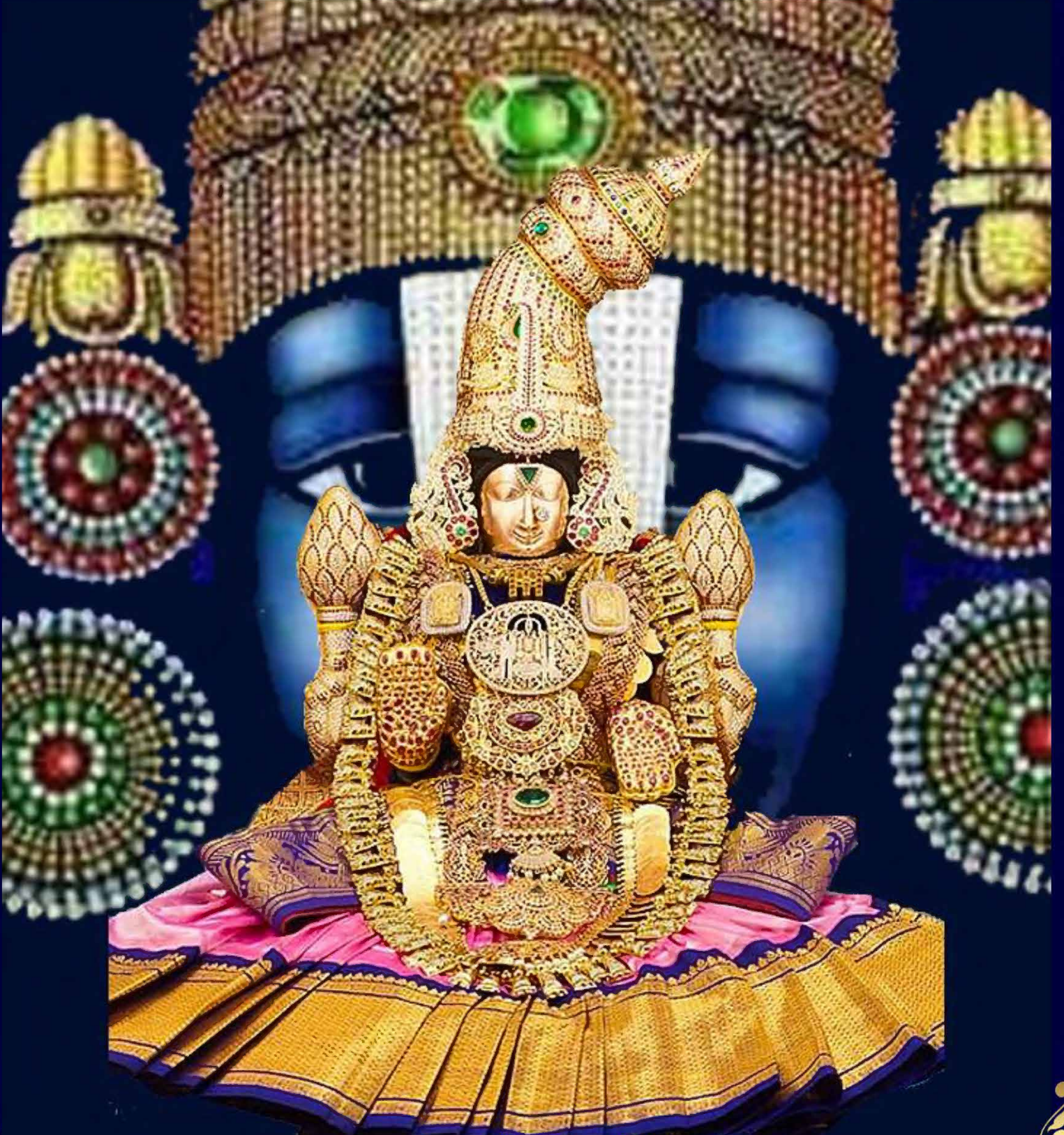


SvAmi NigamAnta MahAdeSikan's
Dayaa Satakam
(SlokaH 91– 100)



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 91

विश्वोपकारमिति नाम सदा दुहानाम्

अद्यापि देवि भवतीमवधीरयन्तम् ।

नाथे निवेशय वृषाद्रिपतेदये त्वं

न्यस्त स्व रक्षण भरं त्वयि मां त्वयैव ॥ ९१ ॥

vishvopakAramiti nAma sadA duhAnAm

adyApi devi bhavatl mavadhIrayantam |

nAthe niveshaya vR^iShAdri paterdaye tvAM

nyasta sva rakShaNa bharaM tvayi mAM tvayaiva | |91



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

“We commence the exposition of Verse 91 corresponding to the tenth decad of the Daya Satakam. This decad is uniquely captivating, not to imply that the other decads are any less. This decad extols Daya Devi again in the context of Her role for those who have performed Bharanyasam and are anxious for Brahma Ananda anubhavam. The first decad contained a salutation to the sacred Venkatam hill, followed by tributes to Azhvar, Nityasuris, Maharishis such as Parashara, Sri Devi, Bhumi Devi, and Neela Devi, and concluded with Svami Desikan’s position of delivering a glorification of Daya Devi in the midst of their grand gathering. Svami Desikan then commences his formal tribute to Daya Devi in verse 11 and documents Her numerous upakarams. As a matter of fact, even adiyen’s upanyasam on the Daya Satakam at the present time and the gathering of several listeners to hear the explanation of the individual verses is due to the grace of Daya Devi. Svami Desikan has explicated that Daya Devi is the cause for Lord Narayana to undertake the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the Universe. During the time of Mahapralayam, all sentient beings existed in an inert state without any name or form as part of Lord Narayana’s body. Greatly moved by their plight and motivated by the fact that if they are bestowed with a body and sense organs to experience pain and pleasure, they may perhaps put this to good use and seek out Lord Narayana, Daya Devi implores that they be given another opportunity

for redemption. Not only that, Daya Devi goes the extra step in blessing these beings with the Sastras so that they can lead their lives in a proper manner.



Daya Devi is the cause for Lord Narayana to undertake the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the Universe.

Next, even if we are consigned to take numerous births on account of our karma, Lord Narayana out of His Sankalpam accompanies us in these births with the sole aim of redeeming us. This comes about due to the efforts of Daya Devi. The impediment for attaining the benevolent Lord Narayana, who is so kindly disposed, is our sin pile. This seems to be an uphill battle for Lord Narayana, who is quite exhausted by this task. However, Daya Devi comes to the Lord's rescue by serving as His protective armour so to speak, thereby instantly ensuring the Lord's victory. For hapless beings struggling in the waters of the samsaric ocean, Daya Devi serves as the raft to cross over, paving the way for their redemption. The boatmen steering this "Daya Devi-boat" are Acharyas, who are well versed in artha panchakam. Without the boat of Daya Devi and the capable boatmen (Acharyas),

there is literally no way for these hapless beings to cross the samsaric ocean. It is unmistakably Daya Devi, who offers this way of redemption. Lord Narayana is known for dispensing justice in accordance with one's karma as evidenced by the **Goda stuti** tribute, "**karmAnubandhi phaladAnaratasya bhartuH.**" Going by this dictum, if the Lord were to mete out consequences for the mountainous sin-pile of errant baddha jivans, time itself would run out for enduring even a small fraction of the sin-pile. Thus, it would be pointless to engage in this task. This position is brought to the forefront by convincing arguments advanced by Daya Devi using the authority of the Sastras, thus paving the way for the baddha jivans' redemption. Svami Desikan has specifically noted that Daya Devi transforms the nigraha sankalpam of Lord Narayana into one of anugraham. To Daya Devi of such loftiness, Svami Desikan performs his formal sharaNagati in verse 60 and in subsequent verses further documents the numerous acts of help rendered by Daya Devi.



Without any consideration of high or low, Daya Devi ensures that all beings are uniformly graced by Lord Narayana. Thus, She ensures that all beings become privy to the grace of Lord Narayana. In the preceding decad Svami Desikan highlighted the role of Daya Devi in bringing about the avatarams of Lord Narayana starting from Archa form to His ten principal avatarams and ensuring that the entire Universe was privy to His grace during these avatarams. In each of the avatarams Lord Narayana showered His grace in a unique manner. For example, in Verse 82 of

Daya Satakam, the tribute "**samlkShaNa vicintana prabhurutibhiH svayaMtAdrushaiH**" (Lord Narayana ensures the protection of beings of the Universe either through His contemplation or by merely looking at them through His eyes.) Additionally, the Lord's acts of compassion were not restricted to the time of His avataram or confined only to those who were fortunate to be born at the time of His incarnation. Instead through the construction of the great bridge, Lord Rama ensured that a one-time sighting of the bridge results in the destruction of the most

heinous sins for all beings at all times including the present. The cause of these extraordinary acts on the part of Lord Narayana is undoubtedly Daya Devi as eloquently captured in the verses of the previous decad.



mAtAdevi tvamasi

Thus, these ninety verses constitute a glowing tribute to Daya Devi, where not a single slokam is inappropriate or mischaracterizes the act of Daya Devi. Daya

Devi is delighted with this flow of verses from Svami Desikan and resolves to ask Svami what he desires. This is something that has occurred elsewhere when Svami Desikan submitted his tribute to Thayar for example in the **Sri Stuti**. The evidence in support of this position can be found in the salutation “yogArambha tvarita manaso yuShmadaikAntya yuktaM dharmaM prAptuM prathamamihaye dhArayante dhanayAm” (Please ask for whatever you want. If it is money that you desire hold your vastram open, there shall be a copious shower of gold coins) and in the salutation “ChatracChAya subhagashirasashcAmarasmerapArshvAH shIAghA shabdaH shravaNamuditAH sragviNaH sancaranti” (If it is name and fame that you desire where you are welcomed by fan bearers and others carrying royal paraphernalia of umbrella and the like accompanied by panegyrists rendering your praise, I stand ready to grant this.) These tributes in fact are a reflection of the joy that Thayar begets when Svami Desikan himself renders them as part of his stotrams. In Kanchipuram, Navaratri utsavam is celebrated around the time of Svami Desikan’s Tirunakshatram (Sravanam in Kanya Masam). Typically, Svami Desikan’s Tirunakshatram coincides with the end of the Navaratri Utsavam. This is usually celebrated in a grand manner with aradhanam, parayanam, and Satrumurai. During this time the Utsava Dampatis in Kanchipuram can be seen at the Kannadi arai Abhisheka Mantapam. They are adorned with all sorts of beautiful ornaments and very slowly proceed towards the Sannadhi of Kovil Desikan, where Maryada (all honors) is offered to Svami Desikan. After this, they move towards the nURRukkAl mantapam, where they receive additional tiruvaradhanams and upacharams. This also coincides with the Desika Utsavam celebrated in a beautiful manner at ThUppul, the avatara sthalam of Svami Desikan. During this time, Svami Desikan arrives on a vahanam, with all royal paraphernalia from ThUppul in front of the Divya Dampatis of Kanchipuram. The Divya Dampatis of Kanchipuram enjoy from the abhisheka mantapam all the honors bestowed upon their favorite son, Svami Desikan, verily in the manner of parents enjoying the laurels conferred upon their children. Thus, those who have true Bhakti towards Perundevi Thayar are graced in the manner outlined in Svami Desikan’s **Sri Stuti** tribute “ChatracChAya subhagashirasashcAmarasmerapArshvAH shIAghA shabdaH shravaNamuditAH sragviNaH sancaranti.” This is actually enacted in real time during the utsavam for Svami Desikan. In a like manner, in the context of the Daya Satakam, Daya Devi is supremely pleased with Svami Desikan’s majestic tribute. In another place in the Sri Stuti, Svami Desikan submits the appeal to Perundevi Thayar “sAnuprAsa prakaTita dayaiH sAndravAtsalyadigdhaiH ambasnigdhairamR^ita laharl labdhasabrahamacaryaiH gharme tApatrayaviracite gADa taptaM kShaNAm mAm

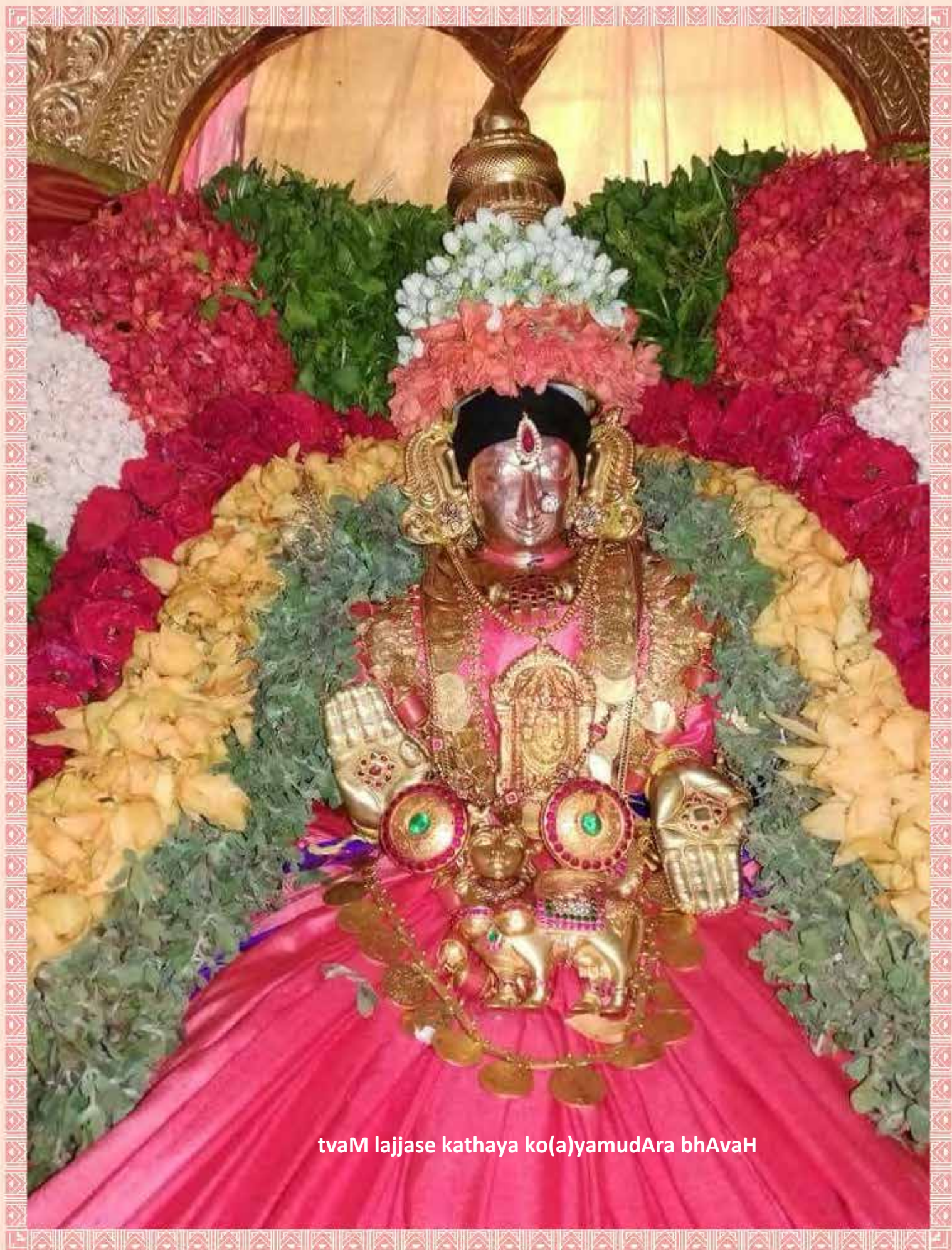
AkincanyaglapitamanaghairArdayethAH kaTakShaiH". Here Svami Desikan desires the nectarine elixir like eye-glances of Mahalakshmi Thayar to gain relief from the intense summer heat arising out of the three kinds of tapams accompanying all samsaric association, which verily scorches his entire body. In response to this appeal, Svami Desikan not only gains the eye-glances of Thayar, but also of Lord Varadaraja (Narayana). Delighted by this good fortune coming his way Svami Desikan further submits the salutation "mAtAdevi tvamasi bhagavAn vAsudevaH pitAme jAtaH so(a)haM janani yuvayorekalakShyaM dayAyAH datto yuShmatparijanatayA deshikairapyatastvam" (It is entirely Your Daya, Oh Mother that this benefit of receiving the compassionate eye-glances of You and Lord Varadaraja has come my way! You are my mother and Lord Vasudeva is my father. Due to Your limitless compassion, it appears that my Acharyas have given me away by way of dattam to render ceaseless kaimkaryam for both of You. Svami Desikan discerns a beautiful smile on the face of Thayar which seems to suggest that "having received this benefit do you desire anything more?"

In a like manner, in the context of the Daya Satakam, Daya Devi is supremely pleased with Svami Desikan's majestic tribute. Daya Devi enquires of Svami Desikan: "Due to association with Sadacharyas, you have performed sharaNAgati. As a consequence, your moksham is assured. Furthermore, due to your disposition, you have no use for aihika/kamyartha benefits. What then do you desire, Svami?" Svami Desikan lived a life of Uncha vrutthi. One day when he did his rounds to collect alms for his daily neivedyam for his Aradhana murti, someone out of extreme affection for Svami mixed a few gold coins along with the rice. Svami Desikan took the offering home and then saw the gold coins. He remarked to his wife that the daily offering of rice was contaminated by worms that needed to be cleared. Upon clearing the gold coins with a string, Svami Desikan used the rice for preparation of neivedyam offering for his Aradhana murti. This is eloquent testimony to Svami Desikan's vairagyam. Therefore, in reply to Daya Devi's question, Svami Desikan will be loath to seeking material benefits. Due to Svami Desikan's sharaNAgati to Daya Devi in verse 60 of the **Daya Satakam** "mR^idu hR^idaye daye mR^iditakAmahite mahite dhR^itavibudhe budheShu vitatAtmadhure madhure vR^iShagirisArvabhaumadayite mayite mahatIM bhavukanidhe nidhehi bhavamUlaharAM laharIm" he is assured of Moksham. What then remains by way of anugraham for Svami Desikan from Daya Devi? She Herself is at a loss to know what this is. Therefore, Daya Devi enquires of Svami Desikan "Svami what is it that you desire? Due to your tribute to Me, I am eternally indebted to you - nitya ruNavati." This is very much in the same spirit of Lord Krishna's

shankha cakra gadApANe dvArakA
nilayAcyuta govinda rakSha mAm



expression of being indebted to Draupadi. While being disrobed in the Kaurava court, Draupadi submitted her appeal through the prayer “shankha cakragadApANe dvArakA nilayAcyuta govinda puNDarIkAkSha rakSha mAMsharaNAgatAm.” Lord Krishna ensured a never-ending supply of robes thereby guarding Draupadi’s honor. However, Lord Krishna later mentioned that this was an action in response to the Govinda namam alone and that He has a debt that remains on account of the other namams submitted in Draupadi’s appeal. This is literally in the manner of merely paying the interest on the debt while a huge principal amount needs to be paid up to be completely discharged from the debt. Daya Devi’s sentiment here is very much in the same spirit as Lord Krishna’s declaration. This slokam is a sambhAShaNam (tete-e-tete) between Daya Devi and Svami Desikan. For most people attaining the lotus feet of Lord Narayana upon gaining moksham and reaching Sri Vaikuntam is the ultimate puruShArtham. However for Svami Desikan, attaining the lotus feet of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill is itself the greatest puruShArtham. Therefore, Svami Desikan submits the appeal to Daya Devi in this verse that She should ensure that he is united with the lotus feet of Lord Srinivasa. This verse is “vishvopakAramiti nAma sadA duhAnAm adyApi devi bhavatImavadhIrayantam nAthe niveshaya vR^iShAdri paterdaye tvaM nyasta sva rakShaNa bharaM tvayi mAM tvayaiva” (Oh Venerable Mother Daya Devi! Adiyen has submitted his glorification of You in the prior verses comprising nine decads and documented Your monumental acts of help to the universe. You are very much like the Divine Cow Kamadhenu, that grants the wishes of all her seekers. In this context the usage “duhAnAm” denotes the act of milking the cow. It is furthermore employed in present tense. Although the Daya Satakam was composed more than 700 years ago and Svami Desikan was the recipient of Daya Devi’s anugraham, the usage of present tense in this verse is eloquent testimony to the fact that Daya Devi’s anugraham exists even at the present time. This is intended to assure those who adopt this stotram for daily recital as well as those who hear the exposition of the meanings underlying the individual verses, that they definitely become privy to the grace of Daya Devi. The tribute “vishvopakAramiti nAma sadA duhAnAm” is meant to convey the enormous upakaram of Daya Devi in endowing us with this body and providing us with the Sastrams so that we lead our lives properly, causing us to seek Acharya sambandham on account of which Bharanyasam is performed and the way for our redemption is paved. This is in the manner of the salutation “mArmElE kaivaittu urankuvAr pOlE” from **Srimad RahasyatrayasAram**. (One who has performed sharaNAgati to Lord Narayana is assured of moksham due to the grace of Daya Devi.



tvam lajjase kathaya ko(a)yamudAra bhAvAH



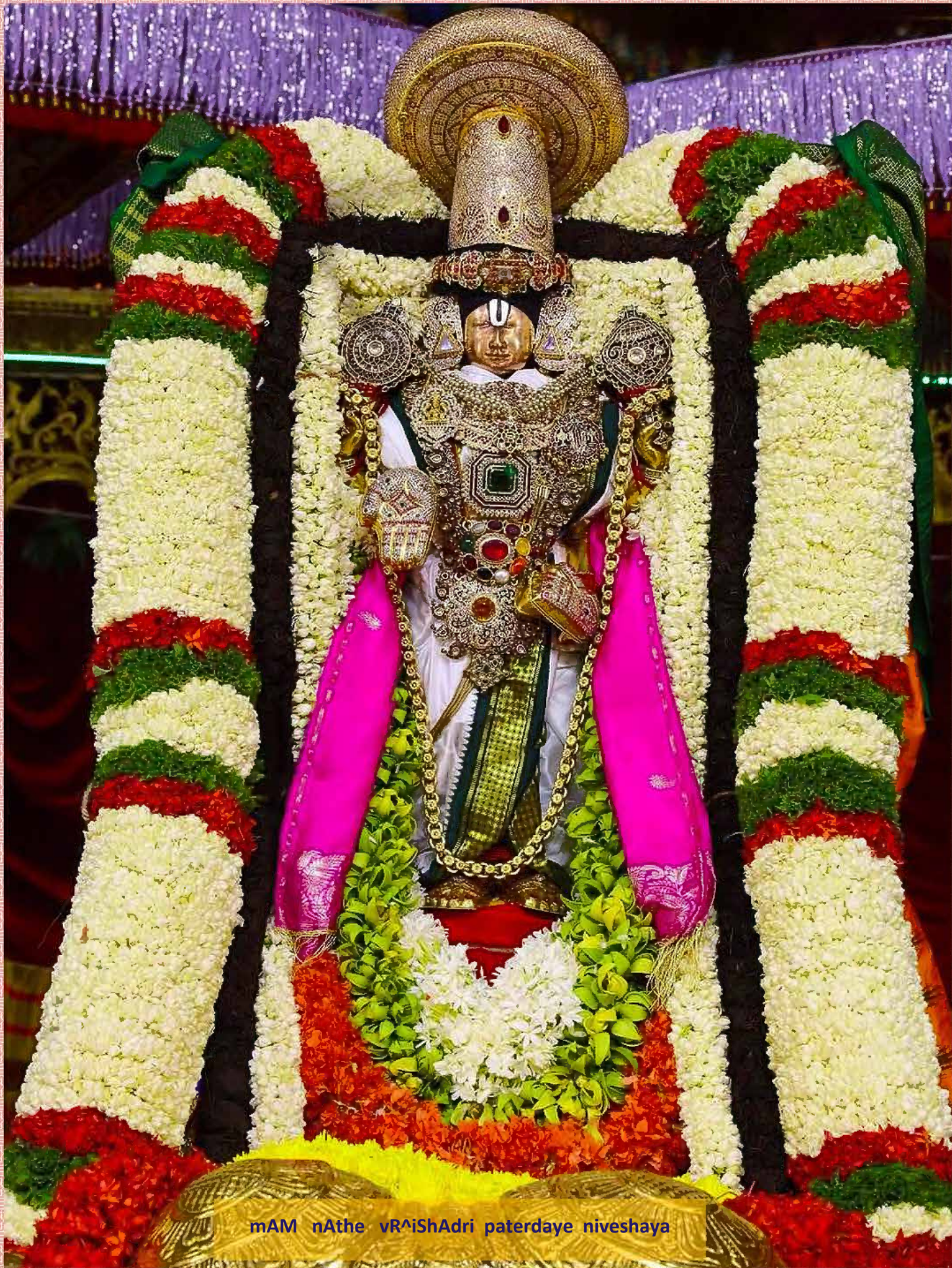
As a result, his state is one of absolute fearlessness in the manner of one resting peacefully placing his hand on his heart.) This is not meant for a select few individuals. Instead, it is universal and applicable to all. In this context, the “**vishvopakAram**” rendered by Daya Devi to all beings of the Universe, is to help them understand that the benefits of **aihiKam** (material benefits) and **amuShmikam** (residence in svarga lokam, the positions of Indra, Rudra, and Brahma) are destructible and hence should be discarded in favor of the lasting and permanent **parama puruShArtham** of mokSham, resulting in eternal kaimkaryam for the Divya Dampatis. Her upakaram for all beings of the Universe,

manifests in several ways, finally almost binding them and throwing them at the feet of Lord Srinivasa in the manner of a convict being brought before a judge by force. When one examines the actions of this jivan, it is replete with sins in the form of a mountainous accumulation over a long time. Several witnesses attest to the acts of transgression on the part of the jivan. The omniscient Lord Narayana needs no witnesses to testify since He is fully aware of the acts committed by the jivan. He asks the jivan whether the allegations are true. With no other recourse left, the jivan enters a guilty plea. So grave are the transgressions of the jivan that the jivan would be consigned to narakams for an inordinately long period. Daya Devi comes to the rescue of the jivan in the manner of a female attorney, representing the jivan in the court of Lord Narayana. She advances compelling arguments rooted in the Sastras, which no doubt recommend punishment for sins committed. However, the same Sastras declare that if the jivan has performed sharaNAgati at the feet of Lord Narayana, the sins no matter how grave are no bar for attaining moksham. He definitely needs to be graced. Daya Devi highlights this fact to Lord Narayana. Thus single-handedly, Daya Devi transforms the nigraha sankalpam of Lord Narayana into one of anugraham for the jivan. This is an act of supreme compassion on the

Oh Mother!, Please unite adiyen with the feet of Lord Srinivasa at His abode of
Tiruvenkata Hill



part of Daya Devi. The numerous ways in which Daya Devi has rendered help for beings of the universe is thus documented in the tribute “vishvopakAramiti nAma sadA duhAnAm” of this Daya Satakam verse. The depiction of the numerous upakarams of Daya Devi is in terms of the churning of the divine cow Kamadhenu, which yields an unending supply of milk for all. In fact the Kamadhenu cow was the bone of contention between Vishvamitra and Vasishta. The former was a king, who once happened to visit the hermitage of sage Vasishta with his large retinue. Sage vasishta welcomed him and arranged for a grand feast with the help of Kamadhenu, the divine cow. In the same manner of the Kamadhenu cow feeding the large retinue of Vishvamitra, Daya Devi renders help to all beings of the universe. It is not restricted to one or two but is available endlessly to however many beings of the Universe that resort to Daya Devi. For example, if one goes to a garment store, the owner when in a good mood may offer a few vastrams for free. A milk vendor may similarly hand out a few freebies in the form of milk cartons. So too the owner of a restaurant may on occasion offer a free meal to a patron. However, all of these offerings are limited and selective. On the other hand, when it comes to Daya Devi, Her upakarams are unlimited and unrestricted and available to all. The usage of “sadA duhAnAm” needs to be appreciated in the context of Daya Devi. Many philanthropically inclined folks may place a condition that this is a one-time offering, whereby you can ask all you want but do not come back again. However, unlike this, Daya Devi’s position is that beings of the Universe can come back to Her repeatedly in large numbers. They are never turned away. Instead, they become privy to Her grace every time. She is constantly seen dispensing Her anugraham to these beings. This is in the manner of Svami Parasara Bhattar’s tribute in **Gunaratna Kosham**, “kasmaicidhanjalibharaM vahate vitlrya aishvaryamakSharagatiM paramaM padaM vA” (A passerby casually saluted Ranganayaki Thayar with folded hands and performed a pradakshinam for Her by sheer accident. So moved was Thayar by this act that She was ready to grant him aishvaryam, kaivalyam, and moksham itself. Despite granting all this She expressed regret in not having done enough for this great act undertaken by the individual.) This is further captured by Svami Parasara Bhattar in the tribute “tvaM lajjase kathaya ko(a)yamudAra bhAvaH” (I have no words to describe Your quality of audAryam, whereby despite granting the individual the parama puruShArtham, You still feel You have not done enough for him). Svami Desikan echoes the same sentiment in the salutation “vishvopakAramiti nAma sadA duhAnAm” of the present Daya Satakam verse. Svami Desikan declares that instead of being grateful for the numerous upakarams rendered by Daya Devi and joyously welcoming Her, he exhibits a disposition of



mAM nAthe vR*ai*ShAdri paterdaye niveshaya

total rejection towards Daya Devi. This sentiment is captured in the salutation “**adyApi devi bhavatiIM avadhlrayantam**” of this Daya Satakam verse. The inner meaning of this glorification is that one may have committed numerous sins prior to performance of sharaNAgati. However, upon realization of one’s svarupam and undertaking the act of surrender, one still engages in sinful acts. This is absolutely unacceptable behavior. Svami Desikan’s instruction here is that such acts need to be eliminated. It must be noted here that sinful acts are of two kinds - those committed unknowingly and those committed knowingly. For example, a rustic villager unknowingly crosses the tracks at a railroad crossing and is accosted by law enforcement authorities. The rustic pleads his innocence on the grounds that he is illiterate and cannot read signs. The authorities would let him go with a warning to not repeat this act. On the other hand, if one who is fully aware of the consequences engages in the same act, the authorities will apply due process and collect the appropriate payment of fines. In a like manner, there is no penalty for sins committed prior to the performance of Prapatti. On the other hand, post-prapatti offenses certainly entail consequences. Svami Desikan provides an excellent example to illustrate this point. If one anointed as a Crown prince engages in the act of stealing, the individual is universally despised. In a like manner, engaging in sinful actions after one has performed Prapatti is frowned upon by Lord Narayana. The consequences for such actions too are quite serious. There may only be a handful of folks who exhibit contriteness for their prior sinful acts and resolve to avoid these acts upon performance of Prapatti. However, the majority of people tend to continue their pre-prapatti ways. Although Svami Desikan’s conduct has been blemishless pre and post prapatti, he takes on the plight of common folks and submits the salutation “**adyApi devi bhavatiIM avadhlrayantam**” in this Daya Satakam verse. This denotes the fact that despite the numerous upakarams rendered by Daya Devi, he entirely shuns Her. This is in the manner of a mother who strives hard for the well-being of her son, by waking up early in the morning, preparing meals in a timely manner, ensuring that her son wakes up and bathes in time and implores that the son partakes of the meal prior to going to school/college. The son instead declares in a fit of anger that he does not want to eat and is in a rush to head out. This despite the fact that the mother has paid attention to the minute details for ensuring the son’s well-being by placing the clothes to be worn and even accompanying the son to school. In this Daya Satakam verse, Svami Desikan states that his disposition towards Daya Devi, who has rendered numerous upakarams, is one of absolutely shunning Her. Only when the son loses such a caring mother is her contribution appreciated with the regret that

anugrahamayIM vande
nityaM aj~nAta nigrahAm



she was not treated properly while alive. For sinful acts there is recourse of expiation through niShkriyai or prAyashchittam. This applies even to the five Maha PAthakAs (grave sins) of stealing gold, engaging in alcohol consumption, defiling the bed of one's Acharya by sinful behavior towards the Guru-Patni, aborting the foetus and associating with those engaged in these four acts. However, for the act of being ungrateful to those who have rendered major upakarams to an individual and forgetting this help, there is no prayashchittam. Here Svami Desikan alludes to the fact that the act of shunning Daya Devi, who has rendered numerous upakarams is akin to lack of gratitude for which there exists no prayashchittam. This is the import of Svami Desikan's impassioned appeal through the salutation "adyApi devi bhavatIM avadhIrayantam" of this Daya Satakam verse. The appeal is continued in the tribute "nAthe niveshaya vR^iShAdri paterdaye tvaM" wherein Svami Desikan states that Daya Devi alone is capable of performing this task. What is the task? The prose order for this tribute "mAM nAthe vR^iShAdri paterdaye niveshaya" helps understand this better. The import of this tribute is "Oh Mother Daya Devi! You need to unite me with the feet of Lord Srinivasa who stands on top of the Venkatam hill. You alone are capable of doing this." This is very similar to the outpouring of Svami Alavandar in the Stotra Ratnam salutation, "kadA punaH shankha rathA~Ngakalpaka dhvajAravinda~Nkusha vajraAncChanam trivikrama tvat caraNAmbujadvayaM madIya mUrdhAnamala~NkariShyati" (How I long for the time when Lotus feet of Trivikrama bearing the lines of conch, discus, lotus, Vajra and the like can adorn my head). Svami Desikan echoes the same sentiment as Svami Alavandar in this Daya Satakam verse. Only Daya Devi is able to grant the benefit of association with the lotus feet of Lord Srinivasa. Thus, in this instance Svami Desikan implores to Daya Devi to grant him this benefit. Daya Devi responds with the statement: "Oh Svami! What you have sought is a tall order. One can even attain Sri Vaikuntam through the act of Prapatti on account of the grace of the Acharya who administers this rite. However, being united with the feet of Lord Srinivasa is a completely different matter. Let alone being united with the feet of Lord Srinivasa, even gaining a darshanam of Lord Srinivasa at His shrine is a difficult task and involves considerable effort." Hence, Svami Desikan skillfully employs the usage "nAthe niveshaya" in this instance. One may sometimes undertake a pilgrimage to Tirumala with great trepidation that a darshanam of Lord Srinivasa may not be possible. However, during these instances one may be blessed with the extraordinary sevai of Lord Srinivasa in a most unexpected manner. On the other hand, one may undertake the pilgrimage with a great deal of preparation, having tickets reserved in advance for the darshanam of Lord Srinivasa. However, during

mR^idu hR^idaye daye



these instances due to some unforeseen circumstances, the darshanam may not be possible. Thus, it is instructive to note that Bhagavat Sevai comes about only when the grace of Daya Devi prevails. What Svami Desikan requests in this instance is the benefit of nitya kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa arising from the association with His feet. Daya Devi is pleased with this request of Svami Desikan and agrees to grant him this benefit. She then enquires “Oh Svami! I am ready to grant you this request. However, can you tell Me what significant act you have undertaken to entitle you to this benefit?” Svami Desikan answers this through the salutation “nyasta svarakShaNa bharaM tvayi mAM tvayaiva” of this Daya Satakam verse. The import of this tribute is that Svami Desikan has performed the act of bhara samarpaNam to Daya Devi. This makes him the property of Daya Devi. Thus, She incurs the responsibility of protecting him. As far as Svami Desikan is concerned, his protection requires uniting him with the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Since Daya Devi inherits the responsibility of protecting Svami Desikan, She becomes obligated to fulfill this wish of Svami Desikan! Furthermore, Svami Desikan has kept up his end of the agreement, it is now up to Daya Devi to do Her part. The salutation “nyasta svarakShaNa bharaM” documents the fact that Svami Desikan has performed Bharanyasam at the feet of Daya Devi. She further enquires of Svami Desikan, “Did you do this by yourself or was someone else involved?” To this, Svami Desikan responds with the salutation “tvayi mAM tvayaiva” (It is only You that caused me to seek refuge in You. This was not my doing out of any independent thinking. Therefore, despite my cantankerous behavior of shunning You, You must ignore this fault and grace me with the benefit of union with the feet of Lord Srinivasa.) Here it is worthwhile recounting the anubhavam of Svami Parasara Bhattar in the context of the Rama avataram. Upon completion of His marriage ceremony, Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya along with Sita Devi and the large contingent of Dasharatha. This started a debate in Ayodhya as to who was greater - Rama or Sita. Be that as it may, subsequently the Lord had to serve His term in exile in the Dandaka forest. Upon completion of this, Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya and was coronated as the king. When the ceremony was completed and Lord Rama came out along with Sita, there was at that instant the formation of two groups, one proclaiming the greatness of Lord Rama and the other proclaiming the greatness of Sita Devi. Each camp highlighted the glorious acts of their chosen hero/heroine in an attempt to establish their supremacy. This gave rise to a heated debate. In an attempt at resolving this issue, each camp decided to place the respective acts of their chosen favorites on a scale and let the scale make the determination. Accordingly, Lord Rama’s supporters declared that He is known as karuNA



Daya Devi transforms the nigrha sankalpam of Lord Narayana into one of anugraham

kAkutsthar. The supporters of Sita declared that She is superior on account of the tribute “**anugrahamayIM vande nityaM aj~nAta nigrAhAm**” (Lord Rama at least had to mete out punishment. However, the term punishment is non-existent in Sita Devi’s dictionary). To this the supporters of Lord Rama countered that He is known for gracing those belonging to the adversary camp, for example Kakasura and Vibhishana and thus, Lord Rama is beyond compare. Sita Devi’s camp responded with the statement that both Kakasura and Vibhishana had to submit their appeal of goptrutva varaNam (nobody else in the Universe was able to offer them refuge). However, not so with Sita Devi. The rakshasis guarding Her were ardhrAparadhis (eternal sinners) engaged in the most heinous acts of sin. However, without their seeking Her grace, Sita Devi offered them protection and saved them from the wrath of Hanuman. Now, can this act of Sita Devi be trumped? It may be noted that the contest between the two camps pertains to the role of Lord Rama and Sita protecting the Universe. The verdict from Svami Parasara Bhattar is “**laghutarA rAmasya ghoShThi kR^itA**” denoting the fact that the scale tipped in favor of Sita Devi’s camp.

Thus, Svami Desikan argues that the camp of Sita Devi is elevated when it comes to protecting those who have sought refuge and by extension this applies to Daya Devi due to the fact that if a concrete form were assigned to the Daya guNam it would be Mahalakshmi Thayar. Therefore, having become part of Daya Devi’s ghoshti, Svami Desikan seeks the benefit of being united with the feet of Lord Srinivasa by way of his protection. An important Sastra visesham is conveyed in the tribute “**nAthe niveshaya**” tribute of this Daya Satakam verse. Those who perform sharaNAgati to Lord Narayana request the benefit of moksham at the end of their bodily existence (**etat dehAvasAnemAm**). However, upon performance of Prapatti, if they are unable to tolerate the consequences of their Prarabdha karma prevailing until the end of their earthly existence, they can definitely seek moksham at the earliest opportunity by resorting to sharaNAgati for Lord Srinivasa. Thus, even though one has performed moksha prapatti and is guaranteed moksham as a consequence, Svami Desikan assures them that if they acquire Arthi viseshatvam (unable to tolerate the separation from Lord Narayana and develop an intense longing for nitya kaikmaryam for which their prevailing prarabdha karma is a bar), they can take recourse to another sharaNAgati to hasten their moksham. Hence, with the prayerful thoughts of the multifaceted upakarams rendered by Daya Devi adiyen seeks the grace of Daya Devi and through Her efforts the grace of Lord Srinivasa for all listeners of this upanyasam and concludes the exposition of this verse.”



tvayi mAM tvayaiva

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

“Oh Daya Devi! What a colossal series of helpful acts for humanity You have undertaken! There are many things that we can recall in terms of all that a sensible sentient has received from You. The last of them is emphasized here. Specifically, You have caused me to perform Prapatti. That gives the assurance that we are freed from the cycles of births and deaths hereafter. Such a motherly Goddess, I have spurned, offended, and displeased. Fie on me! Today - even now - I continue on the path of utter disregard to You, Oh, Mother Daya Devi! How so? By offending Her, disobeying the Sastras, committing prohibited acts, and diligently avoiding prescribed duties. However, despite these transgressions, You will not allow me to go to hell because I am a Prapanna and You would like to save me. Please come to my rescue. I have reposed my burden in You. What do I pray for at this moment? It is to be united with the feet of Lord Srinivasa at His abode in the Venkatam hill. There I shall be engaged in service. With regard to the sins accumulated in the post-prapatti period, please devise an appropriate remedy, namely Prayaschittam or punaH Prapatti (a repeat of Prapatti for the post-moksha-prapatti generated sins). It must be noted that this import is not explicit in this verse. However, there can be no doubt that this is Svami Desikan’s intent. A host of commentators from the Desika Sampradayam would attest to this.”



Sloka 92

नैसर्गिकेण तरसा करुणे नियुक्ता
निम्नेतरेऽपि मयि ते विततिर्यदि स्यात् ।

विस्मापयेद्वृषगिरीश्वरमप्यवार्या
वेलातिलङ्घन दशेव महाम्बुराशेः ॥९२॥

naisargikeNa tarasA karuNe niyuktA
nimentare(a)pi mayi te vitatir yadi syAt |
vismApayedvR^iShagiriShvaramapyavAryA
velAtila~Nghana dasheva mahAmburAsheH | | 92



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

We have arrived at the tenth decad of Daya Satakam. We are specifically covering the second verse from this decad here. In the previous verse, Svami Desikan submitted a prayerful appeal to Daya Devi requesting Her to unite him with the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Since Svami Desikan regards the shrine of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill to be no different from Parama Padam, Svami Desikan seeks the benefit of being united with Lord Srinivasa's feet in order to derive the bliss of Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa. Those who perform sharaNAgati to Lord Narayana request



the benefit of moksham at the end of their bodily existence (etat dehavasAnemAm). However, upon performance of Prapatti, if they are unable to tolerate the consequences of their Prarabdha karma prevailing until the end of their earthly existence, they can definitely seek moksham at the earliest

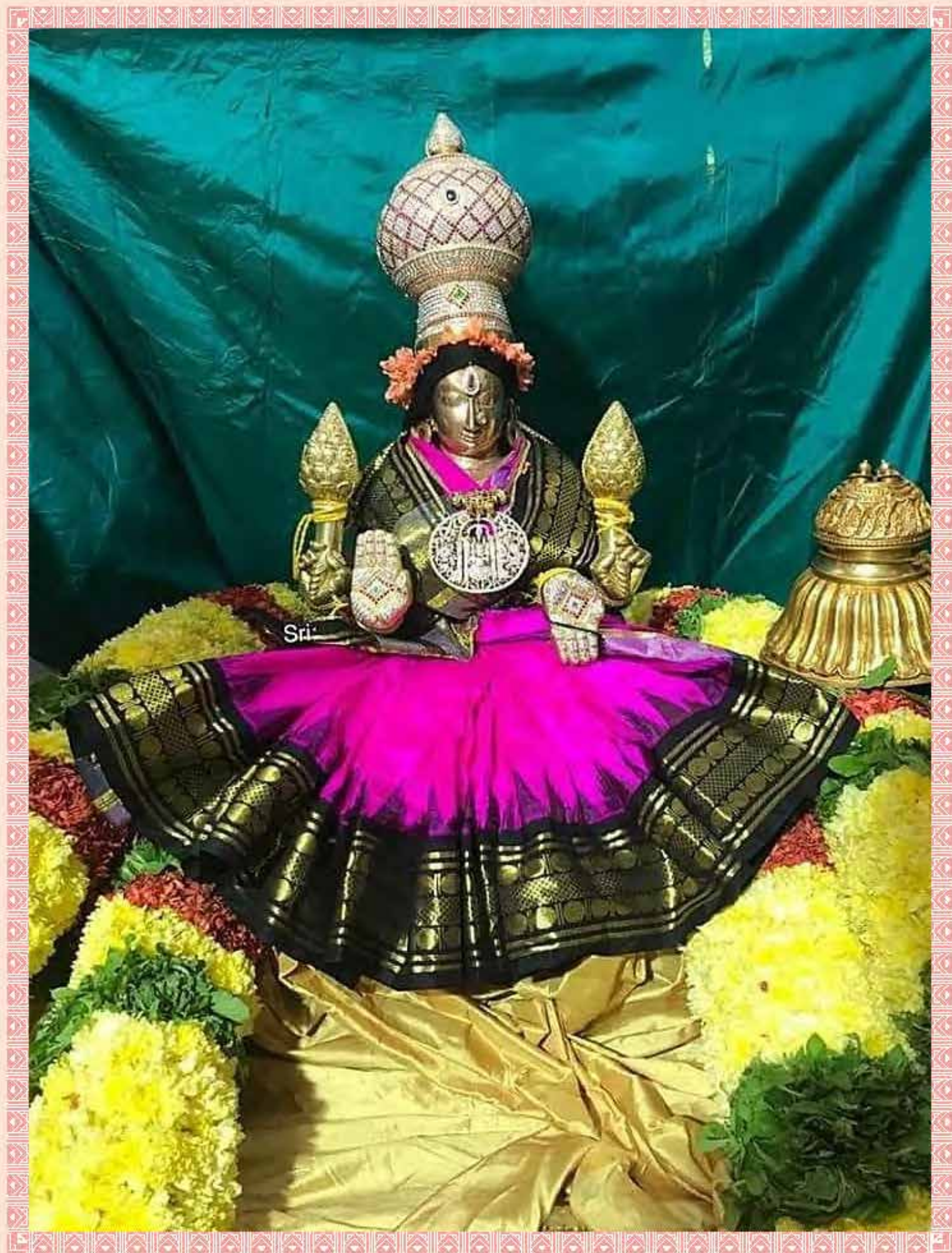
opportunity by resorting to sharaNagati to Lord Srinivasa. Thus, even though one has performed moksha prapatti and is guaranteed moksham as a consequence, Svami Desikan assures them that if they acquire Arthi viseshatvam (unable to tolerate the separation from Lord Narayana and develop an intense longing for nitya kaikmaryam for which their prevailing prarabdha karma is a bar), they can take recourse to another sharaNagati to hasten their moksham. The inner meaning is that Svami Desikan is unable to wait for the Prarabdha karma to be expended. Instead he is overcome by an intense desire for Kaimkaryam to Lord Srinivasa. Therefore, he submits the appeal to Daya Devi requesting that She wipe out any remnants of his Prarabdha Karma and render him a fitting receptacle for the grace of Lord Srinivasa by uniting him with Lord Srinivasa's feet.

It must be remembered that Svami Desikan was an avataram of the GhaNTha in the Sannidhi of Lord Srinivasa in accordance with the tribute “ve~NkaTeshAvatAro(a)yaM tat ghaNTAM sho(a)thavA bhavet”. However, in the spirit of Lord Rama's declaration in the Ramayanam “AtmAnaM mAnuShaM manye rAmaM dasharathAtmajam” (You hail Me as the Supreme Being. However, as far as I know I am an ordinary human being born as the son of Dasharatha), Svami Desikan too depicts himself as an ordinary person and conveys the thought process and characteristics of an ordinary human being in his Sri Suktis. However, for us there is no difference between Lord Srinivasa and Svami Desikan. The mangalasasanam for Svami Desikan in the Desika Mangalam storam is “ve~NkaTeshAvatAro(a)yaM tat ghaNTAM sho(a)thavA bhavet yatIndraM sho(a)thavetyevaM vitarkyAyAstu ma~NgaLam”, which eloquently attests to this fact. In unambiguous terms, Svami Desikan is hailed as the avataram of Lord Srinivasa. From a commonly held perspective Svami Desikan can also be revered as the incarnation of Lord Srinivasa's Temple bell. It is also true that Svami Desikan established again the path of Svami Bhashyakarar. Thus, it is not inappropriate to regard Svami Desikan as an incarnation of Svami Bhashyakarar. Daya Devi is fully aware of these facts. Nevertheless, She views with amazement Svami Desikan's thought process as an ordinary human being who has acquired “Arthi visheShatvam” and thus submits an appeal to be united with the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Thus, Daya Devi too acts in a manner that satisfies the numerous requests made by Svami Desikan taking on the thought process of an ordinary human being. It may be helpful to dwell on the Srimad Ramayanam incident where upon conclusion of the war and the destruction of Ravana, Vibhishana was installed on the throne and Lord Rama requested Vibhishana that Sita Devi be brought in His presence after a proper bath, bedecked with ornaments and adorned with silk



Oh Daya Devi, please cast Your compassionate eye-glances on adiyen

vastrams. When the palanquin carrying Sita was making its way towards Lord Rama, the Vanara army was anxious to see Her and thus jostled for a good view. Beholding this, Lord Rama instructed that Sita Devi come out of the palanquin and walk towards Him so that the Vanara army could see Sita Devi in all Her glory. Lord Rama in a fit of anger addressed Sita harshly, "There are ten directions available to You. You are free to go in any direction You desire. It was not for You that I undertook the annihilation of Ravana and his horde of Rakshasas. Nor was it to regain You that the great bridge across the ocean was constructed. It was entirely for safeguarding the blemishless reputation of the Ikshvaku dynasty that I undertook these acts." Sita Devi did not utter a single word in reply. Instead, in order to establish Her chastity, Sita Devi performed an agni pravesham (entry into the sacred fire). Agni is unable to burn the extremely chaste Sita Devi and renders Her in Her pristine form to Lord Rama. All the devatas assembled there saluted Lord Rama in unison and declared "Oh Rama! You are the supreme being Vishnu. Is it appropriate to act in the manner of an ordinary mortal towards the extremely chaste Sita Devi? She is none other than Mahalakshmi Thayar, Your eternal consort. It may be helpful to recall the puranic salutation "rAghavatve bhavat sitA rukmiNI KrR^iShNa janmani anyeShu cAvatAreShu viShNornityAnapAyini" (Mahalakshmi is never separate from Lord Narayana. If the Lord incarnated as Rama, He was accompanied by Mahalakshmi through the incarnation of Sita Devi. If the Lord incarnated as Krishna He was accompanied by Mahalakshmi through the incarnation of Rukmini. When this is the case, is it appropriate for You, oh Rama, to behave in this manner? Are You not fully aware of Sita Devi's essential nature?". These are the questions posed by the devatas. Lord Rama declared "You have glorified Me as the Supreme Lord Vishnu. However, as far as I know, I am an ordinary human being that has taken birth as the son of Dasharatha." Thus, the purpose of the Rama avataram was to establish the behavior of an ideal human being in conformance with samAnyadharma. Likewise, in Kaliyugam Lord Srinivasa incarnated as Svami Desikan to establish again the code of conduct for ordinary human beings. It is in this context that Svami Desikan's "Arthi visheSham" and intense longing for moksham needs to be understood. This resulted in Svami Desikan's appeal to Daya Devi to unite him with the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Sri Tirumangai Azhvar declares in his **Periya Tirumozhi** tribute "tUnkAr piRavikkaL innam pukappeitu vA~nkAi enRu cintittu nAn ataRkanci pAmpODoru kUraiye payinRArpOI tA~nkAduLLam taLLum en tAmarai kaNNA" This samsaram is verily like a snake. A certain individual was instructed to remain in a hut for the duration of the night and not to leave until the onset of daylight. While sleeping on the floor, he beheld a serpent. Not knowing



when the serpent would fall to the floor and sting him, he is restless. He is also unable to leave due to the instruction to stay put until day-break. The plight of those steeped in Samsara is akin to that of this man. Can he break free from samsara? Definitely not. His prarabdha karma comes in the way. Only Lord Narayana is capable of redeeming him. Thus, Svami Desikan adopts the thought process of a commoner immersed in samsara seeking to break free and submits his appeal in this context. This is captured in the previous verse. Daya Devi too intently hears the plea of Svami Desikan. It is instructive to note Daya Devi's dilemma in seeking to grant Svami Desikan's wish of "nAthe niveshaya" of the previous verse in that if the requested benefit is granted right away by viewing this as an Artha Prapatti, the purpose of Svami Desikan's incarnation would remain unfulfilled. It must be borne in mind that out of Her extreme compassion for beings of the universe, Daya Devi causes Lord Srinivasa to undertake numerous avatarams including His avataram as the Acharya, Svami Desikan. Therefore, would Daya Devi do something to undermine the very purpose of the avataram that She has orchestrated with a great deal of effort? Furthermore, it must be remembered that each avataram of Lord Srinivasa has a distinct purpose. In the case of the Rama avataram it was the construction of the great bridge. For the Krishna avataram it was the Gitopadesam. Likewise, the main purpose of Svami Desikan's avataram remains to be accomplished. Therefore, if Daya Devi grants Svami Desikan's appeal submitted in the manner of a common human being bound to samsara, She would preclude the realization of the main purpose of this avataram. In this instance, the main purpose of Lord Srinivasa's incarnation as Svami Desikan was to bring to the forefront the principles and practices of Bhagavad Ramanuja Darsanam and establish them on a firm foundation with an impenetrable fortress. Not only that, another major undertaking of the avataram of Svami Desikan was the propagation of Prapatti Sastram as a means for moksham, suitable for adoption by all without regard to caste, creed, sex, affiliation and the like. This had to be carried out through numerous kalakshepams, authorship of granthams, stotrams, and Sri Suktis as well as the manner of practice of Prapatti. How then could She accede to Svami Desikan's request in the manner of Artha prapatti, with so much left to be accomplished? Svami Desikan himself declares upon completion of **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** "nirviShTaM yatisArvabhauma vacasAm AvR^ittibhiH yauvanam" (My days of youth were spent in complete immersion in the Sri Suktis of Svami Bhashyakarar first through study in the Kalakshepam mode under Acharya and then through their propagation to deserving sishtyas through Kalakshepam.) Svami Desikan declares in the **Abhiti stavam** salutation "yatipravara bhAratI



rasabhareNa nItaM vayaH praphullapalitaM shiraH paramiha kShamaM prArthaye” (The cause of all my grey hair from advancing years was complete immersion in the Sri Suktis of Svami Bhashyakarar through gaining their purport from Acharya kalakshepam, propagating them to sishyas in the same mode, and authorship of granthams that highlighted their nuances.) Since Daya Devi cannot bring an abrupt end to the avataram of Svami Desikan, with much of the purpose of the avatram remaining unrealized, Daya Devi patiently hears the appeal of Svami Desikan in the previous verse and does not respond at all. Svami Desikan perceives the silence of Daya Devi and realizes that there has to be good reason for this silence on the part of Daya Devi. Specifically, Svami Desikan tries to gain an insight into Daya Devi’s thought process along the lines of “This individual (a common man - by no means Svami Desikan who has adopted the reasoning of a commoner) has committed numerous sins prior to prapatti. The rite of Prapatti was administered in the hope that he would reform himself and behave in a manner pleasing to the Lord. However, even after performing Prapatti he has resorted to his prior sinful ways. How then is it possible to ensure that he begets Bhagavad Kaimkaryam at the end of his earthly existence? Would the post-Prapatti sins not incur the displeasure of Lord Srinivasa? What then is the recourse? In Vedic rituals such as Agnihotram, the submission of havis is known as puroDasham. The devatas are the recipients of the havis. Thus, the puroDasham is meant exclusively for devatas. Can a mere dog aspire to receive this? Definitely not. It is in this spirit of intense naichyam (self-deprecation) that Svami Desikan reasons that he is perhaps unfit for the puroDasham of Srivaikuntam and nitya kaimkaryam for Lord Narayana. It may be helpful to recall on a related note the anubhavam of Sri Andal from the Nacchiyar Tirumozhi. Andal was the only female Azhvar incarnation. The father of every girl is anxious to finalize the marriage of the girl to a suitable groom (bharta - one who protects his wife). Sri Periya Azhvar, the father of Sri Andal was no exception to this sentiment. Perhaps he had in mind a groom, who had undertaken Veda adhyayanam in the proper manner and had all the Sri Vaishanava lakshaNams (traits). Sri Andal declares in the Nacchiyar Tirumozhi that She is not made for mere mortals. Instead, She declares that Her birth and hence Her life are meant exclusively for the supreme Lord Narayana. This is captured in the pasuram “vAniDai vAzhum avvAnavarkku maRaiyavar vELviyil vakutta avi kAniDai tirivatOr nari pukuntu kaDappatum mOppatum ceivatoppa UniDai Azhi ca~nkuttamarkkenRu unnittezhunta en taDa mulaikaL mAniDavarkkenRu pEcchu paDil vAzhakillEn kaNDai manmatanE” (I am not of that kind. I have taken birth exclusively for the Lord who bears the discus and conch. Thus, a life that would



entail serving mere mortals is absolutely unacceptable to Me.) In the instance of Svami Desikan's appeal however, it is one of intense self-deprecation in the manner of the puroDasham offering being unsuitable for a dog. Thus, he submits an appeal to Daya Devi to review his request from the previous verse in light of this thought process in this verse. Specifically, Svami Desikan submits in this verse that Daya Devi is well versed in the nuance of **aghaTitaghaTana sAmarthyam** (the act of establishing something that does not apparently exist from a commonly held perspective). For example, the Sun cannot be masked easily. However, Lord Krishna effortlessly accomplished this through the use of the Sudarsana Chakra in the Mahabharata war. Similarly, a mountain cannot be lifted. However, Lord Krishna effortlessly held the Govardhana mountain on His little finger. These are examples of "aghaTitaghaTana sAmarthyam". Constructing a bridge across the mighty ocean is impossible. However, Lord Rama accomplished that during His avataram - again an instance of "aghaTitaghaTana sAmarthyam" Daya Devi too is endowed with "aghaTitaghaTana sAmarthyam". Therefore, Svami Desikan appeals to Her to demonstrate this in his case by reiterating that in Lord Narayana's view he may be unfit for nitya Bhagavad Kaimkaryam in the manner of dog being unworthy of receiving the puroDasham offering of a yaj~nam. Thus, he requests Daya Devi to intercede on his behalf and render this possible.

The Daya Satakam verse under study now is "**naisargikeNa tarasA karuNe niyukta nimentare(a)pi mayi te vitatir yadi syAtvismApayed vR^iShagirlshvaramapi avAryA velAtila~Nghana dasheva mahAmburAsheH**". Oh Daya Devi! You need to demonstrate Your inherent nature. If done in this context, Lord Srinivasa will have no objection. You seem to be under the impression that Lord Srinivasa is of the disposition "**karmAnubandhi phaladAnaratasya bhartuH**" (He dispenses fruits in accordance with one's karma - good acts being rewarded with benefits and sins being punished appropriately). This is the widely held principle from which Lord Srinivasa never deviates. If He acts any differently, Lord Srinivasa will incur "**vaiShamya doSham**" (the stigma of exhibiting partiality selectively). For example, the actions of Lord Srinivasa may be viewed as a sport. However, even the act of sport is governed by rules. If the sport of Lord Srinivasa can be viewed as a chess game, then each move has restrictions. Pawns can be moved only one square at a time, the knight can only be moved in an L-shaped manner, bishops diagonally, and the like. In the case of Lord Srinivasa's sport, the governing rules are the Sastras, from which there can be no deviation. Thus, even though the acts of creation, sustenance, and dissolution are undertaken by Lord Srinivasa as an act of sport, it is carried out in accordance with the sastras (a rule book so to speak), that outline



specific fruits for specific actions (good or bad). Lord Srinivasa merely dispenses these recommendations from the rule book with full compliance. With a mere glance Lord Srinivasa discerns that the mountainous sin pile of the jivan in this instance seems taller than the Venkatam hill itself. How then would redemption be possible? How could He enable nitya Bhagavad Kaimkaryam for this being? Svami Desikan implores to Daya Devi in this verse that be that as it may with regard to Lord Srinivasa's position of being an impartial adjudicator faced with the dilemma posed by the mountainous sin-pile standing before him precluding redemption for him, if Daya Devi makes up her mind to help him, he will certainly be redeemed. This is the purport of Svami Desikan's appeal to Daya Devi in this verse captured in the salutation "naisargikeNa tarasA karuNe niyuktA nimentare(a)pi mayi te vitatiryadisyAt". An instance from Ramayanam is recalled here. Although this is not mentioned in the Valmiki Ramayanam, it has been often quoted and therefore, adiyen is relating it in this instance. After sighting Sita Devi in the Ashoka vanam and offering Her words of comfort, Hanuman decided to instill fear in the Rakshasas and Rakshasis of Lanka. In an attempt to provoke a fight, Hanuman laid waste to the Ashoka Vanam. Angered by this, Ravana sent out a series of Rakshasas of increasing might until his own son, Akshaya Kumara, met his end at Hanuman's hands. Finally, Ravana sent Indrajith to fight with Hanuman. Indrajith used the Brahmastra to subdue Hanuman. The Rakshasas bound Hanuman with additional ropes and dragged him to the court of Ravana. Ravana was seated on a lofty throne at great height and Hanuman was way below. Hanuman reasoned that he needed to be seated above Ravana and decided to roll up his tail into a massive structure taller than the throne of Ravana and thus was seated at a height above Ravana. This account of Hanuman rolling up his tail into a massive structure exceeding the height of Ravana's throne is not contained in the Valmiki Ramayanam. However, adiyen refers to it due to its popularity. In a like fashion, we may seek to sit on a higher peak than Lord Srinivasa. How is this possible? If one looks at one's sin-pile, its size is greater than that of the Venkatam hill. Therefore, it is very easy to seat ourselves above this mountain of sins and be at a height greater than that of Lord Srinivasa. While not expressing any shame, grief, or regret for committing sins of this magnitude, one takes delight in seating oneself on this mountain that is of a greater height than the Venkatam hill so much so that the Lord has to look up to see them. In order to destroy this mountainous sin-pile, there needs to be a torrential flow of Daya that uproots this mountain and simply washes away all the sins thereby ensuring their destruction at the root. This calls for the anugraham of Daya Devi to result in a torrential flow of sufficient volume and height to effortlessly

bring about the permanent destruction of this mountain of sins. So much so that Lord Srinivasa looks on in astonishment at this extraordinary act of Daya Devi. This alone will pave the way for my redemption Oh Mother Daya Devi! The anvaya kramam for this salutation “te vitatiH mayi yadi syAt” is helpful here. vitati denotes the torrential flow of Daya Devi. What happens when the Daya flow falls upon me? It is in the manner of “naisargikeNa tarasA” in that it is inherently torrential and all engulfing. The thought being conveyed here is that a mere flow is insufficient. It needs to be in the form of a tsunami to wipe out my mountainous sin-pile and destroy it at the root.



mahAmburAsheH

In this context, it is helpful to examine the tribute “n velAtila~Nghana dasheva mahAmburAsheH” from this Daya Satakam verse. “amburAsheH” denotes water body, whereas “mahAmburAsheH” denotes an immeasurably large water body, like an ocean (ocean too may be a misnomer since its breadth and depth can be measured). The “mahAmburAsheH” denoting the torrential flow of Daya Devi has the all engulfing characteristic of the mighty ocean during the time of PraLayam (dissolution). It must be noted that the ocean seldom breaches its boundary, the sea-shore. Even during the days of Amavasya and PaurNami, during the cresting

tidal waves the ocean exceeds its boundary only by a short distance. Only on the rarest of occasions, like a tsunami does the ocean breach its boundary. The essential nature of Lord Srinivasa is very much like that of the ocean, namely restrained by His position of having to dispense the appropriate fruits to jivans in accordance with their actions good or bad.

However, Svami Desikan implores to Daya Devi in this instance that Her flow should not be similarly restricted. Instead, it should break free of all boundaries and gush forth in an all-engulfing manner to rid him of his mountainous sin-pile at the root. This must be in the same way as the tsunami that is capable of washing away a three storied building with its cresting waves. This characteristic is captured in the tribute “*velAtila~Nghana dasheva mahAmburAsheH*” of this Daya Satakam verse. This sort of flow is inherent to Daya Devi and is not forcibly adopted. This is documented in the salutation “*naisargikeNa tarasA*” of this Daya Satakam verse. If this is accomplished by Daya Devi, it results in “*nimentare(a)pi mayi te vitatir yadi syAt*”. It is well known that water flows from a high point to the low point and fills up puddles along the way. Svami Desikan here implores to Daya Devi, that She must regard these puddles as trivial and instead make Her flow so copious and forceful that it must drown out his mountainous sin-pile. What can Lord Srinivasa do upon beholding this act of Yours? Would He restrain You? Most definitely not. Instead, He would look on in amazement that You have accomplished the task of destroying my mountainous sin-pile and that this was something that He himself was unsure of undertaking. This will bring about a transformation in Lord Srinivasa causing Him to join You in the act of blessing me. The tribute “*vismApayed vR^iShagiriShvaramapi avAryA velAtila~Nghana dasheva*” of this Daya Satakam verse thus denotes the transformation in the disposition of Lord Srinivasa brought about by this extraordinary act of Daya Devi. First, Lord Srinivasa looks on in amazement at Daya Devi casting Her eye-glances on Svami Desikan and then engulfing him with Her torrential flow to destroy the mountainous sin-pile. He then joins Daya Devi in conferring His anugraham upon Svami Desikan. As a consequence, Svami Desikan declares that he becomes fit for rendering kaimkaryam to Lord Srinivasa. This act can be undertaken by Daya Devi alone and none else. A few *sUkShma* (hidden) meanings need to be examined. First the usage “*naisargikeNa tarasA karuNe niyukta*” needs to be considered. This denotes something inherent. Here the reference is to Lord Srinivasa’s Daya. The implication is that inherently, Lord Srinivasa is replete with Daya. If this is inherent to Lord Srinivasa, then no effort is called for on the part of the jivan to invoke this Daya. Its inherent nature will cause it to flow and rid jivans of their sins. Water from the hill



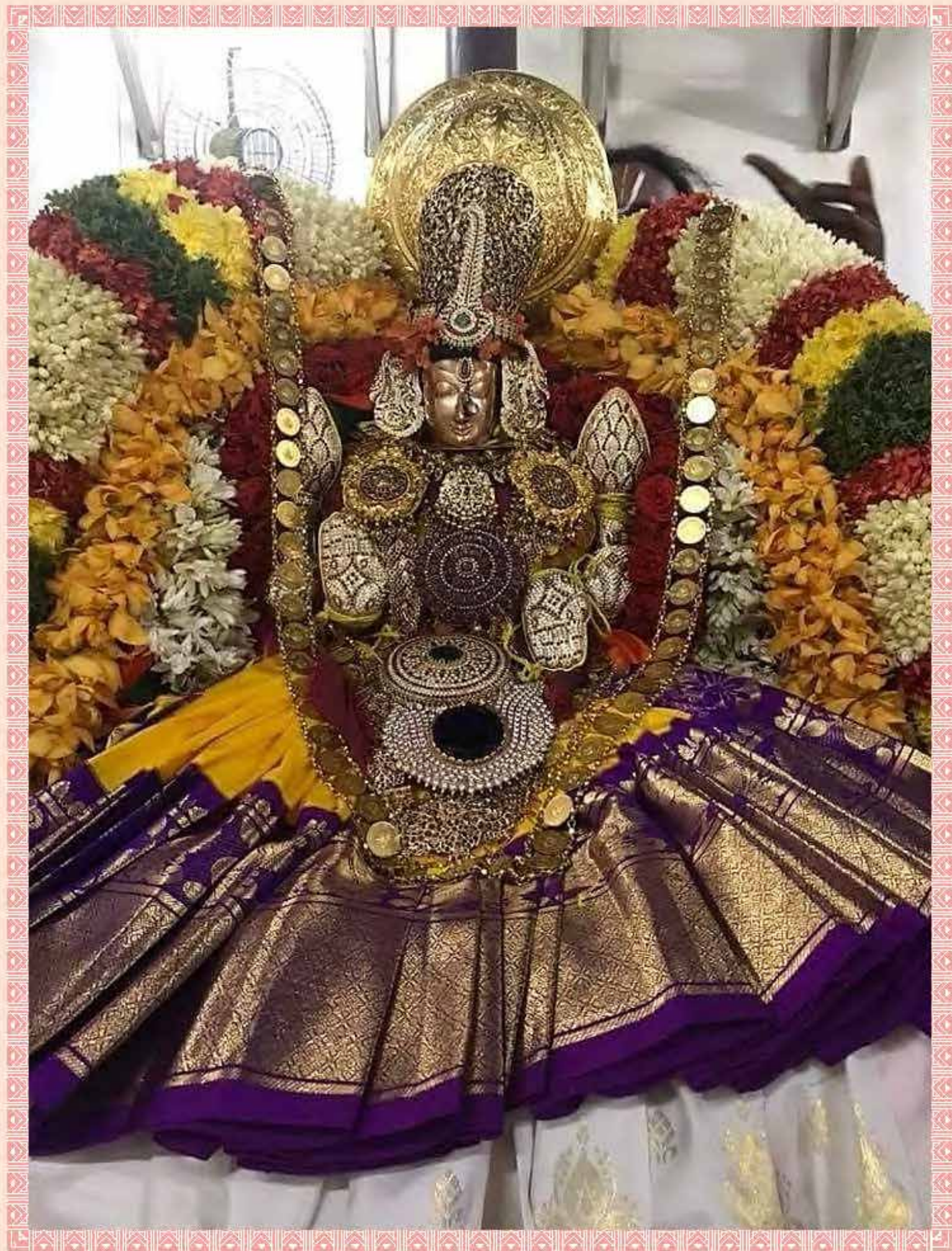
stream flows down and inherently washes away everything in its wake and is a good reflector of light. Therefore superficially, this verse may convey the impression that no effort is required on one's part. Lord Srinivasa, who is inherently compassionate, will bring forth His Daya flow to grace all beings. No special effort on our part is called for. This is in the manner of one safeguarding one's wealth. When one is handed property, no special request from the property is needed for safeguarding it. Instead, one's inherent nature will ensure that this is safeguarded. Likewise for Lord Srinivasa, when it comes to protecting jivas, He is fully aware that they belong to Him and thus protecting them is His inherent nature. No special prayer from these jivas is required for this purpose. Now the manner in which safeguarding wealth takes place is when there is a specific association of the wealth with a person. The person only protects his own wealth and not that of others or wealth that is maintained in a bank. In the context of Lord Srinivasa's protection, one must need to ensure through an appeal that Lord Srinivasa accepts the jivan as His own. Only upon attaining the sense of belonging to Lord Srinivasa does subsequent protection come about. The rationale here is that thus far the jivan was under the misguided impression that he was independent and belonged to none other than himself and was thus deluded into believing that he could protect himself. However, now the jivan has realized that he is unequivocally the property of Lord Srinivasa. Hence the jivan submits the appeal to Lord Srinivasa for acceptance as His property.



This was captured in the tribute “**nAthe niveshaya**” of the previous verse. This refers to the fact that all that is required to open the floodgates to Lord Srinivasa's Daya is the submission of a prayer that the jivan belongs to the Lord and that it is automatically the Lord's responsibility to protect the jivan. The Lord too expects this prayerful submission as documented in the **Srimad Rahasyatraya saram** tribute “**rakShApekShAm pratIkShate**”. Thus, once the Daya Kataksham falls upon the jivan, even the seemingly grave offenses of the jivan that have accumulated as a mountainous sin-pile are at once destroyed. This is an important purport documented in the previous Daya Satakam verse and continued in this verse. In this verse, Svami Desikan describes the fact that Lord Srinivasa looks on in amazement

at the astounding act of Daya Devi, who first casts Her compassionate eye-glances on Svami Desikan (who has taken on the role of an errant baddha jivan). She then unleashes Her torrential and copious nectarine flow, which effortlessly washes away the accumulated sin pile rendering Svami Desikan a fitting entity to render Kaimkaryam to Lord Srinivasa. Another important sUkShma vishayam contained herein is that a few obstacles may arise in the context of rendering Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This may be in the form of long life but bereft of energy to render kaimkaryam or some other light punishment on account of which the jivan is unable to render kaimkaryam. The appeal submitted by Svami Desikan in this context is that he requests freedom from all these obstacles and punishment, so that he is readily able to render Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Another important point to be noted here is that from a common worldly perspective Svami Desikan (taking on the role of a common Baddha jivan) may not have undertaken any special act to gain the grace of Lord Srinivasa. However, as far as Lord Srinivasa is concerned, sharaNAgati has been performed at His feet by Svami Desikan/baddha jivan. Therefore, this is sufficient to invoke the grace of Lord Srinivasa.

This is further captured in the statement “acheShTamAnam AsInam shrIHkancit upatiShTati karmekarmAnusR^itya anyaH na prApyam adhigacChati” “acheShTamAnam AsInam” denotes the fact that one has not undertaken any special act. Such a person inexplicably gains a lot of wealth as indicated in the tribute “shrIHkancit upatiShTati”. Another individual undertakes great efforts in a toiling manner. However, his state is such that he does not have enough for his next meal as captured in the tribute “karmekarmAnusR^itya anyaH na prApyam adhigacChati”. Why this discrepancy? It is undoubtedly the former and latter’s prArabdha karma. The former has performed some great act in a previous birth on account of which he is blessed with great wealth gained without any effort, while the latter has committed some grave sin on account of which despite his best effort, no wealth accrues. Svami Desikan implores to Daya Devi to be graced in the manner of the individual who has not undertaken any special act but is blessed with abundant wealth. Next as a prelude to the next verse, Svami Desikan describes the torrential flow of Daya Devi here. The Daya flow is immeasurable and unlimited in extent. It is capable of washing away the gravest of sins committed by an individual even they are stacked up in a mountain form whose height exceeds that of the Venkatam hill itself! Adiyen narrates a personal instance in this context. Adiyen had the Bhagyam of taking part in the Samprokshanam festivities at Kumbakonam for three days. During this, the parayanams for Lord Aravamudhan were excellent. The Srivaishnava goshti was present in full force making for a joyous experience. The



large number of Bhagavatas assembled here lent a sense of samruddhi (fulfillment) to the proceedings. The beauty of Lord Aravamudhan and Sri Komalavalli Thayar in utsavam was indescribable as captured in the **Srimad Ramayanam** tribute “**tulya shlla vayo vR^ittAM tulyAbhijana lakShaNAM rAghavo arhati vaidehIM tamcheyaM asItekShaNA**” The procession was beyond compare with the Divya Dampatis decorated with dazzling ornaments. Sri Aravamudhan was bearing all His five weapons in a breathtaking alankaram. The pleasantness of His face defied description by mere words and His bewitching smile was of an inviting form with the message “Please come and enjoy this sevai”. It caused everyone gathered to reflect that they had missed out on this unique sevai all these days/years. Sri Aravamudhan seemed to suggest that He was longing for the presence of these Bhagavatas and stood ready to shower His anugraham. The chains and gems adorning the lord’s neck enhanced His beauty. The weapons too functioned as **bhUShaNams** (adorning ornaments) for Lord Aravamudhan rather than **astrams**. This is indicative of the fact that Lord Aravamudhan by His mere Sankalpam is able to destroy those inimically inclined towards His sharaNagatas. He does not require His weapons for this purpose. Therefore, these functioned as ornaments for Him in this instance. The tirucheNDu reaching up to the Lord’s ears seems to enquire “what is the next kaimkaryam to be rendered for You, oh Lord?” Thus, it was a most majestic sight for all! This experience is like a torrential flow that drowns all beholders who are simply mesmerized by the beauty of Lord Aravamudhan. However, this lasts only as long as one is viewing Lord Aravamudhan. The moment one sets their sights on Sri Komalavalli Thayar, it becomes apparent that that beauty of Thayar far exceeds that of Lord Aravamudhan. Thayar’s demeanor seems to suggest “**aishvaryamakSharagatiM paramam padam va**” (I stand ready to grant you all manner of riches, Kaivalyam, and indeed Moksham too. However, all of this is insufficient for the great effort you have undertaken to come here. What more can I do for you?) It is this anxiety of Thayar that becomes apparent at a first look. Her facial expression seems to suggest “I have been waiting for your arrival for a long time. You have finally come. This gives Me great delight. Welcome aboard!” The mahans who had assembled and rendered Veda Parayanam had no desire for any sambhavanam, honors, or the like. Instead, their sole motto was to engage in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam - the ultimate puruShArtham. The company of these mahans was elevating indeed! There were several aged mahans in this gathering including adiyen’s revered father. The occasion was graced by H.H. the 46th pattam Azhagiyasingar. It may be borne in mind that Srimad Azhagiyasingar was quite exhausted by the demands of anushtanam. However, ignoring all of the bodily



May the flood of Daya-cascade of waves, immerse adiyen

strain, H.H. enthusiastically took part in the proceedings. Undoubtedly this was entirely due to the magnetic charm of the Divine Couple providing this most majestic sevai. The samarpaNam of honors to the Divine Couple, Svami NammAzhvar, Svami Tirumankai Azhvar, and Svami Desikan was a divine sight. Many of the assembled mahans remarked that this is indeed a sneak preview of the bounty that awaits us upon attaining nitya vasam in Sri Vaikuntam after Moksham. Another mahan remarked that the utsavam is so beautiful that there should be no evil eyes (drushti) that accrues to either Lord Aravamudhan or to the grand assembly of Bhagavatas devoutly engaged in kaimkaryam. The main reason for blessing the entire assembly with this astonishing sevai is the anugraham of Daya Devi. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, it is captured through the tribute “nimentare(a)pi mayi te vitatir yadi syAt” (namely despite my massive sin-pile, oh Daya Devi! You take pity and grant me this extraordinary anubhavam). In Tamil this is equivalent to a “muDavan aspiring for the kombu tEn” denoting the fact that even though one may be most undeserving of this benefit, one is granted this sevai in a most extraordinary manner. Adiyen thought of sharing this divine anubhavam with all listeners of this exposition. If Divya Prabandham is flourishing today, it is entirely due to the anugraham of Lord Aravamudhan to Sri Nathamuni Acharya. It is adiyen’s prayer that all of you must be blessed with this sevai in person. For those who may not have an opportunity to experience this in person, adiyen hopes this narration will serve as a feast for your ears and enable you to visualize the grand sevai. Even though Svami Desikan is the recipient of the torrential flow of Daya Devi, he continues to appeal to Daya Devi in the next verse. There are two aspects to Lord Srinivasa. One of them is daNDa dharan (metes out consequences in accordance with one’s karma). The other is to confer His grace on all comers. In this context, it is important to note the difference between Leela Karyam and Daya Karyam. The former pertains to Lord Srinivasa’s role as daNDa dharan, while Daya Karyam applies to making the impossible realizable. The next verse is an impassioned appeal to Lord Srinivasa to give up His Leela Karyam as daNDa dharan and become entirely submissive to Daya Devi. In this context, it may appear superficially that the Lord’s role as daNDa dharan applies equally to all beings. However, in the next verse, Svami Desikan declares it is not so. There is a difference between transgressions committed unknowingly and knowingly. The former is excused with a light warning at best. However, the latter entails serious consequences. This is due to the fact that when one is adept at the nuances of what needs to be done and what is forbidden but engages in prohibited acts while giving up prescribed acts with vicarious delight, the punishment meted out will also be



quite serious. However, Svami Desikan offers a prayerful request in the next Daya Satakam verse to be excused for transgressions committed knowingly. The verse is “vij~nAtashAsana gativparIta vR^ityA vR^itrAdibhiH parichitAM padavIM bhajAmi evaM vidhe vR^iShagirlsha daye mayi tvaM dIne vibhoH shamaya daNDa dharatva IIAm” Hearing this, Svami Desikan anticipates that Daya Devi would definitely ask “Have you committed these sins knowingly or unknowingly?” Svami Desikan’s pre-emptive strike so to speak is an apology for committing these sins knowingly. This is captured in the tribute “vij~nAtashAsana gativparIta vR^ityA”. The latter usage in this tribute, “vparIta vR^ityA” refers to the fact that he is engaged in forbidden acts with great delight, while shamelessly giving up prescribed acts. For example, if the shastras declare “satyam vada” (speak only the truth), constantly uttering lies becomes a serious violation. Svami Desikan declares that as a result, his state of being is no different from that of the asura Vritra captured in the tribute “vR^itrAdibhiH parichitAM padavIM bhajAmi”. Svami Desikan continues “Even though I have sinned in this manner, I still come to You, oh Daya Devi, and submit this appeal, captured in the salutation “evaM vidhe vR^iShagirlsha daye mayi tvaM”. Such a sinner stands before You aware of the fact that he fully deserves the punishment through experience of so many narakams. However, if Lord Srinivasa decides to mete out this punishment, it will be impossible for me to withstand its intensity. Therefore, I humbly submit that Lord Srinivasa give up His Leela karyam as daNDa dharan and instead adopt the position of complete subservience to Daya Devi so that my sins are readily forgiven. This is my only hope. This is captured in the tribute “dIne vibhoH shamaya daNDa dharatva IIAm”. From the experience that adiyen had at the Tirukudandai Utsavam, it is a live demonstration that Daya Devi has brought about the task of transforming Lord Srinivasa from His position as daNDa dharan to that of unlimited compassion. The Tirukutantai sevai is an assurance from Daya Devi to us in the manner of “Do not fear. The Lord will not adopt the disposition of daNDa dharan towards you. I have instructed Him thus. He stands by My side to affirm this.” Thus, with a prayerful submission to Daya Devi to grace all with this anugraham adiyen concludes the exposition of this Daya Satakam verse.”

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

“This is a figurative presentation. The flood of Daya-cascade of waves, can immerse me even when I am in an elevated position. It is a purificatory bath. My sins are washed off. The reference here is to post-prapatti sins. The transgressions would have disqualified me for deliverance. But then my prayers, my atonement,



my punaH prapatti would have pacified the Lord. As such when Daya immerses me in a moment of rising wave-cascade, it wins a smiling approval from Lord Srinivasa.

1. The presentation as is from a superficial examination may lead nirhetuka-daya-adherents to attempt to score a point. However, it must be remembered that the Daya flood is spontaneous. Whom it immerses, namely, those it deems qualified for liberation definitely depends on his definitive merits. If he is a Prapanna that has incurred buddhipUrvaka sins upon performance of Prapatti, he would necessarily have to be cleansed either through Prayaschitta or in the extreme case, performance of another punaH prapatti.

2. Any lingering doubts will be removed in the next verse.

3. Brahma Sutra 2.3.41 emphasizes that the Lord, Para Brahman awaits the effort made by the jiva (individual soul, sentient being), in order that injunctions and prohibitions may not become futile. Therefore, Daya is definitely not nirhetuka!"



Sloka 93

विज्ञातशासन गतिर्विपरीत वृत्या
वृत्रादिभिः परिचितां पदवीं भजामि ।
एवंविधे वृषगिरीश दये मयि त्वं
दीने विभोः शमय दण्ड धरत्व लीलाम् ॥९३॥

vij~nAtashAsana gatiRviparIta vR^ityA
vR^itrAdibhiH parichitAM padavIM bhajAmi |
evaM vidhe vR^iShagiriSha daye mayi tvaM
dIne vibhoH shamaya daNDa dharatva lIlAm | 93



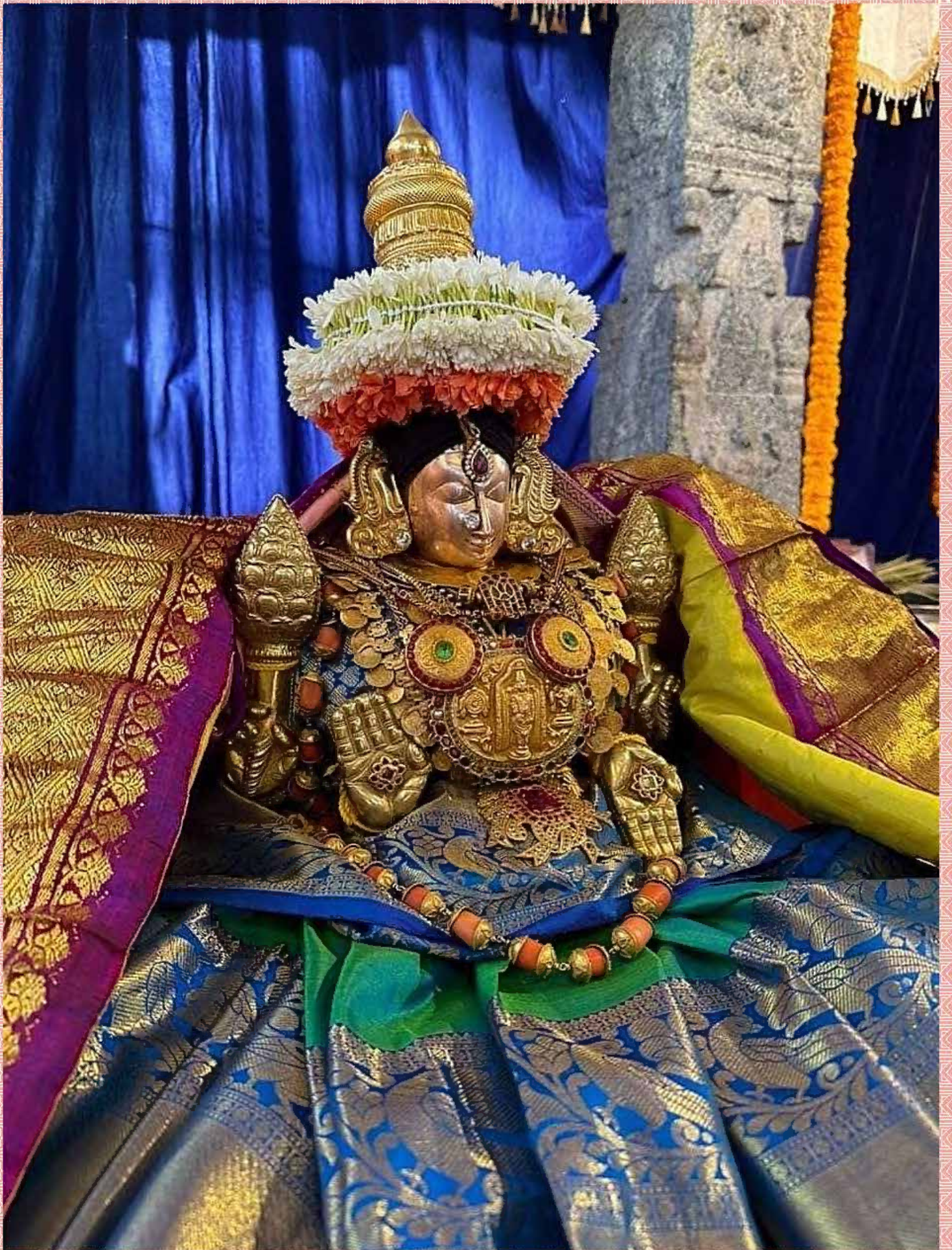
We first quote the anubhavam of [Sri.U.Ve.](#) Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“The previous verse documented an impassioned appeal from Svami Desikan to be engulfed by the torrential Daya flow of Daya Devi, which knows no boundaries. Furthermore, this Daya flow needs to be in the form of a tsunami to destroy all sins, which are truly mountainous and render him (Svami Desikan, in reality us) fit for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. So forceful is the flow that even Lord Srinivasa if He wanted to stop it would be powerless. Instead, He merely looks on in amazement at this extraordinary act of Daya Devi. This decad of verses is replete with numerous shastrArthams and insights. Documented herein is the pre and post-Prapatti code of conduct. In this instance, sharaNAgati for Lord Srinivasa has been undertaken and Svami Desikan commences the decad with the appeal “nAthe niveshaya” to be united with the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Thus, upon completion of the SharaNAgati, Svami Desikan provides an instruction in the post-Prapatti code of conduct. First and foremost, upon completion of Prapatti, one’s thoughts and focus should be directed at efforts of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This is the ultimate puruShArtham. The added joy that comes about due to BhAgavata Kaimkaryam should also be the focus. In fact, this is the limit of one’s Kaimkaryam. This is reflected in the [SharaNAgati Dipika](#) tribute “yunjAnacintya yuvarAja padaM bhajanti”. The import of this tribute is that the Prapanna in due course will beget the kingship of Kaimkarya SAmrAjjam. The performance of Prapatti is a ceremony that coronates the Prapanna as the crown prince. Thus, in the remaining time that the Prapanna



has until the end of his earthly existence, he must be engaged only in thoughts of Bhagavad and BhAgavata Kaimkaryam.

In this verse, Svami Desikan elaborates on the consequences of sins committed knowingly upon performance of Prapatti. By way of background, in a prior verse, Svami Desikan has submitted the appeal of “nAthe niveshaya” to be united with the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Daya Devi reasons “Indeed you have performed sharaNAgati and entrusted the burden of protecting you to Me. However, you still continue to engage in sinful acts after Prapatti, knowing fully well that these are forbidden. What are the consequences?” Svami Desikan infers this intent of Daya Devi and provides a beautiful answer. Specifically, Svami Desikan states that there is no annulment of Moksham. However, due to the sins committed post-Prapatti, there will be a lengthening of their life span to endure the consequences for these sins. This will result in a delay in gaining moksham. For example, if one is eighty years old and continues to engage in sinful acts upon performance of Prapatti, and does not take recourse to PrAyaschittam or in the extreme case punaH prapatti, it will result in their life span being lengthened by a few years. During this period, they may be deprived of Kaimkaryam opportunities. This would be a mechanism for enduring the consequences of these sins. In the extreme instance if the sins committed by the Prapanna after Prapatti are so grave, that the only recourse is narakam, Daya Devi still contemplates on a mechanism to grant them the parama puruShArtham of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. With a great deal of trepidation, Svami Desikan submits his prayerful appeal in this Daya Satakam verse, that even though a number of grave post-Prapatti offenses have been committed, due to his helpless state, Daya Devi must not hold this against him. For that matter Lord Srinivasa should also not use this as an exclusion criterion and deny Moksham. This is the import of this verse. This verse is “vij~nAtashAsana gatiRviparIta vR^ityA vR^itrAdibhiH parichitAM padavIM bhajAmi evaM vidhe vR^iShagiriSha daye mayi tvaM dIne vibhoH shamaya daNDa dharatva lIAm” (Oh Daya Devi! I completely agree with all the points You have raised. I am not an ignoramus. Due to the grace of my Acharyas, I am well versed with the Shastras.) The definition of Shastram is “shAsanAt trAyate iti” (that which provides instruction. This must be understood in the context of being the commands of Lord Narayana.) These instructions are in the form of aj~nA kaimkaryam and anuj~nA kaimkaryam, which must necessarily be followed. How does this become known? It is from the sastram itself. Thus, the salutation “vij~nAtashAsana gatiH” has the meaning that not only is Svami Desikan intimately familiar with the Sastras as the command of Lord Narayana, he is also well aware of its practice by way of rules and



regulations. For example, a new law was passed that requires all riders of two wheelers to wear a helmet. Violators of this law will be detained and fined. Now if a violator is confronted by law enforcement and is asked to pay the fine, the violator cannot feign ignorance of the law. This is an act that is undertaken knowing fully well the consequences. In a like manner, Lord Narayana has documented through the shastras the acts that are prescribed and forbidden. Knowing this fully well, I am engaged in “viparIta vR^ityA”. That is there is a difference between knowingly engaging in a sinful act and engaging in a sinful act blissfully unaware of its consequences. Let’s say if one crushes a bug in one’s sleep or if one inadvertently steps on an insect while walking, these do not count as buddhi-pUrvaka pApam. The shastras declare that these do not accrue any consequences for a Prapanna. Then come the acts that are engaged in without realizing that they are sinful. Do these bear any consequences? In this context, adiyen narrates an instance that took place a few years ago. Adiyen visited a temple in Chennai on Vaikunta Ekadasi day to offer prostration to Lord Narayana. A large crowd had assembled in order to gain a darsanam. It was delightful to see astikas throng in large numbers on this day. There was one Bhagavata attired in svarUpam (12 Tiruman and Pancha Kaccham). He wished to make a monetary contribution, for which he reached into his bag. The bag had a zip, which needed to be closed. In order to use both hands for this purpose, he placed the money in his mouth. After closing the zip, he then removed the money from his mouth and submitted it to Lord Narayana. Adiyen was greatly perturbed upon beholding this. The saliva from his mouth had defiled the offering to Lord Narayana. All others gathered there turned a blind eye to this act and did not utter a word. As far as this Bhagavata was concerned, he was a great Astika. On this auspicious day, he came to seek a darsanam of Lord Narayana and submit something by way of offering - in this instance money. He was blissfully unaware of the fact that that his saliva had contaminated the money offering and that this was a wrongful act. Such an act committed knowingly or unknowingly incurs consequences even if committed with blissful unawareness that this is wrong. If one engaged in this act knowingly, the consequences are more severe than when one engages in this act unknowingly (unaware that it is a sin). While this Svami was performing pradakshiNam, adiyen gently reminded him that his submission of the saliva laden money to the Lord was a wrongful act and advised him not to engage in this act again. He was extremely contrite and apologetic. He mentioned that due to his circumstances, he was not cognizant of these norms and hence requested forgiveness with a promise to never repeat this. Since he engaged in this act unaware of the fact that it was wrong, the consequences are less severe.



Nevertheless, it must be noted that merely being unaware that an act is wrongful and engaging in it does not render it right. It definitely comes with consequences. Now if the same act was engaged in by someone with full awareness that it was wrong, the punishment that comes about is quite severe. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, Svami Desikan declares that he is intimately familiar with the shastras. Furthermore, after understanding their purport fully, he has undertaken the performance of SharaNagati at the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Even so, Svami Desikan terms his post-Prapatti actions as “viparIta vR^ityA” (kR^itya akaraNam and akR^itya karaNam, namely gleefully giving up prescribed acts and engaging in forbidden acts with vicarious delight.) This is the manner of violating the shastras. Moreover, adiyen is fully aware that such violations are worthy of serious punishment. Daya Devi seems to enquire here “You have mastered the shastras and understood their purport. After this you have performed sharaNagati to Lord Srinivasa. Furthermore, knowing fully well the consequences of engaging in sinful acts, you continue to indulge in them after Prapatti. How then do you expect Me to redeem you?” Svami Desikan submits his reply “Indeed Oh Mother Daya Devi! Everything You say is absolutely true. Without Your intervention if adiyen stood before Lord Srinivasa, it would be a straightforward case to put on the dock and mete out appropriate punishment.” This is captured in the tribute “vR^itrAdibhiH parichitAM padavIM bhajAmi” of this Daya Satakam verse reflecting the fact that the punishment would be akin to the state of asuras such as Vritra. It is commonly known that Vritrasura was killed by Indra. This is documented in the Vedam. This is also documented in the sixth canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. There was a rishi named TvaShTa. His son was VishvarUpa. “vishvarUpovai tvAShTaH” is the Vedam tribute that documents this fact. For a while, Vishvarupa was anointed as the Bruhaspati for the Devas. He was formally requested to serve as the Purohita for the Devas. Since Vishvarupa had his adhyayanam with Shukracharya, the guru of the Asuras, he used his siddhis to retrieve the wealth of the devas that had been hidden by the asuras. This Vidya known as Vaishnava was passed on as instruction by Vishvarupa to Indra, on account of which Indra regained his lost wealth. Vishvarupa was endowed with three heads. Over time, he began to engage in flawed practices. Normally, when a yAgam is performed the havis needs to be distributed only to the appropriate devatas. However, while performing yAgams, Vishvarupa in addition to submitting havis to the Devatas, also submitted havis for asuras in a concealed manner. Additionally, Vishvarupa had distinguished himself on account of his Tapas. Such was the power of his tapas, that he even desired the position of Indra himself. It is well known that Indra cannot tolerate any competition for his position



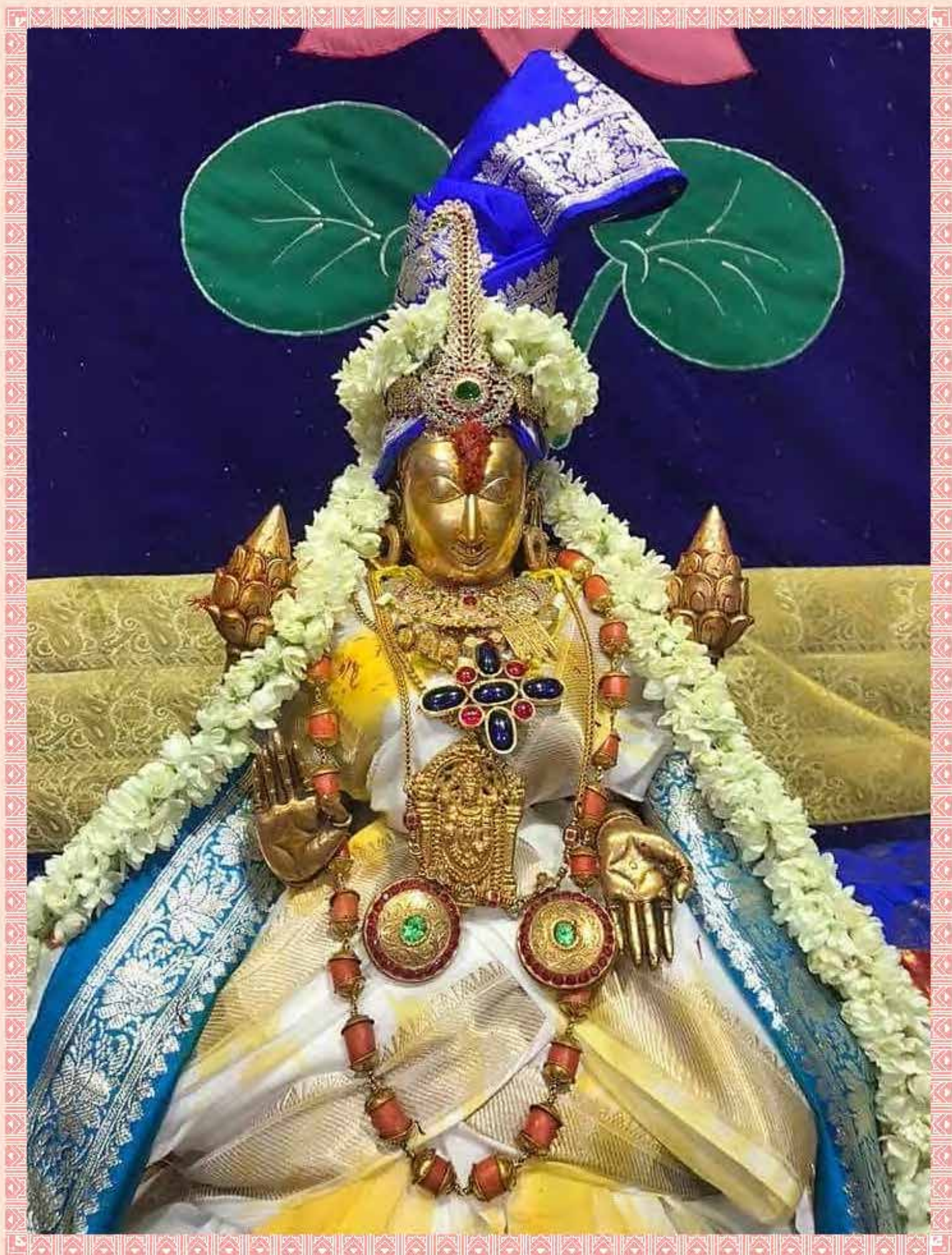
and is quite ruthless about exterminating the competitors. Indra discerned the intention of Vishvarupa and using his VajrAyudha, Indra severed the three heads of Vishvarupa. This act greatly angered, TvaShTa. It must be noted that even though Vishvarupa had erred greatly and was deserving of punishment, TvaShTa was overcome by grief due to the loss of his son. Unable to bear this, and identifying Indra as the cause of his grief, TvaShTa undertook the performance of a yAgam to ensure the destruction of Indra. Thus, the yAgam of TvaShTa was intended to create one that would kill Indra in accordance with the Vedam Rk “[indrashatro vivardhasva](#).” Here is where Lord Narayana came to the rescue of Indra who had sought refuge in Him. It must be remembered that Lord Narayana is known for His sworn position of protecting those who have sought refuge in Him. This was brought about by TvaShTa missing the svaram for reciting the Vedam Rk. This instead, reversed the purport of the Rk to mean “may the being arising from the yAgam be killed by Indra”. This is documented in the Vedam Rk “yatendra shatru svaratoparodha”. The important message here is that when performing karmanushtanam, due attention must be paid to the svaram and the Vedam Rks should be rendered properly. This is particularly important for upayanadhi and shrAddham rites. Even the Purohitar performing the rite must perform this with great attention to detail and with a sense of fear to not slip up. Once the Rk was uttered by TvaShTa, a fierce asura named Vritra emerged from the sacrificial fire. Since the Rk was uttered with altered svaram by TvaShTa, instead of one born to kill Indra, the asura that emerged from the sacrifice was destined to be killed by Indra. This Vritra had a gigantic, fierce form which would instill fear in anyone that saw him. The Maharishis and Sadhus who beheld this sight were petrified and ran for safety. Vritra was so strong that no ordinary weapons could destroy him. The Maharishis, Devas, and Sadhus submitted a prayer to Lord Narayana. Lord Narayana appeared before them and assured them that there is a Rishi named dadhyan, who has undertaken great penance with every moment of his life engaged in dhyanam of Lord Narayana. Thus, his entire body is fortified on account of this Tapas. Now if he is requested to shed his mortal coils and his bones are used to create a weapon, it will definitely destroy Vritra. The Sadhus, Maharishis, and Devas submitted their appeal to Rishi Dadhyan. Realizing that this is the only route for ridding the world of the menace of Vritra, Dadhyan perceived this to be the command of Lord Narayana and shed his mortal coils with the most noble thoughts of SarvabhUta Daya to allow the creation of this weapon for destroying Vritra. A fierce battle ensued between Indra and Vritra. So intense was their fight that the Devas went scurrying for cover. So too did Asuras like Sambara and Namuchi. When



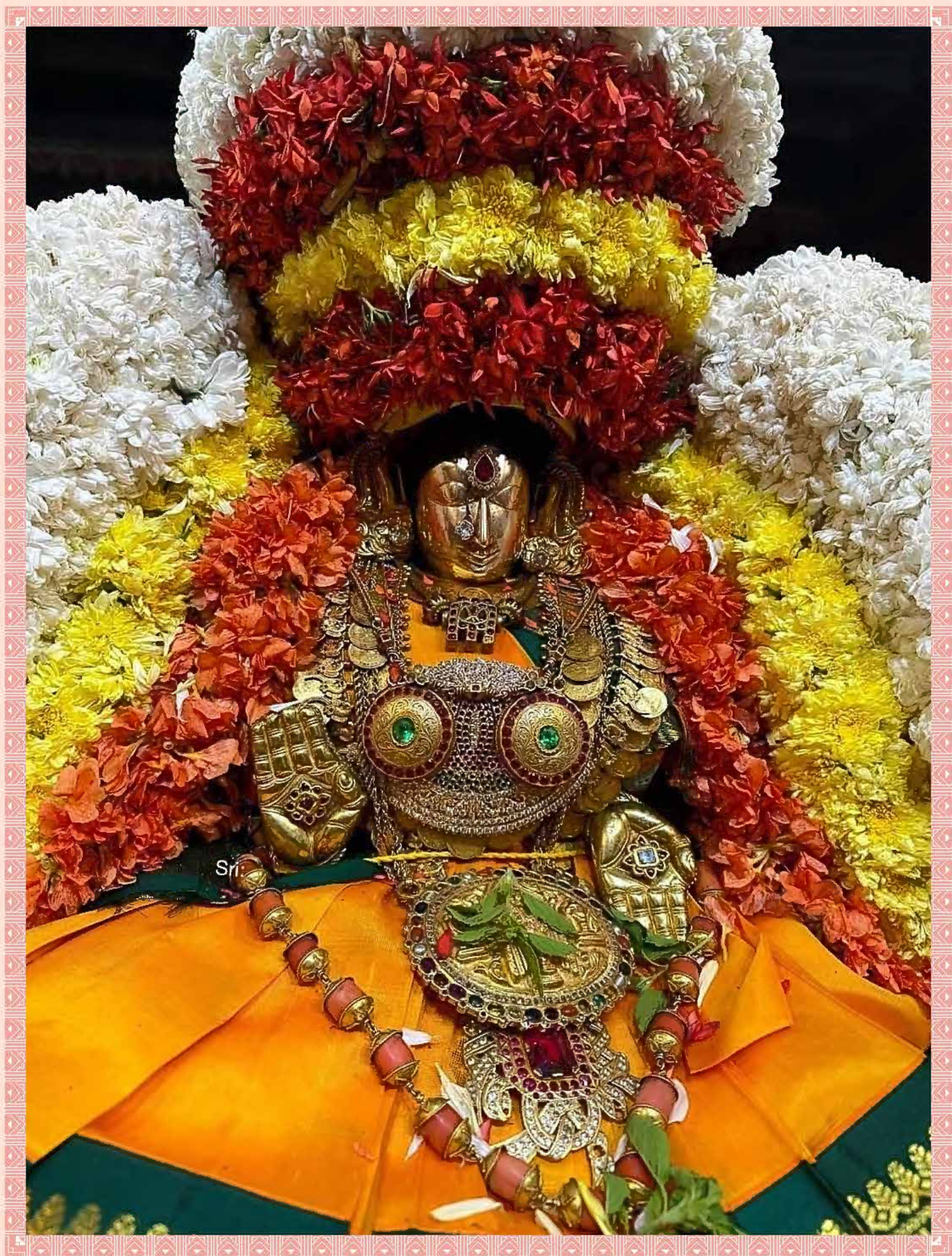
the battle reached a critical point, Vritra addressed Indra “I have been waiting for this moment. To the outside world it may appear that a fierce fight is ensuing between us. However, in reality I have trained my thoughts on Lord Narayana and am waiting for Him to nourish me in the manner of a mother bird offering food for her babies who do not have wings. Therefore, without further delay please use the weapon prepared from the bones of Rishi Dadhyan, and rid me of my suffering. Thereby, I shall gain emancipation and the benefit of Kaimkaryam for Lord Narayana. This is my intense desire. Therefore, please use this weapon against me without delay.” Those who heard the words of Vritra were astonished by the fact that this fierce rakshasa had such noble thoughts. This also reminds us of an instance from the Mahabharata war. In ten days of the war, Bhishma was formidable and could not be defeated. Lord Krishna Himself castigated Arjuna for not fighting with the full extent of his might out of respect for Bhishma as his Acharya and grandfather. Arjuna responded to Lord Krishna with the statement that it is not true that he was not exercising his full might to fight with Bhishma. Instead, Bhishma was so strong that nobody could defeat him. Lord Krishna then addresses Arjuna “You are incapable of destroying Bhishma. I, who have sworn not to take up any arms in this war, will use My Sudarshana Chakram and finish off Bhishma in an instant. You just watch.” Bhishma was overjoyed to see Lord Krishna advancing towards him with Chakram in hand and addressed Lord Krishna with folded hands “**ehi ehi pullAkSha padma netra**” (Oh Lotus-eyed one! I have been waiting for this moment. There can be nobody more fortunate than me to meet my end at Your hands with the Chakram. Please come and rid me of this bondage.) However, there is a difference between Bhishma and Vritra. The outpouring of Bhishma was heartfelt as a Bhakti yogi. Whereas Vritra’s address was intended to distract Indra into believing that the former’s Bhakti for Lord Narayana was so great and thereby ensure that Vritra could easily destroy Indra. In fact, when Indra was mesmerized by the tone of Vritra’s address, Vritra assumed a gigantic form and devoured Indra along with his elephant, AirAvata. Thus, there was an inconsistency between the thought and deed for Vritra. With great difficulty, Indra was able to tear through the bowels of Vritra and subsequently destroy him. It is instructive to note from the VritthAntham of Vritra that he knowingly engaged in sinful behavior. This is captured in the tribute “**vR^itrAdibhiH parichitAM padavIM bhajAmi**” of this Daya Satakam verse. (My state is similar to Vritrasura. I have submitted that I am incapable of following the prescriptions of Karma Yoga, j~nAna Yoga, and Bhakti Yoga. You need to stand in their stead and grace me with the same benefit that accrues to the practitioners of Bhakti Yogam. Thus, expressing my



Akincanyatvam, I have performed sharaNAgati to Lord Srinivasa. However, upon performance of SharaNAgati, I have acted in a manner contrary to what is expected of me. Thus, my sharaNAgati is no different from the words of Vritra, who claimed to have singular focus on the feet of Lord Narayana. The tribute “viparIta vR^ityA” from this Daya Satakam verse completes the analogy to Vritra in that post-Prapatti actions are similar to Vritra devouring Indra. Thus, the appropriate punishment in my case is a figurative killing which is denial of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This is even worse than the killing of Vritra.) SvAmi Alavandar in the **Stotra Ratnam** states “na ninditaM karma tadasti lOkE sahasrasho yanna mayA vyadhAyi so(a)haM vipAkAvasare mukunda krandAmi sampratyagatistavAgre” (All that is incorrect, I have engaged in - not once or twice but thousands of times. The major drawback is that I do not even realize the error of my ways, which only causes further indulgence in the sinful path. If one is punished instantaneously for one’s sins, one will never engage in the act. This is in the manner of one staying away from the fire knowing fully well that it burns. However, for our sins the consequences are not immediate. It is not known when the punishment will come about. This comes about at an appropriate time. Only then do the associated troubles with the sinful act manifest. At that time, it causes us to infer that due to a sinful act committed a long time ago we are enduring its consequences. Svami Alavandar declares in this verse that due to the consequences of the sinful acts not manifesting immediately he continued to indulge in them. At that time I was perhaps enjoying the fruits of some good karma, which rendered me blissfully ignorant to the consequences of the sinful acts. This caused me to become an egregious offender. Now the time has come to pay the price for the sinful acts. When I am reaping the effects of these sins, I have none to turn to for protection. Therefore, I fall at Your feet and implore that You protect me. This is the same sentiment captured in the tribute “vij~nAtashAsana gativiparIta vR^ityA vR^itrAdibhiH parichitAM padavIM bhajAmi” of this Daya Satakam verse. In the **AtimAnusha Sthavam** verse, Sri Kuresha declares “adyApi nAstyuparatiH trividhApacArAt pApa: pare nipatito(a)smi tamasyapAre etAdR^isho(a)hamagatirbhavato dayAyAH pAtraM tvadlyacaraNau sharaNaM prapadye” - “I am constantly engaged in Bhagavad, BhAgavata, and asahya apachAram with no end in sight. The consequence is that I am steeped in sin, resulting in an all-enveloping darkness from which there is no light. There is no question of redemption for me due to these actions. Nobody can help me. However, despite this I perform my surrender to You, Oh Lord! Thereby although I am most undeserving, I become a receptacle for Your Daya.” It must be remembered here that Sri Kuresha is blemishless. However, he takes on the plight



of a commoner to express the struggle that they face. In this instance it must be remembered that when a hungry one arrives at our door seeking a meal, feeding him sumptuously is an act of Daya. However, if someone well known to us visits and has already partaken of a meal, forcing him to eat is not an act of Daya. In a like manner, gracing one who has accumulated a lot of pious acts is no big deal. Redeeming one steeped in sin and making them the receptacle of Daya is the real act of compassion. This is my state declares Sri Kuresha. However, due to the Daya of the Lord, He assures us that we will be graced. Following the lead of Sri Kuresha, Svami Desikan declares in this Daya Satakam verse “evaM vidhe vR^iShagirlSha daye mayi tvaM dIne vibhoH shamaya daNDa dharatva lIlAm” (Even though I have sinned greatly and knowingly, I shudder to think of the consequences when I helplessly stand before Lord Srinivasa. There is no other option except punishment. However, Oh Daya Devi, I guarantee that I shall not be able to withstand the punishment. Therefore, Oh Mother You need to interfere on my behalf and ensure that Lord Srinivasa gives up His Leela Karyam of daNDa dharatvam and adopts a disposition of subservience to You. This is the only way for my redemption. Lord Srinivasa is bereft of vaiShamya naigraNyam. Namely He does not display selective partiality. He is an impartial dispenser of justice in accordance with the rule book of the Shastras. Good acts are rewarded and sins are punished. It must be remembered that Lord Srinivasa engages in this role of daNDa dharatvam as an act of sport. This is His Leela Karyam. Since this is an act of sport, this can be given up. There is nothing wrong with this position. For example, one may be engaged in sport. However, this has to necessarily stop when it starts raining. Similarly, there could be other reasons to disrupt the act of sport. Therefore, Oh Daya Devi! if You make the appeal on my behalf, Lord Srinivasa will desist from this act of sport. You alone are capable of accomplishing this. Therefore, I submit this appeal to You. It is important to note that this verse has a few shastrArthams embedded in it. First off, all Prapannas are freed from the clutches of Yama. Thus, they are guaranteed to not endure the resulting narakas. The prapatti for Moksham is never rendered futile. For those who engage in buddhi-pUrvaka (knowingly committed) sins upon performance of Prapatti, the issue is what are the consequences? This is expounded upon here. To rid oneself of the consequences of these sins, one must perform a prAyashcitta prapatti. However, for one who is guaranteed to engage in sinful acts following prAyashcitta prapatti, what is the recourse? The Shastras afford a long rope. However, despite this allowance we engage in egregious violations. This is analogous to an insurance agent laying out the limitations and exclusion conditions for coverage of medical insurance being confronted with the



question “I do not care what you say. As long as I present you with the bill as per your requirements will I be covered under this medical insurance?” This is totally unacceptable. First off, you are ineligible for coverage. However, out of compassion if this is offered under some restrictions, instead of complying with them, the question being asked is absolutely inappropriate. Therefore, you are deemed ineligible for coverage. In a like manner, the shastras allow considerable leeway so that one can conform to them and lead a life on the right path. However, despite this latitude, our behavior is one of egregious violation of the shastras. The **punaH prapatti** is intended to serve as a mechanism to rid oneself of sins arising from post-prapatti sins committed knowingly. If this is not resorted to, Lord Srinivasa administers some light punishment within the Prapanna’s lifetime so that the effects of these post-prapatti sinful acts are completely expended. This is akin to one being fit for punishment by beheading with a spear, is instead poked by thorns. This is the manner of administering light punishment and ensuring that the Prapanna begets moksham at the end of their life. Here Svami Desikan submits that it would be impossible for him to bear even the light punishment. Therefore, he requests Daya Devi to ensure that even the light punishment does not come about. This is the import of the salutation “**evaM vidhe vR^iShagiriSha daye mayi tvaM dIne vibhoH shamaya daNDa dharatva IIIAm**” of this Daya Satakam verse. This nugget from the shastras is hard to comprehend even for those who have undergone extensive kalakshepam of Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram. It is Daya Devi’s utmost desire that these shastrArthams be captured through the words of Svami Desikan in the Daya Satakam. Therefore, She engages in a samvadham (tete-e-tete) with Svami Desikan in an attempt to evoke a response from Svami Desikan. This is in the manner of the **Srimad Bhagavatam** salutation “**nigama kalpataroH gaLitaM phalaM shukamukhAd**” The luscious fruit in the tree are usually picked by parrots. This indicates the fruit must be good since the parrot discards the poor-quality fruit. In this instance, the creeper known as the Vedas yields delicious fruits. These were partaken of by Shuka Maharishi in the form of a parrot and its essence is distributed for our consumption by Shuka Maharishi as per the declaration “**pibata bhAgavataM rasamAlayaM muhuraho rasika bhuvi bhAvukAH**” In a like manner, Daya Devi desires the parrot known as ThUppul KulamaNi (Svami Desikan), should exposit on the intricate meanings of the shastras through his stotrams and hence decides to engage in this sambhaShaNam. For the next verse, Daya Devi posits a loaded question to Svami Desikan. She states “Oh Swami! You are well versed in the shastras, their nuances and practice. Furthermore, you exposit on these to your followers and instruct them in the intricate meanings of Prapatti Shastram.



Knowing all of this, you have performed surrender. How then do you account for your post-prapatti transgressions? Are you not engaging in fraudulent practice?" Svami Desikan's reply is captured in the next verse, which is "mAsAhasokti ghanakancukavancitAnyah pashyatsu teShu vidhadhAmyati sAhasAni padmA sahAya karuNe na ruNatsi kiM tvaM ghoraM kuLi~Nga shakuneriva ceShTitaM me"

The tribute "mAsAhasokti ghanakancukavancitAnyah" is Svami Desikan's admission of guilt that he is defrauding everyone in the universe. The salutation "pashyatsu teShu vidhadhAmyati sAhasAni" indicates that in full view of the universe, Svami Desikan engages in most eloquent shastraic exposition. However, his practice is exactly the opposite of what he exposit. This is the manner of defrauding the entire universe. For example, I go to great lengths to drive home the point that those who do not perform sandhyavandanam have great punishment in store. They instantly incur the displeasure of Lord Narayana. This is an "Aj~nA kaimkaryam" (Lord Narayana's command) which must definitely be followed. The Aj~nA kaimkaryam is meant entirely for gaining the grace of Lord Narayana. Thus, one who gives up Aj~nA kaimkaryam incurs the displeasure of Lord Narayana. The second kind of Kaimkaryam is anuj~nA kaimkaryam. This includes lighting lamps at the temple of Lord Narayana, offering garlands for adorning Lord Narayana, submitting varieties of delicacies by way of Neivedyam and the like. These kaimkaryams are optional in nature. Performance of these kaimkaryams for a specific purpose, yields the desired results. However, non-performance of these kaimkaryams does not incur the displeasure of Lord Narayana. Not only that, but we must also be extremely careful not to incur BhAgavata apachAram. These are aspects that I have expounded upon in painstaking detail. While this has been for public consumption, in their full view, I do not conform to even a single instruction that I have provided for them. The salutation "padmA sahAya karuNe" addresses Daya Devi as one who is associated with Padma (Mahalakshmi Thayar), who assists Lord Narayana in the task of protection of errant baddha jivans. Through my words I have incurred the vAncitam of the entire universe. However, when they scrutinize my actions, I fall way short in that, my practice is in direct violation of everything that I have preached. This is captured in the tribute "pashyatsu teShu vidhadhAmyati sAhasAni" which denotes that Svami Desikan's actions arise out of extreme bravado. These actions are in the manner of the tribute "ghoraM kuLi~Nga shakuneriva ceShTitaM me." There is a bird known as KuLinga, which makes loud noise and offers instructions, such as "Do not go there. Danger awaits. Someone is bent on luring you into the wrong path to ensure your ruin." However, the Kulinga bird has a fondness for elephant meat sticking to the teeth of a lion that has just

feasted on its kill. When the lion yawns in an act of fatigue and opens its mouth, the Kulinga bird in an instant rushed to pick apart with its beak the piece of elephant meat sticking to the lion's teeth. The bird, while instructing others not to engage in daring acts does exactly what it forbids. Thus, my state is exactly that of the Kulinga bird laments Svami Desikan. Even though I engage in this act quite egregiously, due to my SharaNAgati to You, Oh Daya Devi, it becomes Your responsibility to stop me from this endeavor. This is the import of this verse. The underlying message is that even though we are engaged in the most heinous acts of sin following our Prapatti, that which assures our protection is the Daya of Lord Srinivasa. On this note adiyen seeks the kataksham of Daya Devi for all listeners of this upanyasam and completes the exposition of this verse."

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

"Even after passing through the Prapatti purification step, many - most even, incur deliberate violations of the Lord's mandates about Do's and Don't's. Who? What type of persons? Even very learned and dependable scholars! This is a curse. Such violators may even be designated as pseudo-prapannas. If one reflects upon oneself, it is apparent that this designation is befitting for most of us. Let that be so, declares Swami. In reality, we need to say this not him.

How do I use my perfect knowledge regarding the Shastras. I commit all acts that are forbidden therein. If this is not bad enough, I gleefully avoid the mandatory duties laid out in the Shastras. Thus, my knowledge has only encouraged me to follow the path of Vritra, Hiranya, Ravana, and the like. What is my spirit? Utter contempt for the codes of conduct. I do this with utmost dedication! Fie upon me!

Notwithstanding such behavior, Oh Daya Devi! My mother! pray take pity on me in the manner of a mother would on Her dull-headed, dim-witted, knowledge-blind, pitiable baby and pacify the Lord so that He does not wield His punishment rod as He is known to for correcting errant children."



Sloka 94

मा साहसोक्ति घनकञ्चुक वञ्चितान्यः
पश्यत्सु तेषु विदधाम्यतिसाहसानि ।
पद्मासहायकरुणे न रुणत्सि किं त्वं
घोरं कुलिङ्ग शकुनेरिव चेष्टितं मे ॥९४॥

mA sAhasokti ghana ka~ncuka va~ncitAnyah
pashyatsu teShu vidadhAmyati sAhasAni |
padmA sahAya karuNe na ruNatsi kiM tvaM
ghoraM kuli~Nga shakuneriva ceShTitaM me | 94



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

“We began the exposition of verse 94 earlier. In the previous verse Svami Desikan submitted the prayerful appeal “*dlne vibhoH shamaya daNDadharatvalliAm*” (meting out punishment for sins is an act of sport for Lord Srinivasa. However, Oh Daya Devi You need to cause Him to desist from this act). Also, the difference in the degree of punishment meted out for acts knowingly engaged in and those committed without knowing that they were sinful was explicated upon. Svami Desikan even admitted that he is well versed in the shastras and has thus engaged in shastraic violations knowingly. Even so, he submits an appeal to Daya Devi to save him from punishment from Lord Srinivasa carried out as an act of sport. Ravana was well versed in the Sama Vedam. His command of Sanskrit grammar (vyAkaraNam) was unparalleled. Despite his lofty credentials and scholarship, he engaged in the most despicable act of separating Sita Devi from Lord Rama. Since this act was committed knowingly, the punishment for Ravana would greatly exceed that for others. Svami Desikan’s appeal to Daya Devi was that his state is comparable to that of Ravana in that he knowingly engages in sinful acts post-Prapatti. Therefore, he requests that She intervene on his behalf and save him from punishment from Lord Srinivasa. Daya Devi enquires by way of a prelude to this verse “Oh Svami! You instruct unskilled ones in the nuances of the shastras. You are extremely learned when it comes to these shastras. You have also performed a sharaNagati to Lord Srinivasa. Now we are focusing on post-Prapatti sins. For those

sins committed unknowingly, there is no penalty. Only the sins that are engaged in knowingly bear consequences. You have also submitted a Prayaschitta Prapatti (PunaH Prapatti) to destroy the effects of sins accrued to knowingly engaging in forbidden acts. Even after this you do not cease to engage in sinful acts. How then can the Lord be expected to exhibit a favorable disposition towards you? I too am baffled by your actions.” An analogy is useful here. A mother instructs her child not to engage in certain acts, since they greatly anger the child’s father. The child agrees to desist from these acts. When the father arrives, the mother mentions to him that she has advised the child not to engage in acts which anger his father and that the child has agreed. The father most compassionately remarks that he has excused the child’s actions this one time. However, future violations will definitely incur punishment. After a few days the child again engages in the forbidden acts and arrives at his mother’s side. The mother enquires “I advised you previously to desist from these acts since they greatly anger your father. You promised not to engage in them. Yet, you engage in the very same acts and stand before me? How do you expect me to intervene on your behalf and gain the good graces of your father?” The enquiry of Daya Devi is very much in keeping with the spirit of the discussion between the mother and her child. Svami Desikan states that Daya Devi’s observations are spot on. Furthermore, he attests to the fact that he proudly proclaims to engage in these kind of forbidden acts. This verse is “mA sAhasokti ghana ka~ncuka va~ncitAnyah pashyatsu teShu vidadhAmyati sAhasAni padmA sahAya karuNe na ruNatsi kiM tvaM ghoraM kuli~Nga shakuneriva ceShTitaM me.” Despite my instruction to all about staying away from these forbidden acts, I engage in them due to some compelling force. I even advise all my followers that this is a dangerous task and must not be engaged in. However, when it comes to my own practice, I do exactly the opposite of what I preach. In fact, I engage in these acts in full view of those that I instruct to desist from these actions. This is like the subhAhita vAkyam “paropadeshe pANDityam”, indicating that great scholars eloquently preach the do’s and don’ts. However, when it comes to their own practice, the scholarship is missing in action. For example, “tAra sandhyAmupAsita” is a common instruction for Brahmacharis with respect to the performance of Sandhyavananam. Typically, the thread ceremony (upanayanam) is celebrated with great pomp in the presence of a large gathering of guests. After everyone has been sumptuously fed, it is time for the Madhyahnika. Everyone would have blessed the Brahmachari earlier, but when it comes time for the Madhyahnika, there is typically nobody available to help the Brahmachari with this rite. The purpose of the upanayanam is not to have the grand feast with a large

gathering, but intended to foster the practice of Trikala Sandhya so that the Brahmachari becomes eligible for Veda adhyayanam. Even the Bruhaspati who performed the upanayanam would depart after instructing the Brahmachari to perform the Trikala sandya. However, the travails in getting the Brahmachari to first memorize all the Sandhya Vandana mantrams and engage in the prescribed acts of offering arghyam and the like are non-trivial. If the Brahmachari does not adopt the practice of Trikala Sandhyavandanam, the performance of the upanayanam becomes a wasted effort. Typically, when young Brahmacharis prostrate before elders and Acharya, it is customary for the latter to enquire “do you do the Trikala Sandhya?” If the Brahmachari answers in the affirmative, they would then ask him to recite the upasthana mantrams for the three Sandhyas. This was a routine practice adopted by H.H. Srimad Paravakottai Andavan Swami. Any gruhastha shishyas that visited his Ashramam would routinely be asked the question if they performed the Trikala Sandhya. If they answered that they do this once or twice, H.H. would advise them that the sacred duty of Trikala Sandhya should never be given up or compromised upon. Only upon being assured of their conformance to this act would H.H. administer SamashrayaNam and Bharanyasam. Thus, this is an Aj~nA kaimkaryam, which must necessarily be performed. Non-performance accrues sins. This may be true of commoners. However, when one arrives in full svarUpam, it is usual to ask if they perform Trikala Sandhyavandanam. The idea is that when someone is so full of Bhakti that they are in full svarUpam, they would necessarily uphold the basic demands of anushtanam. However, what if one such individual fails to perform the basic anushtanam? This analogy sets the stage perfectly for this Daya Satakam verse. Thus, if one is in svarUpam and eloquently preaches that performance of Sandhyavandanam is mandatory, but in full view of his followers does not perform Sandhyavandanam, what would be his state? If one constantly preaches that these are forbidden acts, therefore do not engage in them, however when it comes to practice, the one that preaches engages with vicarious delight in the very acts that he advises others to refrain from, how could he become privy to the grace of Lord Srinivasa? Svami NammAzhvar in the opening verse of fifth decad of **TiruvAimozhi 5.1** declares, “kaiyAr cakkarattu en karu mANikkamE enRenRu poyyE kaimmai solli puRamE puRamE ADi meyyE peRRozhintEn viti vAykinRu kAppArAr aiyO kaNNA pirAn aRaiyO ini pOnAIE” denotes the fact that the Lord just by Himself is indescribably beautiful. However, when holding the dazzling Sudarshana Chakram, His beauty is enhanced several fold. Even in the former case, one performs the hArati by way of removal of drushTi. What to speak of the latter? If one observes at the Sannadhi of Aravamudan, the

tiruvAzhi tirucanku (Conch) is seen leaning towards His ears. In other places it is seen to be slightly away. The mangalasAsanam of great Mahans for Aravamudhan glorifies the conch near His ear as whispering to the Lord to command to accomplish any task for Him. When one prostrates before the murti as described by Svami NammAzhvar, one can continue to speak endlessly about the captivating beauty of Lord Narayana. Just imagine a learned scholar expositing on these aspects quite eloquently. If such an individual engages in “poiye kaimmai solli puRamE puRamE ADi” (All of this is meant for public consumption. However, when it comes to his own turn to prostrate before Lord Narayana, there is absolutely no Bhakti worth the name on display. This is definitely fraudulent practice.) In a like fashion, Svami Desikan declares in this Daya Satakam verse that he has taken great pains to glorify Daya Devi, highlight Her elevated role in ensuring that all Her children beget the grace of Lord Srinivasa, and document in great detail Her numerous acts of help to beings of the universe. However, when it comes to his own practice, Svami Desikan in a mood of naichyam (self-deprecation) declares that he is bereft of all Bhakti towards Daya Devi. Svami NammAzhvar goes a step further and states that he is simply mesmerized by the exposition of even a vile sinner (who does not follow a single word of what he preaches) and develops an intense liking for Lord Narayana. For commoners like us, we may attend an upanyasam/kalakshepam where we may hear a greatly moving exposition on the greatness of Lord Narayana and resolve that the time we have on this earth is limited and thus let us engage in Bhagavad Dhyanam and Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. However, upon returning home a riveting action of cricket on tv consumes our attention. In the tribute “meyye peRRozhintEn viti vAykinRu kAppArAr aiyO kaNNa pirAn aRaiyO ini pOnAlE”, Svami NammAzhvar further declares “I too fake the sense of Bhakti towards You. However, instead of restricting Your grace to those who have true Bhakti for You, You accept even fraudulent demonstrations of Bhakti from someone like me.” This is akin to an upanyasakar expositing with great Bhakti on the greatness of the works of Svami NammAzhvar and Svami Desikan and upon conclusion of the upanyasam referring to these works in casual terms without the slightest prathibhakti. The import of Svami NammAzhvar’s tribute needs to be understood in the context that even if one fakes Bhakti towards Lord Narayana, the Lord knowing this fully well does not hesitate to grace the individual. The individual’s expression of Bhakti may be fraudulent. However, the anugraham of Lord Narayana is always real. “Nobody can stop the limitless flow of Your anugraham.” Returning to the exposition of this Daya Satakam verse, Svami Desikan acknowledges that every word uttered by Daya Devi is true. “I have been



quite eloquent when advising others about forbidden acts and cautioned them at length about engaging in these acts. I have also asked them to desist from their daring to commit these acts and warned them that great danger awaits if they do not heed my words. However, when it comes to my own actions, in the full view of all I have advised I do exactly the opposite of what I advise them. My actions are in the manner of the kulinga bird, which painstakingly offers sane advice about dangers that lay ahead for others but daringly engages in the act of picking away the piece of elephant meat stuck between the teeth of a slumbering lion blissfully unaware that the lion can close its mouth at any time.” This is reflected in the tribute “ghoraM kuli~Nga shakuneriva ceShTitaM me” of this Daya Satakam verse. It is instructive to recall the words of Shishupala from the Mahabharata wherein during the performance of the Rajasuya Yaj~na, the question of whom to offer first worship (agra pUja) came up. The most exalted personality in the assembly of such a sacrificial ceremony is first offered worship. After all arrangements were made for Yudhistira's sacrifice, the next consideration was who should be worshipped first in the ceremony. This particular ceremony is called agrapUja. agra means first, and pUja means worship. In the sacrificial assembly, all the members were very exalted. Some proposed to elect one person as the perfect candidate for accepting agrapUja, and others proposed someone else. Then Bhishma, the son of Shantanu, spoke giving his opinion, “As the sun is the center of all luminescing objects, so Krishna is the center of all living beings. Our sacrificial altar is illuminated and blessed by His presence as a sunless region is blessed by the sun. Therefore, I feel that Krishna should be the first worshiped in this assembly.”

Bhishma, the great grandsire of the Kurus, then ordered Sahadeva to offer the agrapuja to Lord Krishna. However, Shishupala could not bear to see that worship offered to Lord Krishna. He spoke up influenced by envy and hatred, “O descendant of the Kuru race, this Krishna does not deserve royal worship as if he were a king. You sons of Pandu are acting like children. Bhishma, the son of Ganga, obviously, possesses little knowledge. He deserves to be censured amongst the honest and wise. How does this one of the Yadu dynasty, who is not even a king, deserve worship before all the exalted kings present? Krishna is not certainly the oldest in age, for here is His father, Vasudeva. If you regard Krishna as a well-wisher, there is a greater well-wisher present here as King Drupada. When Drona is present, how could you regard Krishna as a greater preceptor? Do you regard Krishna as greater in wisdom than Dvaipayana Vyasa? Amongst the warriors present, the great Bhishma, who can die only at his will, stand supreme. How could Krishna receive worship before him? When Ashvatthama, the knower of every

branch of knowledge is present, how could you worship Krishna? When Duryodhana, the bull of the Bharata race, is present how could Krishna be worshipped first? Passing over Kripa, the preceptor of the Bharata princes, why have you worshiped Krishna? When Bhishmaka, Rukmi, Ekalavya, Salya or Karna are present, how could you worship Krishna? This slayer of Madhu is neither a sacrificial priest, nor a preceptor, nor a king. With what understanding have you worshiped Krishna? O chief of the Kurus, you have rejected qualified persons to be first worshiped from motives for gain. If you had planned to worship this Krishna, then why have you brought all these kings here to be insulted? This wretch born of the Vrishni race has caused the slaying of King Jarasandha by unrighteous means. Oh Yudhisthira, you have abandoned righteousness today.”

Then turning to Lord Krishna, Shishupala, who was bringing death upon his head, spoke the following death knell of words, “Oh Janardana, why have You accepted the position of being first worshiped? You have acted like a dog that laps up clarified butter stolen from the sacrifice. Oh slayer of Madhu, as a wife is to one without virile power, as a fine play is to one who is blind, so this royal worship is to thee who are not even a king.” Shishupala addresses Bhishma with the words “Kulinga shakunirnAma parshvEhi mamata pare bhiShmatasya sadAvachaH shrUyanteta vigharhithAH” (Your words become meaningless). One’s words acquire value if they practice what they preach. The declaration “yaj~nAya carati sreShta:” highlights this fact. For example, if elders instruct people in the nuances of the shastras and establish the practice of the shastras through their anushtanam, it inspires their followers to adopt this practice. Shishupala then addresses Bhishma and asks the question “You have provided instruction at length about the various practices to be adopted. However, when it comes to the agra puja for the Rajasuya yaj~na, you have suggested that there is none worthier than Krishna. What is so great about Him? This does not sit well”. In this Daya Satakam verse Svami Desikan characterizes himself through the tribute “ghoraM kuli~Nga shakuneriva ceShTitaM me”. Svami Desikan’s mastery with word-play is noteworthy in this instance. Specifically, he declares that even though he is of the disposition “ghoraM kuli~Nga shakuneriva ceShTitaM me”, it is Daya Devi’s responsibility. Specifically, on account of his sharaNagati to Her, She should have ensured that all such evil tendencies were destroyed at their root. In particular, She should have enabled Svami Desikan to establish consistency in preaching and practice. Thus, Svami Desikan skillfully absolves himself of any wrongdoing! Therefore, it becomes Daya Devi’s responsibility to stop Svami Desikan from engaging in forbidden acts. Thus we conclude our exposition of this Daya Satakam verse”



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

“There is the mythical bird called Kulinga. This bird warns other birds of going near the lion and almost in the same breath, attempt to bite a flesh morsel in the lion’s mouth and become prey to the wild animal. Here Svami Desikan declares that “Having to my credit deeds that would invite the Lord’s punishment in this life itself, by reason of accumulated transgressions of the Lord’s mandates, all of this in the full knowledge of observers, I would usually advise them, warn them of incurring the Lord’s wrath. What exactly is my stature? I am like the proverbial Kulinga bird warning other birds of adventure and rashness but attempts to snatch a morsel of flesh from a lion’s mouth and die by reason of its foolish rashness.” Svami Desikan appeals to Daya Devi. “Oh Mother! Why do You not deter me from such misadventure”. The important message here is that one should avoid forbidden acts and perform the prescribed acts in a steadfast manner.



Sloka 95

विक्षेपमर्हसि दये विपलायितेऽपि

व्याजं विभाव्य वृषशैल पतेर्विहारम् ।

स्वाधीन सत्त्व सरणिः स्वयमत्र जन्तौ

द्राघीयसी दृढतरा गुण वागुरा त्वम् ॥ ९५ ॥

vikShepam arhasi daye vipalAyite(a)pi

vyAjaM vibhAvya vR^iShashaila pater vihAram I

svAdhIna satva saraNiH svayamatra jantau

drAghIyasi dR^iDhatarA guNa vAgurA tvam II 95



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

“This verse is “vikShepam arhasi daye vipalAyite(a)pi vyAjaM vibhAvya vR^iShashaila pater vihAram svAdhIna satva saraNiH svayamatra jantau drAghIyasi dR^iDhatarA guNa vAgurA tvam”. Here Svami Desikan after having submitted his imploring appeals in the previous verses is now posited with a question by Daya Devi. Specifically, Daya Devi asks “Oh Svami! You have submitted the burden of your protection to Me. Furthermore, you have also stated that it is My responsibility to restrain you from engaging in forbidden acts. Don’t you have to do anything in this case?” Daya Devi remarks “padmapatrasavenApi nakShamAmi vasundhare.” The Varaha Charama sloka which is in the form of an upadesam from Bhagavan Varaha to Bhumidevi has been expounded in great detail by Svami Desikan in the grantham **Rahasya ShikhamaNi**. In the Varaha Charama sloka, Bhagavan Varaha declares “even though you may offer worship to Me, and submit flower offerings, there are certain transgressions that I shall never forgive.” From this it becomes apparent that there are certain transgressions that can be condoned while certain others cannot. Daya Devi enquires of Svami Desikan “When the Varaha Charama sloka declares that certain offenses cannot be forgiven, you seem to suggest that through the path of punaH prapatti, the most heinous of sins can be destroyed. Have you discovered a new means to get around the dictates of the Lord? I am unable to understand your way of operation.” Svami Desikan’s response to Daya Devi is contained in this verse. First off, he characterizes Daya

Devi as a net, which is far reaching. Lord Srinivasa is a King. As per His usual practice He engages in the sport of hunting known as **vihAram**. During this act of sport, He casts the Daya Devi net far and wide. This is intended to ensnare common beings. There is an important difference between this sport of Lord Srinivasa and the hunting undertaken by lions of the forest, which violently destroy their prey. The sport of Lord Srinivasa on the other hand seeks to capture alive beings in the forest, bring them over to His domain and nourish them with His life-giving elixir. Likewise, there are those that undertake the task of hunting a deer. Some do it with the purpose of feasting on its meat, while some others seek to capture it alive whereby the deer can offer company. It may be remembered that Lord Srinivasa has given up residence in His eternal abode, Sri Vaikuntam, to take root at the Venkatam hill. The sole purpose of His arrival at the Venkatam hill is to redeem errant baddha jivans through His act of sport, known as vihAram. The sole intent of Lord Srinivasa's sport is to identify jivans that are fitting receptacles for His grace so that they may be elevated and blessed with the ultimate benefit of nitya kaimkaryam. This is the underlying purpose for engaging in the act of sport of hunting. However, the one thing to note is that while Lord Srinivasa seeks us out, we seem to move further away from Him. Therefore, He casts the Daya Devi net in the hope that jivans get ensnared by the net. This is a reflection of Svami NammAzhvar's **Tiruviruttam** Pasuram "**en ninRa yOniyumAi piRantAi imaiyOr talaivA**". The **Bhagavadgita** too discusses this while detailing the avatara kAraNam of Lord Narayana. Lord Krishna specifically states "**bahUni me vyatItAni janmAni tava cArjuna| tAnyahaM veda sarvANi na tvaM vettha paraMtapah**" (Every time you have taken birth, I too have accompanied you with a corresponding birth. However, I know each of these births, whereas you do not). Lord Krishna then proceeds to reveal an important rahasyam. At that point Arjuna seems to think that every time he takes birth so too does Krishna. Therefore, there is no difference between them. Lord Krishna steps in promptly to dispel this notion and instead offers the correct perspective through the instruction "There is a difference between your birth and Mine. My birth comes about always on account of My sankalpam. For example, when the Devatas performed sharaNagati for relief from Ravana's tyranny, I resolved to take birth as Rama, the son of Dasharatha and Kausalya. The Brahmanas of the Dandakaranya forest submitted their appeal to Me that due to the harassment from rakshasas such as Khara, Dhushana, and Ravana, they were unable to engage in their activities of Tapas and Dhyanam. At that point I assured them that I shall destroy the entire Rakshasa clan at the root. While this came about due to Lord Narayana's sankalpam in that He could precisely determine to whom He would be born, we have no such

control over our birth or whom we would be born as. It is entirely governed by our Karma. Thus, Lord Krishna expositied on this important difference to Arjuna and observed that since the birth for the Lord comes about due to His sankalpam, it is known as **avatAram**. On the otherhand Arjuna's birth is governed by Karma and is thus an **avirbhAvam**. Due to sankalpam the Lord begets births as the son of Kausalya, Devaki and the like. However, on account of Karma jivans like Arjuna beget births. If the prevailing Karma is good they get births in a good family, have the chance to engage in adhyayanam, and Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. On the otherhand if the prevailing Karma is bad, then one takes birth in a family given to bad ways. They turn out to be **nastikas**, who stay away from Lord Narayana. Lord Krishna specifically states in His instruction (to Arjuna) that He incarnates for the sole purpose of redeeming baddha jivans who are dear to Him. So much so that He accompanies these jivans during every one of their births with the view point of affording them an opportunity at redemption and gaining the benefit of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Svami Nammazhvar's mangalasasanam highlighting this fact is captured in the **Tiruviruttam** Pasuram "**en ninRa yOniyumAi piRantAi imaiyOr talaivA! Mei ninRu kETTaruLAI aDiyEn ceiyyum viNNappame**". This pasuram is rendered routinely at Kanchipuram during the Garudotsavam celebration.



tirukkaNDen ponmEni kaNDen

Garuda Sevai takes place on the third morning of the festivities, which commences with the rendition of IyaRpA. This contains the mUnRAM tiruvantAti from the outpourings of Pey Azhvar, who declares “tirukkaNDEn ponmEni kaNDEn tikazhum arukkan aNi nirRamum kaNDEn cerukkiLarum ponnAzhi kaNDEn puricankam kaikkaNDEn ennAzhi vaNNan pAL inRu”. This pasuram as well as Svami NammAzhvar’s Tiruviruttam Pasuram are rendered on this day. There are a couple of reasons for this. Pey Azhvar’s pasuram highlights the inseparability of Lord Narayana from Sri. Svami NammAzhvar’s Pasuram brings out the reason for the Lord taking His numerous avatarams - it is expressly for the purpose of ridding baddha jivans from their bondage and ensuring their elevation. Since the Garuda Sevai takes place on Vaikasi Vishakam day, it is customary to perform the celebration of Svami NammAzhvar through his pasurams. With regard to Pey Azhvar’s tribute, it is the Panchajanya conch that stands out amidst the numerous mAlais adorning the Lord during Garuda Sevai. This manner of celebration is a tradition handed to us by our purvas, to re-create the anubhavam of Pey Azhvar and Svami NammAzhvar. What is the reason for Lord Varadaraja to go on a procession for several miles in the sweltering heat? He could very well grace all comers from His abode at Hastigiri. However, it is His overbearing concern to grace commoners who may not have an opportunity to come to Hastigiri to offer prostrations that causes Him to undertake the journey. Thus, it becomes clear that Lord Narayana takes on the Archa form and Vibhava form solely for the purpose of redeeming errant baddha jivans. However, these baddha jivans fail to recognize this fact and thus are never ensnared in His net. For example, if the Sevai takes place at night one might be inclined to think why bother staying awake in the late hours of the night. Let’s see if we can get the Darsanam in the morning. Thus, some unfortunate ones may have their doors locked, a/c turned on and blissfully remain asleep when the Lord arrives at their doorstep. At day-break, they may have the mindset “who has the time to wait for the Lord to arrive. I need to go to the office to take care of my work.” Thus, even though the Lord has gone the extra mile to afford the baddha jivan several opportunities to engage in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, the jivan stays away and thus misses out on the opportunities. This is the implication of not being ensnared by the Lord’s hunting net. Therefore, in this Daya Satakam verse Svami Desikan submits an eloquent tribute “vikShepam arhasi daye vipalAyite(a)pi” (Oh Daya Devi! You need to perform a great act of help for me. You have made all good acts subservient to You.) When it comes to us, we are unable to engage in any good acts, whereas we are able to engage in forbidden acts

without any restraint. This is captured in the tribute “svAdhIna satva saraNiH” of this Daya Satakam verse.



She is the net cast by Lord Sri Srinivasa

Furthermore, Svami Desikan has described Daya Devi as the net of Lord Srinivasa. Now this net needs to be cast where there are likely jivans that would be ensnared. Otherwise, there is no point in having the net. Usually, when nut bearing crops are grown, foxes tend to feast upon them. To prevent this, a net is cast near the crop to ensnare the fox. Similarly, if one wishes to catch deer, the net has to be cast in the appropriate place in the forest. An attempt to do this in the city would be futile. In this context, Daya Devi is fully aware of the places where errant baddha

jivans can likely be found and reformed. Svami Desikan declares here that he is steeped in the wrong path. Even if it be so, Daya Devi out of Her compassion seeks to reform him and bring him towards Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This is brought forth in the tribute “svAdhIna satva saraNiH”. Now that it has been established that Lord Srinivasa has entered the hunting sport of capturing alive baddha jivans with the goal of reforming them and that Daya Devi serves as His net to ensnare them, Svami Desikan describes the net further through the tribute “drAghlyasI dR^iDhatarA guNa vAgurA tvam”. This net is long and wide as attested to by the usage “drAghlyasI”. Furthermore, the net is firm with no escape for those ensnared by this net as evidenced by “dR^iDhatarA”. One can visualize this through an example. Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi as dampatis engage in a good act for a specific purpose. This is brought about on account of some excuse. When the Purusha is giving away his wealth, Daya Devi lines up a set of suitable recipients for this wealth so that they may be benefitted. The inner meaning is that Daya Devi is extremely fond of those who have performed sharaNAgati to Her/Lord Srinivasa. Therefore, while Lord Srinivasa is dispensing His abundant grace, She desired for Her sharaNAgatas to be the first recipients after which everyone else follows. It is common for one to think of one’s responsibilities as those of providing good education for their children as a consequence of which they gain good employment. After this is the issue of getting them married to a bride/groom from a suitable family and ensure they beget progeny. However, one’s responsibility does not cease there. Instead as elders they bear the responsibility of ensuring that they and all their family members are treading the correct path - namely engaging in sat vishayam and rendering Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Not only that the elders incur the responsibility of ensuring the protection of the atmA of each of their family members. Therefore, it becomes their duty to provide sadAcArya sambandham for their family members as a consequence of which Bharanyasam is performed and the redemption of the Atma is guaranteed. Thus, the responsibilities incurred are quite onerous. However, for some reason or the other, people move away from these responsibilities especially those involving the nurturing of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam for their offspring as well as ensuring that Bharanyasam is performed. However, they fulfill the rest of their responsibilities. On the otherhand Daya Devi’s disposition is such that She has adopted the motto of “catch them young” to make sure that “Her children - errant baddha jivans” have performed sharaNAgati at the feet of an Acharya. However, even after performance of SharaNAgati, these jivans seem to be taking to nastika ways. It is with the sole intent of reforming these renegade children that Daya Devi casts Her net. When performing prapatti for

as an excuse to cast Her extremely strong net far and wide so that errant baddha jivans like him can be trapped and reformed.



svAdhIna satva saraNiH svayamatra jantau

The salutation “svAdhIna satva saraNiH svayamatra jantau” denotes that all good acts are under the control of Daya Devi. The appeal here is that She must transform Svami Desikan (who considers himself otherwise useless in a state of intense self-deprecation) into svayamatra jantau (something that is useful). It is instructive to note that Svami Desikan does not describe himself as someone learned or knowledgeable in the Sastras. Instead, he refers to himself as a common

these baddha jivans Acharyas have declared before Lord Narayana “This jivan belongs to me. You must overlook all his transgressions and confer upon him Your grace”. It is solely to uphold the statement of the Acharyas that Daya Devi takes on the form of a net to ensnare these errant jivans and reform them. The tribute “drAghlyasI dR^iDhatarA guNa vAgurA tvam” again highlights the fact that all the kalyAna guNams of Lord Srinivasa are subservient to Daya Devi and are therefore a part of Daya Devi. This makes the net impossible to escape from. It is vast, and it is so strong that nobody can escape from this net once they are caught. Svami Desikan then submits his appeal “tvam” (Oh Daya Devi!) “vipalAyite(a)pi” (Even though I run away and make great efforts to not get caught in this net, it is Your responsibility to ensure that I am ensnared by this net.) Daya Devi is quite astounded by this argument offered by Svami Desikan. Svami Desikan continues “Indeed I have performed sharaNagati at Your Feet. Therefore, the burden of protecting me and the attendant consequences entirely become Your responsibility. Furthermore, any additional sins committed post-prapatti become Your obligation too. Either You need to ensure that I do not engage in such acts or even if I do, You need to correct for this through prayaschittams or in the extreme case through performance of punaH prapatti.” In this context, it is helpful to note that our purvas have strived hard to encourage us to take part in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. They have also provided us with Sadacharya sambandham as a consequence of which Prapatti has been performed. However, our prarabha karma may be such that despite their best efforts, we may shy away from Kaimkaryam opportunities. Consequently, we are distracted and engage our mind in wasteful pursuits, which seem to be quite attractive on the face of it. It is only for such beings that the Daya Devi net is cast and they must be trapped in this net. Lord Srinivasa resident at the Venkatam hill stands ready to grant aihika phalan, amushmika phalan and even moksham. The jostling crowds and the tedium involved in the process of gaining a Darsanam of Lord Srinivasa may cause one to think it is probably too arduous to undertake this task and therefore one may even decide not to come to the Venkatam hill again. However, upon gaining the Darsanam of Lord Srinivasa, the individual is overwhelmed and looks forward to the next time he can come to offer prayers to Lord Srinivasa. This transformation is brought about by Daya Devi. This is the import of the tribute “drAghlyasI dR^iDhatarA guNa vAgurA tvam”. The salutation “vR^iShashaila pateH vyAjaM vibhAvya” denotes the fact that Lord Srinivasa engages in the sport of hunting known as vihAram. Svami Desikan submits an appeal to Daya Devi here that She must use this act of the Lord



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Daya Devi is the net that is impossible to escape from

being (jantu) that needs to be trapped in the Daya Devi net. In the Sannidhi of Aravamudhan at KumbhakoNam, Perumal and Thayar come out for utsavams. During these occasions, Thayar precedes Perumal especially when the path is somewhat convoluted. In other Divya Desams such as Kanchipuram, when the same convoluted paths need to be traversed, Perumal precedes Thayar. Both of these are valid and have pramaNams from Srimad Ramayanam in support of this practice. First let us examine the instance of Lord Aravamudhan, where Perumal is preceded by Thayar. The incarnation of this Archa murti is to confer His anugraham on all Bhaktas, and bring them to moksham in a step-by-step manner. The main impediment in approaching Lord Aravamudhan is one's mountainous sin-pile. This needs to be destroyed before one can gain the anugraham of Lord Narayana. It is precisely to ensure the destruction of this sin-pile that Thayar precedes Perumal. Once the impediment is removed, the Lord's grace flows automatically. Prior to leaving for the forest, Lord Rama instructs Sita Devi that She must remain in Ayodhya and serve the elders, while the Lord carries out the task of residing in the forest. Sita Devi insists on accompanying Lord Rama to the forest. Lord Rama enquires what is it that Sita Devi will accomplish by coming to the forest. Sita Devi submits "agrataste gamiShyAmi mR^idnantI kusha kaMTakAn" (The forest is replete with sharp stones, thorns, and prickly bushes. Your lotus feet will be greatly hurt by these. I shall stay in front of you and clear the path. The inner meaning is that the sin-pile of His supplicants literally scorch the feet of Lord Narayana. However, Mahalakshmi Thayar destroys this in a trice, rendering the supplicant a fitting receptacle for the Lord's grace.) This is the most valuable service rendered by Komalavalli Thayar, who precedes Perumal during the Utsavams. It is also the import of the tribute "guNa vAgurA tvam". The net is cast prior to the hunter engaging in the sport. Accordingly in this context, the Daya Devi net is cast prior to Lord Srinivasa engaging in His "vihAram" sport. Daya Devi ensures that the jivans that get trapped in Her net become privy to the Kataksham of Lord Srinivasa and are blessed with Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Now we examine the cases in Divya Desams where Perumal precedes Thayar during utsavams. Again, the Ramayanam provides the scriptural support through the statement "agrataH prayayau rAmah sItA madhyesumadhyamA pR^iShThatastu dhanuShpANi lakShmaNau (a)nujagAma ha" This is an explanation of PraNavam. Lord Rama, who is "akAra vAchyam" (denoted by the aksharam "a") traverses the path first, followed by SItA in the middle denoted by "ukAravAchyam" (denoted by the aksharam "u"). This is indicative of Thayar's purushakarathvam (mediatrix to associate the jivan with Lord Narayana). Finally, Lakshmana with bow in hand follows SItA. This is intended to



drAghlyasI dR^iDhatarA guNa vAgurA tvam

denote the jivan/seshan that is completely subservient to the Divine Couple as evidenced by “makAra vAchyan” (the aksharam “ma”). This is the explanation from great mahans, who have studied the Ramayanam carefully and analyzed the esoteric meanings found therein. The import of this Daya Satakam verse is that Daya Devi has taken great pains to transform Herself into this net of Lord Srinivasa. One must not run away from this net. Instead, they must get ensnared in this net and become privy to Bhagavad anugraham. Sri Svami then narrated a personal episode of a family visiting Navalpakkam and very respectfully prostrating before him and his revered father to seek their blessings and gain a darsanam of Lord Srinivasa. Sri Svami concluded that this was definitely due to the grace of Daya Devi as reflected in the tribute “drAghlyasI dR^iDhatarA guNa vAgurA tvam”.

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

“This verse involves a prayer to Daya Devi. We have a weakness. Even after being able to come close, in dearness and loving bonds, by virtue of performing prapatti, we tend to go astray - not so much in space, but in emotional hold and bond of affection. How so? By violation of the cardinal requirements of Prapatti. Especially in the sense of disowning our main bulwark - nay our only bulwark, the Lord, we go astray. We resort to other deities, as if any of them could grant what our Lord may fail to secure for us. This is the most heinous sin that a Prapanna may possibly incur. Now we get to the gist of the prayer.

“Oh Daya Devi! I imagine a net strong and long enough, which You could cast and catch me lest I should - in violation of Prapatti codes - go astray and go away too! I speak of a figurative net. The material making up the net is the Lord’s code of love and fond affection. Indeed, Daya Devi Herself is the constituent material (guNa vAgurA). There can be no stronger, no more viable material! You will thus be able to catch me, even if I have gone a long distance away - of course, not in terms of space - playfully do this. You alone are capable of this.”



Sloka 96

सन्तन्यमानमपराधगणं विचिन्त्य
त्रस्यामि हन्त भवतीं च विभावयामि ।
अह्नाय मे वृषगिरीश दये जहीमाम्
आशीविष ग्रहण केलि निभामवस्थाम् ॥९६॥

santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya
trasyAmi hanta bhavatIM ca vibhAvayAmi |
ahnAya me vR^iShagiriSha daye jahIMAm
AshlviSha grahaNa keli nibhAmavasthAm | |96



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

“We now examine another amazing verse of the Daya Satakam commencing with “*santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya*”. The previous verse glorified the anugraham of Lord Srinivasa. It is with the sole purpose of gracing beings like us that Lord Srinivasa gave up residence in His eternal abode, Sri Vaikuntam and took root at the Venkatam hill as the archa murti. This is documented in the tribute “*mAyAvi paramAnandam tyaktvA valkuNTham uttamam svAmi puShkaraNI tlre ramayA sahamodate*”. Lord Srinivasa is capable of extraordinary acts, which beings like us cannot even imagine. Sometimes we may be given to think that we have performed great acts of good. Therefore, some great benefit awaits us. On the other hand, we may behold someone engaging in despicable acts and we may assume that great narakam awaits him. However, what transpires is quite the opposite. The one who performed good acts may encounter great difficulty, whereas one that commits despicable acts is rewarded with great benefits. Lord Narayana Himself declares “*anyohyanyacintayati svacChandaM vyavadAmyaham*” (You may think whatever you want. However, I act in My own way.) In this context the puraNam declares that Lord Srinivasa took root at the Venkatam hills on the banks of the Svami pushkaraNi for the sole purpose of gracing jivans like us. Svami Desikan notes that on account of this fact, it is imperative for jivans like us to gain the kataksham of Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi to become receptacles for Their unbounded grace. SVami Desikan declared in the previous verse that even though



paDiyAi kiDantu un pavaLa vAi kANbEnE!

Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi stand ready to grace us, we tend to stay away from Them. By going far away, our sin-pile causes us to miss out on the kataksham of Lord Srinivasa. Even though Bhaktas throng to the shrine of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill in large numbers each day, there is a larger group of jivans that has not become privy to the kataksham of Lord Srinivasa. Therefore, in the previous verse Svami Desikan described Lord Srinivasa as engaged in a sport of hunting known as **vihAram**. This sport, unlike common hunting where the prey is ruthlessly killed, is intended to catch errant jivans alive, and bring about a transformation in them so that they become privy to the grace of Srinivasa and gain Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Thus, it is a sport intended for protecting jivans. Daya Devi functions as the net of Lord Srinivasa. This net is broad and wide. It is extremely strong in that once a jivan is captured in the net there is no way of escape. Svami Desikan's prayerful submission is that Daya Devi must cause him to be trapped in this net. This is the act of affection displayed by Daya Devi towards jivans as She makes them worthy receptacles for the grace of Lord Srinivasa and causes them to engage in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. After Svami Desikan's prayerful submission from the previous verse Daya Devi posits another question to Svami Desikan. The reply to this question is contained in this exquisite verse of the Daya Satakam. Since this verse houses several **shAstrArthams** (esoteric meanings of the shAstras), it is important to gain a background of sharaNAgati prior to delving into Daya Devi's question or Svami Desikan's reply. First off the shAstras outline that those who desire to perform sharaNAgati do so with the full understanding that this involves five angAs – 1) **AnukUlasya sankalpam** (Acting in ways pleasing to Lord Narayana), 2) **prathikUlasya varjanam** (Avoiding anything that displeases Him), 3) **mahAvishvAsam** (Firm belief that Lord Narayana will protect under all circumstances), 4) **kArpaNyam** (inability to protect oneself by one's own means) and 5) **goptR^itva varaNam** (Being a destitute without Lord Narayana). All of these are important but, most important among them is **mahAvishvAsam**. vishvAsam is commonly known as trust. However, mahAvishvAsam is unwavering faith that Lord Narayana will protect the supplicant come what may. If this is present at the time of performance of sharaNAgati, it would definitely be successful. The purpose for which sharaNAgati is performed becomes fructified. How so? The prabhAvam (greatness) of sharaNAgati is such that all sins committed prior to the performance of sharaNAgati are destroyed in a trice. There are a few categories of sins - **sancita pApam** (those sins that have not begun to yield consequences) **prArabdha pApam** (The accumulated sins that are yielding consequences) and **buddhipUrvaka pApam** (sins committed knowingly after performance of sharaNAgati), and

abuddhipUrvaka pApam (sins committed unknowingly). Performance of sharaNAgati destroys the sancita pApam. Even the prArabdhha karma except that pertaining to the remaining lifetime of the sharaNAgata is destroyed as a result of performance of sharaNAgati. “prArabdhha khanDanjanAH nyAsena kShapayan” is the salutation from the **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** that describes this fact. Svami Desikan highlights the fact that all prArabdhha karma except that pertaining to the remainder of the Prapanna’s lifetime is destroyed as documented in the Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram salutation “prArabdhena pUrvapApam akhilam sAmAdhikamchottaram nyAsena kShapayan”. Now when it comes to the sins performed knowingly after BharanyAsam, the compassionate Lord Narayana again offers a way out through the undertaking of prAyashcitta prapatti. For those with a cluttered mind, who may be hard hearted and think that their mokSha prapatti for Lord Narayana is sufficient protection and continue to knowingly engage in sinful behavior post-prapatti, they too are rid of these sins through some laghu daNDanai (light punishment) in keeping with the statement “kautilye shati shikShayApi anapAyan” Svami Desikan declares “roTi karoti prabhuH” Thus, Lord Narayana ensures that once an individual has resorted to sharaNAgati, he is ultimately rendered fit to perform Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. In summary there are two kinds of sins that arise - buddhipUrvaka pApam and abuddhipUrvaka pApam. For the former kind there are two options to get rid of the consequences of the sins. One is to perform prAyashcitta prapatti while the other is to endure light punishment that is meted out by Lord Narayana. This is the shAstram. Thus, it becomes clear that even if one commits sins knowingly after performance of Prapatti, Lord Narayana ensures that they are still privy to His grace and can secure mokSham. In this context it is helpful to recall an episode from the Ramayana. Sita Devi was guarded by fierce Rakshasis, who made endless threats to Her. During one such instance, **trijaTa**, the daughter of Vibhishana addressed these Rakshasis and mentioned that she had a dream in which she saw Ravana clad in oil-soaked garments (complete ashuddhi) falling upside down. She also saw Rama and Lakshmana arrive and destroy all of Lanka. They then seated Sita Devi in the Pushpaka Vimana and took Her. Therefore, there is a great tragedy that is about to befall Lanka. She declared “If we need to escape this calamity, we need to perform sharaNAgati to Sita Devi as described in the statement”. If such an act is undertaken, we will be rescued in keeping with the statement “**alamesha paritrAtum rAghavan rAkShasIggaNam**”. Therefore, on behalf of all the Rakshasis, Trijata undertook the performance of sharaNAgati to Sita Devi. Sita Devi accepted this sharaNAgati with the statement “**yadi tat satyam**”. This took place in the

Sundara KANDam, when Hanuman had arrived in Lanka. Two months passed since Hanuman came to Lanka and went back to Lord Rama to convey the glad tidings. During this period, the Rakshasis again resorted to their threats towards Sita Devi. This was carried out under orders from Ravana. This raises the question whether the sins of the Rakshasis were buddhipUrvakam or abuddhipUrvakam. It is definitely the former. Sita Devi declares “marshayAmisha dhurbala” (Since I am powerless, I have to endure all the threats and insults from these Rakshasis). Even so, when time came, Sita Devi protected all the Rakshasis. Did these Rakshasis undertake prAyashcitta prapatti? Who were they protected from? When Hanuman arrived at Sita Devi’s side proclaiming Lord Rama’s victory over Ravana, he sought Her permission to pulverize to his heart’s content each of the Rakshasis that had tortured Sita Devi. Sita Devi was rendered speechless upon hearing about Lord Rama’s victory. However, She did not grant permission to Hanuman for carrying out the gruesome act of punishing the Rakshasis. Instead, She responded to Hanuman with the salutation “pApAnAm vA shubhAnAm vA vadhArhANAm plava~NgamaH kAryam karuNamAryenA na kashcit naparAdhyati”. (According to your perspective if they sinned knowingly, or else if they were merely carrying out the orders of their master, Ravana, there is no one that has not sinned. Therefore, do not harm them.) Thus, the Rakshasis were saved from the wrath of Hanuman on account of the sharaNAgati performed by Trijata. Just like the Rakshasis who engaged in buddhipUrvaka pApam after the performance of sharaNAgati but were rescued by Sita Devi despite not having resorted to prAyashcitta prapatti, is it not possible for Lord Narayana to similarly come to our rescue even if we may have engaged in buddhipUrvaka pApam? Svami Desikan answers this through the salutation “kautilye shati shikShayapi anapAyan” to denote that prapannas who engage in buddhipUrvaka pApam after Prapatti but do not undertake prAyashcitta prapatti, are subjected to punishments within their lifespan to remove the effects of these sins. Now when it comes to the Rakshasis that were guarding Sita Devi, one may ask there is no apparent punishment. Svami Desikan states that even for these Rakshasis there was a punishment. What was it? Hanuman requested permission from Sita Devi to pulverize the Rakshasis to his heart’s content since they had tortured Sita Devi. This was done in the presence of the Rakshasis. While Sita Devi was preparing to answer Hanuman’s request, the one moment of not knowing what Her answer would be was like eternal torture to the Rakshasis. This was the punishment they endured. They were not sure if Sita Devi would agree to Hanuman’s request. In this case their fate would be sealed. On the other hand, they were not sure if Sita Devi would turn down Hanuman’s request. That moment of



bhaveyam sharaNam hi vaha

uncertainty induced extreme fear in the Rakshasis and constituted their punishment for buddhipUrvaka pApam. Only after they were subjected to this moment of punishment, did the Rakshasis receive protection from Silta Devi. In the **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** Svami Desikan describes this as “**vALAIE vlci OnkiviDumApOIE**”. For example, if one has been declared to be subject to punishment by beheading by a sword and the sword has been sharpened for this purpose, the writing is clearly on the wall. The individual subject to this punishment closes his eyes in anticipation that sword would land on his neck and is unable to bear this sight. However, if the sword is merely swung but stops short of beheading the person, the plight of the individual prior to stopping the beheading is quite tortuous. This is the punishment that Svami Desikan refers to for buddhipUrvaka pApam. The punishment meted out to the Rakshasis was very much in keeping with the spirit of this sentiment. With this background, we now explore the question posited by Daya Devi and Svami Desikan’s answer through verse 96. Daya Devi asks of Svami Desikan “Oh Svami! What you are expositing is great to hear. You have performed sharaNagati at My feet with mahAvishvAsam. After that you engage in buddhipUrvaka pApam for which you undertake prAyashchitta prapatti. However, after this act do you refrain from further sins? No instead you commit more sins and then again resort to prAyashchitta prapatti leading to an infinite loop. This being the case, how can I accept your submission and rescue you?” Svami Desikan’s reply is summarized in the verse “**santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya trasyAmi hanta bhavatIM ca vibhAvayAmi ahnAya me vR^iShagiriSha daye jahImAm AshlviSha grahaNa keli nibhAmavasthAm**”.

The tribute “**santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya trasyAmi**” reflects a great fear on the part of Svami Desikan. He has not uttered these words thus far and only now uses them. If one examines this slokam carefully it becomes apparent that this meant exclusively for us. What is it that is scaring Svami Desikan? It is the monumental sins! In reality, this is the sin-pile that we have accumulated, since Svami Desikan exhibited blemishless conduct. Svami Desikan continues further “Oh Daya Devi! I contemplate upon You and my fear is at once banished”. For example, adiyen undertakes upanyasam of a given subject. During that time adiyen thinks that he has prepared something and is delivering it to an audience. However, it is not so. The upanyasam comes about entirely on account of the grace of adiyen’s Acharyan and Daya Devi. However, this faith is not absolute and does not prevail at all times. Each time adiyen goes for an upanyasam adiyen is plagued by the thoughts of “have I prepared adequately for this upanyasam? Is there sufficient content for one hour?” However, due to the grace of adiyen’s Acharya, adiyen is

able to deliver the upanyasam for the prescribed time. When the upanyasam is nearing completion, the only thought that comes to mind is that this has been successful entirely on account of Acharya anugraham. The next day however, the same thoughts pertaining to the preparation and delivery resurface, instead of thinking that yesterday it was only Acharyan's grace that ensured the success of the upanyasam. Hopefully, by his grace today's upanyasam too will be successful. Another example here is helpful to consider. A young boy's parents take him and submit him to the care of a teacher for the purpose of taking an exam. The teacher assures the boy that he should take the exam. It would be the teacher's responsibility to ensure that somehow the boy passes the exam. However, the boy is beset with fear of inadequate preparation and hence, poor performance on the exam. Even though the teacher has assured him of all possible help to pass the exam, the boy begins to doubt the ability and authority of the teacher. Likewise, in another instance one may approach someone with a request for employment. The latter advises the former to submit an application and attend the interview and that he would do everything possible to help the former get the job. Despite applying and attending the interview, the candidate is plagued by self-doubt and entertains unnecessary thoughts of "how many others more qualified than me would apply for the position? How many of them may have performed better than me in the interview? What are my chances? This despite being assured of getting the job by a higher authority." In all these cases there is a total lack of mahavishvAsam in the person that has promised a successful outcome. Due to this fact, until the success materializes, one is steeped in fear. This sentiment is eloquently mirrored in the tribute "[santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya](#)" The sambodhanam here is "[vR^iShagirlsha daye](#)" (Oh Daya Devi of Srinivasa). Specifically, Svami Desikan reiterates that he is a repeat offender and yet after each violation he resorts to prAyashcitta prapatti. Svami Desikan further declares that even though he has performed prapatti with mahavishvAsam, upon looking at his sin-pile he is plagued by the doubt of whether he would get the promised benefit from prapatti and is thus in a state of fear. Can this be called an inferiority complex or a lack of confidence? This is the state that Svami Desikan adopts in this instance. Here it must not be interpreted as a lack of confidence on Svami's part or an instance of inferiority complex. Svami Desikan is fully aware of his [svarUpam](#). He has performed [sharaNAgati](#) to Daya Devi with full [mahAvishvAsam](#). This alone is sufficient to guarantee Moksham. Thus, Svami Desikan's disposition is entirely in accordance with shAstram. For example, the shAstram instructs us that [sandhyAvandanam](#) needs to be performed at the appropriate time. In another



instance, the shAstram instructs us that one should not utter a lie. It is entirely because one is bound by the dictates of the shAstram that one conforms to these instructions. In a similar vein the shAstras outline that performance of sharaNAgati rids one of all sins. Due our mahAvishvAsam in the shAstram, we undertake the performance of sharaNAgati. Despite the MahAvishvAsam, when one thinks about the magnitude of offenses that one has engaged in, it is inevitable to be plagued by doubts of whether the sharaNAgati destroys sins of this magnitude. In the Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram, Svami Desikan engages in an elaborate discussion of the kinds of sins that one engages in. First off there are sins committed in secret (**rahasya kR^itam**). For these kinds of sins, one needs to engage in prAyashcittam at least in secrecy. Then there are sins committed in a manner that becomes widely known. For these kinds of sins, the prAyashcittam too has to be undertaken in full view of those who have beheld these sinful acts. For rahasya kR^itam pApam, one becomes entirely accountable to one's conscience. For example, one may see a beautiful woman walking across the street. This may arouse different feelings in different people. For instance, one may think whether the lady is more beautiful than one's wife. This itself is a sinful thought. Likewise, the roles may be reversed when a woman beholds a handsome man on the street. In another instance one may wish ill for another without explicitly stating it. This too falls under the rahasya kR^itam pApam category. Even though these acts are carried out in secret, prAyashcittam for these sins must necessarily be undertaken. **parasya kR^itam prApam** is the category of sins carried out explicitly. For example, if one has committed apachAram towards a BhAgavata in the open, one needs to immediately seek forgiveness openly from the BhAgavata for the apachAram. To illustrate this point, Svami Desikan quotes the instance from the Srimad Ramayanam detailing the encounter between Sugriva and Lakshmana. Greatly angered by the fact that Sugriva did not come to help Rama at the end of the rainy season, Lakshmana entered Kishkinda and delivered the stark warning "**na ca sankucitaH panthA yena vAli hatO gathaH**" (The path by which Vali attained his end remains open. Therefore, do not incur the wrath of Lord Rama). Sugriva realizing the gravity of his crime, performed sharaNAgati at the feet of Lakshmana uttering the salutation "**vishvAsAt praNayena vA**" (There is none that has not sinned. Out of my confidence in Lord Rama, I took my time to come to His help. I did not intend to not come to Rama's help. I was merely delayed.) "**prekShasya kShantumarhasi**" (I seek forgiveness for this). To this, Lakshmana responded with the tribute "**yat ca shoka abhibhUtasya shR^itvA rAmAsya bhAShitam maya tvam puruShANi uktaH tat kShamasva sakhe mama**" (Rama was grief stricken. Seeing his plight made me extremely angry and

thus I uttered harsh words to you. It was never my intent to cause you any mental or physical agony. Please forgive me for this act. This is the aparAdha kShamApaNam engaged in by Lakshmana.) Thus, the shAstras unequivocally state that regardless of whether a sin is committed in secrecy or in the open, the necessary atonement must be undertaken through prAyashcittam. Given this background, Svami Desikan submits his appeal to Daya Devi. First the sambodhanam in this verse is “vR^iShagirlsha daye” with the implication that only the divya dampati daya can grant His request. No one else can grant his request as documented in the tribute “santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya trasyAmi” (I am steeped in fear thinking of the multitude of sins I have committed - the numerous Bhagavad and Bhagavata apacArams that are constantly accruing. It is not merely the accrued sins, but also my tendency to engage in continued sinful acts after which I shudder to think of the consequences.) An important point needs to be noted here. Lord Narayana will forgive apacArams committed towards Him. However, He will never tolerate or condone apacArams committed towards His BhAgavatAs. Svami Desikan describes this as “rAja tArapachAattai pOLE” to denote the fact that a King may condone offenses committed towards him. However, anyone engaging in sinful behavior towards his Queen is summarily punished. In a like manner, Lord Narayana, never forgives apacArams committed towards His BhAgavatas. When it comes to us, we are constantly engaged in Bhagavad Apacharam, BhAgavata apacAram, or nAnavida apacAram as described by SvAmi BhAshyakarar in the gadya trayam. There are five kinds of apacAram that are an absolute taboo. However, we are blissfully engaged in these acts. Upon engaging in these acts, we are beset with fear. Instead of reasoning that we have performed sharaNagati with mahAvishvAsam, as a consequence of which we are assured of moksham, we begin to doubt the efficacy of sharaNagati. This state is mirrored in the salutation “santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya trasyAmi”. The Uneru celvam pasurams of Kulashekara Azhvar for Lord Srinivasa submit an appeal that the Azhvar would like to be anything animate or inanimate in the precincts of Tiruvenkatam. In the 9th Pasuram of this decad, the Azhvar declares “ceDiyAya valvinaikal tlrkkum tirumAlE neDiyAnE vE~nkaTavA nin koyilin vAcal aDiyArum vAnavarum arambaiyarum kiDantiya~nkum paDiyAi kiDantu un pavaLavAi kANbEnE”. The Azhvar declares “My sins are like a wild hedge. These cannot be destroyed at their root once and for all. Even though they may be cut down to size, they sprout again after the first rainfall.” For example, one can see in buildings and Gopurams the growth of creepers. Even if they are cut and removed, they grow again as if someone has carefully watered them. Our sins exist in a similar manner.



vR^iShagirlSha daye

They may be destroyed once. However, they have a tendency to return again and cause us to engage in them. The Azhvar then states “Even though the sins are of this nature, Oh Srinivasa, You ruthlessly destroy them” In a similar vein, Tirumankai Azhvar declares “konREn pal uyirai kuRikkOL onRilAmaiYinAl enREnum irantArkku initAka uraittaRiyEn kunREi mEkam atir kuLirmAmalai vE~nkaTavA anRe vantaDaintEn aDiyEnai AT koNDaruLE” This pasuram is extremely moving due to the anubhava rasam. (The Azhvar declares: My sins are so grave- I have engaged in ruthless killing of innocent people. If they were wealthy, in the name of taking their wealth for service to Lord Ranganatha, I have engaged in their killing. If they were poor, I have engaged in their killing under the excuse that they did not offer me anything to take to my family. This is not one or two instances but scores of people that have been killed by me. If one were to ask me why I engaged in this, I am unable to provide a satisfactory answer. One may ask if I have engaged in Dharma Karyam of any kind? Instead of pointing the seeker with kind words to someone who can help them, I have mercilessly turned them away. I view the Venkatam hill as the rain bearing cloud and Lord Srinivasa standing atop the hill as the cool refreshing rainfall. I have been the ArdhrAparAdhi (one engaged in ceaseless aparAdhams). I have come to You as my only hope for redemption. Without You, I am a destitute. Therefore, it is Your responsibility to protect me and save me from the consequences of these grave apacharams.) In a like fashion Svami Desikan outlines his fear in the “santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNaM vicintya trasyAmi hanta bhavatIM ca vibhAvayAmi” salutation of this Daya Satakam verse. Here the implication is that Daya Devi alone is capable of rescuing one from the consequences of these grave apacharams. The use of the “cakaram” in this context is worthy of note. In other words, its use elsewhere could denote that Svami Desikan also thinks of Daya Devi, implying that there is someone else besides Her that is capable of redeeming him. However, its use in this verse affirms that his thoughts are firmly fixed on Daya Devi, who is his only hope of redemption from these grave apacharams. This can be inferred from the anvaya kramam (prose order) for this salutation “bhavatIM vibhAvayAmi ca”. Svami Desikan describes his state (in reality our pitiable state) through the tribute “ahnAya me vR^iShagiriSha daye jahImAm AshIviSha grahaNa keli nibhAmavasthAm”. Specifically, Svami Desikan describes this through an example. Let’s say one has been instructed in the Garuda Mantram. In order to test its efficacy, on a Garuda Panchami day, the individual beholds a snake slithering by and thinks that due to the Mantra Siddhi he has, he can easily capture and hold the snake. Accordingly, he does so. However, he is internally scared of how long the siddhi from the mantram will last and

whether he will be bitten by the snake. How does this relate to our state? We have performed sharaNAgati. As a consequence, we are guaranteed moksham. On the other-hand if we behold our sin-pile it is mountainous and causes us to wonder whether we will gain Moksham after all despite having performed sharaNAgati. The Garuda mantram is the antidote for the poison from the snake-bite. Having this guarantee causes me to repeatedly play with the snake. To make an analogy in the present-day context, car racing is a common sport. Despite the danger to one's life from either the instability of the car at high speed or the fire hazard, one repeatedly engages in the act of car racing. Thus, one engaged in this task too is steeped in fear. This is the state that Svami Desikan refers to in the Daya Satakam tribute and submits an appeal to Daya Devi to rid him of this fear. Specifically, Svami Desikan requests that just as the snake is destroyed once and for all by Garuda, Oh Daya Devi, You must destroy the fear arising from this state for me. This is the prayer for destruction of papArambaka pApam, namely the sins that cause one to engage in further sin resulting in a compounding effect. The inner meaning of this tribute is that "I am in a state where there is forever the threat of destruction by a snake bite due to my papArambaka papam. Therefore, I live in constant fear. Oh Daya Devi, please rid me of this pitiable condition in a most expeditious manner. You alone can accomplish this task." Here Svami Desikan expresses his sorrow at the fact that he (in reality we) engages in pApam following which he performs prAyashcittam and again engages in the same sin followed by prAyashcittam, leading to an infinite loop. How does this mirror our state? Due to some dint of good fortune, we beget **sadAcarya sambandham**, as a result of which sharaNAgati is performed. However, from the next moment do we make a conscious attempt to conform to the shAstras and engage exclusively in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam while avoiding all apacArams? Most definitely not. This is due to the fact, that we are unable to control our minds to focus on Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Instead, we tend to be distracted by a plethora of other things that are opposed to our svarUpam (essential nature). This causes us to engage in Bhagavad apacAram, BhAgavata apacAram and the like. As a consequence, we incur the wrath of Lord Narayana. If one is stone hearted and remains blissfully unaware of the sins he is engaged in, it causes him to unhesitatingly commit sinful acts one after another. However, for one who realizes that the path he traverses is sinful, the regret that comes about is quite grueling. The import of Svami Desikan's appeal in this verse is that we should never beget such a state and that Daya Devi should intervene in a timely manner to nip in the bud any such pApams that give rise to this state. Thus, it is clear that only the Daya of Lord Srinivasa or Divya Dampati Daya is capable of ridding us of papArambaka

bhavatIM
vibhAvayAmi
ca



papam. With this prayerful submission to Daya Devi, we conclude our exposition of this verse.”

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

“A prapanna has to live a life of cautious avoidance of sins. These sins have a venomous character. If we loosely yield on any count, commit a sin, albeit with some regret and moral compunction, it has its own evil influence. It invites the Lord’s punishment. Additionally, it causes us to give into additional tempting sinful tendencies.

A continuous series, a lineage, an array of sins follows. This prodigious performance of prolific sins torments one, when I pause to ponder over the horde we have collected.

I am shocked. I shudder to think of it. What can I do? I resort to You, Oh Daya Devi! I practically surrender to You.

But what a vicious cycle this has led to? I swoon when I think of it.

My plight is like that of an idiot, who happened to be a master of the Garuda Mantram. He had the sinister habit of playing with venomous snakes. He would catch one; it would bite him. Only Garuda mantra chanting saves him. But then relying on his mastery of the Garuda mantra, he resorts to snake catching!

Well, I commit violations - grievous ones at that. Just because I have **prAyashcitta prapatti** as atonement process to eliminate the effect of the particular violation, could I resort to committing sins again and again? With such thoughts, Svami presents his appeal to Daya Devi.

When I recall the great array of sins, violations of the code of Prapatti and post-Prapatti existence, I shudder in fear. I have only one recourse, namely Daya Devi. This means in effect; I have to perform a prAyashcitta – say, punaH- prapatti! My behavior is reminiscent of a man who practices the Garuda Mantram to ward off the poison of a snake he catches and plays with it in a dangerous game!

One’s resort to Prapatti as a proper atonement for any heinous sin committed would only incur an offence against Daya Devi, treating Prapatti as if it were a trifle. No doubt, I shudder at the thought of a committed sin. Equally true that I get hope from Prapatti. Oh Daya Devi! Please put an end to this situation once and for all.”

Sloka 97

औत्सुक्य पूर्वमुपहृत्य महापराधान्
मातः प्रसादयितुमिच्छति मे मनस्त्वाम् ।
आलिह्य तान् निरवशेषमलब्ध तृप्तिः
ताम्यस्यहो वृषगिरीश धृता दये त्वम् ॥९७॥

autsukya pUrvam upahR^itya mahAparAdhAn
mAtaH prasAdayitu micChati me manastvAm |
Alihya tAn nirava sheShamalabdha tR^iptiH
tAmyas yaho vR^iShagiriSha dhR^itA daye tvam | |97



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

“Svami Desikan in the previous verse declared that our continued engagement in sinful acts results in a compounding effect, which incurs the wrath of Lord Narayana. As a consequence, Svami Desikan is petrified when he thinks about this. This is known as “pApa bhIru”. All of us would like to conform to the Shastras, which instruct us that our disposition should be one of pApa bhIru, namely fear accruing sins. This should be our essential nature to be on our guard so that no action of ours results in sins. If any lapse occurs on our part, we must necessarily atone for it. Svami Desikan instructs us in the NyAsa dashakam “nityam niraparAdheShu kaiMkaryeShu niyukShvamAm” (Even when engaged in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, we need to ensure that no BhAgavata apacAram comes about as a consequence of our actions.) This is an extremely important instruction in that even when engaged in Bhagavad Kaikmaryam we need to be on our guard. We may think after all we have been blessed with Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. What wrong can arise? However, due to some difference of opinion with another BhAgavata also engaged in the same Kaimkaryam, BhAgavata apacAram can easily come about. We need to be extremely careful to avoid such an occurrence. To illustrate this fact, Svami Desikan quotes ShANDilya vR^ittAntam. Garutman is known for his antara~Nga kaimkaryam for Lord Narayana. Svami Alavandar glorifies Garutman in the Stotraratnam salutation “dAsaH sakha vAhanamAsanaM dhvajaH yaste vitAnaM vyajanaM trayImayaH” (Garuda serves as the servant, friend, vehicle, seat, flag, and



vR^iShagirlSha dhR^ita daye tvam

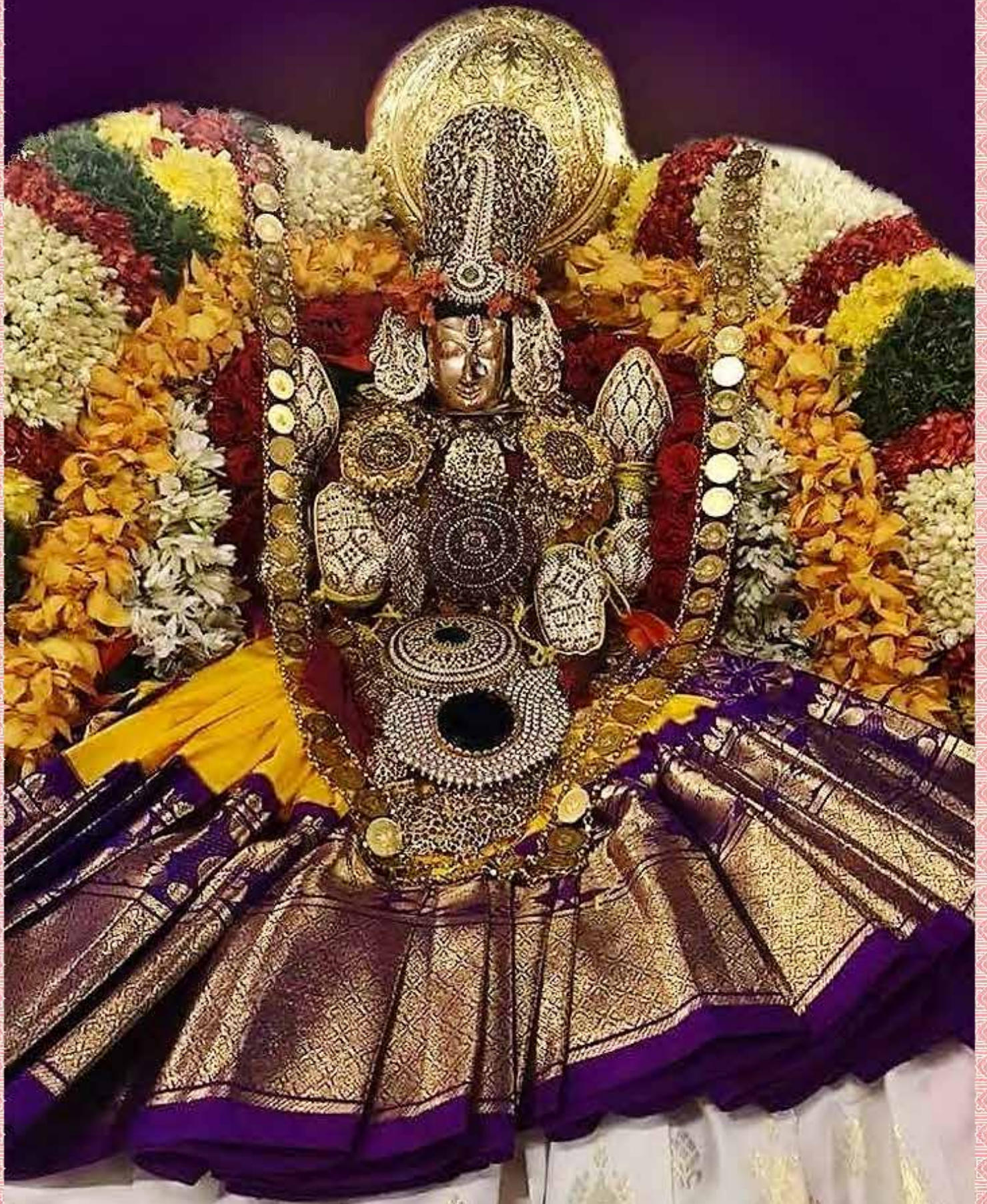
the like and is replete with the three Vedas). Even for this lofty Garutman, due to an apacAram of a sAtvika nature, he was beset by difficulties. This is understood from the vR^ittAntam of ShANDilya rishi as described by Svami Desikan in the **Srimad RahasyatrayasAram**. Garutman had a relative Mamakalbhar, who performed Veda adhyayanam under VishvAmitra. Having mastered the Shastras and upon completion of his studies, he needed to submit Guru Dakshina to VishvAmitra. VishvAmitra gently refused his offer of Guru Dakshina. However, the student was persistent in his request to submit the Guru Dakshina. VishvAmitra demanded of him to bring 800 horses, whose ears and tail were black, but the rest of the body was white. The student submitted to Garutman "You traverse the whole world and know where such horses exist. Please help me to get 800 of these horses so that I can submit my promised Guru Dakshina." In his search, Garutman encountered an island, where there lived a great BhAgavata known as ShANDilya. Garutman was somewhat exhausted from his travel. He was cordially received by ShANDilya, who offered all forms of hospitality to relieve the fatigue. At that point Garutman thought, why has this great BhAgavata taken residence in this rather forsaken island instead of being resident in Brahma lokam or ViShNu lokam? Just this mere thought, even though in an extremely positive manner, constituted an apacAram. As a consequence, Garutman lost all his wings and could not fly. ShANDilya immediately discerned the reason for this happening and addressed Garutman "Instead of thinking of me as rendering Bhagavad Kaimkaryam from this island, you thought I should be resident in Brahma Lokam or ViShNu lokam. Therefore, you lost your wings and are unable to fly." ShANDilya then gently caressed Garutman and lo and behold! all his wings were restored, and he was able to fly again. Svami Desikan makes the point that Garutman did not engage in any wrongdoing towards ShANDilya. Thus, even when a SATvika apacAram can result in such grave consequences, what to speak about the kind of apacArams we engage in willfully and deliberately? To drive home this point, Svami Desikan employs the usage "**trasyAmi**" (I live in fear of this apacAram) in the previous verse. It may be remembered from the **ViShNu SahasranAmam** salutation "**bhaya kR^it bhaya nAshanaH**" that Lord Narayana is the cause as well as the destroyer of fear. In this context, Svami Desikan declares that he is fearful of any apacArams accruing in the process of rendering Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. In keeping with the ViShNu SahasranAmam salutation, he immediately seeks the grace of Daya Devi for destruction of these sins through the tribute "**vibhavayAmi ca**". This is an instruction for every BhAgavata to follow. This needs to be adopted in practice by every Sri Vaishnava. Even if it be Bhagavad Kaimkaryam that is being rendered, one



vibhavayAmi ca

must pay attention to whether such an act would cause mental anguish to a BhAgavata, as a consequence of which BhAgavata apacAram can arise. Only after ensuring that no BhAgavata is offended and no BhAgavata apacAram arises, should one undertake Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This needs to be incorporated into practice for our every act in our day-to-day lives. This is quite extraordinary in that it reminds us of our svarUpam (essential nature). Daya Devi is delighted by this reply from Svami Desikan. What is the reason for Her delight? It is Svami Desikan's appeal to Her to destroy once and for all any sins that result in additional sinful acts causing BhAgavata apacAram or violation of shAstram that can incur the wrath of Lord NArAyaNa. Once these sins are destroyed, the individual becomes blemishless. As a result, it is a cause for great delight to Daya Devi. Now on account of this monumental help of Daya Devi, Svami Desikan is rendered at a loss to express his gratitude to Her.

Now Svami Desikan reveals in this verse, the upakAram/upahAram that he can render for this great act of Daya Devi through a skillful choice of words. This verse is "autsukya pUrvam upahR^itya mahAparAdhAn mAtaH prasAdayitu micChati me manastvAm Alihya tAn nirava sheShamalabdha tR^iptiH tAmyas yaho vR^iShagiriSha dhR^itA daye tvam" If one examines the SrisUktis of AzhvArs and Kuresha, the commencement of their tribute may not have any distinguishing features. However, they build up to a crescendo as they near conclusion and reach a climax. Svami Desikan follows their lead in delivering this verse. For example, in the VaradarAja stavam and SundarabAhu stavam, Kuresha's description of the Lord's body, His various AbharaNams and the like are quite standard. However, the concluding ten verses causes him to pour out his heart in a most moving manner as he seeks out Bhagavad samsleSham and Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. So too is the case with the atimAnuSha stavam. The usage "pApIyatopi" is particularly noteworthy wherein Sri Kuresha wonders that one like him that has sinned so greatly could ever become privy to the grace of Lord NArAyaNa. However, he gains assurance from the tribute "sharaNAGata shabda bhAjaH", wherein he declares that by virtue of having performed sharaNagati to Lord VaradarAja, he is assured of the Lord's grace. Sri Kuresha further qualifies his tribute in that he is not sure whether the sharaNAGati was performed properly or not. However, merely uttering the word that he is a sharaNAGata forces the hand of Lord VaradarAja to bestow protection. In the VaradarAja stavam, Sri Kuresha submits the salutation "imaM janaM hanta! kadA(a)bhiShekShyati tvadakShiNAdyorvarada! shramApahA akR^itrima prema rasapravAhajA visR^itvarI vIkShaNavIcisantatiH" (When would I become privy to Your grace? When will Your cool compassionate eye-glances fall



mAtAH daye

upon me?) Svami Desikan too follows the lead of Sri Kuresha in works such as the **DevanAyaka pancAshat**, and **SharaNAgati dIpika**. In this Daya Satakam verse the **sambodhanam** (call out) is “**mAtAH daye**” (Oh Mother Daya Devi!). A careful examination of the Daya Satakam reveals that Svami Desikan is very selective in his usage of **mAtaH** for Daya Devi. It may be remembered that Daya Devi takes on several roles such as a mother caring for Her child, an AcArya for errant baddha jivans and the like. When it comes to AcAryas, after Lord NArAyaNa, next in line is MahAlakShmi tAyAr. Since Daya Devi is no different from MahAlakShmi tAyAr, She comes to the fore on account of the “**karuNAmiva rUpiNIm**” (if a concrete form were to be assigned to the DayA guNam it would undoubtedly be MahAlakShmi tAyAr) salutation from verse 6 of the Daya Shatakam. Thus, it is established that Daya Devi has the role of a mother as well as that of an AcArya. Svami Desikan wonders here what is it that he can do for Her? Daya Devi has rendered a monumental help by destroying all of his sins and making him blemishless - a fitting receptacle for the grace of Lord Srinivasa. For an act of this magnitude, there is nothing that can be offered by way of **pratyupakAram** (favor in return). When one visits the sannidhi of Lord NArAyaNa or AcAryas, one should never go empty handed in keeping with the dharma Shastra statement “**rikta hastena nopeyAt**”. The sentiment underlying this statement is that one needs to submit an offering of some kind to Lord NArAyaNa/AcAryas, while prostrating before them in their sannidhi. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, Svami Desikan states that Daya Devi has rendered a mahopakaram for him. However, while prostrating before Her, he can only offer what he has in his possession. Therefore, he decides upon the suitable offering. The instruction “**yadannaH puruSho bhavati tadannAstasya devatAH**” reveals that whatever we partake as food is what we offer to our ArAdhana murti. This is our svarUpam (essential nature). The underlying instruction is that one should not submit a token offering of food to our ArAdhana murti and indulge in a feast subsequently. Instead, anything that we partake of as food needs to necessarily be offered first to Lord NArAyaNa. For example, it is unacceptable to make sweet pongal with limited amount of ghee for offering to Lord NArAyaNa and subsequently add substantial amounts of ghee while one is partaking of the dish. Thus, the instruction is that whatever we partake of must be offered in identical form to the Lord. Whatever is offered to the Lord must be partaken of as food without any alteration. This is our svarUpam (essential nature). For example, if salt was accidentally not added for the neivedyam submitted in arAdhanam, our elders have established the practice that the food should be partaken of without any additional salt since this is the will of the Lord. It must be noted that the instruction

for offering what we partake to the Lord is not meant for items prohibited by the Sastrams. Everything we partake of must be sanctioned by the Sastras. Anything prohibited by the sastras is unfit for offering to Lord NArAyaNa and is therefore unfit for our consumption. The concept is further illustrated through an episode from the Ayodhya khANDam of the RAmAyaNam. In this instance Lord Rama had taken residence at the precincts of the Chitrakuta hill in a hermitage. Bharata arrived with a large retinue from Ayodhya with the intention of convincing Lord Rama to return to Ayodhya to rule the kingdom. Upon prostrating before Lord Rama, Bharata informs him of Dasharatha attaining Svarga lokam. As soon as Lord Rama heard this, Rama undertook his prescribed duties for Dasharatha along with Sita and Lakshmana. The offerings of tarpaNam and piNDam were duly undertaken by Lord Rama on the banks of the MandAkini river. What was offered by way of piNDam? It is only the food that they were partaking of in the forest. A unique offering from the forest is known as “Ingudhi piNyAkam”. In Tamil it is known as “pu~Nga maram”. The fruit from this tree was offered as piNDam. Upon completion of the rites to the departed Dasharatha, Lord Rama returned to his hermitage. Shortly thereafter, Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikayi follow and behold the piNDam offering by Lord Rama. Kausalya reasons to herself that Dasharatha was such a great king but such is the state of Lord Rama that he had to offer “Ingudhi piNyAkam” by way of piNDam. Perhaps this is the shastraic mandate. This is entirely in keeping with the shastraic instruction “yadannaH puruSho bhavati tadannAstasya devatAH”. Whatever was partaken by Lord Rama in the forest to sustain Himself, was offered as piNDam to Dasharatha. This statement from Kausalya is reproduced verbatim by Valmiki Bhagavan. In a like fashion, we too can only offer what we have by way of offering to Lord NArAyaNa. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, the difference between upakAram and upahAram needs to be understood. Here the focus is on upahAram (offering of food to Lord NArAyaNa/Daya Devi). upakAram is the rendering of help, which is quite different from upahAram. Here, Svami Desikan submits an offering of upahAram to Daya Devi. The offering is “mahAparAdhAn upahR^itya” (offering of sins of great magnitude). Here it must be remembered that Svami Desikan exhibited blemishless conduct and thus had no aparadhams to speak of. However, he takes on the state of common individuals like us, who have accumulated mountainous sin-piles and thus submits such an offering to Daya Devi. Accordingly, Svami Desikan offers Daya Devi his huge sin-pile as upahAram, which he states is the only thing he possesses. The inner meaning is that we have accumulated countless Bhagavad apacArams, BhAgavata apacArams, and nAnavida apacArams, which have incurred the wrath

of Lord NARayaNa. This offering in entirety is submitted to Daya Devi by way of upahAram, so that they can be destroyed once and for all. Specifically, the mahAparAdhAn refers to BhAgavata apacAram. In the aparAdha parihAra adhikAram of **Srimad RahasyatrayasAram**, Svami Desikan states that BhAgavata apacAram is equivalent to “**rAjadhAra apacAram**”. In other words, a king may condone offences committed towards him. However, any inappropriate act with his queen is summarily punished and never condoned by the king. Thus, Lord NARayaNa never tolerates BhAgavata apacAram. This is evident from the AmbarIsha upAkhyANam. Specifically, Lord NARayaNa states that He is helpless to stop the Sudarshana Cakram that is relentlessly pursuing DurvAsa and instructs the latter to seek relief by offering an apology to AmbarIsha himself.



mahAparAdhAn upahR^itya

In this Daya Satakam verse Svami Desikan states that “**mahAparAdhAn upahR^itya mAtaH prasAdayitu me manastvAm**” reflecting the fact that he offers as upahAram his enormous sin-pile. After being satiated by this offering, he expects

that Daya Devi will bestow Her grace upon him. For example, one may have several things in one's possession. Among them there may be one thing that is absolutely worthless. Would such a thing be fit for offering to anyone? However, if this is the only recourse, one makes such an offering with a great deal of regret and trepidation. However, in this instance Svami Desikan makes the offering using the tribute “**autsukya pUrvam**” (with great enthusiasm). Not only that Svami Desikan declares that Daya Devi will be pleased with this offering and confer Her grace as a result as documented in the salutation “**mAtaH prasAdayitu me manastvAm**”. A number of **uttama BhAgavatAs** have rendered **kaimkaryam** to Lord Srinivasa. These include Tirumala Nambi, AnanthAzhvan and the like. Among them was Kurumbaruttha Nambi, a **BhAgavata** whose real name is not known. He was a potter. He regularly offered the pots that he made to Lord Srinivasa. In days of yore (35-40 years ago), **prasAdam** offerings for Lord Srinivasa used to be made in clay utensils. A large number of these utensils used to be stacked in the **maDapalli**. Thus, if there was a request for **prasAdam**, it used to come in the clay pots. The **muLahOrai prasadam** served from these utensils had a unique taste so much so that it was considered a **bhAgyam** to receive this on specific days at the shrine of Lord Srinivasa. A similar offering could be had at the **sannidhi** of Sri GovindarAjar after Thomala Sevai in the evening. Replete with ghee, this would be a most delectable **prasAdam** offering. This used to be served from the “**maN-pANDam**” (clay pot). In the **prakAram** of Lord Srinivasa, one can see **hemakUpam**. In fact, the **prakAram** itself is known as **hemakUpa chenpaka prakAram**. Here there used to be a well, with no pulley to draw water. Thus, people used to stand on top of the well and lower a rope tied to a clay pot to get water. This water would then be flowed directly to the **maDapalli** for use in cooking. This was in vogue more than thirty-five years ago. However, now the **hemakupam** is closed and adorned with silk perhaps due to **kalikalushavashAt**. Thus, not even a single vessel of water is collected now from here. Kurumbaruttha Nambi was the **BhAgavata**, who regularly submitted clay utensils for use in the **Sannidhi** of Lord Srinivasa. Upon preparing each clay utensil, he would also prepare a flower made from clay and submit along with the vessel for Lord Srinivasa's use. The king of the land, **ToNDamAn**, used to submit flowers made of gold (**svarNa puShpam**) for Lord Srinivasa. Both flower offerings were submitted at the same time. In an extremely surprising act, the clay flower submission of Kurumbaruttha Nambi was accepted by Lord Srinivasa on His head, whereas the submission of the king was lying at a distance from Lord Srinivasa. What is the reason for this? It is undoubtedly the unalloyed **bhakti** of Kurumbaruttha Nambi. This is another instance of Lord Srinivasa graciously



koyamudhAra bhAvaH - SrlranganAyaki tAyAr

accepting an offering of the clay flower from one who could not submit anything else but offered what he had with intense bhakti. In line with this sentiment Svami Desikan reasons that the only thing he has at his disposal is the mountainous store of mahAparAdhams. Thus, Svami Desikan requests Daya Devi to accept the sin-pile as an offering of food from him and in turn bestow Her grace. The submissions of Bharadvaja and Shabari from the RamayaNam become relevant in this context. When Lord Rama visited sage Bharadvaja along with Lakshmana and Sita, he rendered atithi satkAram with whatever he had at that time. However, when Bharata arrived with his large retinue from Ayodhya, sage Bharadvaja arranged for a lavish feast. Again, after the killing of Ravana, when Lord Rama returned in the pushpaka vimAnam which was jam-packed with VAnaras, sage Bharadvaja organized an excellent tadlyArAdhanai (feast). Since this feast was quite elaborate and took a long time, Lord Rama in the interim sent Hanuman as His messenger to Bharata to convey the message of His arrival at the Ashramam of Bharadvaja and the feast that was being laid out delaying His arrival at NandigrAma. Shabari too offered atithi satkAram (hospitality) to Lord Rama and Lakshmana. Sage Bharadvaja was able to serve a lavish feast to the large armies due to the power of his tapas as a consequence of which Vishvakarma and Nala arrived to help organize this. However, Shabari was a forest-dweller, who had to make do with whatever was available in the forest. She selected the best among these offerings for Lord Ramaa and Lakshmana. The thought of Lord Rama being an emperor and thus lavished with all sorts of delicacies never crossed her mind. Instead, her sole focus was to gather the best of what is available in the forest and offer it as food for Lord Rama with intense bhakti. The implication here is that Svami Desikan requests Daya Devi to accept his offering of “mahAparAdhAn” in the same manner as Lord Rama accepted the offering of Shabari. Svami Desikan also declares that he is not embarrassed to offer this. Instead, he does so quite enthusiastically in keeping with the salutation “autsukya pUrvam upahR^itya”. For example, one may have fruits, which one plans to offer to a distinguished guest, and even in that collection, many of them may be rotting. One may then contemplate whether such fruits are fit for offering to the guest. In Telugu, there is a famous saying that if something is on the verge of spoiling offer it to a Brahmana! This is due to the fact that the Brahmana never complains. Even a beggar may complain about the quality of the offering but a Brahmana never utters a word. If a fruit is required for neivedyam, even if the offering is on the verge of spoiling, the Brahmana will respectfully offer it to Lord NArAyaNa. In a like fashion, it may be asked if the lowly offering that Svami Desikan is proposing would be insulting to Daya Devi. Here Daya Devi answers this by noting



mAtaH prasAdayitu micChati me manastvAm

that “You are offering Me what you have. I accept it with great relish”. The tribute **mAtaH prasAdayitu micChati me manastvAm**” from this Daya Satakam verse reflects the fact that Svami Desikan’s mind is fixed on Daya Devi. With this thought he offers what is in his possession by way of food offering to Daya Devi. His hope is that Daya Devi will be pleased with this offering and shower Her grace upon him. The use of **vartamAna kAlam** (present tense) is significant here. This is denoted by the usage “**icChati**”. It must be remembered that Svami Desikan’s offering is not like a fruit or flower. Instead, it is a submission of his huge sin-pile. He has already performed sharaNAgati for Moksham. During this act, the entire **sancita pApam** is wiped out. After performance of sharaNAgati, if one engages in buddhipUrvaka papam, this too can be expiated by prayashcitta prapatti. There too the offering is one of sin-pile. This is destroyed by Daya Devi. Thus, no matter how many times prAyashcitta prapatti is undertaken, each time the offering is one of a massive sin-pile. However, Daya Devi unfailingly destroys the sin-pile each time. This is the underlying message from this Daya Satakam verse. This sentiment has been expressed in verse 70 through the salutation “**bharanyAsacChanna prabalavR^ijina prAbhR^itabhR^rutA pratiprasthanaM te shR^itinagara shR^i~ngATaka juShaH**”- (My sin-pile is collected in a platter covered by the cloth of Bharanyasam and submitted as an offering to You, Daya Devi. You, being the Empress of the universe, come out of Your palace at the meeting of four streets (described by the shR^itis) and receive this offering from me.) However, there is an important difference between the two offerings. The offering in verse 70 pertains to the Prapatti performed for the purpose of gaining Moksham. In this instance though the use of present tense denotes the ongoing performance of Prapatti, which is a reference to PrAyashcitta Prapatti. The inner meaning is that Daya Devi destroys the accrued sins at the time of performance of PrayAshcitta Prapatti. When something is offered by way of food to a recipient, it is either accepted with great relish or is set aside for possible consumption later. These offerings are not necessarily partaken of immediately. For example, when a dear one invites us to a wedding, we would look at the invitation with great enthusiasm. On the other hand, if it is someone else that we are not that very close with gives us a wedding invitation, we would set it aside for later viewing. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, the central question is whether Daya Devi accepts the offering of “mahAparAdhAn” or not. The discussion of Patrikai reminded aDiyEn about an incident that will be narrated briefly. During his pUrvAshramam, Srimad Villivalam Azhagiyasingar, the 45th pIThAdipati at Sri Ahobila Matham, celebrated his shashTiyabdha pUrti (60th birthday). He and his Devi arrived in Navalpakkam to invite Sri U.Ve. Ayya



karuNAmiva rUpiNIm

Devanathachariar Svamin for this occasion. Srimad Azhagiyasingar after prostrating before Sri Ayya Svamin, submitted the Patrikai, which was in three languages - Sanskrit, Tamil, and English. Sri Ayya Svamin immediately viewed the Patrikai from start to finish with great interest. Upon completion of this task, Sri Ayya Svami enquired about the well-being of Srimad Azhagiyasingar with a pleasant smile and remarked “romba santhOSham”. Later on, after ascending the pITham at Sri Ahobila Matham, Srimad Villivalam Azhagiyasingar fondly recalled the anugraham of Sri Ayya Svami during this occasion and considered it his unique good fortune. The point being made is that when the Patrikai is submitted to a great AcArya and it is viewed with great enthusiasam, it brings unique cheer to the offeror. In the context of the submission to Daya Devi, we are unsure of how it will be received since the submission is one of a mountainous sin-pile, nevertheless offered quite enthusiastically. However, this offering is accepted by Daya Devi with great relish and is partaken of without wasting even a single morsel as documented in the tribute “Alihya tAn niravasheShamalabdha tR^iptiH”. For instance, when one is offered prasadam in a temple and partakes of it immediately it gives rise to great happiness for those distributing the prasadam. The taste of the hot prasadam too is unique. In this instance, Daya Devi consumes the offering of “mahAparADhAn” in its entirety without leaving behind a trace. The usage “AlihyatAn” deserves examination. It is the act of licking the food with one’s tongue indicative of the relish with which the food is partaken. For example, when one is offered honey it is consumed to an extent with great enjoyment. The remnant sticking to one’s hand is partaken of by licking the hand with one’s tongue, indicative of the fine taste of the honey and the relish with which it is consumed. It is in this manner that Daya Devi partakes of the offering of “mahAparAdhAn”- niravasheSham (without any remanants). Her consumption of this offering seems to suggest that this is insufficient. If water is offered to a cow in a vessel and the cow takes to it with relish, not even a drop of water remains. In fact, the cow uses its tongue to clean up the vessel of any trace of water, almost causing a hole in the vessel. This is the manner in which Daya Devi consumes our offering of “mahAparAdhAn”. The next issue is whether Daya Devi is satiated from the offering. In this instance the answer is no as documented in the tribute “alabdha tR^iptiH”. In other words, Daya Devi partakes of the offering as if it were a trifle and is hungry for more. This is captured in the “tAmyasi” tribute of this Daya Satakam verse, denoting the fact that Daya Devi becomes pale with hunger. For example, if one who is hungry is given a limited offering with the promise of more to come, the pangs of hunger still persist. Daya Devi’s state is similar in that even after consuming the humongous sin-pile, She is

hungry for more. This seems to mirror the salutation of Sri ParAshara BhaTTar to Sri RanganAyaki tAyAr. “aishvaryamakSharagatiM paramaM padaM vA kasmaicidanjali bharaM vahatevitIrya” (A passer by at the Temple of Ranganatha happened to offer by sheer accident a salutation with folded hands to Sri RanganAyaki tAyAr. This act on his part caused Her to declare that She stands ready to grant him all material wealth, kaivalyam, and even moksham itself. Yet She thinks that She has not done enough for the enormous trouble this individual has taken in submitting his salutation with folded hands.) Sri ParAshara Bhattar exclaims “koyamudhAra bhAvaH” to express the fact that he is at a loss of words to describe the compassion of tAyAr. Daya Devi too is of a similar disposition as Ranganayaki tAyAr since She is no different from the latter. Thus, even if it is “mahAparAdhAn” that is offered, since it is offered by “Her Child” She consumes it all without leaving a trace on account of Her great affection (vAatsalyam) for Her children. This can also be interpreted as “nindA stuti” (a work of praise which is actually a scolding) or “stuti nindA” (scolding which is construed as praise). In this instance it is the former. It is intended to bring out the fact that no matter how grave our offence is, Daya Devi consumes it as if it were a trifle. Also, Daya Devi has rendered a mahopakAram for us. Despite our incapability for offering anything in return for Her monumental act, She still exudes affection for us. This is the mahopakAram rendered by Daya Devi. This act of Daya Devi-not being satiated no matter how large a sin-pile offering is submitted and appearing pale - is Svami Desikan’s ninda stuti. In other words, it is praise in the form of an apparent abuse. The salutation “vR^iShagiriIsha dhR^itA daye tvam” captures the fact that Daya Devi is borne by Lord Srinivasa. Lord Srinivasa confers the four puruShArthAs. This is the main reason for His arrival at the Tiruvenkatam hill. The lofty role of Daya Devi too is highlighted in this context. She is the one that enables Lord Srinivasa to confer the four puruShArthAs. Without Her, Lord Srinivasa is incapable of granting anything. Daya Devi of such loftiness, joyfully accepts the offering of “mahAparAdhAn” as if it were a delicacy and devours it completely. Svami Desikan declares that there cannot be a more astonishing act than this captured in the tribute “tAmyas yaho” of this Daya Satakam verse. If one approaches somebody for a favor and the request is immediately granted, the joy that arises is matchless. In the context of Daya Devi, the instantaneous consumption of the offering of “mahAparAdhAn” gives rise to similar joy. Not only that, Daya Devi seems to enquire if there is more to be partaken of. This is the import of the present Daya Satakam verse. Svami NammAzhvar glorifies Lord Srinivasa as “ulakamuNDa peruvAyA” (one who swallowed the entire universe). In a like manner, Daya Devi too after having

Oh Mother Daya Devi! What is it that I can offer for Your mahopakAram towards me?



partaken of the humongous sin-pile remains unsatiated and craves for more. It may be helpful to recall here the “apUrNa kukShiH” tribute from verse 29 of the Daya Satakam. The relationship between Daya Devi and Svami Desikan can be viewed as that of one between a mother and son. Andal glorifies Lord Krishna as “yacotai iLam cinkam”. If a child is passive, there is nothing unusual and makes for a boring narrative. On the other hand, if the child is constantly up to mischief of some kind, the acts become enjoyable. The usage “iLam cinkam” denotes that the lion cub enjoys the company of its mother. In turn Yashodha takes delight in the acts of Lord Krishna. In a like manner, Daya Devi’s enjoyment of our acts, albeit one of sin, needs to be appreciated. If one having PrakR^iti sambandham does not engage in any violation of the Sastram, Daya Devi’s affection for them is nothing remarkable. However, if one engaging in all sorts of sinful acts, is favored and graced by Daya Devi despite the despicable acts, it is truly astounding. An important point of note is that this verse could give rise to the misleading notion that Lord Srinivasa enjoys the faults of jivans so much so that He/Daya Devi partake of these faults with great relish. Such a position cannot be further from the truth with respect to the import of this verse. First off, merely because Daya Devi partakes of the offering of “mahAparAdhAn” with great delight, it does not provide the license to willfully engage in sinful acts under the pretext of offering delectable food to Daya Devi. Instead, the purport of this verse is to highlight the loftiness of sharaNAgati, which is capable of destroying the gravest of sins. In the sharaNAgati dIpika, Svami Desikan declares “brahmANDalakShashatakoTigaNAnanatAn ekakShaNe viparivartya vilajjamAnAm matpAparAshimathane madhudarpahantriM shaktiM niyu~NKShva sharaNAgatavatsala tvam” (Lord Deepa Prakasha is extremely fond of His sharaNAgatAs as denoted by the tribute “sharaNAgata vatsala”. Due to this fact, He exudes affection for sharaNAgatAs. His strength is so great that the apacArams in this entire universe that number in the lakhs and hundreds of crores (extremely large) are destroyed in a single moment. Svami Desikan appeals to Lord Deepa Prakasha to exercise this strength on his sins. When the strength displayed in destroying Madhu and Kaitaba is employed against his sins, they are ruthlessly destroyed.) Here, Svami Desikan views Lord Deepa Prakasha as the Supreme Being rather than as his mother. However, there is a difference in the manner of Daya Devi destroying one’s sins and Lord NARayaNa accomplishing the same task. When Lord NARayaNa undertakes the task, He demonstrates His supremacy as the emperor of all He surveys. However, Daya Devi partakes of the sins as a delectable offering of food and destroys them. Both Lord NARayaNa and Daya Devi perform the same task. However, this does not imply that Daya Devi takes to the offering of

sins with relish in the spirit of enjoying the faults of the jivan. This is definitely against the tenets of the sampradAyam. Instead, the correct perspective is the fact that Daya Devi destroys the sins of those who have performed sharaNAgati. aDiyEn recounts an incident that took place when aDiyEn went to the temple of Lord VaradarAja to offer prostrations. That morning, there was not much of a crowd and thus aDiyE could enjoy the sevai in solitude. It happened to be a kaNNADi arai sevai on a Hasta nakshatram day. The Bhattar Svamin welcomed aDiyEn for sevai. aDiyEn rendered a few stotrams by way of tribute to Lord VaradarAja while offering prostration. aDiyEn happened to go empty handed. However, such was aDiyEn's bhAgyam that the Arcakar Svamin gave aDiyEn the flowers submitted to Lord Varadaraja and fruits offered as neivedyam. aDiyEn was thrilled to receive this anugraham and thought even though aDiyEn had gone to the Temple empty-handed, the compassion of Varadaraja conferred a great blessing. However, upon completing this upanyAsam, aDiyEn realizes that aDiyEn did not go empty-handed. aDiyEn had a great sin-pile that was submitted by way of offering to Lord VaradarAja. The grace of Daya Devi ensured its acceptance and the result was the anugraham from Him. In a like manner, it is aDiyEn's sincere wish that all of us are rid of our sins by Daya Devi and become fitting receptacles for the grace of Lord Srinivasa, and conclude the exposition of this verse."

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

"Oh Mother Daya Devi! What is it that I can offer for Your mahopakAram towards me? I only have my huge sin-pile, which I enthusiastically submit to You by way of a food offering. However, despite the lowly nature of this offering, You take to it with great relish and devour it. It seems that this large offering is insufficient for You. In spite of consuming it all without leaving behind a single morsel, literally by licking with Your tongue every bit, You appear famished. You are supported by Lord Srinivasa. Two points of note should be observed:

1. The usage that Daya Devi appears famished is Svami Desikan's ninda stuti for Daya Devi. It appears as though Svami Desikan seems to scold Daya Devi for appearing famished. However, in reality he is wonderstruck by Her ability to destroy the most enormous of sin-piles as if it were trivial and even more so since Daya Devi exudes affection for these jivans despite their sins.

2. This verse can give the misleading interpretation of doSha bhogyatvam for Daya Devi due to the usage of partaking of the sin-pile offering with great relish. This is not so. Neither does it afford the jivan the license to indulge in sinful acts at will so that a generous offering can be made to Daya Devi. In fact, Svami Desikan

cautions against committing any sinful act upon the performance of Prapatti and discusses this issue in great detail in the Srimad Rahasyatrayaasaram. This verse is instead intended to highlight the glory of sharaNAgati, which is capable of destroying the most heinous of sins. Therefore, there is absolutely no place for doSha bhogyatvam in this context.”



Sloka 98

जह्याद्वृषाचलपतिः प्रतिघेऽपि न त्वां
घर्मोपतप्त इव शीतळतामुदन्वान् ।
सा मामरुन्तुदभरन्यसनानुवृत्तिः
तद्वीक्षणैः स्पृश दये तव केळिपद्मैः ॥९८॥

jahyAdvR^iShAchalapatiH pratighe(a)pi na tvAM
gharmopatapta iva shItaLAtAmudanvAn|
sA mAmaruntudabharanyasanAnuvR^ittiH
tadvIkShaNaiH spR^isha daye tava keLipadmaiH| |98



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

“The previous verse highlighted the offering of the sin-piles as a food offering, which was joyfully accepted by Daya Devi, resulting in their destruction. Furthermore, it was pointed out that there is absolutely no place for dosha bhogyatvam in this context. Instead, the correct purport was documented as one of Daya Devi ruthlessly destroying the sin-pile of sharaNAGatAs, rendering them perfect receptacles for the grace of Lord Srinivasa. There is an inherent flaw with the dosha bhogyatvam concept. Specifically, it encourages one to commit more and more sins since a large offering can be made to Daya Devi. This is only detrimental to one’s sharaNAGati as Svami Desikan outlines the code of conduct in the **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** for Prapannas in the post-prapatti period. Therefore, the correct perspective is that no matter how great one’s sin-pile is, Daya Devi ensures its destruction upon their performance of sharaNAGati. The implication is that even for such a being who has an enormous sin-pile, Daya Devi exudes Her affection. Daya Devi is quite delighted to hear Svami Desikan’s tribute in this regard. This is due to the fact that Svami Desikan’s verses in this decad explain fairly complicated and intricate messages from the shastras in a simple-to-understand manner. Daya Devi now desires to hear more of the exposition of the shastraic messages and thereby hear Her praise from Svami Desikan. Motivated by this thought Daya Devi posits a question to Svami Desikan “Oh Svami! You have glorified Me in 97 verses. In reality these need to be directed elsewhere. Indeed



Sri Daya Devi has persuasive command on Lord SriNivAsa!

you have performed sharaNAgati to Me for moksham in verse 60 and again in the tribute “vishvopakAramiti nAma sadA duhAnAm” you have again resorted to Me for Prayaschitta Prapatti seeking relief from buddhipUrvaka pApam. Again, in the salutation “santanyamAnamaparAdhagaNam vicintya” you have sought My help to destroy the sins that cause you to indulge in buddhipUrvaka pApam. Although you have requested Me for help with these items, I am merely a quality (guNam), that seeks refuge in Lord Srinivasa. Therefore, everything that you have submitted to Me rightfully needs to be submitted to Lord Srinivasa. Don’t you agree?” Svami Desikan is quite shaken by these words of Daya Devi. How could he be wrong in directing his tribute to Daya Devi in 97 verses? A practical example helps illustrate the matter more clearly. A husband and wife both go to work. When it comes to matters of the house, sometimes they act independently, while at other times they arrive at a decision after discussion. In a like manner, we may appreciate the role of Daya Devi.

To start with Daya is a guNam (quality). However, the equivalence of Daya to Mahalakshmi Thayar has been established. Using this equivalence, Svami Desikan rendered 97 verses in Her praise. However, even if Daya Devi declares that She is a mere guNam, a few other associations need to be made. In a day-to-day setting, if someone approached the lady of the house for help with something, she would state that this will be done after she consults with her husband, due to a pact that she has with him. However, it does not imply that she is incapable of satisfying the request. Neither is the request to her a waste. This is merely a manner of according respect to the man of the house. However, there are other instances where the need is immediate and struggling individuals approach the lady of the house for help with their suffering. Here, she cannot afford to wait until her husband’s arrival and instead she needs to act immediately. In such an instance, she rushes to the succor of the suffering individual right away. In another instance, if an utsavam for perumal arrives at one’s doorstep when the man of the house is away, the lady of the house would not desist from offering something by way of food to the Lord due to the fact that her husband is away. If she does so, the man of house will only rebuke her for the lapse. Likewise, if a great BhAgavata arrives at one’s house when the man of the house is away, it is the duty of the lady of the house to render atithi satkAram to the BhAgavata and not wait for the arrival of her husband. Thus, in some instances the lady of the house acts independently while in others she demonstrates her complete dependence on her husband. In the context of Daya Devi, the question that arises is whether She can act independently or if She is completely dependent on Lord Srinivasa. Is She capable of protecting those who

perform sharaNAgati at Her feet? In this instance Daya Devi seems to suggest that while She is quite delighted by Svami Desikan's tribute, She is incapable of granting everything that he has sought and that he needs to submit the same request to Lord Srinivasa. This is akin to approaching an influential figure in an organization for help. The individual patiently hears the request and tributes from the seeker. After the seeker has finished and made the request, the individual states that he is no longer affiliated with that organization and is therefore unable to render the help that is sought. Thus, someone else needs to be approached. The seeker would be quite discouraged by the wasted effort and would exhibit a great deal of regret. Daya Devi is quite anxious to test Svami Desikan's disposition in this regard and hence Her question to Svami Desikan. Svami Desikan's reply is documented in verse 98.

Prior to delving into the exposition of the verse, it is important to understand the relationship between Mahalakshmi Thayar and Lord Srinivasa. This relationship is denoted by "apR^ithak siddha visheShaNam", namely Lord Srinivasa and Mahalakshmi are inseparable from each other. This is best understood from Svami NammAzhvar's mangalasasanam for Lord Srinivasa through the tribute "akalakillEn iRayum enRu alarmElmankai uRai mArbA". This salutation attests to the fact that Thayar is never separated from Lord Srinivasa even for a moment. If one looks for the visheSham for Lord Srinivasa, it is His role as the Supreme Brahman, engaged in the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe as described by the Vedas. Likewise, His status as shriyaH pati confers upon Him another unique visheSham. Thus, it is a lakShaNam for Lord Srinivasa. In a like manner, the relationship between Daya Devi and Lord Srinivasa is one of "apR^ithak siddha visheShaNam". Even if Daya is considered as a mere guNam, it is impossible to behold Her without Lord Srinivasa. The relationship between Lord Narayana and Mahalakshmi Thayar is further expounded upon in the **Srimad Ramayanam** through the tribute "bhAskareNa prabhA yathA". The Sun cannot be separated from its radiance. In a like manner, one can never separate Lord Rama from Sita Devi. Svami Desikan describes the relationship in the **MahAvIra Vaibhavam** tribute "praBhAvAn sltayA devya paramavyoma bhAskaraH" So too Daya Devi is inseparable from Lord Srinivasa. Thus, if one pays tribute to Daya Devi it is equivalent to glorifying Lord Srinivasa and vice versa. Using this shastraic support Svami Desikan answers Daya Devi with the statement that "I have not done anything wrong in glorifying You. There is nothing that is out of reach for You. I have not performed sharaNAgati to You in the manner of Lord Rama performing sharaNAgati to Samudra Raja. This is due to the fact that the shAstram explicitly forbids performance of sharaNAgati to



Please devise a scheme to touch me with the
glances of the Lord's eyes

one that is incapable of protecting the supplicant. If such an act is undertaken it is doomed to failure. This is the reason for Lord Rama's unsuccessful sharaNAgati to Samudra Raja. Even today, when one visits TirupullANI, Lord Rama is seen as **darbha shayanar** reflecting the austerity He undertook in the performance of sharaNAgati. Svami Desikan argues that his sharaNAgati is not performed at the feet of an incapable person, implying that Daya Devi is a pre-eminent personage." This message from the shAstram is captured in this Daya Satakam verse which is "jahyAdvR^iShAchalapatiH pratighe(a)pi na tvAM gharmopatapta iva shItaLAtAmudanvAn sA mAmaruntudabharanyasanAnuvR^ittiH tadvIkShaNaH spR^isha daye tava keLipadmaiH". The implication here is that one who is ignorant of the shAstrams can be easily fooled by the words of Daya Devi. However, not Svami Desikan, who has mastered the shAstras. Svami Desikan explicitly states that "I am fully aware of Your prowess, oh Daya Devi! Therefore, it is inappropriate for You to use these words." No doubt Lord Srinivasa grants all fruits in keeping with the Vedanta Sutra statement "**phalam atha upapattateH**" Yagam, dhAnam, and Karmam are undertaken. Yagams are directed towards specific deities. However, when it comes to conferring the fruits of the Yagams, it is not the deities themselves that confer this. Instead, it is the supreme Lord Narayana, who is resident as the indweller in these deities. This fact is well documented in the shastras. When it comes to Karmas, we need to go no further than the **Godha Stuti** tribute "**karmAnubandhi phaladAnaratasya bhartuH**" of Svami Desikan to understand that Lord Narayana alone confers the fruits of all Karmas. Thus, He becomes the Phala **pradAta**. Daya Devi's question is motivated by these statements from the shAstram, which unequivocally state that Lord Narayana alone grants all fruits. Svami Desikan agrees with this statement of Daya Devi but notes eloquently that a tribute/request to Her is the same as submitting the tribute/request to Lord Srinivasa. Thus, it makes no difference whether the benefit is requested of Daya Devi or Lord Srinivasa. This subtle point may be lost on those who are not well versed with the Shastrams but not Svami Desikan. Therefore, Svami Desikan appeals to Daya Devi to desist from this attempt. Thus Svami Desikan quite emphatically states that "Having performed sharaNAgati to You, oh Daya Devi! even if You instruct me to perform sharaNAgati to Lord Srinivasa, I shall not do this." This is due to the fact that performance of sharaNAgati is dictated by the **brahmAstra nyAyam**. It must be remembered that the BrahmAstra can only be used once against an individual. When invoked again, it loses its efficacy. Due to the BrahmAstra nyAyam that prevails, once sharaNAgati is performed at the feet of Daya Devi, who is inseparable from Lord Srinivasa, another sharaNAgati for the



Daya Devi is delighted by our sharaNAgati to Her Lord!

same purpose to Lord Srinivasa is forbidden. Therefore, SVami Desikan quite emphatically states that he will not undertake the performance of sharaNAgati for Moksham to Lord Srinivasa. To illustrate his position, Svami Desikan uses an example from the MahAbhArata. King Shantanu was the father of Bhishma. After his demise and attaining Svarga lokam, he wanted to test the sincerity with which Bhishma performed the rites for the pitrus. During the performance of shrAddham, the piNDam needs to be submitted by placing it on the ground. However, in this instance when Bhishma was performing the shrAddham, Shantanu stretched out his hand as if to ask for the piNDam. Bhishma was performing the shrAddham with utmost devotion, which pleased Shantanu. Therefore, rather than placing the piNDam on the ground, Shantanu thought it would be more appropriate to accept this offering in his hand. The shAstram is unequivocal in instructing us to regard departed ancestors as pitR^is and provide offerings accordingly. The shAstrams explicitly forbid regarding them as anyone else and making concessions. Knowing the shAstram fully well, Bhishma did not make the offering in Shantanu's hand. Instead, he placed the piNDam on the ground. This instance is intended to highlight Bhishma's knowledge of the shAstras and his steadfastness in practicing the shAstraic mandates. In a like manner, Svami Desikan too illustrates an important meaning from the shAstras in this context. "sakR^it kR^ita shAstra" is the dictum for sharaNAgati indicating that it must only be performed once. A second sharaNAgati for the same purpose is thus expressly forbidden. In accordance with Svami Desikan's tribute "prAyaH prapadhane pumsAm paunAH puNyam nivAraNam" sharaNAgati has to be performed only once. Specifically with respect to this tribute, Svami Desikan enjoys the anubhavam of Lord RanganAtha, whose hand is in a slightly raised posture (abhaya mudra) indicating that performance of sharaNAgati once is sufficient and that a repeat performance for the same purpose is unnecessary. The implication is that Lord RanganAtha needs no reminder that the supplicant has performed surrender and that Lord RanganAtha will redeem him at the appropriate time. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse Svami Desikan is conveying the same message in that sharaNAgati to Daya Devi has been performed, which is equivalent to a surrender to Lord Srinivasa. Thus a repeat sharaNAgati is forbidden. Therefore, the tribute "jahyAdvR^iShAchalapatiH pratighe(a)pi na tvAM gharmopatapta iva shItaLAtAmudanvAn" from this Daya Satakam verse indicates that Lord Srinivasa is never separated from Daya Devi. "pratighe(a)pi tvAM na jahyAdvR^iShAchalapatiH" is the anvaya kramam (prose order) for this tribute. This mirrors the salutation from Svami NammAzhvar's mangalasasanam "akalakiEn iRayum enRu alarmEl mankai uRai mArbA". The Azhvar's tribute indicates that

Lord Srinivasa is never separated from Daya Devi



Thayar is never separated from Lord Srinivasa even for a moment. In this instance, Svami Desikan reverses the order and states that Lord Srinivasa is never for a moment separated from Daya Devi. “**pratigham**” denotes anger. Daya Devi is never given to anger. Only the Lord can get angry at times. Does this imply the absence of Daya in those instances? Svami Desikan declares in this verse most definitely not. Even in times of anger, Lord Srinivasa is never separated from Daya Devi. This can be understood from the Ramayanam. After Sita Devi was kidnapped by Ravana, Lord Rama arrives at the hermitage. He searches everywhere for Sita Devi and cannot find Her. He enquires pleadingly of the Vana Devatas, the beasts of the forest and the trees if they saw Sita. After getting no clues of any kind, Lord Rama in a fit of anger declares that He would turn the earth upside down in His attempt to locate Sita Devi. Lakshmana calms down Lord Rama with words to the effect that intellect rather than emotions should guide His actions. The extraordinary rage displayed by Lord Rama was intended to highlight His position as “**AtmAnaM mAnuShaM manye rAmaM dasharathAtmajam**” (I am a mere mortal, the son of Dasharatha even though all the Devas including Brahma declare that I am the Supreme Being). Thus, it was an act intended to conform with the conduct of normal human beings. It is not as if the all-knowing Lord was unaware of the happenings (kidnapping of Sita by Ravana). Nor did it take away from His ability to retrieve Her in a trice without lifting His finger. Neither does it mean that Sita was separated from Him although externally it appears as if He is grieving over the separation. However, in His avataram as Rama, He displayed all the emotions of a normal human being. Lord Krishna’s anger is described in the salutation “**dhyapatet pR^itivishlyata**”. When questioned about whether His promise would hold true or not, Lord Krishna was greatly angered. Specifically, He states that when it comes to upholding His assurance to those who have surrendered to Him, even if the world turns upside down with the skies meeting the earth, His promise to sharaNAgatAs will be upheld. Again, in this instance during the time of anger, Lord Krishna was not separated from Daya Devi. The anger came about due to His anxiety to protect those who have surrendered to Him rather than out of a desire to destroy someone. Sometimes the man of the house may exhibit a stern disposition towards his children and may seem to be quite harsh. However, internally, his love for the children exceeds even that of his wife-the mother of the children. The harsh disposition is intended to convey the message that he cannot be taken for granted by the children and that no leniency will be shown when it comes to non-conformance with rules of the house. Thus, even the Lord’s anger is merely an external display and not His essential nature. The message of this Daya



Satakam verse is that even during those times of anger, Daya never leaves the Lord. Svami Desikan makes the point by way of an example in this context through the tribute “gharmopatapta iva shItaLAtAmudanvAn”. udanvan denotes the ocean. In the scorching summer heat with no trace of rain, even the ocean waters seem hot at the surface. However, the coolness inherent to the ocean waters becomes apparent when one gets deeper into the ocean. Thus, the heat in the ocean waters is superficial, while internally, the ocean retains its coolness. Likewise, when one goes to a lake for snAnam early in the evening, the surface waters may seem hot. However, taking an immersion a little deeper gives a soothing feeling from the cool waters. In a like manner, the essential nature of Lord Srinivasa is one of Daya. Superficially like the hot ocean water, He may seem angry. However, His inherent nature is replete with compassion much like the same ocean water. Thus, Svami Desikan establishes the position that even in times of anger, Lord Srinivasa is never separated from Daya Devi. This establishes the “apR^ithak siddha visheShaNam” characterizing the relationship between Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi. Thus, it is apparent that an appeal submitted to Daya Devi is equivalent to the same appeal submitted to Lord Srinivasa. Specifically, sharaNAgati undertaken at the feet of Daya Devi is equivalent to sharaNAgati performed to Lord Srinivasa. Svami Desikan therefore answers Daya Devi’s question with irrefutable shAstraic support and firmly states that he cannot perform another sharaNAgati for the same purpose to Lord Srinivasa. Daya Devi is quite pleased with Svami Desikan’s answer. However, She submits once more “There is one thing that is quite bothersome to Me. It is the repeated performance of sharaNAgati. This has been done once for the purpose of gaining Moksham. However, after this you engage in sinful acts and each time perform sharaNAgati by way of expiation. It greatly pains Me when you submit to Me that I must redeem you from these repeated sinful acts.” The appearance of those submitting to Daya Devi an appeal for sharaNAgati is described in the tribute “sA mAmaruntudabharanyasanAnuvR^ittiH” of this Daya Satakam verse. This tribute captures the fact that the supplicant is utterly helpless and incapable of protecting himself due to lack of knowledge and lack of strength. Furthermore, the individual declares that he has nothing in his possession and is therefore in abject poverty. Furthermore, he does not have any other recourse besides Lord Srinivasa/Daya Devi (in this instance). The implication of Daya Devi’s statement is that it is extremely distressing for Her to behold these suffering jivans arriving before Her and seeking Her help. The message from the salutation “sA mAmaruntudabharanyasanAnuvR^ittiH” indicates that the request for a repeat prapatti (Prayaschitta Prapatti) causes a lot of distress for Daya Devi. An analogy is

useful to understand Daya Devi's position in this regard. If one approaches a person of authority for help and receives the requested assistance, and then later on arrives at the door of the same person complaining that a number of difficulties arose and that the help rendered did not serve the purpose, it becomes infuriating to the person of authority. In fact, even the approach a second time is wrong on all counts. Due to the fact that they have been helped once by the person of authority, they should not return again seeking the same favor. The help rendered too should be of such magnitude that the recipient does not return seeking the same favor again. This is termed as vaLLal in Tamil - namely fulfilling. Thus, in the context of Daya Devi's predicament, when one who has received Her anugraham returns again seeking the same help from Her, it implies that there was something lacking in Her original help. This causes Her great distress since She has showered Her grace in a most benevolent manner the first time. Thus, in a pointed manner Daya Devi addresses Svami Desikan "Oh Svami! The repeat performance of sharaNAGati causes Me great distress. I am unable to withstand this, since it implies that something was lacking when I accepted and graced the first Prapatti." This raises the important question of whether performance of Prayaschitta Prapatti is not required. It is not that Prayaschitta Prapatti should not be undertaken but instead it is a submission to eliminate the causes for buddhipUrvaka pApam, namely papArambaka papam. In fact, this is part of our daily prayer while rendering the nyAsa dashakam salutation "nityaM niraparAdheShu kaimkaryeShu niyu~NkShvamAm". No doubt we need to be engaged in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This body is conferred upon us precisely to engage in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. "vyarthaM vikShu vayaM gataH" is a statement of intense regret. Upon awaking, one must feel that the time until yesterday was wasted. So much kaimkaryam could have been undertaken in this time. At least from now on more opportunities for Bhagavad kaimkaryam should arise and cause us to engage in them. This is known as nirveda kArikai. Our elders have instituted a practice of reciting this while uttering the verse "shloka trayaM idaM puNyam". This can be found in the ahnika grantham of Svami Sri Tirukkutantai Deshikan. The import of these three verses is that the Lord should come to our rescue in the manner of His gracing Gajendra. Further, we should be blessed with the suitability to render kaimkaryam to Lord Narayana. Finally, this day should not be wasted. Instead, it should be put to use in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam for which we seek Lord Narayana's grace. During such an instance, we should not incur the wrath of Lord Narayana and approach Him with the request for forgiveness of the transgression. Thus, the statement of Daya Devi is intended to denote that one must seek kaimkaryam which does not incur any

apacharams and does not in any way preclude the performance of Prayaschitta Prapatti. The tribute “sA mAmaruntudabharanyasanAnuvR^ittiH” denotes the fact that Daya Devi enquires of Svami Desikan “Given this state of Mine what do you recommend needs to be done?” The tribute “tadvIkShaNaiH spR^isha daye tava keLipadmaiH” is Svami Desikan’s response. This denotes the fact that Lord Srinivasa’s eye-glances are at the command of Daya Devi. This is visualized as a lotus, which is held like a toy in Daya Devi’s hand to attract those dear to Her (sharaNagatAs) and soothe them with the touch of this lotus. The act of creation of the universe is a sport engaged in by Lord Srinivasa. However, this is engaged in only at the command of Daya Devi. The inner meaning of this tribute is that Svami Desikan desires the soothing touch of the lotus denoted by the Kataksham of Lord Srinivasa, which is subject to the command of Daya Devi. The lotus is itself held as a toy in the hand of Daya Devi.



tadvIkShaNaiH spR^isha daye tava keLipadmaiH

In verse 25 of the DevanAyaka PancAshat Svami Desikan describes the compassionate eye-glances of Lord DevanAyaka through the tribute “vishvAbhirakShaNa vihArakR^itakShaNaiste vaimAnikAdhipa viDambita

mugdhapadmaiH amodavAhibhiranAmaya vAkya garbhaIH
ardrIbhavAmyamR^itavarShanibhairapA~NgaiH” (Lord DevanAyaka is engaged in the sport of protecting the universe. His intent is that no being in the universe should suffer. For this purpose, He need not move mountains. Instead, His compassionate eye-glances falling upon these beings would suffice. The eye-glances are like a lotus. It is replete with coolness, softness and a pleasing fragrance. The fragrance of the Lord’s eye-glances is different from that of an ordinary flower. It confers the benefit of Bhagavad kaimkaryam in the aprAkR^ita (bereft of prakR^iti sambandham and replete with shuddha satvam) deshAm of Sri Vaikuntam. It destroys our sins. Not only that, the eye-glances of Devanayaka seem to enquire about the well-being of the Bhakta. Svami Desikan declares here that he is drenched in the nectarine shower of the eye-glances of Devanayaka as a result.) Similarly, Tirukacchi Nambi seeks to be drenched by the compassionate eye-glances of Lord VaradarAja in the DevarAja AShTakam tribute “tvadIkShaNa sudhAsindhuvIcivikShepashIkaraiH kAruNyamArutAnItaiH shItalairabhiShi~ncamAm”. Another important meaning to be gained from this Daya Satakam verse is from the tribute “gharmopataпта iva shItaLAtAmudanvAn”. The usage upa denotes in close proximity. In this instance that which is in close proximity to the ocean is the sand on the ocean bank. In this context, the heat from the sand is transferred to the surface waters of the ocean. However, the inherent nature of the ocean water is one of coolness. In a like manner, even if Lord Srinivasa is greatly angered by our transgression, it is only temporary. Due to His association with Daya Devi, this anger results in a light punishment. Thus, it does not take away from His essential nature of utmost compassion for all beings. The second point of note is that surrender performed at the feet of Lord Srinivasa is equivalent to performing sharaNAgati to those extremely dear to Him-in this case AcAryAs. Thus, a surrender undertaken at the feet of AcAryAs is joyfully accepted by Lord Srinivasa as a surrender to Him. Daya Devi’s delight knows no bounds when She heard the tribute of Svami Desikan from this verse. This is due to the fact that Svami Desikan has highlighted numerous intricate messages from the shAstras in the process of glorifying Her. Her delight is in the manner of parents enjoying the words of their child. She then remarks to Svami Desikan “No doubt your statements here are entirely in accordance with the shAstras. I am never separated from Lord Srinivasa even for a moment. A sharaNAgati performed to Me is equivalent to sharaNAgati performed at the feet of Lord Srinivasa. However, after performing sharaNAgati to Me and then submitting the request for PrAyaschitta Prapatti, again and again you indulge in uttaratra (post-prapatti transgressions) and seek the destruction of



Traivan Arul

sA mAmaruntudabharanyasanAnuvR[^]ittiH

pApArambaka pApam (those sins that prompt one to engage in additional sinful acts). Having done all of this, if you indulge in material pleasures, what comes out of My **abhaya pradAnam** (freedom from fear for you)? You need to ensure that this does not come about.” Svami Desikan reflects long and hard about this instruction from Daya Devi. She is absolutely right in that once Her protection is assured one must be engaged in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam to the exclusion of everything else. Svami Desikan’s reply becomes evident in the next verse.”

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

“Svami Desikan presents a picturesque portrayal here. A preliminary presumption of a possible self-negation by Daya Devi is conveyed. By way of a pre-emptive strike, Svami Desikan conceives a sambhAShaNam (constructive dialog) between Daya Devi and himself, wherein Daya Devi remarks “You want everything and address Me with great reverence. However, I am a mere abstract quality conveniently invested with a sentience and assigned the designation Daya Devi. Therefore, please address your tribute and request to Lord Srinivasa in whom I have sought refuge.” This is quite late in the day since Daya Devi has enjoyed 97 verses in Her praise and elects to protest now. Thanks to Her self-avowal we have a most beautiful poem glorifying Her role and persuasive command on Lord Srinivasa. Svami Desikan’s response is briefly summarized. “Lord Srinivasa is like a vast ocean that retains its coolness at the bottom even in the face of the worst summer heat. Even in moments of wrath with respect to any transgressions, He has deep-rooted Daya. Without You He cannot function. You are an essential constituent to His Lordship. The pramANam referenced here is “**shraddhayA devaH devatvam aShnute**”. I know Your feelings. You are grievously pained by anyone taking Prapatti lightly and repeating it - as if it were to follow every grievous sin, carefully, and deliberately designed and executed. You are completely justified. However, You are a discerning judge of human weakness. You must do me a favor. You must devise a scheme to touch me with the glances of the Lord’s eyes, which are but toy flowers that You sport in Your hand. If His eye-glances, which are the lovely lotuses in Your hands, touch me due to Your initiative, I become relieved. I enjoy Srinivasa Daya in full.”



Sloka 99

दृष्टेऽपि दुर्बलधियं दमनेऽपि दृप्तं
स्नात्वाऽपि धूलिरसिकं भजनेऽपि भीमम् ।
बद्ध्वा गृहाण वृषशैल पतेर्दये मां
त्वद्धारणं स्वयमनुग्रहं शृङ्गलाभिः ॥९९॥

dR^iShTe(a)pi durbala dhiyaM damane(a)pi dR^iptaM
snAtvA(a)pi dhUlirasikaM bhajane(a)pi bhlmam |
baddhvA gR^ihANa vR^iShashaila paterdaye mAM
tvadvAraNaM svayam anugraha shR^i~NgaAbhiH | 99



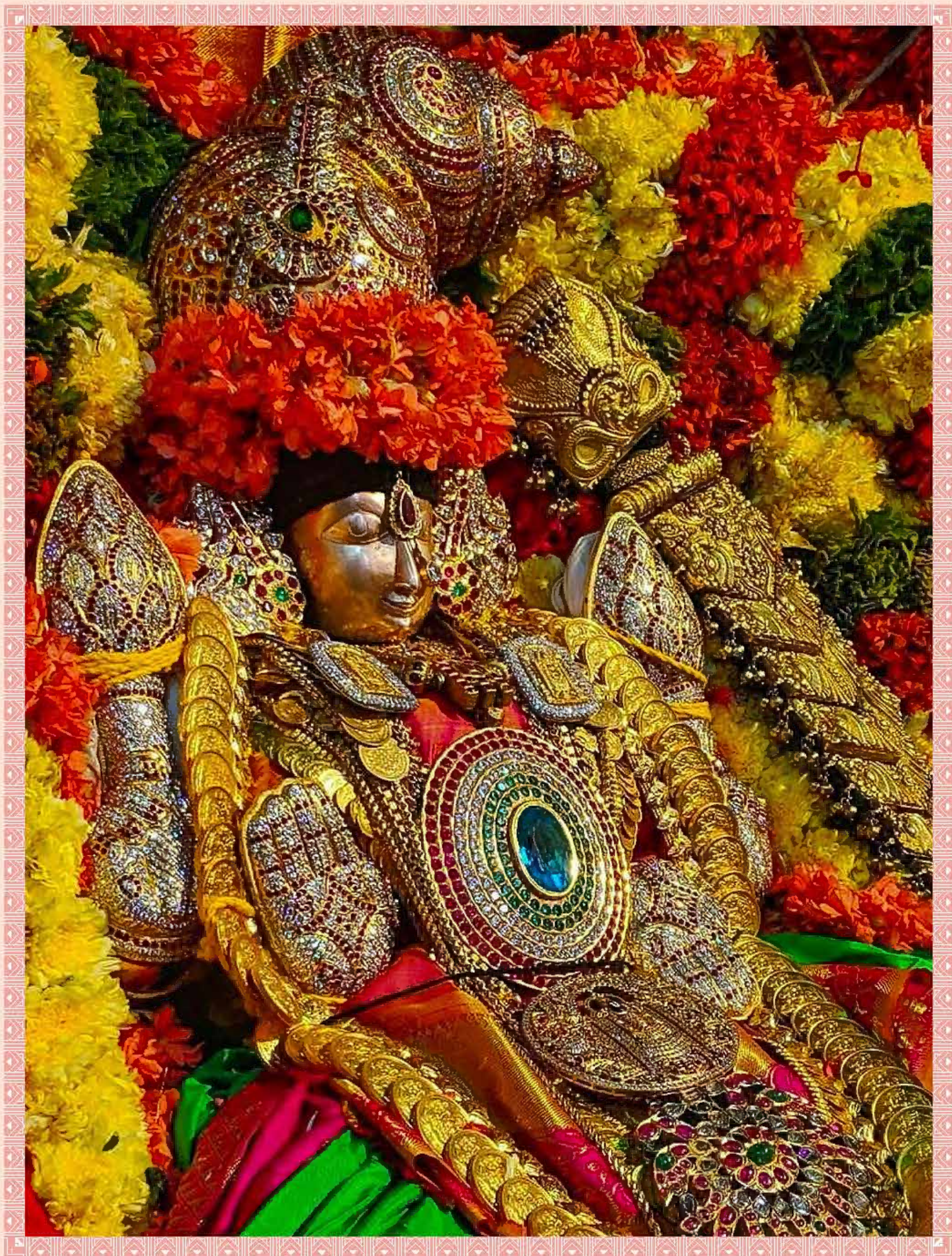
We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin:

“This verse is “dR^iShTe(a)pi durbala dhiyaM damane(a)pi dR^iptaM snAtvA(a)pi dhUlirasikaM bhajane(a)pi bhlmam baddhvA gR^ihANa vR^iShashaila paterdaye mAM tvadvAraNaM svayam anugraha shR^i~NgaAbhiH.” Svami Desikan describes himself as an elephant on a rampage. The elephant has a close associate - the mahout or controller. In this instance Svami Desikan conceives himself to be the elephant belonging to the mahout, Daya Devi. Thus, it becomes Her duty to protect this elephant. The sambodhanam in this verse is “vR^iShashailapateH daye!” (Oh Daya Devi of Lord Srinivasa). The tribute “dR^iShTe(a)pi durbala dhiyaM” denotes the fact that the elephant on a rampage has lost all sense of discernment. Thus, the elephant is unable to recognize what is good and what is bad. Without discrimination of any kind, the elephant is on a mission of destruction. Even food offering, which is good for the elephant, is disregarded in this case due to its state. The salutation “damane(a)pi dR^iptaM” denotes the whip wielded by the mahout to control the elephant. Despite repeated whiplashes from the mahout, the elephant is in no mood to yield. The tribute “snAtvA(a)pi dhUlirasikaM” refers to the fact that despite being bathed by the mahout to cleanse the beast, upon reaching the bank, the elephant rolls in dirt due to its rampaging state. Thus, even though the elephant has been given a cleansing bath, in an instant it becomes dirty again. The only recourse, therefore, is to chain the beast with strong cuffs from which the elephant cannot break free and tie it up.

Svami Desikan describes his state in terms of this analogy. It must also be noted that Svami Desikan describes himself as the elephant belonging to Daya Devi. It must be noted that Svami Desikan being blemishless himself takes on the role of a commoner to highlight our plight. What is our plight? We have been bestowed with the shastras in order to lead our lives in the proper manner. The shastras provide specific instructions on how to lead our lives. It exhorts us to always speak the truth, never to miss performance of Sandhyavandanam, and not to incur BhAgavata apacharam. However, the term “dR^iShTe(a)pi” denotes that despite having the shastras in front of us, we exhibit a total disregard for them and lead our lives in manner that is completely opposed to the shastras. This is captured by the usage “api”. Thus, the term “dR^iShTe(a)pi” highlights behavior that is completely opposite to what is recommended by the shastras. The shastraic messages have been reinforced by our elders who go to great lengths to explain their import to us. Having heard this exposition, the first act engaged in is that of BhAgavata apacharam.

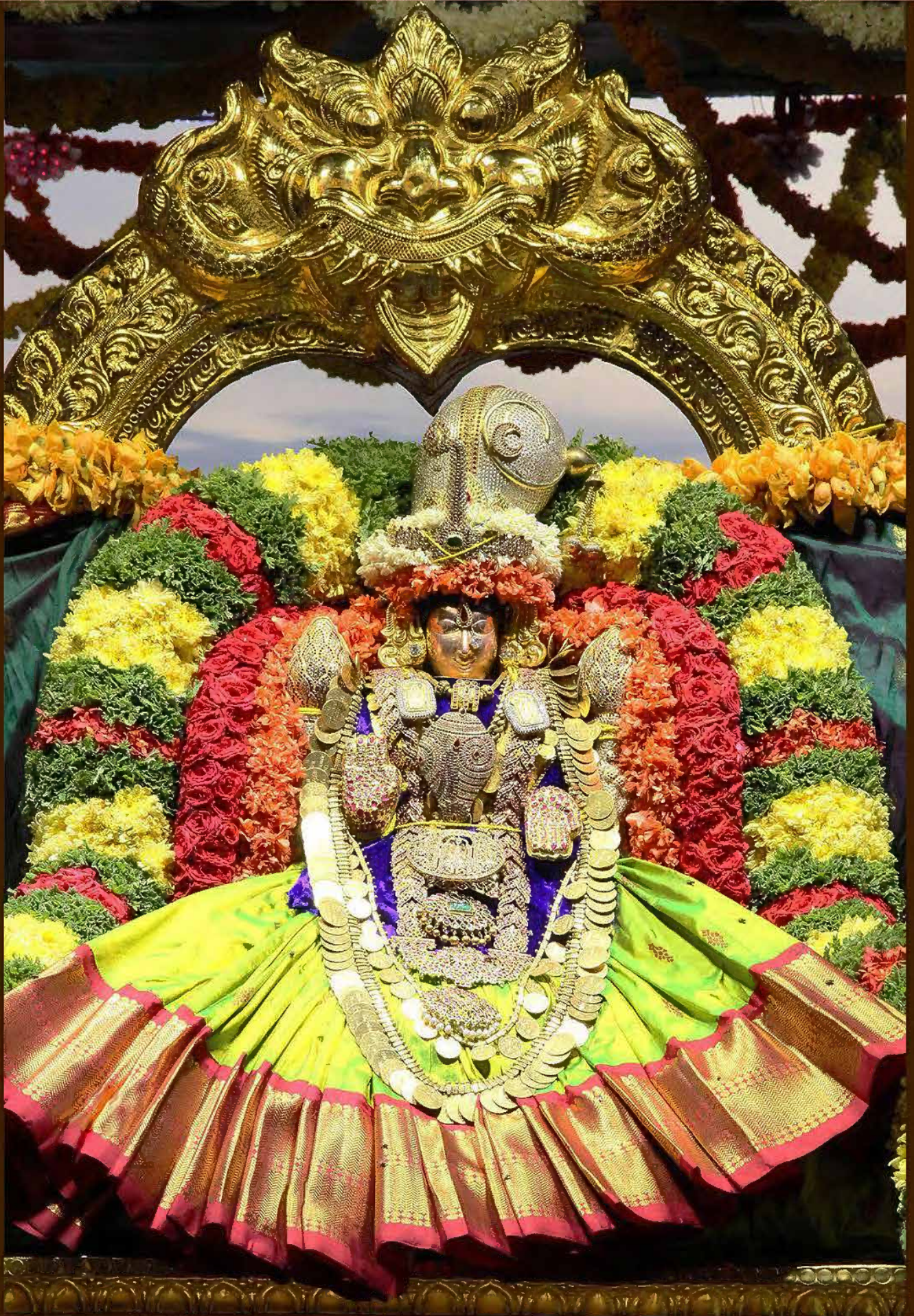
For example, if one is awaiting the purohita for performance of a religious rite and the latter is late in coming, immediately the former remarks “These Vaidikas do not have consistency in their behavior. They promise to come at a certain time but always arrive an hour later. How is it possible for me to perform the religious rite and then go to work?”. In this process, one does not take into account an unexpected circumstance or a traffic jam that has delayed the Vaidika. Thus, the maximum abuse is heaped upon the Vaidika. Even when the purohita explains the circumstances that caused the delay one continues the tirade with the statement “Is it only you that has commitments and special circumstances? What about my needs to be in the office at a certain time?”.

However, the first instruction we receive from our Acharyas is that BhAgavata apacharams of this kind should be avoided. However, despite this advice, we seem to be steeped in BhAgavata apacharam every moment of our lives. This is true even of Vaidikas and not restricted to mere common folk. Despite the instruction from the shastram to avoid BhAgavata apacharam and the message being reinforced by advice from Acharyas, one’s intellect (buddhi) is clouded due to a cluttered mind. Just as the rampaging elephant discards the food offering, we too discard the instruction from the shastras and advice of Acharyas, even though they are intended for our well-being. The import is that even though the food offered is good for the elephant it is discarded. In a like manner, we too exhibit a total disregard for the shastraic instruction, which is intended to ensure our welfare.



The shastras further instruct us through the messages “mAtR^i devo bhava pitR^i devo bhava AcArya devo bhava atithi devo bhava” How many guests have we entertained? Our elders have routinely engaged in this practice of feeding a guest or two on a daily basis prior to partaking of food. They have ensured that a child or two from a poor family is afforded the opportunity for education and have been raised as part of their family. We must appreciate that these acts of generosity on the part of our elders have kept us in our current state. Thus, only if we undertake acts of charity and kindness can we ensure the well-being of our progeny. Adiyen is heartbroken at the inability to engage in these good acts. Instead of expressing regret for our inability to engage in this type of generosity, we are constantly engaged in BhAgavata apacharam. We do not heed good advice which is intended for our well-being. Instead, we act in a manner that is totally opposed to the shastras. The tribute “dR^iShTe(a)pi durbala dhiyaM damane(a)pi dR^iptaM” denotes the fact that despite punishment being meted out for these acts of BhAgavata apacharam, one remains blissfully ignorant of the fact that these are consequences for sins we have committed. Instead, we seem to engage in additional sinful acts. Despite punishment being meted out the tendency to engage in sinful acts remains unmitigated. There is no resolve to refrain from Bhagavad apacharam, BhAgavata apacharam, and nAnavida apacharam.

Despite all the above flaws, due to some **sukrutam** (good deed engaged in unknowingly), the grace of Daya Devi ensures that we beget Acharya sambandham (contact). As a consequence, SaraNAgati is performed. This act is akin to bathing the rampaging elephant. It may be remembered that the act of SaraNAgati destroys our sins and renders us pure. This is the analogy to bathing the elephant. The dirt in this context refers to our sins. The inner meaning is that performance of SaraNAgati destroys all our sins (**sanchita** and **prArabdha** with the exception of **apyupagata prArabdha karma** - that is the karma that prevails until the end of one's life after performance of SaraNAgati.) After having been cleansed by a bath, the elephant can very well remain clean. However, upon reaching the bank the elephant rolls in dirt thus rendering itself unclean once again. In the context of SaraNAgatas the recommended code of conduct is to engage in Bhagavad and BhAgavata kaimkaryam upon performance of SaraNAgati. This needs to be the singular goal. Namely, to the maximum extent possible from our earnings, we must put it to use for Kaimkaryam for Bhagavan, BhAgavatas, and Acharyas. Instead, we tend to think of how our earnings can enhance our own comfort and indulgence. This is akin to the elephant taking to dirt upon reaching the bank after the bath.



Thus, despite being rid of our sins due to the grace of Acharyas through SaraNAgati, we still engage in satisfaction of base pleasures and desires. This is completely contrary to the prescribed code of conduct for Prapannas. The tribute “bhajane(a)pi bhlmam” describes the fact that the mahout arrives to help the elephant. However, the rampaging elephant exhibits anger towards the mahout. Likewise, with regards to us, it is the exhibition of anger towards BhAgavatas, who come to help us, exhibiting anger towards Daya Devi, who is only interested in our well-being, and exhibiting anger towards Lord Srinivasa. This is known as “aj~nAdhi langanam”. The tribute “baddhvA gR^ihANa vR^iShashailapaterdaye mAM tvad vAraNaM svayam anugraha shR^i~NgalAbhiH” denotes Svami Desikan’s request to Daya Devi to render him shackled in the manner of the elephant being tied by strong chains from which it cannot break free. In this case, the chain that Svami Desikan refers to is the anugraham (grace) of Daya Devi. The inner meaning is that Daya Devi’s grace is overpowering in that once SaraNAgati at Her feet is performed, the individual ceases to engage in anything distracting from Bhagavad-BhAgavata-Acharya Kaimkaryam and does not give in to base desires or pleasures. This is denoted by the restraining chain of the anugraham of Daya Devi. The binding of the elephant needs to be examined further. In this instance the elephant belongs to Daya Devi due to performance of SaraNAgati at Her feet. As a consequence, this elephant gains the status of a crown prince. Specifically, Bharanyasam is the crowning ceremony for the kaimkarya samrajyam that awaits the prapanna at the end of their earthly existence. In this instance, if the elephant goes on a rampage it becomes the responsibility of the owner of the elephant to apply the restraining chain. Thus, Svami Desikan seeks the grace of Daya Devi to ensure blemishless post-prapatti conduct. Therefore, even though our conduct may be similar to that of the rampaging elephant, the restraining shackles of Daya Devi’s grace will ensure that we are not distracted from our pursuit of Bhagavad-BhAgavata-Acharya Kaimkaryam and do not give into distractions of any kind. With this we conclude our exposition of this Daya Satakam verse.”

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

“Oh Daya Devi adorning Lord Srinivasa! I behave like a mad elephant. On first sight, I am weak in intellect and burdened with an inability to discriminate between good and bad. Therefore, I am extremely unreliable. If one were to tame this elephant and control it, its ichorous nature would resist the attempt. If bathed in water, it would only roll on dirty earth. It relishes dirt and unclean things. If approached and cajoled by the master (mahout or good people), it would revolt in a threatening manner. I have described myself thus far. This elephant belongs to

You, Oh Mother Daya Devi! This elephant should not be allowed to languish in this manner. It is risky and quite dangerous for the elephant. Therefore, please lock it with strong shackles. In this case, it is the shackles of Your anugraham. You must do this Yourself by clandestinely approaching me from behind and fasten me with strong shackles. This alone will ensure the well-being of this elephant as well as all others in the universe. A few important points need to be observed here.

1. Enjoy the beauty of the simile.

2. Due to the unique relationship between Daya Devi and the dependent Prapanna, She has to Herself keep the prapanna under control. This is captured by the usage “svayam”. Due to the unique one-to-one relationship between the surrendered Prapanna and Daya Devi, She needs to shackle “Her elephant”. Daya Devi has to do it of Her own volition.

Certain commentators appear to interpret this as implied nirhetuka kR^ipa. Not necessarily. Daya has to protect Her protégé - myself and has to do it Herself. This prayer moves Her. Hence it becomes sahetuka too!”



Sloka 100

नातः परं किमपि मे त्वयि नाथनीयं
मातर्दये मयि कुरुष्व तथा प्रसादम् ।
बद्धादरो वृषगिरि प्रणयी यथाऽसौ
मुक्तानुभूतिमिह दास्यति मे मुकुन्दः ॥ १०० ॥

nAtaH paraM kimapi me tvayi nAthanIyaM
mAtar daye mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam |
baddhAdaro vR^iShagiri praNayI yathA(a)sau
muktAnu bhUtim iha dAsyati me mukundaH | | 100



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

“We now come to verse 100, which is the final verse formally glorifying Daya Devi in this Stotram. The remaining verses document the glory of the Daya Satakam as a **phalashruti** - namely the benefits gained by reciting this majestic stuti. This being the grand finale, Svami Desikan renders a magnificent verse (not to say that the other verses are any less) to conclude his tribute to Daya Devi with a flourish. This is literally an outpouring caused by an overwhelming of his mind and heart by Daya Devi. This verse is “nAtaH paraM kimapi me tvayi nAthanIyaM mAtar daye mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam baddhAdaro vR^iShagiri praNayI yathA(a)sau muktAnu bhUtim iha dAsyati me mukundaH”. We need to recognize that when one undertakes a gargantuan task, one starts with great enthusiasm. Towards the middle unexpected difficulties may be encountered giving rise to a feeling of exhaustion. As one reaches the end, there is a tinge of sadness that the task will be over. This is a feeling that adiyen experiences every year while rendering the Tiruppavai upanyasams in MArgazhi mAsam. At the start, it commences with great enthusiasm. After a week or ten days, the feeling of only completing a portion of this wonderful work of Andal sets in. In fact, adiyen even experiences a fear whether the task can be completed. After the 26th Pasuram, the feeling of sadness nearing completion of the task begins to weigh in. This is true of the 10-day Brahmotsavam for Lord Srinivasa. It starts in a grand manner with great enthusiasm. Progressively, the strain from the effort begins to show typically on

mR^idu hR^idaye daye



days 4-7. Then as the utsavam nears conclusion, the realization sets in that the utsavam will be over shortly and that one cannot enjoy this for another year. Likewise, when it comes to the Daya Satakam, it dawns upon us that Svami Desikan is about to complete this magnificent Stotram. Could he not extend this some more? The reason for this is the unparalleled anubhavam of Svami Desikan. In the previous verse, Svami Desikan described himself as an elephant on a rampage. This elephant pays no heed to what is good and what is intended for its well-being. It lacks the ability to discriminate between good and bad. Either when threatened with punishment or when approached in a kind manner, the elephant pays no heed. Therefore, Svami Desikan implores Daya Devi that the elephant be shackled by the unbreakable chain of Daya Devi's anugraham. Elsewhere, he has described himself as a being that can never be restrained and seeks to be captured in the net known as Daya Devi without any escape route. In reality, Svami Desikan is mirroring the plight of individuals like us, who are caught up in prakR^iti. The inner meaning of these tributes is that we are replete with tamo guNam (evil tendencies). This causes a suppression of satva guNam (good tendencies). Even for one that is predominantly filled with tamo guNam, the grace of Daya Devi is necessary. We may also recall that through the verse "mR^idu hR^idaye daye.." Svami Desikan performed sharaNagati to Daya Devi. Through the tribute "vij~nAta shAsana gatiH.." Svami Desikan also highlighted the importance and role of prAyashcitta prapatti. Then in the verse "santanyamAnamaparAdha gaNaM vicintya...." Svami Desikan submitted a prayer to Daya Devi for destruction of papArambaka pApam (sins that cause one to engage in additional sins). In this manner, Svami Desikan has sought refuge at the feet of Daya Devi and documented that he has no other recourse besides Daya Devi. Daya Devi enjoyed the tributes of Svami Desikan one by one. One such tribute that stands out is "aki~ncana nidhiM sUtiM apavarga trivargayoH a~njanAdrlshvaradayAm abhiShtaumi nira~njanAm". It may also be recalled that Svami Desikan invited prominent guests such as Lord Srinivasa, Mahalakshmi Thayar, Bhumi Devi, Neela Devi, Vishvaksena, Svami NammAzhvar, and Maharishis to the sabha at Tiruvenkatam, where he delivers his magnificent stuti to Daya Devi. The import of the above tribute delivered in the presence of great personages is that Daya Devi is the sole recourse for those who are incapable of adopting the means of j~nAna yogam, karma yogam, and bhakti yogam due to lack of knowledge and strength. They are literally destitute without Daya Devi. Not only that, Daya Devi stands ready to grace those who are well-versed in the shastras, who have Atma j~nAnam. She is willing to grant wealth (aishvaryam), residence in Svargam (AmuShmikam), and kaivalyam to Her seekers. Additionally,

even for those who may not have Atma jñanam, and desire only material benefits, Daya Devi grants them their wishes and in a step-by-step manner causes them to seek moksham. This reflects Her glorification as “āñjanAdrlshvara dayA”. āñjanam denotes collyrium. This is usually a beauty aid for the eyes. However, the āñjanam of Daya Devi reveals svarUpa jñanam (knowledge of our essential nature - one of subservience to Lord Narayana) and causes us to seek refuge at the feet of Lord Srinivasa. Svami Desikan swears before this elite audience that he will glorify Daya Devi to the exclusion of everything else. Svami Desikan commenced his tribute to Daya Devi from verse 11 of the stuti and continued on. In the verse “vR^iShagirigR^ihamedhiguNAH bodha bala ishvara vIrya shakti mukhAH doShAbhaveyurete yadi nAma daye tvayA vinA bhUtAH” Svami Desikan even declares that in the absence of Daya Devi, the other kalyANa guNams verily become flaws (doSha). The import of this verse is that for the Lord’s kalyANa guNams to acquire their rightful status, the association with Daya Devi is mandatory. The usage “bhaveyuH” in this context refers to making the unrealizable remain as is. In this instance it is a guarantee that Daya Devi is forever associated with the guNams of the Lord and thus, they do not become doShams. Furthermore, Daya Devi is the cause for Lord Srinivasa undertaking the activities of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe. She comes to the rescue of the Lord in His times of distress as captured in the verse “karuNe duriteShu mAmakeShu pratikArAntara durjayeShu khinnaH” (Our sins are so great that they overwhelm Lord Srinivasa Himself. At this juncture, He adorns Himself with the protective armour of Daya Devi. Instantly this destroys the sins and renders Tiruvenkatam as the place of victory for Lord Srinivasa (vijaya sthAnam). This is the great upakaram of Daya Devi to Lord Srinivasa.) The major impediment to attaining moksham and engaging in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam is our mountainous sin-pile, which cannot be destroyed by ordinary means. However, when one seeks refuge in Daya Devi, She ensures the destruction of the sin-pile and renders the supplicant fit for moksham. Svami Desikan glorifies Daya Devi in several ways. For example, in the salutation “divyApA~Ngam dishasi karuNe eShu sat deshikAtmA kShipraM prAptA vR^iShagiripatiME kShatrabandhvAdayaste vishvAcAryA vidhi shivamukhAH svAdhikAroparuddhAH manye mAtA jaDa iva sute vatsalA mAdR^Ishe tvam”. Svami Desikan declares that Daya Devi enters the compassionate eye-glances of Acharyas. Once an individual becomes the recipient of these eye-glances, he is assured of moksham - something that has not been possible even for Brahma and Rudra to attain. This comes about due to Daya Devi’s overbearing concern for the Prapanna in the manner of a mother caring for her retarded son. Verse 60 documents Svami

vR^iShagiri praNayI



Desikan's formal surrender to Daya Devi through the tribute "mR^idu hR^idaye daye mR^iditakAmahite mahite..". When the Lord Himself fails to see even a single good act on the part of a supplicant and beholds only their sins, Daya Devi comes to their rescue by highlighting the good acts undertaken by the supplicant. This is captured in the tribute "hitamitijagat dR^iShtyA kluptalH aklupta phalAntaraiH". The verse "bharanyAsacChanna prabala vR^ijina prAbhR^ita bhR^itAM" documents the role of Daya Devi in receiving and destroying the sins which are submitted by way of offering with the cloth cover of Bharanyasam. She does not stop there. She causes Lord Srinivasa to undertake numerous avatarams, Archa and Vibhava including His ten principal avatarams. In keeping with the declaration "kalau venkaTanAyakaH" Lord Srinivasa rids us of the scorching heat generated by the era of kali and graces us. To Daya Devi of such magnificence, Svami Desikan in the tenth decad describes his pitiable state and in each verse of this decad submits a prayer seeking Her grace for his rescue. He specifically requests Daya Devi for fructification of prAyashcitta prapatti, as well as the destruction of pAparambaka pApam and finally, for singular focus on Bhagavad-BhAgavata kaimkaryam without giving into distractions coming about from gratification of the senses. In fact, Svami Desikan declares that it is Daya Devi's responsibility to protect him. Daya Devi is extremely delighted by this rendition of Svami Desikan. Daya Devi reasons to Herself that numerous mahans including Azhvars, Maharishis, and Acharyas have rendered stotrams in praise of Lord Narayana. However, none of them has glorified His Daya separately. On the other hand, Svami Desikan has delivered a most beautiful and elaborate glorification of Daya Devi to the exclusion of all else. Therefore, She needs to grant him something as a reward for his magnificent stuti. She addresses Svami Desikan through the words "Oh Svami! You have rendered a most exquisite Storam exclusively in praise of Me. Therefore, I desire to give you something. What is it that you desire?" Here it must be noted that Daya Devi's offer appears to be pratyupakAram for upakAram from Svami Desikan. If this is the spirit of the offering is pratyupakAram, it becomes a transactional dealing. On the other hand, the anugraham has to be something of a more lasting nature. This is illustrated through an instance from Srlmad RAmAyaNam. After Ravana abducted SitA Devi, Lord Rama in course of time befriended Sugriva and subsequently Hanuman was sent to the southern direction in search of SitA. Having seen SitA Devi, Hanuman returned to Lord Rama's presence and conveyed the good news through the tribute "dR^iShTA SitA". Lord Rama thinks of a way to suitably reward Hanuman for bringing the good news of sighting SitA Devi. He reasons that nothing can adequately reward Hanuman for

ataH paraM kimapi me tvayi
nAthanIyaM



the yeoman efforts and for bringing the good news. Therefore, He reasons that “eSha sarvasya bhUtastu pariShva~Nga hanumataH” to reflect the fact that no matter what He does it would not amount to anything significant compared to the monumental help rendered by Hanuman. Lord Rama decides to embrace Hanuman with His body that has been carefully tended to by SitA Devi as a gesture of giving His entire possession to Hanuman in gratitude. This is reflected in the salutation “eSha sarvasya bhUto”. Saying thus, Lord Rama affectionately embraced Hanuman. This is equivalent to giving His all to Hanuman. This gesture on the part of Lord Rama was intended to highlight the mahopakAram of Hanuman in locating SitA Devi and bringing back the good news of Her sighting. It must also be remembered that the embrace of Hanuman was unique in that nobody else in the RAmAyaNam received this. In a like manner, Daya Devi desires to highlight the magnum opus of Svami Desikan in rendering this majestic Stotram in Her praise and highlight this magnificent work to the universe. Accordingly, She resolves to find out what is it that Svami Desikan intensely desires so that She may grant his wish and bring him great delight. It must also be borne in mind that just as Lord Rama was not satisfied with the embrace of Hanuman (even though this gave His all), due to the fact that Lord Rama felt that no gift on His part can adequately reward Hanuman for his extraordinary act. Daya Devi too in this instance feels that even if She grants Svami Desikan everything he desires, it is not a sufficient reward for his extraordinary task of glorifying Her. This illustrates the state of Svami NammAzhvAr during a particular instance. Svami NammAzhvAr performed his formal sharaNAgati at the feet of Lord Srinivasa in the famous Tiruvaimozhi Pasuram 6.10 “pukazh onRilla aDiyEn un aDikkIzh amarntu pukuntEnE”. (Without recourse to anything else, I seek refuge in Your feet). The inner meaning is that the Azhvar upon performing sharaNAgati at the feet of Lord Srinivasa has no desire for aihika benefits (material wealth and gratification of the senses). Instead, all he desires is the Kaimkarya sAmrAjjam in Srivaikuntam. In fact, even Moksham becomes a by-product of this desire for uninterrupted Kaimkaryam! Lord Srinivasa reasons that the Azhvar has delivered 600 Pasurams so far and desires to hear the remaining 400 Pasurams from the Azhvar himself. This would not be possible if the Azhvar’s request for Moksham is granted right away. The intent of Lord Srinivasa is to enjoy the Azhvar’s Bhagavad anubhavam in the remaining 400 verses rather than any barriers that preclude moksham for the Azhvar, who demonstrated blemishless conduct. The Azhvar is quite surprised that his request for Moksham was not granted immediately. He began to lament this fact in the seventh decad of the Tuvaimozhi. Specifically, in the Pasuram “uNNilAyiya aivarAl kumatIRRI ennai un pAta pa~Nkayam naNNiLA

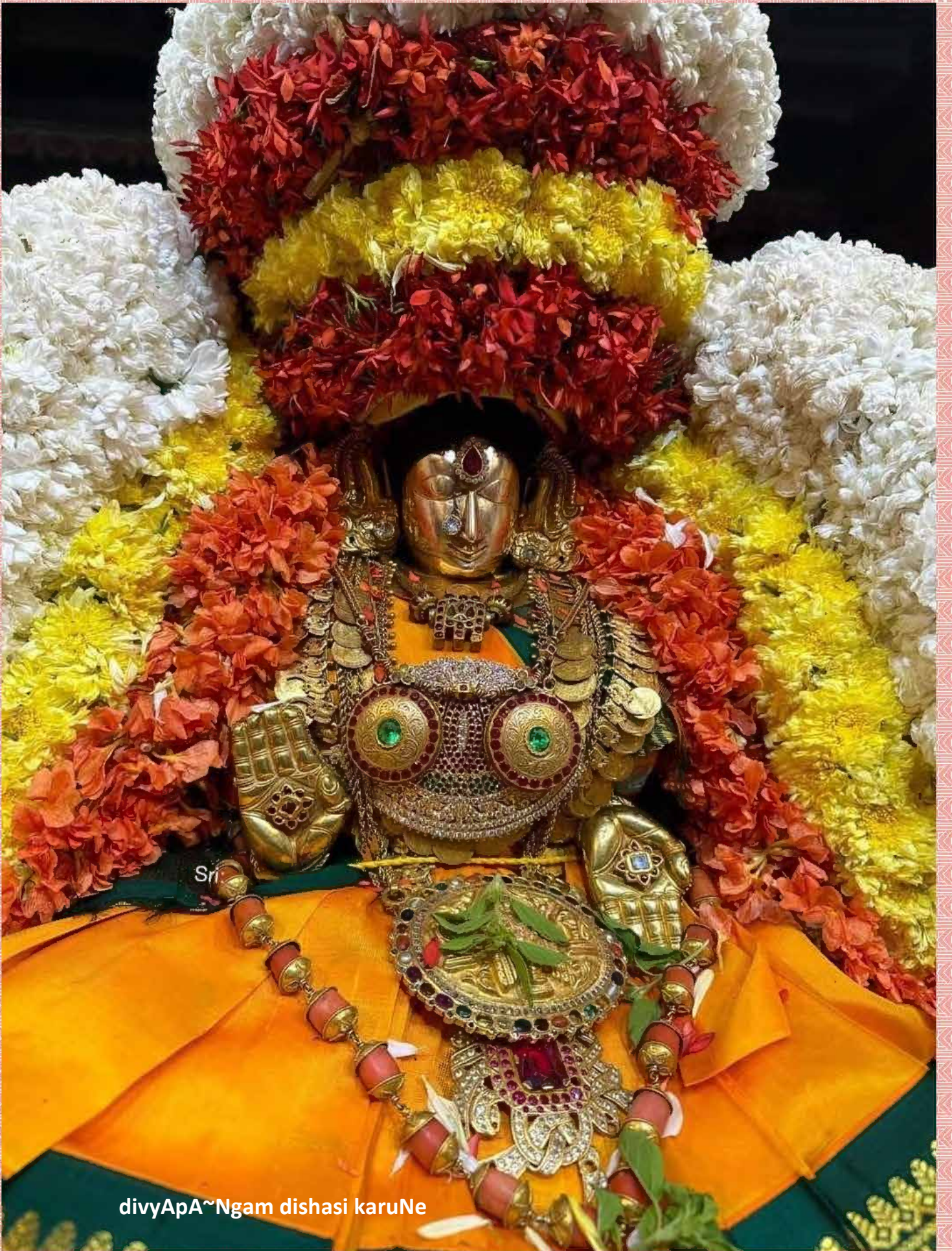
muktAnubhUtim iha dAsyati



vakaiyE naliVAn innum eNNukinRAi eNNiLA perumAyanE imaiyOrkaL Ettum ulaka mUnRuDai aNNaLE amutE appanE ennai ALvAnE” (Emperor of the three worlds! You are most enjoyable although there is no such requirement. You rule over me too! Even though I have submitted my sharaNAgati to You, I have still not received Your grace completely. Instead, You have left me at the mercy of my five senses, which are dragging me towards pursuits that are in direct opposition with Your commands. What is it that You have in mind for me? What is the reason for making me a prisoner of these senses? What is the use of my surrender to You in that case? I do not know the reason for this. You as the all-knowing one needs to answer this. You have verily subjected me to that which is totally opposed to my sharaNAgati to You. Please desist from this act. You serve as the panacea for all ills arising from the senses. You need to rescue me.) Svami Desikan follows the lead of Svami NammAzhvAr as he delivers verse 100 of the Daya Satakam “na ataH paraM kimapi me tvayi nAthanIyaM mAtardaye mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam baddhAdaro vR^iShagiri praNayI yathA(a)sau muktAnubhUtim iha dAsyati me mukundaH”. “mAtardaye” (Oh Mother Daya Devi!) is the sambodhanam for Daya Devi in this verse. A related tribute from Svami Desikan’s Sri Stuti becomes relevant in this context “mAtA devi tvamasi bhagavAn vAsudevaH pitA me jAtassohaM janani yuvayorekalakShyaM dayAyAH dhatto yuShmatparijanatayA deshikairapyatastvaM kim te bhUyaH priyamitikilaH smerA vaktrA vibhAsi”. This is Svami Desikan’s mangalAsasanam for Mahalakshmi Thayar. She sports a bewitching smile, which seems to suggest “what is it that you desire, Oh Svami?” Svami Desikan’s reply is “You are the mother of the entire universe and more importantly, my Mother. Lord Vasudeva is my Father, who nourishes and enriches me. I am privy to the compassionate eye-glances of You both! This cannot be attained easily and this is sought after by many. Every Srivaishnava considers his life as being fulfilled only upon begetting Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Due to the grace of my Acharya, I have gotten the status of one who is engaged in Kaimkaryam to You both”. “Is there anything more than this that you desire, Oh Svami?” is the intent of Thayar’s smile. In a like manner, in this Daya Satakam verse, Daya Devi enquires of Svami Desikan “Oh Svami! What is it that you desire?” Svami Desikan’s reply is captured in this verse. Commencing with “na ataH paraM kimapi me tvayi nAthanIyaM mAtardaye mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam” Svami Desikan states that he desires nothing else after becoming a receptacle of Daya Devi’s grace. It is instructive to observe that Svami Desikan commences the tribute with the usage “na” (negation). Usually, the reply is in the form “mama na” denoting that “I do not desire anything more”. However, by way of answering Daya Devi, Svami Desikan commences the tribute

with “na”. Svami Desikan continues “I submit a humble request to You. It is sufficient if You can grant me this request due to Your grace”. Daya Devi enquires “What is it that you submit a request for?”. Svami Desikan replies “Due to my sharaNAgati to You, oh Mother Daya Devi, I am assured of Moksham. I have no desire for aihika benefits (material wealth and pleasures for gratifying the senses) and have never sought them. I have also undertaken the performance of prAyashcitta prapatti and additionally for the destruction of pApArambaka pApam at Your feet. Thus, I am assured of engaging in the pleasant task of Bhagavad-BhAgavata Kaimkaryam and have shut off all ways of incurring the wrath of Lord Srinivasa. Therefore, You may wonder what more do I need?” In this context it is helpful to recall Svami Desikan’s Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram exposition of the last moments of Svami Bhashyakarar. During his last moments, Svami Bhashyakarar was surrounded by his disciples, who were in tears as they contemplated the future of the Bhagavad Ramanuja Darsanam after Svami Bhashyakarar departs for TirunADu (Sri VaikuNTham). They resolve that along with Svami Bhashyakarar’s end, they would end their lives too by self-immolation. When Svami Bhashyakarar heard this, he was quite shocked and exclaimed “If anyone here is contemplating suicide upon my departure from this world, I swear in the haloed name of Lord Narayana and Svami Alavandar that this individual does not belong to me.” There can be no greater punishment than this. The next question that arises is what is left then for the followers of Svami Bhashyakarar to engage in upon his demise. Svami Bhashyakarar outlines this in the form of five commands (divya aj~nA). First among them is the instruction to master the Sri Bhashyam and propagate it through the traditional Kalakshepam mode. Next, comes the instruction to enjoy the aruLicheyal of the Azhvars in the Divya Prabandham. If this is not possible, Svami Bhashyakarar recommends undertaking Bhagavad Kaimkaryam at a Divya Desam in terms of flower offerings to the Lord or stringing together garlands from flowers and the like. If this is not possible, the recommendation is to engage in constant recitation of the dvaya mantram. If this too is not possible, Svami Bhashyakarar suggests engaging in the service of a Srivaishnava, who undertakes the observance of the above four instructions. Since all the sishyas of Svami Bhashyakarar are sharaNAgatas, they need not worry about moksham, which is guaranteed as a consequence of sharaNAgati. If one has second thoughts on this subject, it merely indicates their lack of mahAvishvAsam. What then happens to the issue of “deha yAtra” during the interim period between performance of sharaNAgati and the end of one’s life? Should one worry about this? Svami Bhashyakarar declares that “deha yAtra” is “karmAdhInam” (subject to one’s karma). Thus, no matter how much one

agonizes about this issue, it is pointless since Karma dictates the course of happenings. In keeping with this message from Svami Bhashyakarar, Svami Desikan notes that he need not do anything for his deha yAtra. Since moksham is assured and deha yAtra is dictated by karma, is it fine to remain dis-engaged from everything or pursue things according to one's whim and fancy? Svami Desikan answers this by submitting a prayerful appeal looking at Lord Srinivasa who is by the side of Daya Devi through the salutation "asau mukundaH" The usage "asau" denotes one who is by the side. Mukunda is one who grants moksham. The import of the tribute is that Lord Srinivasa (MukundaH) who is by the side of Daya Devi grants moksham either immediately or in time. However, Svami Desikan makes a special request of Daya Devi that the bliss arising from nitya kaimkaryam in Sri Vaikuntam must be granted to him in this IIIA vibhuthi itself. Lord Srinivasa is capable of granting this anubhavam. Svami Desikan's prayerful appeal to Daya Devi is that She must intercede with Her consort, Lord Srinivasa, on behalf of Svami Desikan and ensure that this request is granted. "bhuvi mukunda vindemahi" is another tribute echoing the same sentiment. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, this sentiment is captured in the tribute "muktAnu bhUtim iha dAsyati me mukundaH" The import of this tribute is that the complete BrahmAnubhavam, which becomes possible in Sri Vaikuntam upon getting Moksham, should be made available in this IIIA vibhuthi itself. In the Tiruvaimozhi, Svami NammAzhvar declares "ozhivil kAlam ellAm uDanAi manni vazhuvilA aDimai ceyya vENDum nAm tezhi kural aruvi tiruvE~nkaDattu ezhil kol cOti entai tantai tantaikkE" reflecting the fact that one must engage in Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa, who is in the form of the beacon light on top of the Venkatam hill. Lord Srinivasa shines forth as the beacon light with the radiance known as Daya Devi. It is for Lord Srinivasa of such magnificence that Svami NammAzhvar desires to render kaimkaryam. The Azhvar's tribute "vazhuvilA aDimai" which becomes possible in Sri Vaikuntam is what Svami Desikan desires to enjoy in this IIIA vibhuthi itself! Thus, Svami Desikan closely follows the lead of Svami NammAzhvar in this context. Sri Tirumankai Azhvar in his Periya Tirumozhi mangalAsasanam for Lord Srinivasa declares "tAyE tantai enRum tArame kILai makkaL enRum nOyE paTTOzhintEn nunnai kANpatOr AcaiynAl vEyEy pUm pozhil cUzh viraiyAr tiruvE~nKaTava nAyEn vantaDaintEn nalki Al ennai koNDaruLE". (Thus far, I was bound to samsaram only worrying about my mother, father, wife, and children. My primary goal was to earn money for their well-being and for ensuring their happiness. This was the goal of my life. Totally lacking svarUpa j~nAnam (knowledge of one's essential nature), this lowly being has arrived in Your presence. It is entirely my fault that I had not sought refuge in You



divyApA~Ngam dishasi karuNe

all this while. However, I have arrived now. Please grace me with Your protection). The outpouring of Sri Tirumankai Azhvar is also captured in this verse of the Daya Satakam. It must be borne in mind, that Svami Desikan never exhibited a disposition of the form that the Azhvar expresses anguish about. Instead, it is to capture our state that Svami Desikan echoes the Azhvar's sentiment in this Daya Satakam verse. The Azhvar further declares that "until now, I was deluded into believing that all relationships arising due to adiyen's bodily existence were the only things. However, now I have been enlightened that You are everything for me." Tirumankai Azhvar too follows the lead of Svami NammAzhvar in highlighting the Upanishad message "mAtA pitA bhrAtA nivAsa sharaNaM suhR^it gatiH NArAyaNa" (Lord Narayana is the mother, father, brother, indweller, sole refuge, well-wisher and the only recourse). Svami NammAzhvar additionally desires to render Kaimkaryam to Lord Srinivasa, whose glory is described in the Upanishad salutation, at Tiruvenkatam. Svami Desikan too follows the lead of the Azhvar in making his request to which Daya Devi enquires "Will this happen if I make the request on your behalf?" Svami Desikan's reply is contained in the salutation "vR^iShagiri praNayI yathA(a)sau muktAnubhUtim iha dAsyati me mukundaH". The tribute "vR^iShagiri praNayI" denotes the fact that Lord Srinivasa decided to take root at the Venkatam hill in keeping with the puraNam statement "mAyavi paramAnandam tyaktvA vaikuNThamuttamam svAmi puShkaraNitIre ramayA sahamodate". The import of this tribute is that Lord Srinivasa, who is in bliss at His abode of Sri Vaikuntam, which is not lacking in anything, gave up His residence here in favor of the banks of Svami PushkaraNi at the Venkatam hill and exudes delight with his consort, Mahalakshmi. Lord Srinivasa, who grants moksham, is glorified by Svami Desikan as "baddhAdaro iha me muktAnubhUtim dAsyati". This denotes the fact that Lord Srinivasa is overjoyed at the arrival of someone who makes this request and takes great pleasure in granting them their request. Here it must be noted that there are two ways to give something to one who arrives at the door of a great emperor seeking something - it is one thing to grant the seeker's wish with great delight and quite another matter to grant it in a manner that is designed to get rid of them as soon as possible.

Here Svami Desikan alludes to the fact that Lord Srinivasa must grant his request with great delight in the manner of the Upanishad salutation "shraddhaya deyaM ashaddhaya(a)deyaM shriya deyaM hriya deyaM bhiya deyaM saMvida deyaM atha yadi te karmavicikitsa va vrittavicikitsa va syat". "shraddhaya deyaM" denotes the fact that a gift given to someone must be offered with great reverence. "ashaddhaya(a)deyaM" denotes the fact that it should never be offered with

mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam



disrespect. “shriya deyaM” and “hriya deyaM” instruct us that the offering must be made with utmost humility. It must be offered in the spirit that the offering should do good for the recipient. It is in this manner that Svami Desikan desires the anugraham of Lord Srinivasa. Instead of offering food like one does to a beggar, inviting a guest to one’s home, treating them with respect, and serving them delicacies that they like while engaging in a pleasant conversation with them is the recommended manner for offering food. This is the manner of Lord Srinivasa’s disposition as reflected in the salutation “asau mukundaH” In this instance, Svami Desikan has arrived seeking Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa. This salutation is a prayerful appeal that he should be welcomed with great pleasure by Lord Srinivasa and encouraged to render Kaimkaryam. This is reflected further in the tribute “muktAnubhUtim iha dAsyati”. Svami Desikan desires the bliss of paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam, which becomes available in Srivaikuntam upon getting moksham, in this Illa vibhuti itself. This is in the manner of ToNDaraDipoDi Azhvar’s tribute to Lord RanganAtha in the pasuram “pacchaimA malai pOl mEni pavazhavAi kamala ce~NkaN acutA! amaraR ErE! Ayar tam kozhuntE! ennum icchuvai tavira yAn pOi Intira lOkam ALum acchuvai perinum vENDEn ara~NgamA nakaruLAnE” (There can be nothing more enjoyable for me than rendering the glory of Lord Ranganatha through His numerous names. Is His overlordship restricted only to the nitya suris in Srivaikuntam? Most definitely not. He exuded the same affection for the illiterate folks of Gokulam as their Lord.) Svami NammAzhvar declares in the pasuram “lcan vAnavarkku enpan enRAI atu tEcamO tiruvE~nkaDattanukku nlcAnEn niRaivonRumilEn en kaN pAcam vaitta para~ncuDar cotikkE” that the glory of Lord Srinivasa is not so much that He is the chief of the nitya suris. Instead, it lies in the fact that He, who is the light of lights, graces an individual like me. Therefore, Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa should be rendered at the Venktam hill. Svami Desikan follows the lead of the Azhvar in that he seeks from Lord Srinivasa of such magnificence the bhAgyam of rendering Kaimkaryam at Tiruvenkatam hill itself, where he can experience the bliss of rendering nitya kaimkaryam at Srivaikuntam. The usage “baddhAdaraH” in this Daya Satakam verse reflects the fact that the manner of welcoming kaimkaryam should not be like the “jaraganDi” mode of darsanam made available to bhaktas in the present day. Instead, it should be in the manner of slowly and systematically enjoying every little act of Kaimkaryam in a leisurely fashion. The salutation “ataH paraM kimapi me tvayi nAthanyaM” from this verse indicates that it is Daya Devi’s responsibility to ensure that his request is fulfilled by Lord Srinivasa.



The tribute “**tathA mayi prasAdam kuruShva**” reflects the fact that is all Svami Desikan seeks from Daya Devi. Thus, Svami Desikan seeks Daya Devi’s intervention with Lord Srinivasa to ensure that he begets the same bliss of paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam, which prevails in Srivaikuntam, at the Tiruvenkatam hill itself. He desires nothing else. The tribute “**tvayi nAthanyaM**” suggests that Svami Desikan has performed moksha prapatti, prayashcitta prapatti, and in addition submitted the prapatti for destruction of pApArambaka pApam. Therefore, all he seeks now is the bliss of Kaimkaryam. The bliss of paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam is extremely sweet containing in it the flavor of milk, sugar, and honey. This is the only benefit that Svami Desikan desires to

experience in IIIA vibhuti itself. Svami Desikan echoes a similar sentiment in the **VaradarAja PancAshat** salutation “**tvaM cet prasIdasi tavAsmi samIpatashcet tvayyasti bhaktiranaghA karishailanAtha samsR^ijyate yadi ca dAsajanastvadIyaH samsAra eSha bhagavan apavarga eva**” (“If I have the benefit of Your grace and You are pleased with me, I will be in close proximity to You. Additionally, if I am blessed with untainted bhakti to You, and have the company of BhAgavatas engaged in Kaimkaryam for You, this Samsaram itself becomes moksham”). The import of this verse is that if one is blessed with the grace of Lord Narayana, with the Lord being pleased with the individual, and is conferred with the bhAgyam of being in close proximity to Lord Narayana, possessing blemishless bhakti and has for company BhAgavatas who take delight in rendering Kaimkaryam to Lord Narayana, the anubhavam is identical to that gained in Srivaikuntam upon getting Moksham. In such an instance, samsAram itself confers the anubhavam of Moksham.) In the Daya Satakam verse too the prayerful submission is for Kaimkaryam to Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill and for the experience of paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam. For common folks like us, the darsanam of Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill even for a moment causes goosebumps. This leaves us speechless even though we may have made a prior resolve to seek a large list of blessings.

santanyamAnamaparAdha
gaNaM vicintya



However, the aura and majesty of Lord Srinivasa is overwhelming in that it causes us to completely forget this list and instead focus only on offering prostrations to Him. While this is the condition of one who is blessed with a momentary darsanam of Lord Srinivasa, one can only imagine the delight gained from constantly being in His presence rendering Kaimkaryam. This is the benefit that Svami Desikan intensely desires. Thus, Svami Desikan's appeal in this Daya Satakam verse wherein he states that "he desires nothing more than this benefit" seems to indicate that this may be a trivial matter. However, it is not so. The appeal is for unrestricted right to Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa at all times. This is no ordinary request. We need not examine this request in the context of present-day crowds that throng to the Venkatam hill for a fleeting darsanam of Lord Srinivasa. Even during the times of Svami Desikan, Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa was no mean feat. Mahans like AnanthAzhvan and others have rendered tireless Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa. It must also be remembered that Svami Desikan is no different from Lord Srinivasa Himself. This verse is an outpouring of the GhantAvataram of Lord Srinivasa for illustrating the ultimate puruShArtham for commoners like us. Thus, Svami Desikan submits the appeal for this ultimate puruShArtham to Daya Devi and specifically asks Her to intercede on his behalf with Her consort, Lord Srinivasa. This is called "Sri Parisu" colloquially referred to as "siparisu". Thus, after the initial ten verses Svami Desikan devoted ninety magnificent verses to glorify Daya Devi and her numerous upakarams in many ways. Therefore, even the ultimate puruShArtham when requested of Daya Devi is surely conferred as eloquently stated by Svami Desikan. Daya Devi has the role of the Mother of the Universe. Hence, She has the ability and responsibility of protecting Her helpless children caught in the swirl of Samsaram. This is the import of the tribute "mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam" (Besides You who else can I seek this benefit from? You are the only one that can pave the way for this benefit to accrue to me.) In a home, it is only the mother that instructs the children in what is good and bad for them. Also, when the children need something, they can approach their mother without hesitation to ask her for this. Thus, it is instructive to note Svami Desikan's address of Daya Devi in this context through the "mAtardaye mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam" (This is what I desire. By Your grace, You need to ensure that I get it. Even though I may be replete with faults, I belong to You. I have therefore become privy to Your unalloyed vAtsalyam - the love of a cow for its newborn calf. Consequently, yYou must ignore all my faults and bestow Your munificent blessing upon me." The blessing in this instance is the bhoga pradhAnam - that which brings great joy. In this instance that which brings great joy to Svami Desikan is the paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam in

Srivaikuntam. Svami Desikan desires to experience this at the Venkatam hill itself through uninterrupted Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa). The “iha dAsyati” tribute from this verse is indicative of the fact that Svami Desikan requests Daya Devi to grant him the bliss of Kaimkaryam at the Venkatam hill in the same manner as the Lord confers paripUrNa Brahma anubhavam at Srivaikuntam. Svami Desikan further submits that if Daya Devi is truly pleased with the offering of his stotram, She should grant him this benefit. In the Ramayanam, SitA Devi declares “puruShavyAghraM tAtha kuru dayA mayi” (SitA Devi merely desires to be rescued by Lord Rama without regard to how He carries out this task. Here She submits to Hanuman to pave the way for this). Svami Desikan too submits his appeal in the same spirit as SitA Devi in that he is oblivious to the process by which his request is granted. However, the important thing is that Daya Devi must facilitate the granting of his request by interceding on his behalf with Lord Srinivasa. The considerations of whether or not he is deserving of this benefit, or whether he possesses the requisite characteristics to engage in the nitya kaimkaryam are immaterial. The implication here is that if there is any deficiency in him, Daya Devi should remove this and render him fit for Kaimkaryam to Lord Srinivasa. On the other hand, if he is deemed fit for engaging in Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa, he should be granted his request. This is the import of the tribute “mayi kuruShva tathA prasAdam”. Thus, Svami Desikan closely follows the lead of SitA Devi from the Ramayanam salutation in submitting his appeal to Daya Devi. He further qualifies the appeal by noting that Daya Devi alone can grant this request through Her appeal to Lord Srinivasa on his behalf. Thus, Svami Desikan desires this most lofty benefit and nothing else. This tribute must inspire us to seek the same benefit as eloquently outlined by Svami Desikan. For us to gain this, it is sufficient if we offer prayers to develop unalloyed bhakti to Svami Desikan and seek the bhAgyam of uninterrupted Kaimkaryam for Svami Desikan. Additionally, we need to seek the blessing of learning Svami Desikan’s Sri Suktis, enjoying them and propagating them. This prayer can be granted by Svami Desikan alone and no one else. Thus, adiyen with a prayerful submission of such a request to Svami Desikan, Daya Devi, and Lord Srinivasa, concludes the exposition of this verse from the Daya Satakam.”

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

“In this last verse formally glorifying Daya Devi in this stotram, Svami Desikan assertively declares “na ataH param” to denote nothing hereafter.

The essence of the verse is that Svami Desikan seeks nothing more from Daya Devi for enjoyment.



Un aDikkeezh amarntu pukuntEnE!

Oh! Mother Daya Devi! Please bless me such that Lord Srinivasa, who has taken root at the Vrushadri hill on account of a fancy, a love, an attachment, who grants bhukti and mukti as well, in a manner of highly favorable boon to devotees, grant me the beatitude that will in every respect be equivalent to the bliss of Moksham. The mental delectation of the Lord in this location in these precincts, which I have had, should continue until I attain Sri Vaikuntam.

Svami Desikan's mental beatitude with Lord Srinivasa since He is in Tirumalai is one of **bhoga-mAtra-sAmyam**. As a consequence, this verse is an outpouring from this beatitude. Svami Desikan craves for this benefit eternally as long as he is in this world."

