendipuram



After reaching Thiruvendipuram, Swamy Desikan wanted to chant the Garuda mantra taught to him by his Guru AppuLLAr. Desika climbed the small hill named Oushadagiri opposite to Narasimhan Sannidhi in Thiruvendipuram and began recitation of the mantra while meditating on the Lord.

For many days, without food or sleep, he chanted the Garuda mantram to receive the blessings of the divine bird Garuda on which Sriman Narayana travels. It is said in the scriptures that Garudan is Veda Swaroopi.

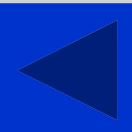




Desikan Praying to Lord Garuda Alwar



Garuda was pleased with the devotion of Swamy Desikan and he appeared before him. He blessed him with Sri Hayagriva mantram and instructed him to meditate on the Lord while chanting the Hayagriva mantra continuously in order to receive the blessings of Sri Hayagriva.





Garuda Alwar Gives Darshan to Desikan



**Hayagreeva
Mantram**





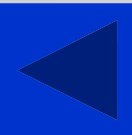
Desikan Reciting Hayagreeva mantra



Then Lord Hayagreeva appeared before Desikan and blessed him with the nectar flowing from His own mouth. Lord Hayagreeva took a seat on Swami Desikan's tongue tip as prayed for by Swami Desikan. Lord Hayagreeva also gave an idol of Himself for Swamy Desikan's daily worship.

This idol or Vighram is still preserved in the Devanathan temple in ThiruvahIndhrapuram.

Swami Desikan composed the famous Hayagreeva stotram, Devanayaka Panchaasath in Sanskrit and Achyutha Satakam in Prakrutham and Mumanikovai and Nava mani maalai in Tamil.





(Left) Hayagreeva Shakshathkaram; (Right) Swami holding the Hayagreeva Vighram presented by the Lord Himself



Lord Sri Hayagreeva



Lord Sri Lakshmi-Hayagreeva

Dear Children, Please recite this HAYAGREEVA sloka below 11 times daily and see the miracle of this Sthothra. With Lord Sri Hayagrivan's anugraham, you will increase your memory power and get excellent marks.

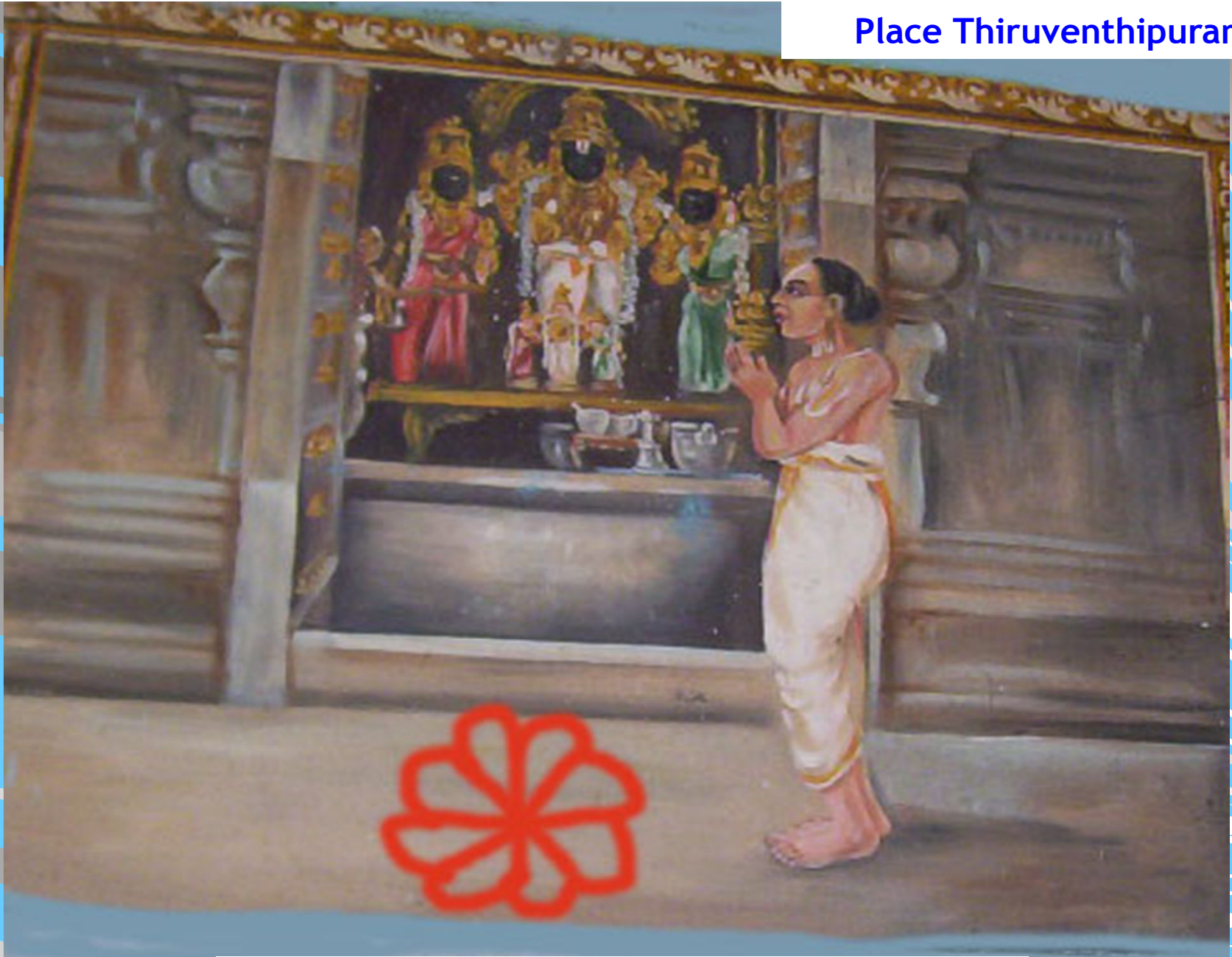
GyAnAnandhamayam dEvam
nirmala sphatikAkruthim
AadhAram sarva-vidhyAnAm
Hayagreevam upAsmahE

One more Hayagreeva Slokam

Visuddha vigyaAna ghana-svaroopam
vigyAna visrANana Bhaddha-dheeksham
DayA-nidhim dEha-bhruthAm SaraNyam
dEvam Hayagreevamaham prapadhyE



Place Thiruventhipuram



Desikan Praying to Lord Devanathan



Moolavar - Devanathan

**DevanAyaka-
PanchAsath-sthuthi-
sampanna
SathyavAchE
Namaha**

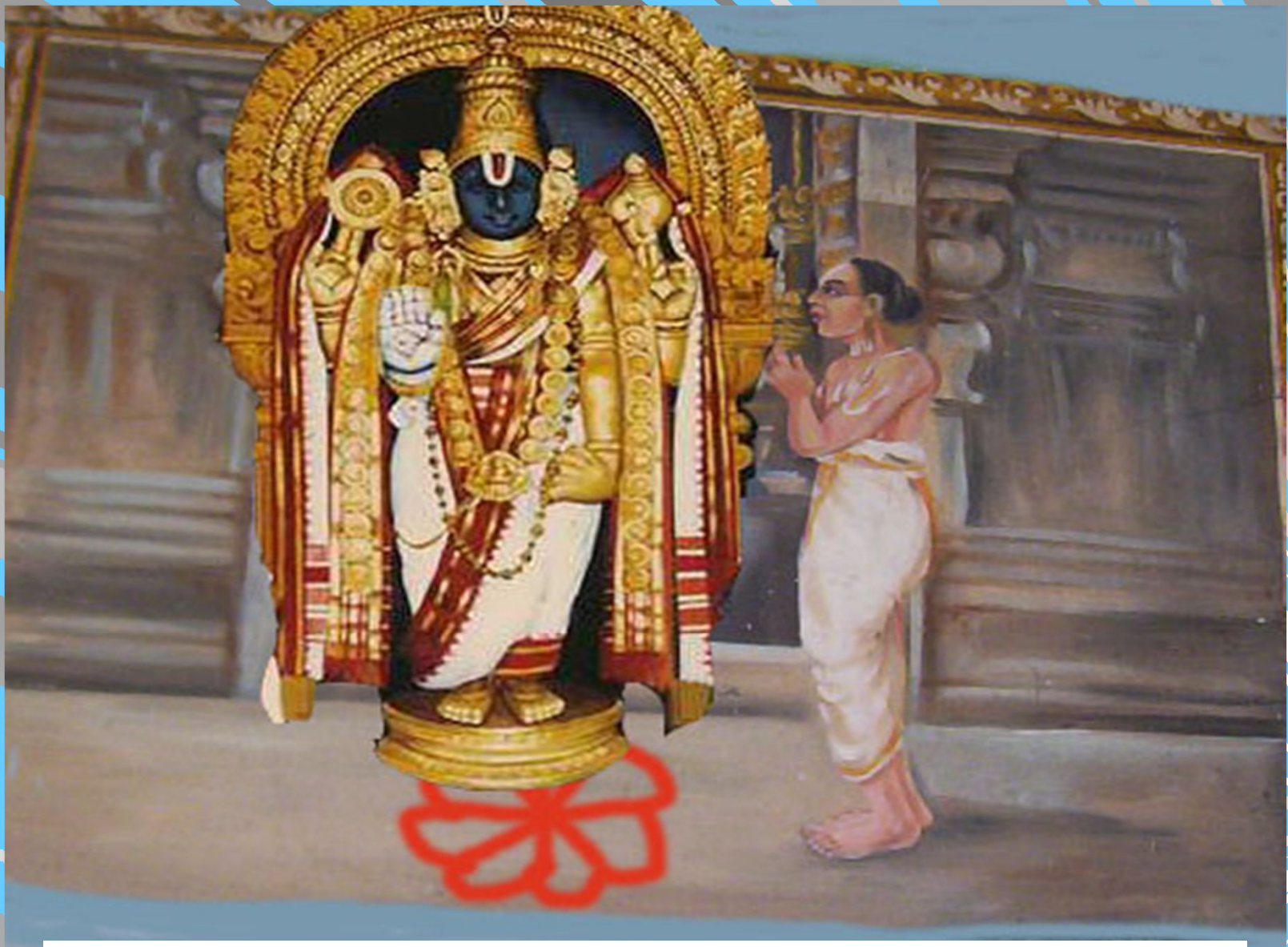
**Meaning:
Salutations to the
AchAryan, who
became
SathyavAdhi
by creating the
DevanAyaka
PanchAsath sthuthi**



Hemambhujavalli nayaki



Raja Alankaram of Devathirajan and His
Consort Hemambhujavalli nayaki
Thiruvendipuram

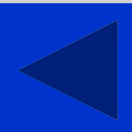


**Imaginary view of Swami Doing MangalASanam
to Lord Devanathan.**



A Mason's Challenge to Swamy

Once a mason challenged Swami Desikan to construct a well with the bricks supplied by him. Swami Desika accepted the challenge.





Our Swami Builds Well

The mason gave broken and irregular shaped bricks to Swami Desikan. Despite this Swamy arranged them nicely and finished the construction of the well successfully. This well exists even today in ThiruvahIndhrapuram.



Place Kanchipuram



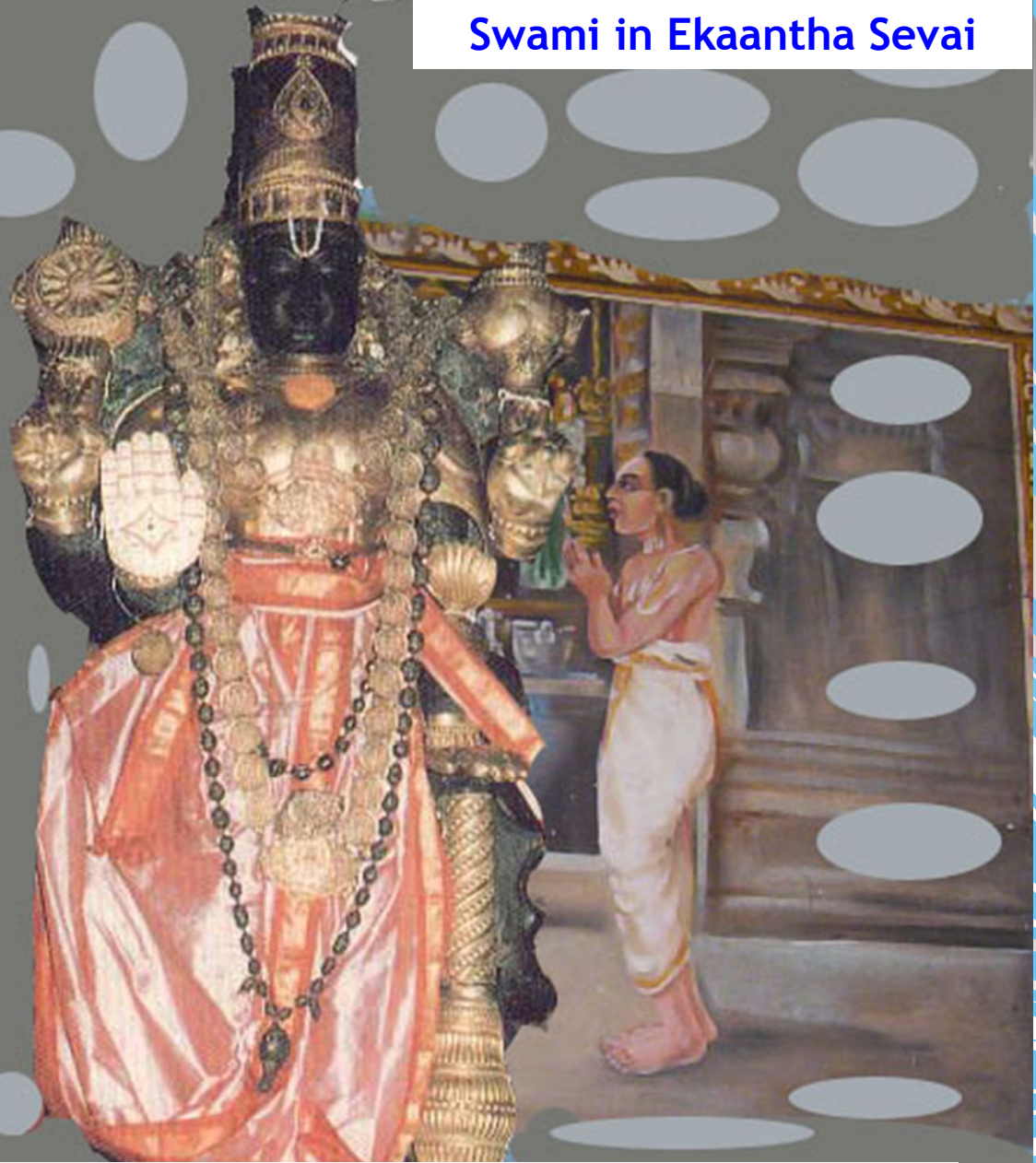
Desikan doing mangalASanam to Lord Varadaraja



Children, do you know that even today Swami Desikan does mangalaaSaasnam to Lord Devaraja. During Swami Desikan's Thirunakshatram celebration every year, He gets the rare honour of crossing the dwaarapaalakaas and getting close to the Lord to perform mangalaaSaasnam. No other Acharya is given this Honour anywhere in any other temple.



Swami in Ekaantha Sevai



Imaginary view of Swami Doing MangalASanam
to Lord Varadharajar



Birth of Sudharshanaashtakam

Once upon a time, in the place called Thiruputkuzhi, a dangerous disease named Vaisuri struck like an epidemic. A lot of people suffered as a result and our Swami, who is a KaruNaamoorthy, immediately composed Sudharshanaashtakam and people were relieved of their miseries.





Birth of Sudharshanaashtakam at Thiruputkuzhi

“Sudharshanaashtakam”



Jaya Jaya Sri
Sudarsana
Jaya Jaya Sri
Sudarsana



According to one school of thought, Swamy Desikan composed Sudharshanaashtakam when he was challenged by a Magician.

Magician gets tamed by our Swami

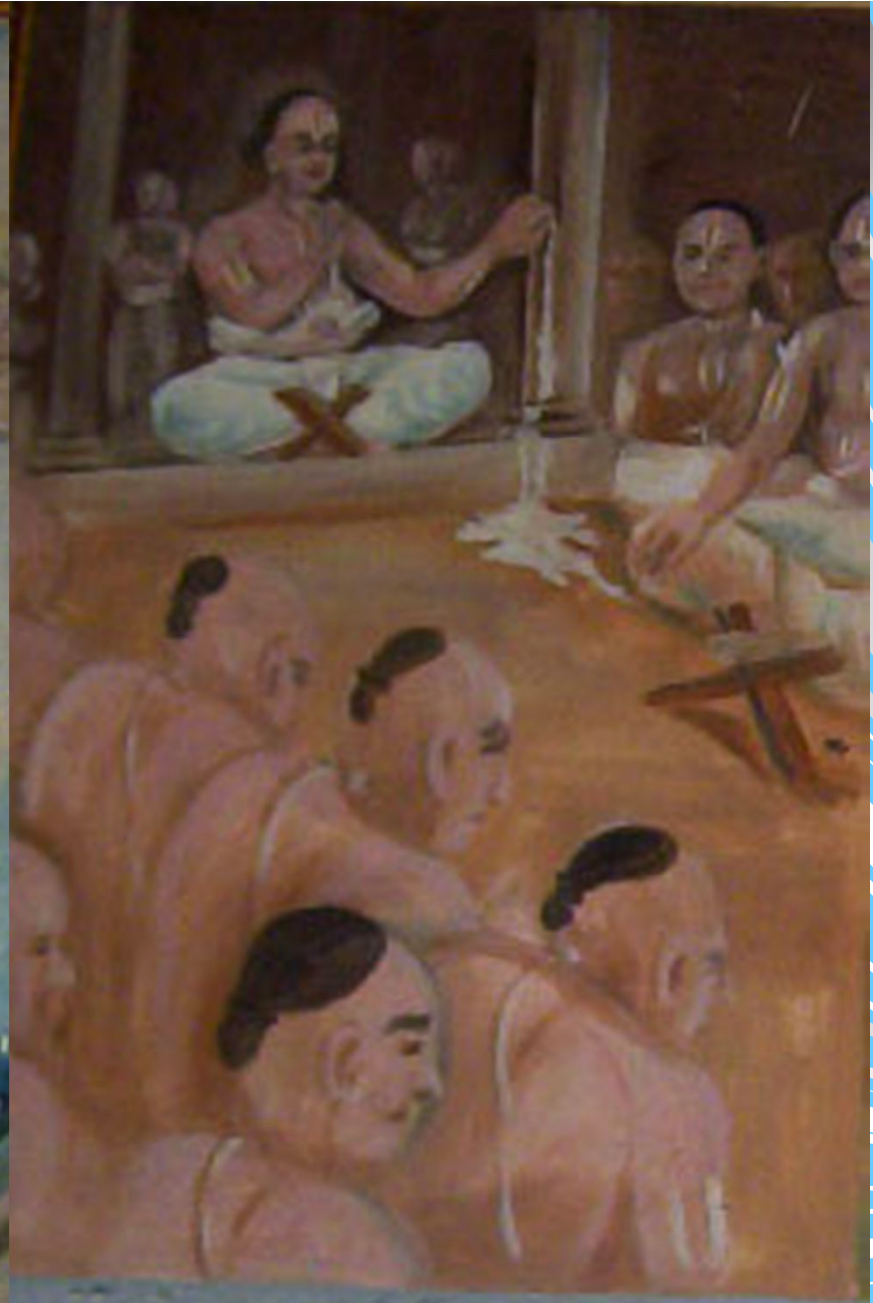
One magician confronted swami and then drank water from a pond. With his magical powers, he made swami's stomach bulge as he (the magician) drank water from the pond. Swami was feeling extreme pain and understood the reason quickly. At this point, Swamy Desikan just scratched a pillar near by with his fingernails and water flowed out of the pillar. The magician was astonished with the super magic of Swamy Desikan and begged his pardon.

It is told that Swamy Desikan composed the Sudharshanashtakam for this instance.





Dushta Sanyasi Drinks Water from the Pond



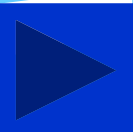
Swami Desikan Scratches the Pillar and Water Flows



Swamis VairAgya

Some of the local people in Kanchipuram felt bad that a great master like Sri Desika is doing uncha vritti i.e. begging for grains. They thought of mixing gold coins along with rice and offering it to him since Desika won't accept money or Gold if given separately.

Swami Desika did not notice this trick and came home and gave the rice to his wife for making prasadam. She was also a simple maiden and had never seen gold coins in her life. She called Swamy Desikan and asked him what the glittering coins are. Swami Desika was surprised at this and told her that they are vermin and separated them by a dharpa grass, as he did not even want to touch the gold coins. Such was the Vairaagyam of Swami Desikan!



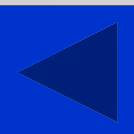


Gold Coin in Uncha vritti offerings



Birth of VairAgya Panchakam.

One of Swami Desikan's friend (Vidhyaranyar) during their school days became the minister of Vijayanagara kingdom. He heard about the poverty of Sri Desikan and wanted to help him. So he sent a message asking Swamy Desikan to come to the kingdom and receive gifts from the king. Swami Desika refused this request and in return sent him a poem called VairAgya Panchakam.



Place Vijayanagara Empire



Vidhyaranyar Sending Message to Swami
Desikan



naasthi pithrArjitham kinchith
na mayaa kinchithaarjitham
asthi mE Hasthi-sailAgrE
vasthu paithAmaham dhanam

Meaning

I have neither any accumulated wealth left behind by my father nor any wealth assembled from my own efforts.

I have however one of the greatest of wealths in the world, that has been left behind by my grand seer (Brahma Devan), who gained it through the performance of the Aswamedha Yaagam at Elephant hill (Hastha Giri at Kanchipuram). When I have this imperishable wealth, where is the need for other kinds of wealth for me?





Swamis renders Justice

Swami was requested to preside over as the moderator in a debate between the Adwaitha Vidhwan, Vidhyaranyar and Dvaita Vidhwan, Akshobhya. Although Vidhyaranyar was his boyhood friend, after hearing the arguments of both the vidhwans, Swamy gave a ruling impartially that Akshobhya's views were in accordance with Pramanas and settled the dispute.





Debate between Vidhyaranyar and Akshobhya



Swami Desikan Gives Judgment

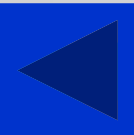


Blessing a Pulavar



Swami at Thirupathi

Swami Desikan then went to Thirupathi and here he composed the beautiful sthothram called Daya Satakam. Lord Srinivasa blessed Swami Desika conferring the title VEdanta Acharya.



Place Thirupathi



Swami Doing Nithya Anushtanam in Sri vari Swami Pushkarni at Thiruvankattam or Thirupathi as is known popularly



Place Thirupathi

**Swami Desikan Doing Mangalaasaanam of
Lord Srinivasa**



Children,

**Do you know the other
names of Lord Srinivasa?**

**The other names of Lord
Srinivasa are**

Thiruvencatamudaiyaan,

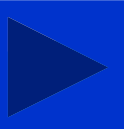
Balaji,

Thimmappa,

VencatEsa,

ThirumalEsa,

Sheshachalavasa,



Place Thirupathi

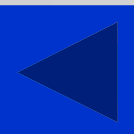


Imaginary view of Swami Desikan and Lord Srinivasar



Challenge to Our Ramanuja Darsanam

Once a band of Mayaa Vaadhis landed in Srirangam for a debate condemning Ramanuja Darsanam. Periya Vaachaan PiLLai, PiLLai Lokaachaarya and others resorted to the Grand old Master Sudarsana Bhattar for advice. Sudarsana Bhattar said that it was only Swami Desikan who could save the situation and sent a letter to Kanchi inviting Thooppul PiLLai, Swamy Desikan, to face the opponents.

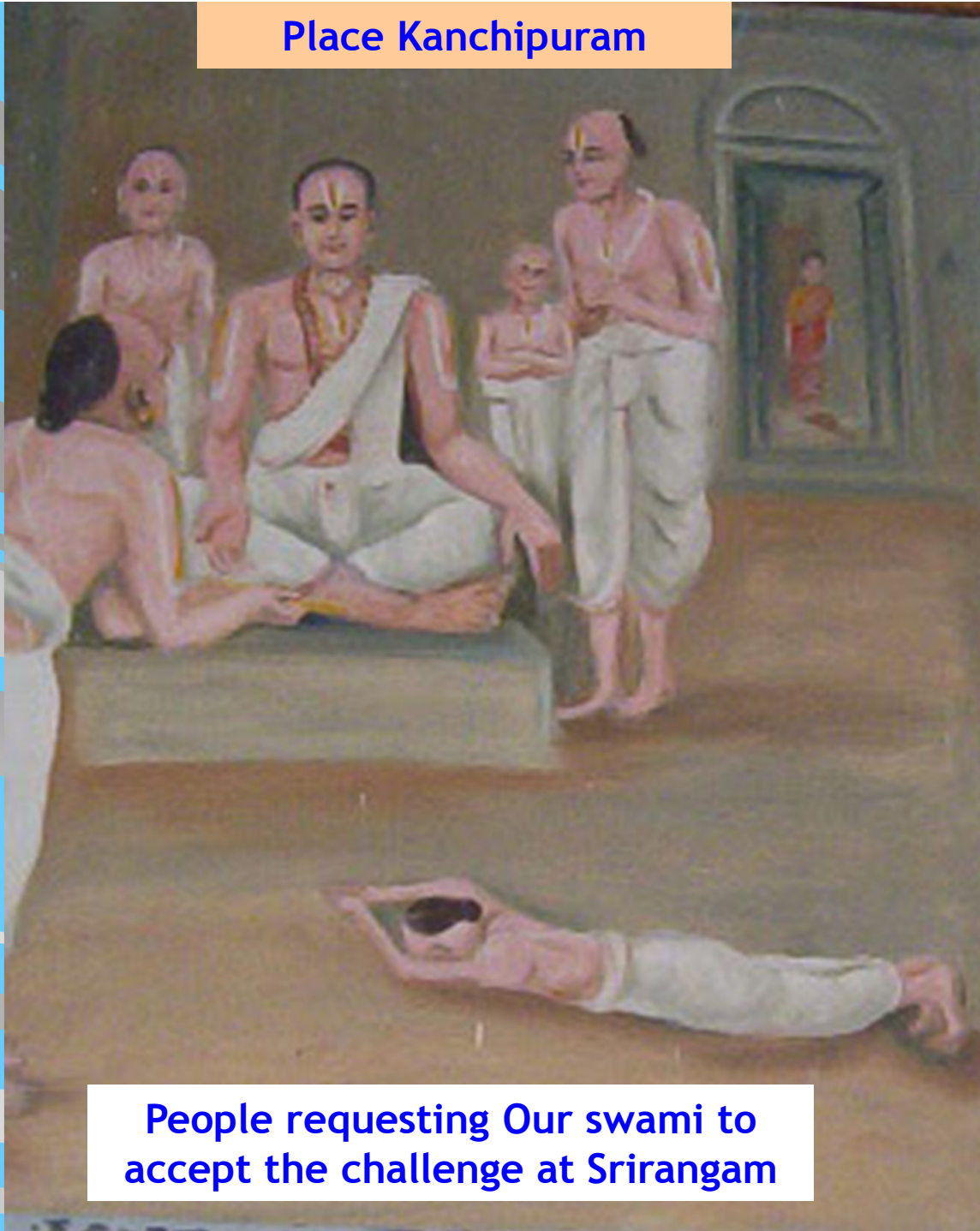


Place Srirangam



Mayaa Vaadhis challenges for a debate condemning
Ramanuja Darisanam

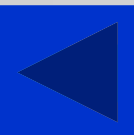
Place Kanchipuram



People requesting Our swami to accept the challenge at Srirangam



Swami immediately set forth to Srirangam but on the way he halted at Sriperumbuthur and prayed to Yathirajar (Ramanujar) and composed the famous Yathiraja Sapthathi.





**Swami Doing Mangalaasaasanam to
Udayavar at Sriperumbuthur enroute to
Srirangam**

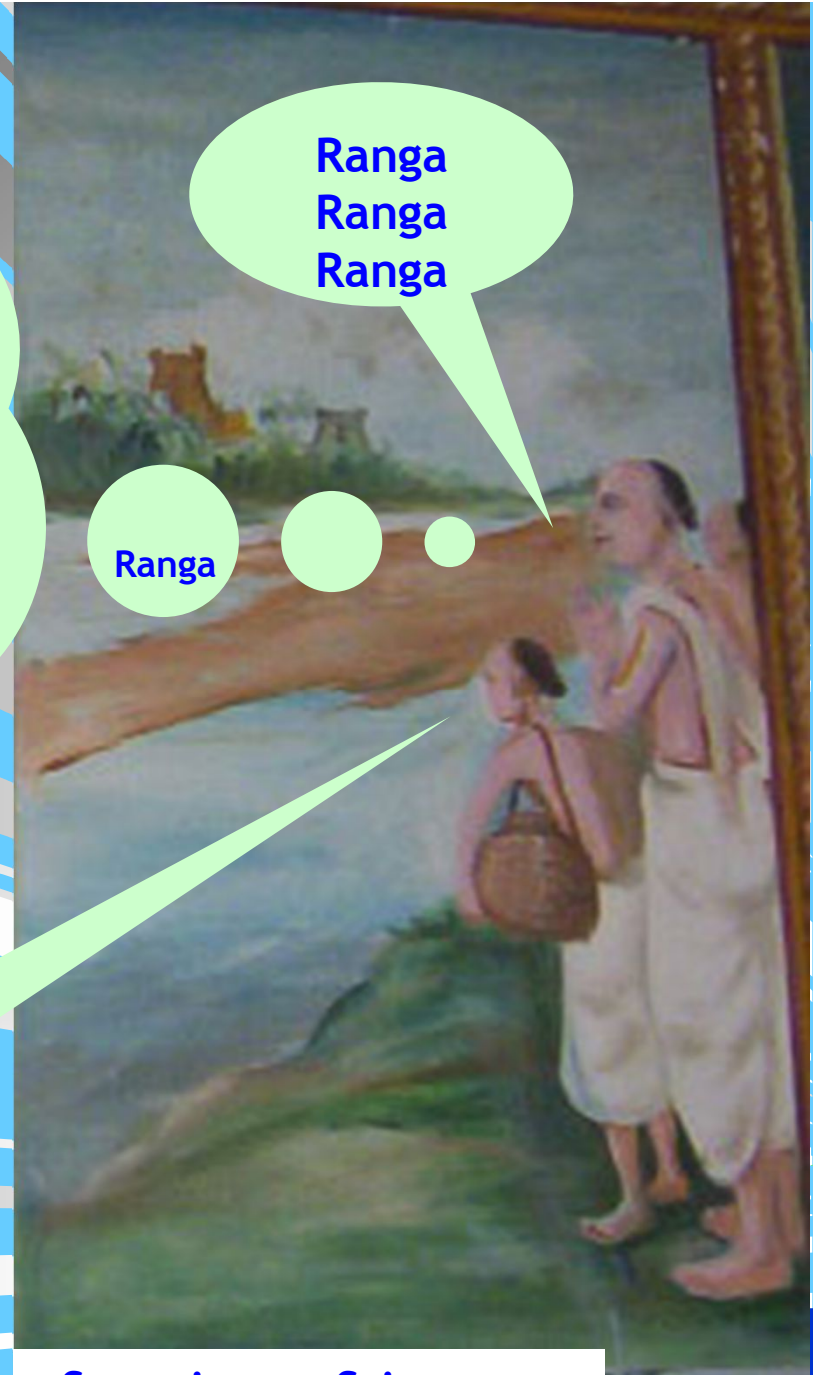
**Lord Ramanuja's
Thaan uganda thirumEni**



Ranga
Ranga
Ranga

Ranga
Ranga
Ranga

Ranga



Swami near Srirangam

Sri Ranganathan



Place Srirangam



Swami Wins the Debate



Swami Getting Theertha Prasadam at Sri Ranganatha Sannidhi



Swami Desikan at Ranganayaki Thayar Sannidhi

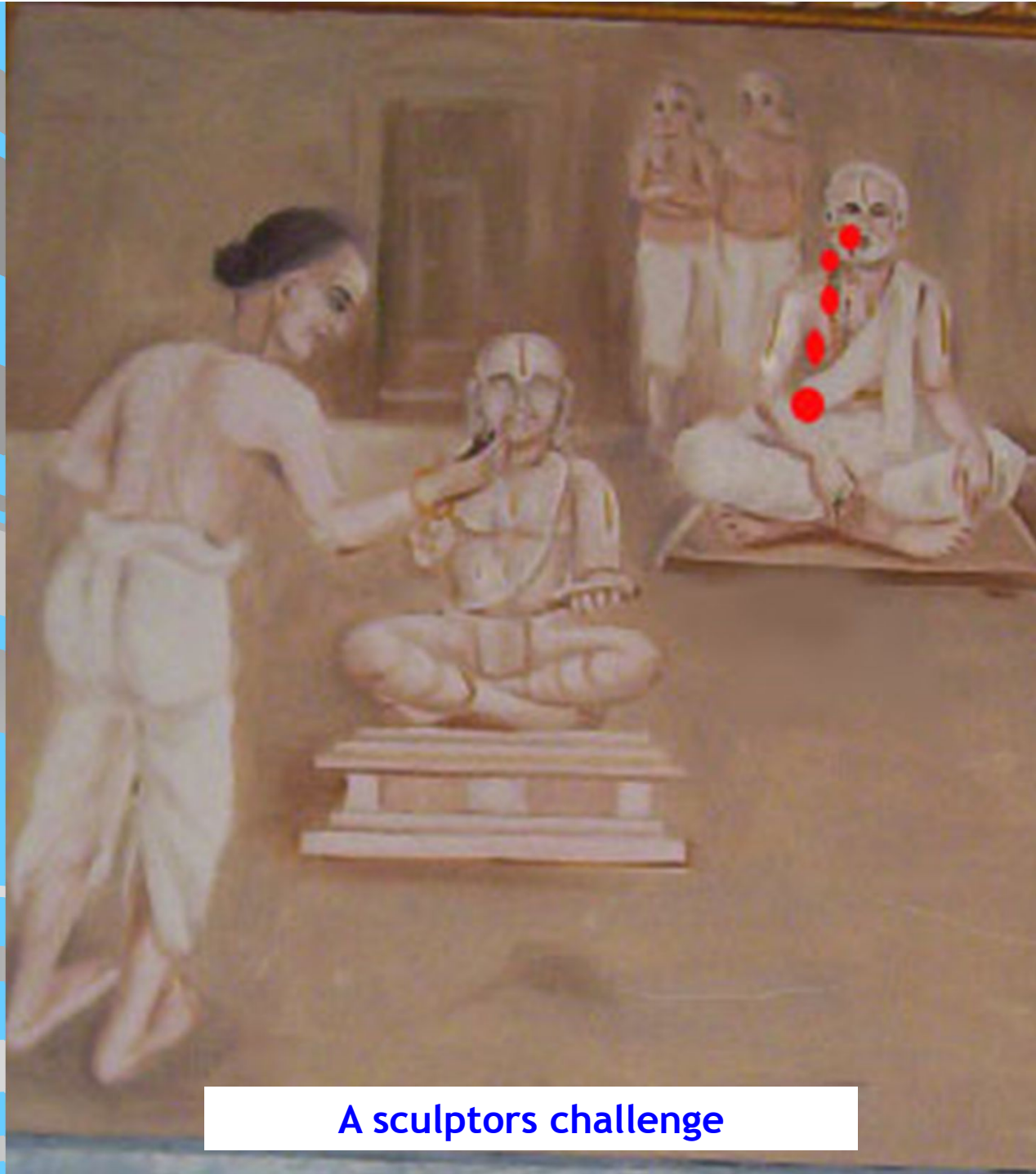


Swami defeats Sculptor

Once a sculptor offered to provide a base and asked him to make an image of himself. Desika made an image of himself but when the sculptor tried to fix it on the base, he could not do so. He tried to chisel out a portion of the body of the image. Blood flowed from the corresponding part of the body of Desika. The sculptor admitted that the fault was in the base made by him. Desika fixed it up in the base exactly as it should be, like a professional sculptor.

Later, this image was installed by Desikan's son Nayinaacharya at ThiruvahIndhrapuram. Anyone visiting ThiruvahIndhrapuram and offering prayers to the idol, can never take their eyes off this marvelous Vigraham.





A sculptors challenge

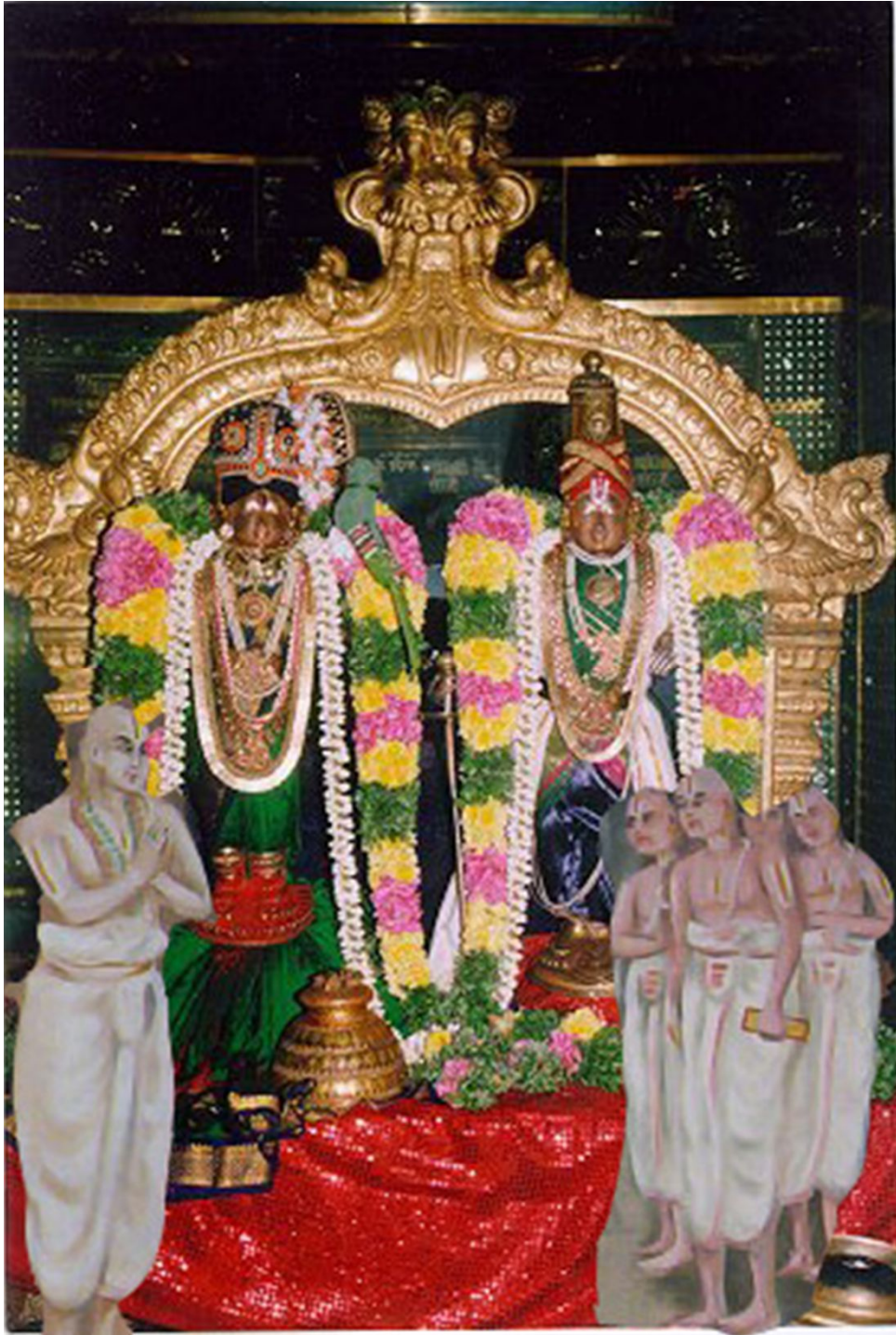


Sculptor loses the challenge



**Swami Doing Mangalasanam to
Udayavar at Srirangam**

**Lord Ramanuja's
TAMANA THIRUMENI
SRIRANGAM**



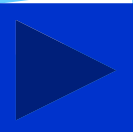
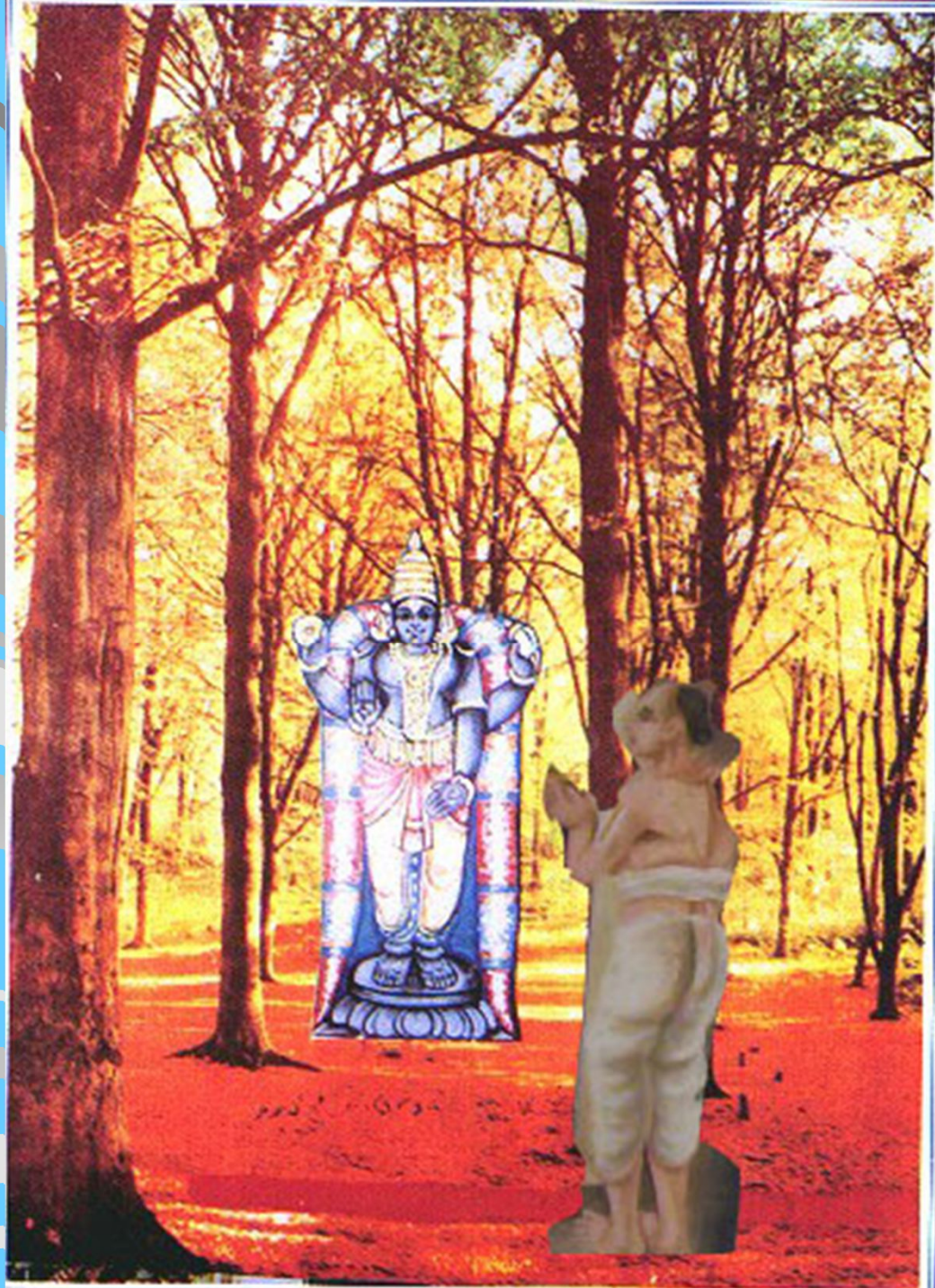
Swami at Srivilliputtur:

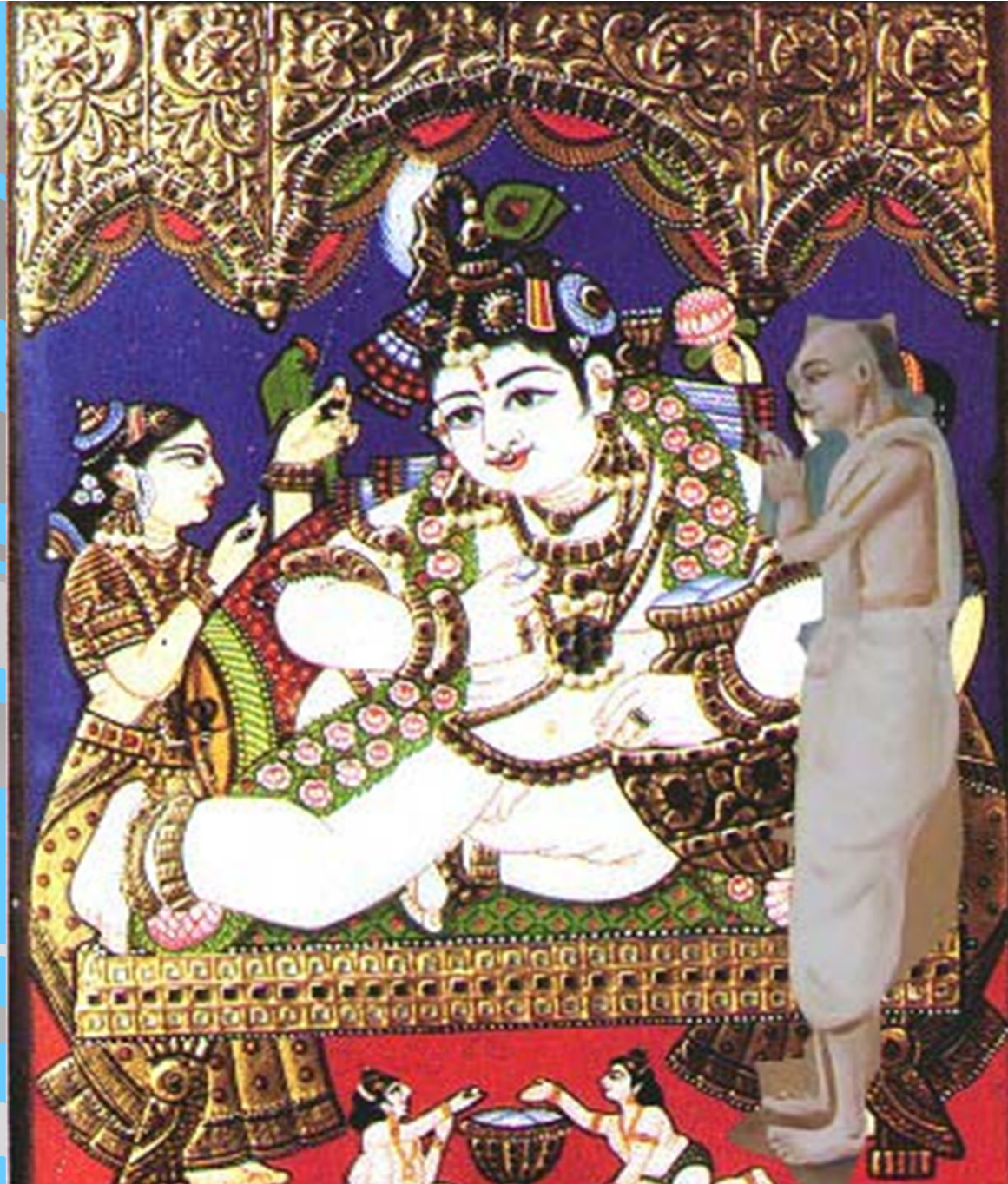
Swami Desikan went on a pilgrimage to the South and visited many divya Desam's in Kerala and Madurai and while he was at Srivilliputtur he composed the famous Godha sthuthi. Swami had special bhakthi towards Andal and this sthothram glorifies Andal. She has commanded that this stotram should be recited during Her Utsavam along with Dhivya Prabhandhams.



Swami then toured
Northern India and
visited various places.

Swami doing
mangalasaasanam at
Naimisaranyam

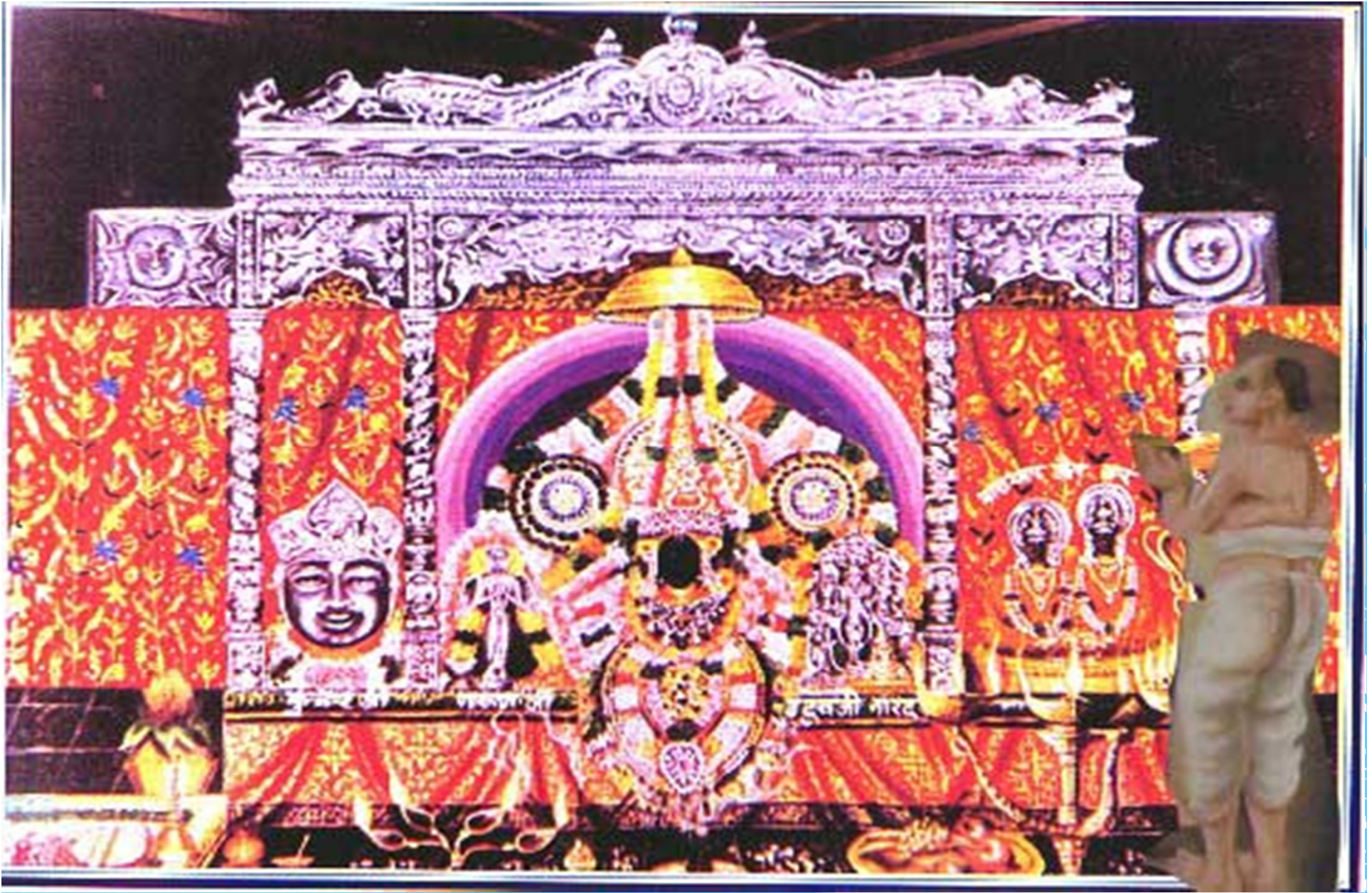




Swami Doing mangalashnam at Thiruayarpadi



Swami Doing mangalaasaasanam at Devaprayag



Swami Doing mangalashnam at Badrikaashram



Swami Doing Mangalashnam at Saligrama in Nepal



Swami Doing mangalashnam at Dwaraka



Snake Charmer Tamed by our Swami

Once a snake charmer challenged Desika to control his poisonous snakes. Swamy Desikan drew a chalk line on the ground and recited some mantra. None of the snakes could cross over the line drawn by swami but one ferocious snake crossed over to harm swami. Swami Desikan then recited the Garuda manthram and instantly Garuda came and took away all the snakes. The Snake Charmer begged to Swami Desika to give back his snakes since it was his only livelihood. Swami Desikan again prayed to Garuda who returned the snakes.





Snake charmer taught lesson



Swamy praying to VynaTheyan



Hayagreevan's Leelai

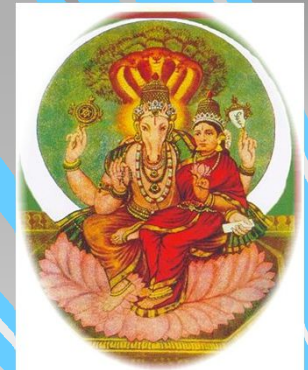
Once, when the Swami was visiting a Kshetram, he rested in the thinnai of a house for the night. Since he could not get anything to offer as Naivedyam to the Lord, he just offered some water to the Lord with a heavy heart and went to bed on an empty stomach. Suddenly, he was awakened by the landlord who reported that a white horse was eating the grain in his stores. Swami understood that it was the Leela of Sri Hayagreevan and comforted the house owner. He asked the landlord to bring some milk and offered it to his upAsana moorthy. Thereupon, the horse disappeared. Next morning, when the landlord went to shop he saw that all the sacks there were fully laden with gold. He offered the gold to Swami, but as usual Swami refused.





Horse eating Grains

Swami offering milk to the Horse and praying to
Lord Hayagreeva



Swami praying to Lord Hayagreeva





Lords themselves descend and take the food offered by the Swami

Once swami was performing the annual rites to his late parents and nobody came for eating on the occasion of the observance, but swamy did not loose heart. He put the plantain leaf and served all the items and prayed to the Lord. Lord answered his prayers. Lord Devaraja, Lord Hayagreeva & Lord Srinivasa came in person and partook the offering on the occasion, to the astonishment of the whole place.

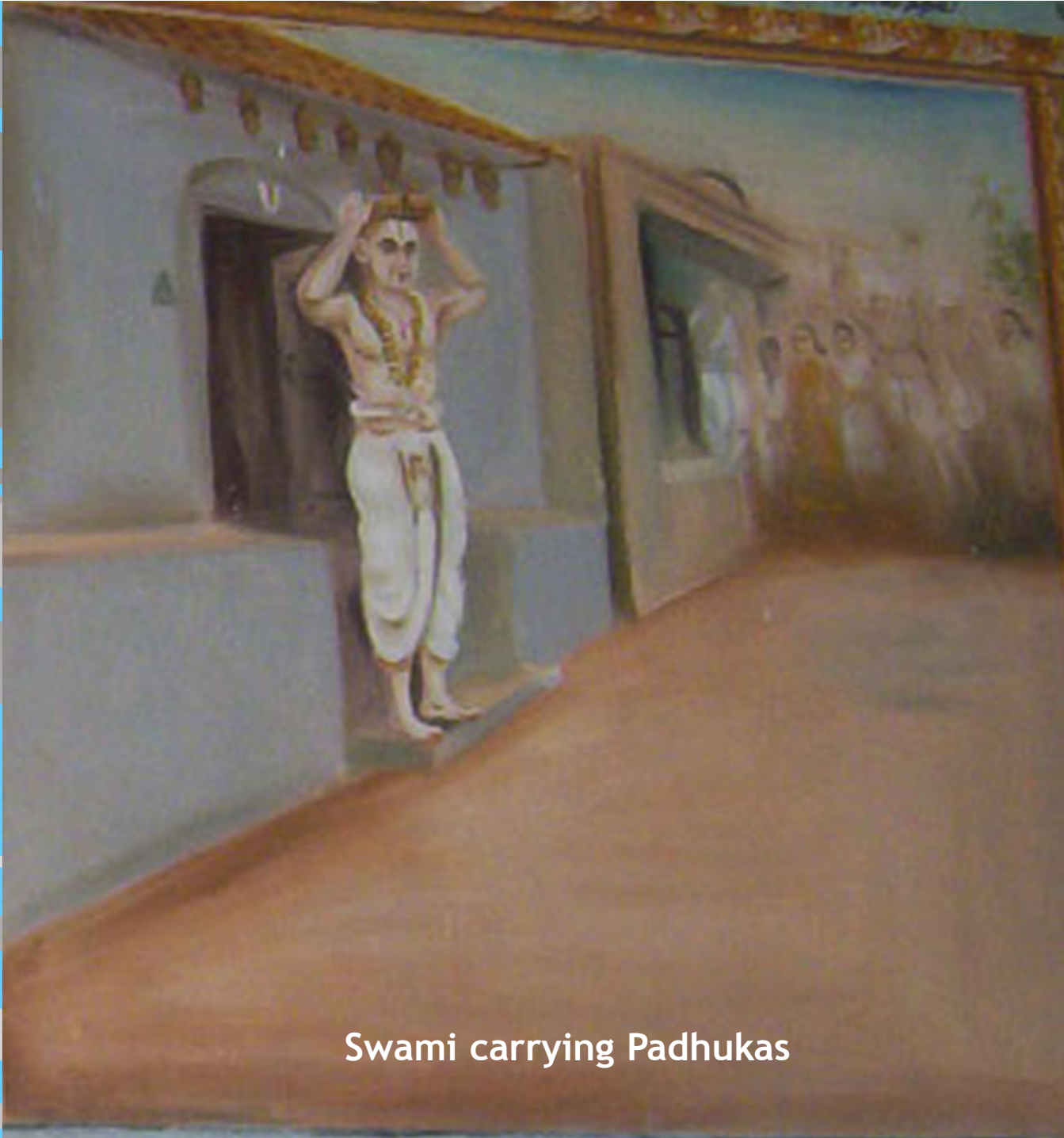




Annual Ceremony at Swami's house



Once people of town wanted to insult swami so they hang thooranam of slippers in front of his house , swami just came out holding Lords Paduka on head and told the I am I am happy to have Lords Padukai above my head. And the opponents were ashamed of their act



Swami carrying Padhukas

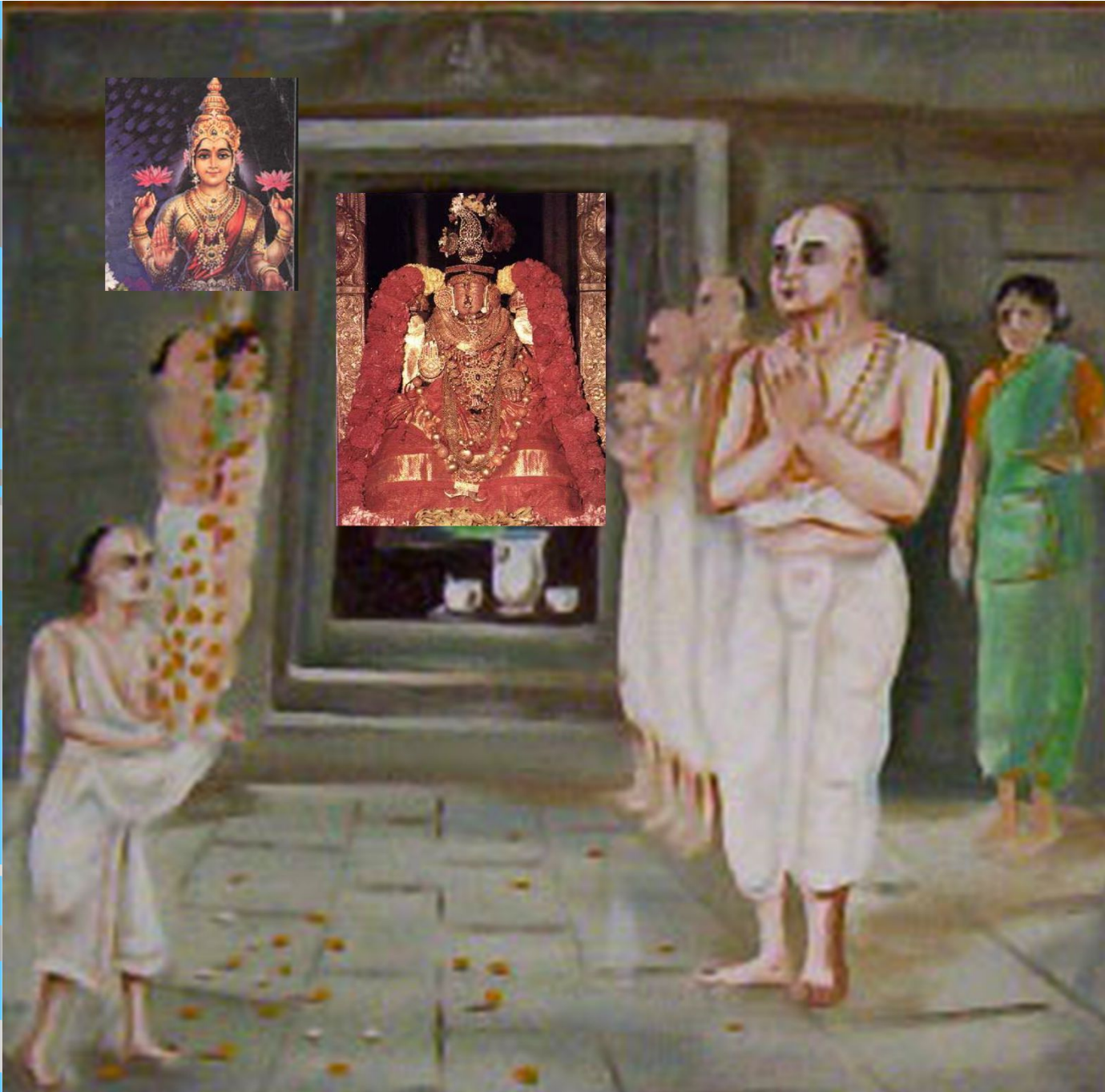
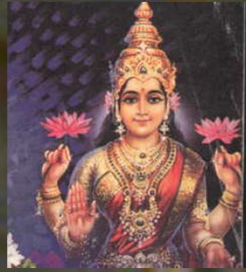


Birth of Sri Sthuthi

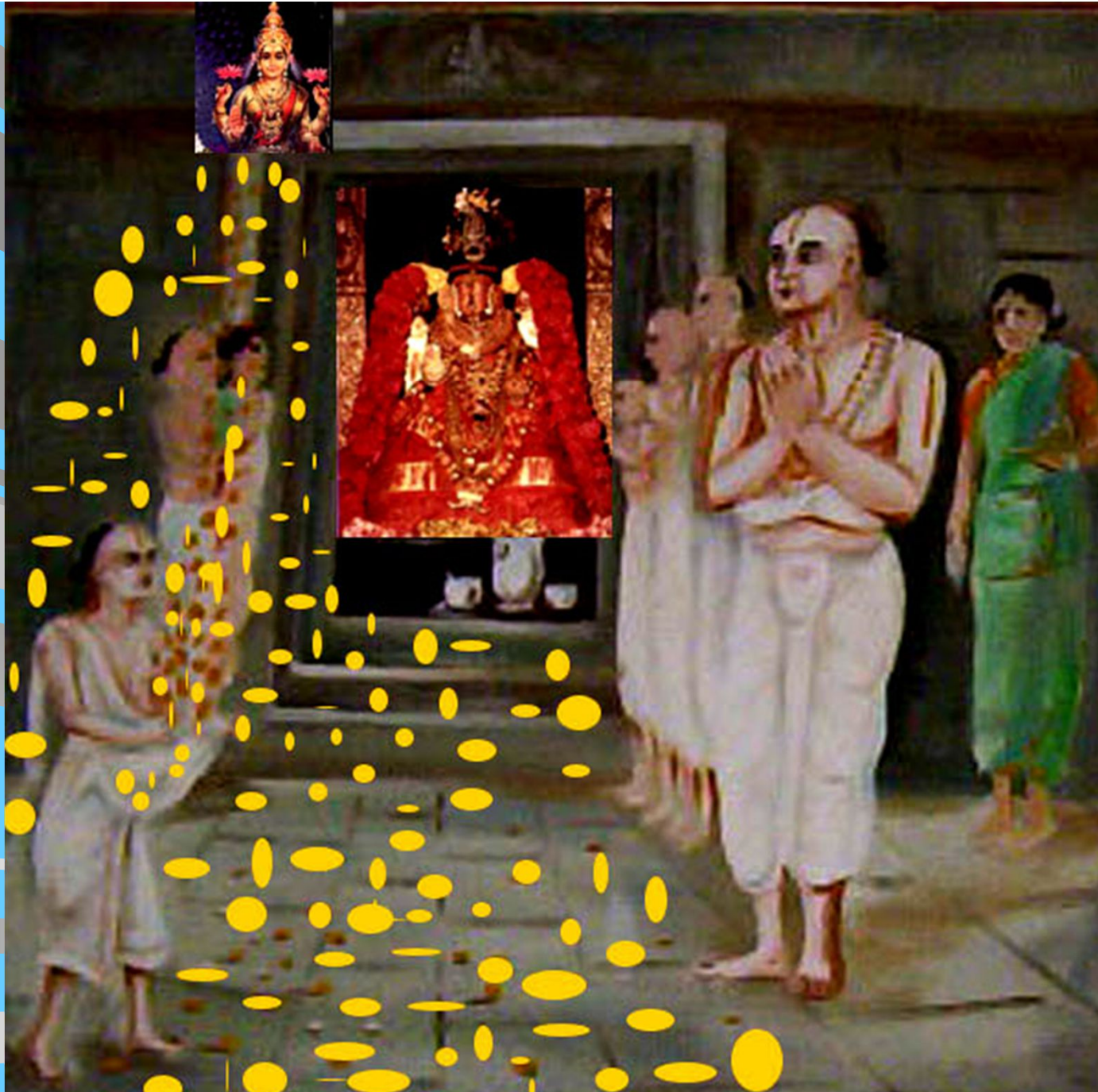
Once a young boy wanted some money for his marriage and approached the wealthy people in Kanchipuram. They were jealous of Sri Desikan's simplicity not seeking any financial help from them. Just to embarrass our swami they have told that only Desika can give lots of money because he is rich. The boy did not know the evil intention of the jealous people and went to swami Desika for financial help. We all know that Desika is not having any money but he took the young boy to the Thayar sannidhi and started reciting Sri Shtuthi and lo and behold.

It has started raining and rain of gold coins from the sky. Swami Desika thanked the Thayar for her mercy and told the boy to take as much he wants and he did not take any coin for himself. The jealous people were shocked at this incident and came running to seek the pardon of swami Desika.





Swami Desikan at Perundevi Thayar sannidhi

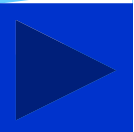
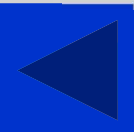


Swami Desikan at Perundevi Thayars sannidhi reciting Sri Sthuthi



Swami's Travel to Sathyagalam

Towards the end of the 13th century and beginning of 14th century, the city of Srirangam was invaded by Malik Kafur, the General of Alauddin Khilji, Sultan of Delhi. People were forced to flee Srirangam. One of those who could not escape was Sudharshana Bhattar, author of the famous commentary on Ramanuja's famous Sri Bhaashyam known as Shrutha Prakaashika. He however, wisely left this book as well as two young children in the safe custody of Swami Desikan. Swami, taking it as God's will, left Srirangam for a safe place. He traveled along the course of river Cauvery. It is no wonder then that he reached SATHYAGALAM, he must have said "This is it!".



Place enroute to Sathyagalam



Swami's Travel to Sathyagalam



**Swami Doing Kalapshepam at Sathyagalam
Brahmatantra Swatantra Prakala Jeer is also seated**



Brahmatantra Parakala Jeer Founder and First Jeer of Parakala Muttham



**Presiding Deities of Sathyagalam Lord Kote Varadharajar
& Goddess Perumdevi Thayar**



Children Have you ever seen Swami Desikan in Standing Posture?

No, you would always find him in a sitting posture but at Sathyagalam there is a unique vigraham. The unique feature of Swami Desikan's idol at Sathyagalam is that He is in Ninra Thirukkolam or standing pose.

It is said that Swami is standing and anxiously looking towards Srirangam to see if peace has returned or not (his standing posture gives an impression that he was literally on his toes, ready to head back to Srirangam).

This pose is not there anywhere in the world as you will generally find him in all the temples in a seated pose.



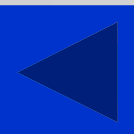


**Present Day Idol of Swami Desikan in the Unique Ninra Thirukkolam
[Standing Posture] at Sathyagalam**



Gyaanashwatha:

While in Sathyagalam, Swami Desikan had selected a particular spot on the riverbed for his daily anushtaanam and meditation under a “peepul tree” {Ashwatha Vriksham}. This spot has been revered by generations of people who acknowledge the tree as Swami Desikan’s “special seat” where he composed many literary compositions. The entire setting with the “peepul tree” {Ashwatha Vriksham} is known as Gyaanashwatha. This spot was in a bad shape until recently, when it underwent renovation and was spruced up to make it fit for visiting Holinesses and others to observe their “Anushtaanam”.



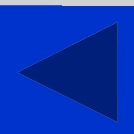


Artistic view of Swami Seated in Koormasanam under Gynaashwatha at the Banks of river Cauvery in Sathyagalam



Koormasanam

Swami Desikan once had a dream in which a “Satvik” person requests that he allow him to do some form of service (Kainkaryam) to him. Swami Desikan did not read too much into this dream. The very next day when swami was returning from the river after his “Aahnnikam”, a tortoise followed him all through and “raced fiercely”. This happening also did not bother him in anyway. However, that night in his dream, he had a vision of GOD wherein he was told to do “Anugraham”. The next morning when Swami Desikan returned to his special seat (aasanam) under the gyaanaashwatha, he found a stone peetam in the form of a tortoise (Koorma). Swami started using it during his “Anushtaanam”. The unique Sri Koormasanam (naturally formed in granite) on which Our Swami performed his Nithya Anushtaanam on the Banks of Cauvery is now preserved in his Sannidhi.





Swami Seated in Koormasanam



Picture of Present day Koormasanam in Sathyagalam



Artistic view of Swami Seated in Koormasanam under Gynaashwatha at the Banks of river Cauvery in Sathyagalam



Picture of Present day
Koormasanam and Swami
Desikan's Idol

Sathyagalam

Swami at Melkote



Swami Doing Mangalashnam to
Thirunarayanan at Melkote

Swami at Melkote



Swami at Melkote



Lord Ramanuja's
**TAMAR UGANDA THIRUMENI
THIRUNARAYANAPURAM(MELKOTE)**

Swami Doing Mangalashnam to
Udayavar at Melkote

Swami at Melkote



Imaginary view of Swami Doing
Mangalashnam to Present day Idol of
Udayavar at Melkote

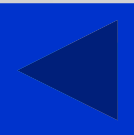
Udayavar Sannidhi at Melkote



Present day Idols of Lord Ramanuja In Melkote.



Once peace returned Swami returned back to Srirangam. When some of the orthodox people objected to the recital of Divya Prabandam in the temple on the grounds that they included the works of Non -Brahmin Alwars, written in Dravida Baasha and Tiruvoimozhi in particular dealt with Kaama that was taboo for them. Swami argued with them and convinced them that the holy collects were equal to the Vedas since they contained all that was in the Vedas, that since they were in praise of the Lord, the language did not matter and that the Kaama spoken of was nothing but absolute devotion to the Lord . He re-instituted the practice of 'Adhyayana Utsava'- the ceremonial honoring of the Alwars.





Birth of Paduka Sahasranamam



Some vidhwans challenged Swami Desikan to compose 1000 hymns in praise of Lord Ranganatha in one day. Swami accepted the challenge and he prayed to Ranganatha to bless him. The Lord commanded that Sri Desikan should compose the stotrams on the Divine Sandals (padhukas). Swami was busy with various activities during the day like teaching. In the night also he slept until 4 O'clock in the morning. Then he started writing down the stotras and in less than 3 hours he composed 1008 stotras on the padhukas. Even a fast recital of the entire paaduka sahasram would take us more than 6 hours while swami composed them in such a short time since he was "Kavitarkika simham" which means lion among the poets.



Title conferred on Swami by Periya Perumal and Periya Piraatti

It was at this time that Periya Perumal conferred the title of "Vedanta Desikan" and Periya Piraatti conferred the title of "Sarva Tantra Swatantra" on Swamy Desikan.






Composition of Sri Paduka Sahasranamam



Our Swami becomes Nithyasuri (eternally liberated soul)



Swami Desika lived 101 years and he felt the time has come for him to go the spiritual abode of Narayana. He went to Sri Ranganatha and took his permission (shown in next slide). His disciples and his son were feeling the pain of his separation and cried. Swami Desika consoled them and instructed them to continue their divine works and follow Sri Ramanuja darshanam. In the year 1369, he kept his head in the lap of his son Kumara Varadhachariar and left his mortal coil while listening to the chanting of Thiruvaymozhi and Upanishads. (Children, please look at next slide, it is an imaginary view of swami Desikan becoming a Nithyasuri. See his head in Kumara Varadhachariar's lap and his feet is on HH Brahmatantra Jeer.)

Later Sri Ranganayaki Thayar ordered that a sannidhi should be made for Swami Desika close to her sannidhi inside the temple. Also, it is believed that she ordered that no other Acharya sannidhi will be made hereafter inside the temple as a mark of respect to this great Acharya, which is being followed to this day. One can see Swamy Desikan's sannidhi in front of the Thayar sannidhi in Srirangam.



Place Srirangam Temple

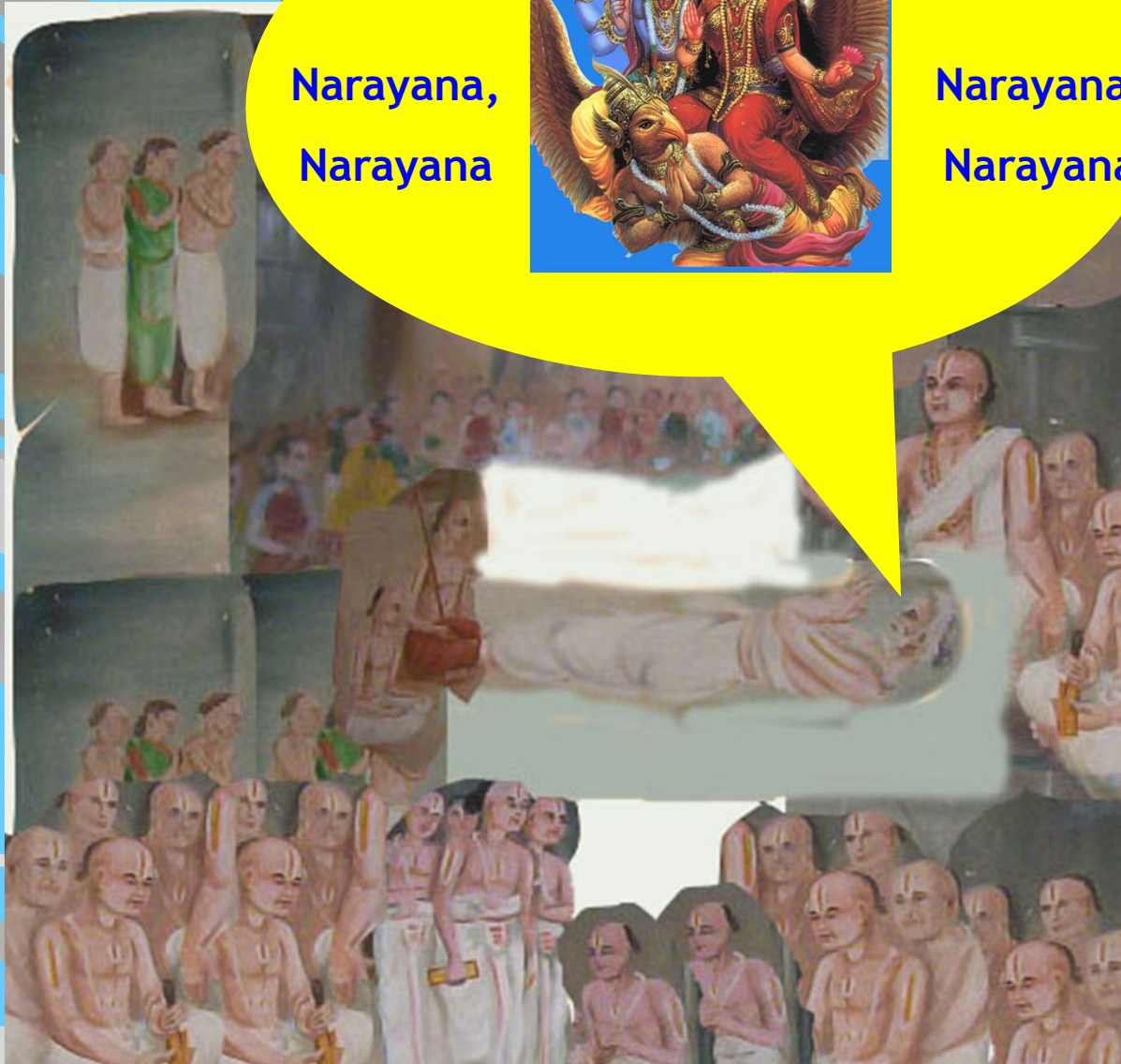


An imaginary picture of Swami taking permission from Lord Ranganatha, Goddess Ranganayaki, to come to his spiritual abode. Swami is seen with his son Kumara Varadhachariar, HH Brahmatantra Parakala Jeer and other disciples.



Narayana,
Narayana

Narayana,
Narayana



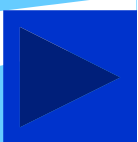
Imaginary View of Swami Desikan Becoming *Nithyasuri*



Artistic view of Swami Desikan sitting in lap of Sriman Narayana



Artistic view of Sannidhi at Thooppul where in Swami Desikan is doing mangalashnam to Lord Deepaparakashar with ubhanachiyars, Maraghatavalli Thayar and Andal.





**Artistic view of
Swami Desikan
doing
mangalasanam in
Paramapadam**



Artistic view of
Swami Desikan
doing
mangalasanam
in
Thiruparkadal



kavitArkika-siMhAya kalyANa-guNashAline
shrlmate ve~NkaTeshAya vedAnta gurave namaH

कवितार्किक-सिंहाय कल्याण-गुणशालिने
श्रीमते वेङ्कटेशाय वेदान्त गुरवे नमः

kavitārṅkika-simhāya kalyāṇa-guṇaśāline
śrīmate veṅkaṭeśāya vedānta gurave namaḥ





Swami Desikan at Thooppul adorning Lord Devanathan in his Vakshatsthalam



Lord Lakshmi Hayagreeva aradhanai moorthy of Parakala Muttham



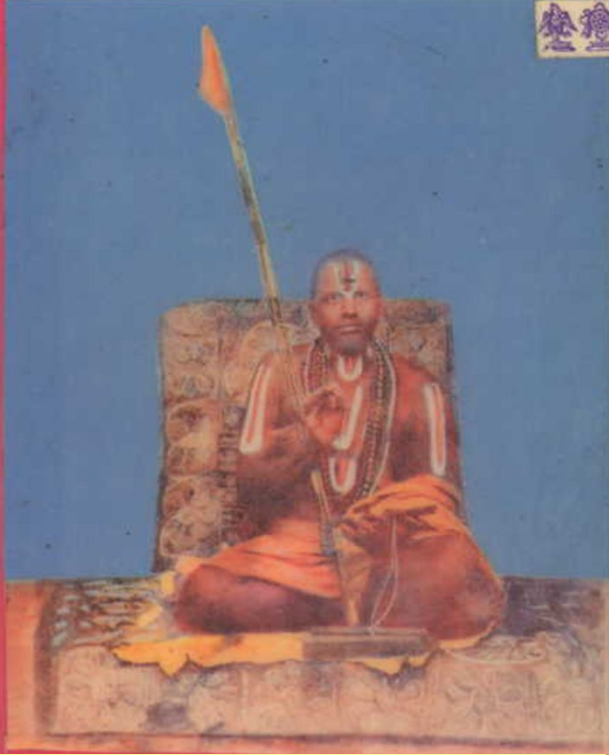
Dhanur Maasa Sevai Of Lord Deepa Prakashar with Sudharshana Alwar, Sri Devi, Bhoomi Devi, Andal, and Navaneetha Narthana Krishna. Children please observe that our Lord Villakolli Perumal is wearing Winter Dress i.e. Pani Kulla (Winter Cap and Wear Angi (type of sweater)



Present Day Sannidhi of Swami Desikan at Thooppul swami flanked by Bhattachar in left and Dr. SaThakOpa Thathachar in right

38-வது பட்டம் திருக்குடந்தை பூர்மதழகியசிங்கர் பூர்வண்
 ஸடகோப பூர் பூர்நிவாஸ ஸடகோப யதீந்தர மஹாதேஸிகன்
 (தை-திருவாதிரை)

ஸ்ரீமத் பூர்நிவாஸ ராமானுஜ மஹாதேஸிகன்
 திருக்குடந்தை (காடந்தேத்தி) ஆண்டகன்
 அவதாரம் ஆவணிமூலம் விஜேதி வருஷம் (1829)
 சன்வாசம் ஆவணிமூலம் விஷ்வாஷு வருஷம் (1906)
 ஐதங்கம் விலகவருஷம் (1908) மாசிமாசம்
 திருவண் பக்ஷ அவதரி



ஸ்ரீ பூர்நிவாஸ பூர்வண்
 (தாடிமரி) 1835—1860

**38th Pattam
 Azhagiyasingar H H Sri
 Srinivasa SatakOpa
 Yathindra Maha Desikan
 (ThiruKudanthai
 Azagiasingar)**

**HH Srimath Srinivasa
 Ramanuja Mahadesikan
 (ThiruKudanthai
 KaTandethi Andavan)
 flanked by His
 poorvashrama Gurus.**

**28th Pattam Parakala
 Jeer HH Sri Srinivasa
 Brahmatantra Parakala
 Jeer (Thadimari
 Swami).**

This Presentation is dedicated to all the Three Holiness.



My Sincere Thanks to

My Religious Mentor Sri U Ve Oppiliappan Koil Varadachari Sadagopan, of USA,
My Sister Dr.Padmashree Prajval of USA,
Sri U Ve Anbil Ramaswamy of USA, (Got idea after reading his material in web)
Sri V MadhavakkaNnan of Singapore, (Got idea after reading his material in web)
Sri U Ve SathakOpa Thathachar (Helped me in Thooppul)
Sri Krishnan Ayyangar of SPIC, Chennai (Took Me to Thooppul)
Sri R Srinivasagamani of Gopura Darisanam (Some photos from his book)
And of course as always My Parents and My Wife Geetha Sridhar.





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