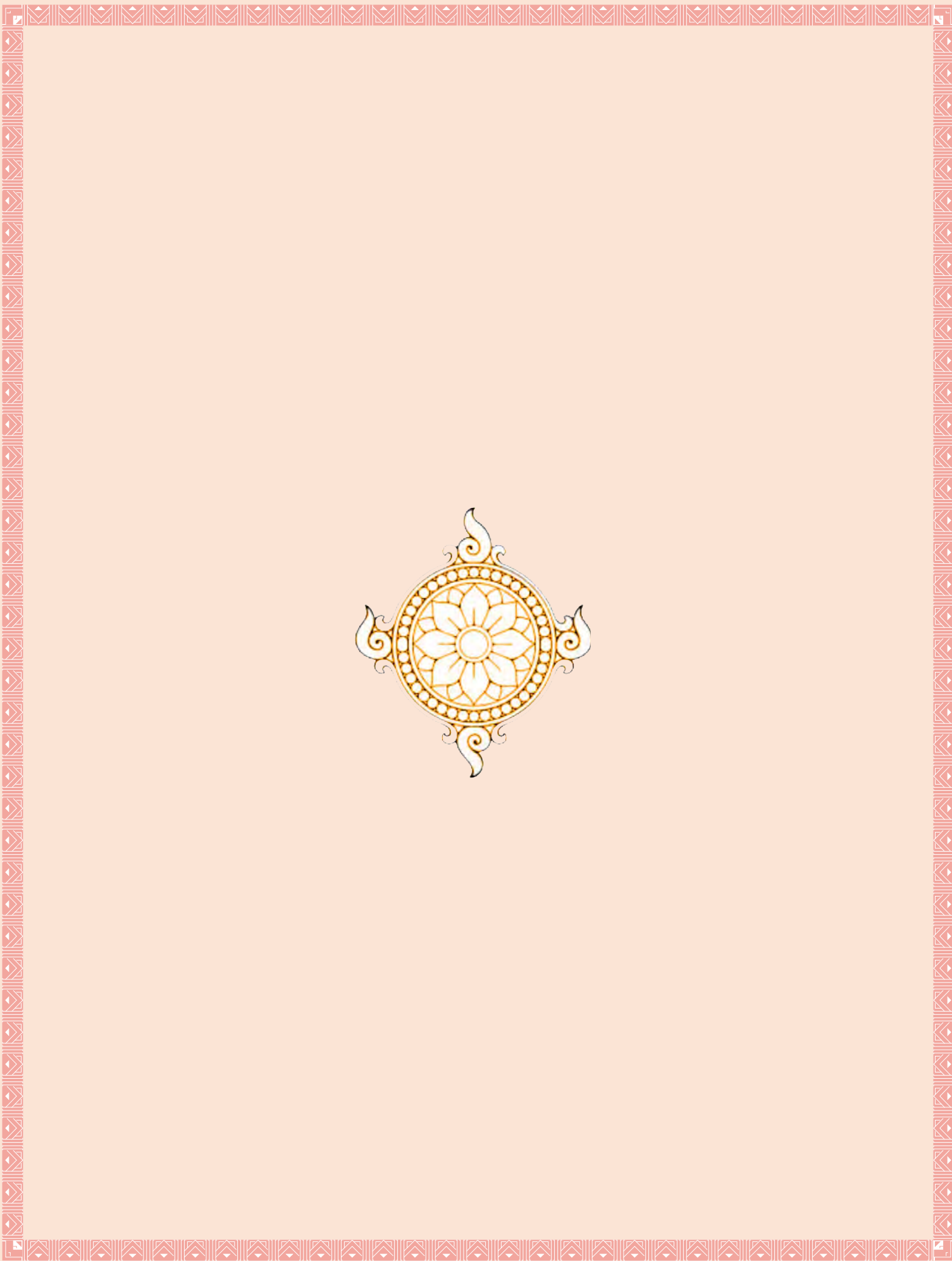


SvAmi NigamAnta MahAdeSikan's
Dayaa Satakam
(SlokaH 71 – 80)



Translated into English by
Ammangi Thandalam Muralidhar Rangaswamy



Sri:



SvAmi Nigamanta MahaDesikan's

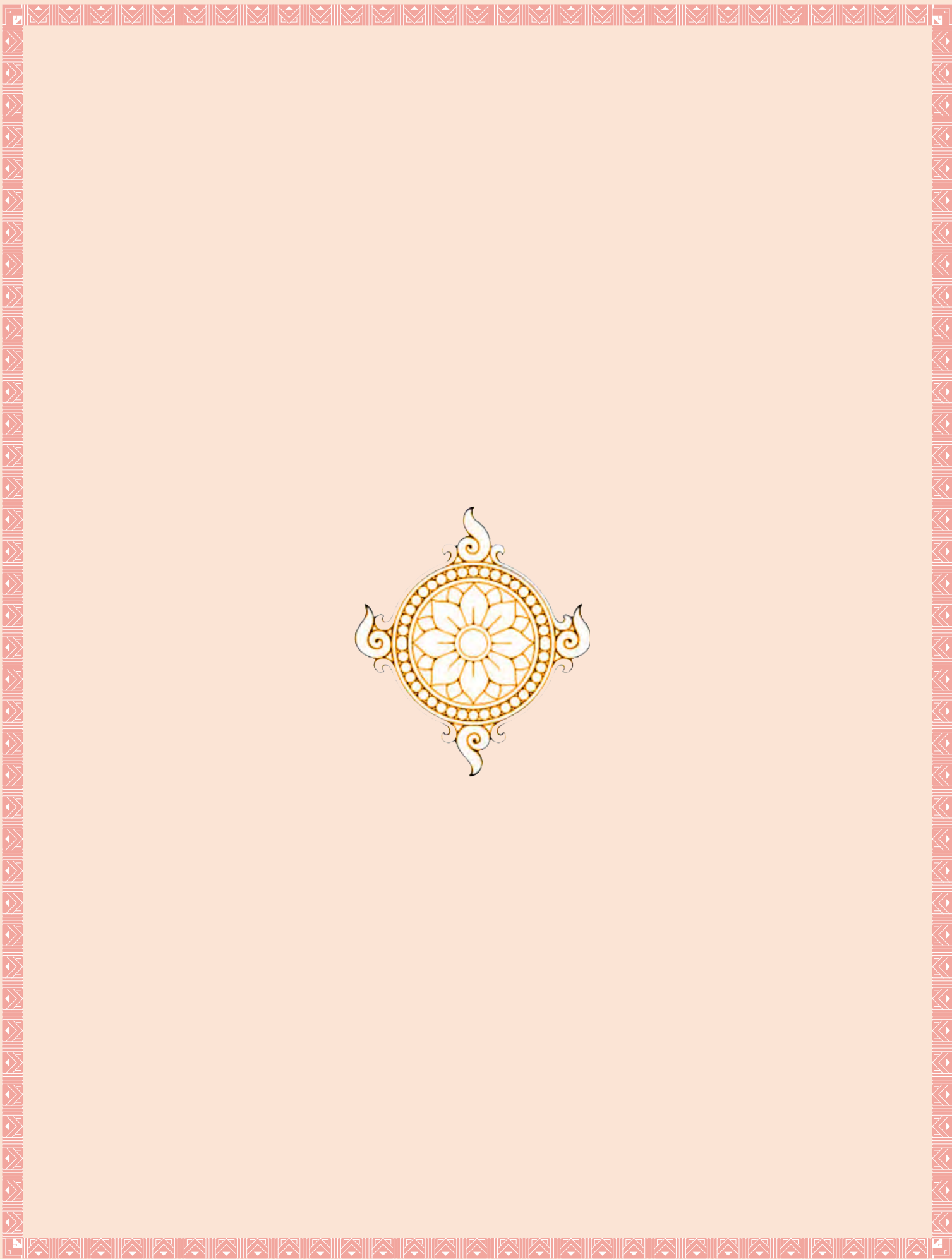
DAYAA SATAKAM



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 71

त्रिविध चिदचित्सत्तास्थेम प्रवृत्ति नियामिका
वृषगिरि विभोरिच्छा सा त्वं परैरपराहता ।
कृपण भरभृत् किङ्कुर्वाण प्रभूत गुणान्तरा
वहसि करुणे वैचक्षण्यं मदीक्षण साहसे ॥ ७१ ॥

trividha cidacitsattAsthema pravR^itti niyAmika
vR^iShagiri vibhoricChA sA tvaM parairaparAhatA |
kR^ipaNā bharabhR^it ki~NkurvANa prabhUta guNAntarA
vahasi karuNe vaicakShaNyaM madIkShaNā sAhase | | 71



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

“This verse is “trividha cidacitsattAsthema pravR^itti niyAmika vR^iShagiri vibhoricChaa sA tvaM parairaparAhatA kR^ipaNā bharabhR^it ki~NkurvANa prabhUta guNAntarA vahasi karuNe vaicakShaNyaM madIkShaNā sAhase.” This is the start of the eighth decad of the Stotram. In the sixth decad Svami Desikan highlighted the glory of SharaNAGati in the starting with the verse “athikR^ipaNopi” and concluding with his formal surrender to Daya Devi in verse 60 through the salutation “mR^idhu hR^idaye daye”. This literally follows the path revealed by Svami NammAzhvar who performed his formal sharaNAGati to Lord Srinivasa in the famous 6.10 Pasuram of Triuvaimozhi, “AkalaKillEn”. In this decad, Svami Desikan describes the glory of Daya Devi as it pertains to Her role in destroying the sins of those who have performed sharaNAGati to Her. The torrential flow of Daya Devi literally washes away the sins of the sharaNAGata. This is described through the fact that until the performance of sharaNAGati, the jivan was subject to imprisonment in samsara (engaging in a seemingly endless cycle of birth and death with no hope for redemption). In this decad, Svami Desikan highlights the role of Daya Devi in ensuring that sharaNAGatas are freed from such imprisonment. The sambodhanam here is “Oh KaruNe!”. The tribute “trividha cidacit” refers to the three kinds of sentient and insentient beings - baddha (those that are bound to samsara on account of Karma), mukta (those who were bound to samsara once upon a time but gained redemption either through the adoption of Bhakti yogam or Prapatti),

and **nitya** (those who are eternal residents of Sri Vaikuntam and never had bondage of any kind and are in constant company of Lord Narayana deriving unending bliss - for example, Ananta, Garuda, Vishvakṣena et al.) denoting the sentient and triguṇam (**prakR^iti** - **satva**, **rajas**, **tamas**), **kAlam** (time), **shuddha satvam** (that substance which is blemishless that permeates Sri Vaikuntam exclusively) denoting the three kinds of insentient ones. The salutation “**sattAsthema pravR^itti**” represents the existence (lifetime), inherent nature (form and disposition), and activities of these three kinds of sentient and insentient beings. This is discussed by Svami Bhashyakarar in the **SriVaikuNTha Gadyam** tribute “**svAdhIna trividha cetanAcetana svarUpa sthiti pravaR^itti bhedaṁ**”. All these are determined by Lord Narayana as noted by Svami Bhashyakarar in the Gadya trayam. In this verse Svami Desikan emphasizes that Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi are the ones that are responsible for the existence, inherent nature, and activities of the three kinds of sentient and insentient beings. The “**niyAmika**” tribute from this verse highlights the fact that Daya Devi rules over the three kinds of sentient and insentient beings, when it comes to their existence, inherent nature, and activities. The tribute “**parairaparAhatA**” denotes that Daya Devi is an unstoppable force. We may ask with respect to what? The answer lies in the next salutation of this verse “**kR^ipaNā bharabhR^it ki~NkurvANa prabhUta guNAntarA**” which denotes that She bears those who have **akincanyam** (utter helplessness and thus unable to redeem themselves). This is described as those who consider it a burden to bear the tag of utter helplessness. When one utters the salutation “**akincanonyagati sharaNya tvatpAdamUlaM sharaNaM prapadye**” (Being utterly helpless, I seek refuge in Your feet which is my sole recourse), they are instantly graced by Lord Narayana. The inner meaning is that when one performs sharaNagati one needs to submit an appeal that they are utterly helpless, are absolutely incapable of protecting themselves, and have no other refuge except Lord Narayana. None else can afford protection (It is helpful to recall the sharaNagati of Kakasura, who traversed the entire universe to free himself from the pursuit of Lord Rama’s arrow to no avail as documented in the Valmiki Ramayanam tribute “**pitA ca parityaktaH**”, and finally sought refuge at the feet of Lord Rama and Sita by way of prAyaschittam for his apacharam). Greatly moved by this appeal, Lord Narayana unfailingly comes to their help. In this context, the reference is to those who have adopted Daya Devi as their sole refuge. Thus, if one were to question what wealth these people possess, it is their **akinchanyatvam**. The tribute “**kR^ipaNā bharabhR^it**” from this Daya Satakam verse alludes to the fact that Daya Devi accepts their burden of being **akinchanas**.



Empress of the Universe

The tribute “prabhUta guNAntarA vahasi karuNe vaicakShaNyaM madIkShaNa sAhase” from this Daya Satakam verse describes the fact that the remaining kalyANa guNams of Lord Srinivasa are subservient to Daya Devi, who is so to speak the sankalpam of Lord Srinivasa. Because of Her stature as the unquestioned Empress of the Universe, She has unlimited freedom to do as She wills and thus quite daringly casts Her compassionate glances on me (It must be noted here that Svami Desikan in a mood of self-deprecation takes on the numerous faults inherent to common people even though he was endowed with blemishless conduct), which is not an easy task. It must be noted that gaining the kataksham of elevated personages is an onerous task. Furthermore, beholding certain kinds of people is forbidden. For example, when one wakes up from sleep in the morning, there are fairly stringent rules for what to behold and what not to behold. Beholding some things cause untold difficulties for the individual during the day. These are the amangala vastus (inauspicious objects). For example, brooms should never be placed by one’s bedside since it is forbidden from viewing upon waking up from sleep. Beholding lamps, sumangalis, and fresh fruit is considered auspicious. If not, just viewing one’s own hands upon waking up from

sleep is recommended. In Kerala it is customary to behold auspicious objects at the onset of the new year (ViShu KaNi). Therefore, objects such as ornaments, lamps, and fresh fruit are placed at one's bedside the night before so that one gets the new year off to an auspicious start, with the rationale that the entire year turns out to be auspicious. Here the act of Daya Devi beholding those who have sinned greatly is thus an act of great daring since it goes against the grains of the commonly recommended practice of not viewing anything inauspicious. A few visheShams need to be noted here. According to the salutation "trividha cidacitsattAsthemapravR^itti niyAmika", Daya Devi is responsible for the existence, inherent nature, and activities of the three kinds of sentient and insentient beings. Not only that, Daya Devi functions as the sankalpam of Lord Srinivasa as described in the tribute "vR^iShagiri vibhoricChA". Thus, the glory of Daya Devi is impossible to describe by words (anirvacanlyam). In reality, Daya Devi is the cause for creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe. These facts cannot be disputed by anyone. Daya Devi's sole aim is the well-being (yogakShemam - which has been elaborated upon in verse 32 of the Daya Satakam). In Sri GuNaratnakosham, Sri Parashara Bhattar declares "There exists a being who has sinned greatly. Upon beholding Sri Ranganayaki Thayar, he submitted a prayerful offering with folded hands in anjali mudra." This is captured in the tribute "kasmaicidanjalibharam vahate vitlrya". The tribute "aishvaryamakSharagatiM paramaM padaM va" attests to the fact that Ranganayaki Thayar in response to this simple act on his part grants him all aishvaryam (material wealth), kaivalyam, as well as eternal residence in Parama Padam (mokSham). Having granted him all of this, Ranganayaki Thayar laments that She has not done enough for this great act on his part, carried out with considerable effort and wants to confer something more. This is captured in the salutation "koyamudAra bhAvaH". Here, Sri Parashara Bhattar admits that he is at a loss for words to describe the limitless compassion of Thayar. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, the jivan having performed sharaNagati is captured through the tribute "kR^ipana bharabhR^it" and echoes the same sentiment as Sri Parashara Bhattar. This is further elaborated upon by Svami Desikan in the DevanAyaka PancAsat verse "niShkincanatva dhanina vibhudheSha yena nyastaH svarakShaNabharastava pAda padme nanAvidha prathitayoga visheSha dhanyAH nArhanti tasya shatakoTi tamAMshakakShyam" (I do not know what good I have done in what janma! However, I have a great wealth. This dhanam I submit to You my Lord. What is this dhanam? Inability to perform karma yogam, j~nAna yogam and bhakti yogam but seeking Your Feet as my sole refuge. I who possess this dhanam, have submitted the responsibility of my protection to Your Lotus Feet.

Those who behave in this manner, even great yogis who have accumulated tapobalam over countless births do not measure up to a small fraction.) Discerning this wealth of **akincanatvam**, Daya Devi, who is served by the other Kalyana gunams of Lord Srinivasa, casts Her compassionate glances on the sharaNAgata (In this case Svami Desikan has taken upon himself the role of a commoner, who has committed great sins and would thus be unfit for viewing according to the shastra pramANams documented earlier, but is graced by Daya Devi entirely on account of the performance of sharaNAgati). In the previous verse, the disposition of Daya Devi towards sharaNAgatas was documented.



May the Most Auspicious Mother cast Her Compassionate glances on us!

In this verse, Her upakAram to sharaNAgatas through Her compassionate glances is described. This decad (verses 71-80) is set to **HariNi vR^ittam** (meter). HariNI is another name for **vR^iShabhaceshtita**, which refers to a type of syllabic metre (**vR^itta**). HariNI contains seventeen syllables in each and every quarter and it possesses the gaNas namely na, sa, ma, ra, and sa. Since this decad is devoted to the glory of Daya Devi, HariNI is a most appropriate meter. In the eighth decad of

Tiruvaimozhi, Svami NammAzhvar presents an enjoyment of Bhagavad gunams (Bhagavad guna anubhavam). Specifically, this decad of the Tiruvaimozhi highlights the actions of Lord Narayana, in a manner that is discerning of His Bhakta's innermost desires and brings them great joy. In this verse of the Daya Satakam Svami Desikan highlights the fact that all other kalyana gunams of Lord Srinivasa are subservient to Daya Devi and await Her command. Since Daya Devi is the sole refuge of the SharaNagatas, She instructs the other kalyana gunams of Lord Srinivasa to stand ready so that the Lord acts in a manner that ensures the well-being of the sharaNagatas. For example, vAtsalyam is under the control of Daya Devi. How does She instruct vAtsalyam? This can be seen from the instance of a sharaNagata, who has sinned greatly, arrives before Lord Srinivasa. Lord Srinivasa is in a dilemma as to how to rescue the sharaNagata since the mountainous sin-pile offers no scope of redemption. At that instant, Daya Devi commands vAtsalyam to ensure that the Lord does not think much of the sins committed by the sharaNagata and to open up the floodgates so that His overflowing affection for them takes over. In a like manner, each kalyana gunam of Lord Srinivasa acts as per the instruction of Daya Devi. Daya Devi of such stature deems it worthy of casting Her compassionate eye-glances on sinners like us (it must be remembered again here that the Shastras forbid viewing anything inauspicious as outlined earlier and that sinners fall in the worst category of those that can be viewed). Svami Desikan declares in this verse that indeed this is a daring act on the part of Daya Devi. Thus, contemplating on this mahopakAram of Daya Devi and submitting a prayer to Lord Srinivasa and Daya Devi that they must rid us all of our sins and make us worthy of engaging in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, adiyen concludes the exposition of this verse."

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

"Oh Daya Devi! You may be denoted by desire or will of Lord Srinivasa. This is indeed the divine will or Bhagavat Sankalpa. The Lord has a great burden of duties. He presides over the activity of three kinds of species (Nitya, Mukta, and Baddha). Karuna informs the Lord's three-fold activity of creation, sustenance, and annihilation. All the duties that He discharges are unquestionable, routine processes. None can deter Him from them. That He alone must fulfill this responsibility is well known. Nevertheless, He has a special corner for helpless indigent souls. Because this is His supreme task, all His qualities serve to assist Daya Devi. Daya Devi is the Empress of the Lord's auspicious qualities. Therefore, She is revered and loved by the other qualities. What is most striking now is: You tend to cast Your glances on me. This is a rather rash act of daring. You can do so since You



vR^iShagiri vibhoricChA

are unquestionable. However, I shudder to think of this (due to my mountainous sin-pile, which makes me totally unfit for viewing).”



Sloka 72

वृषगिरि पतेर्हृद्या विश्वावतार सहायिनी
क्षपित निखिलावद्या देवि क्षमादि निषेविता ।
भुवन जननी पुंसां भोगापवर्ग विधायिनी
वितमसि पदे व्यक्तिं नित्यां बिभर्षि दये स्वयम् ॥ ७२ ॥

vR^iShagiri pater hR^idhyA vishvAvatAra sahAyini
kShapita nikhilAvadhyA devi kShamAdi niShevitA |
bhuvana janani puMsAM bhogApavarga vidhAyini
vitamasi pade vyaktiM nityAM bibharShi daye svayam | | 72



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

“We are examining the purport of the 8th decad of the Daya Satakam set to Harini meter. Harini denotes a female deer. The eyes of the female deer are quite enchanting. In particular, with wide open eyes the female deer casts its eye-glances on noble ones. In keeping with this fact, Svami Desikan describes in this decad the compassionate eye-glances of Daya Devi being cast on Saranagatas. Hence, the Harini meter becomes most appropriate for this set of ten verses. The plethora of ways in which Daya Devi renders Her mahopakaram for Saranagatas is documented. The previous verse documented the fact that Daya Devi is the sankalpam of Lord Srinivasa. Therein it was also highlighted that since Daya Devi functions as the sankalpam of Lord Srinivasa, which is responsible for the existence, inherent nature, and activities of the three kinds (baddha, mukta, and nitya) of sentient and insentient beings, She controls these activities too. In accordance with the Upanishad salutation “so kAmayata bahusyAm prajAyeyeti” the task of creation of the universe (srushti) comes about on account of the Lord’s Sankalpam, which is again Daya Devi. The previous verse also documented the fact that when Lord Srinivasa decides to confer His Daya on someone, Daya Devi becomes an unstoppable force. Bhagavan’s Vatsalyam towards Saranagatas is due to His sankalpam, which is Daya Devi. Hence, His vatsalyam becomes dayAdInam (subservient to Daya Devi). The torrential flow of Daya Devi is such that even if Mahalakshmi Thayar were to complain to Lord Srinivasa that the recipient of the

Daya is replete with faults, it will not be accepted by the Lord as documented by Svami NammAzhvar in the Tiruvaimozhi tribute “**yen aDiyAr atu ceyyAr ceitArEl nanRu ceitar**” (“My Saranagatas will not act in that sinful manner. Even if they apparently did this only good will come out of it. Therefore, do not intervene to alter My sankalpam.” Hence, the Lord never forsakes those who have surrendered to Him.)



This sentiment is also documented in the Srimad Ramayanam during Lord Rama's promise of protection to the Maharishis of daNDakaraNya through his solemn oath to exterminate the entire rakshasa clan that had been coming in the way of their tapas. Sita Devi enquires of the Lord “**smArayetvam na shikShaye**” (Oh Lord I am merely reminding You. I am not taking You to task in any manner because, whatever You resolve to do will only be correct and in full compliance with Dharma. These Rakshasas no doubt harass the Maharishis and frequently prevent them from carrying out their

Tapas. However, as forest residents they have caused us no harm. Why then this hasty resolve to exterminate their entire clan?). To this Lord Rama responded “**apyahaM jlvitaM jahyAM tvAM vA slte sa lakShmaNAM na tu pratij~nAM saMshR^itya brAhmaNeShu visheShataH iti**” (I may forsake You, that is dearer to Me than My own life. Let alone this, Lakshmana, who is even dearer, may also be forsaken in the same manner. However, I will uphold at any cost My promise to the Brahmanas, that have surrendered to Me with the request for help to stop the torment from the rakshasas.)



Oh Daya Devi of lofty stature!

This illustrates the fact that the Lord's sankalpam is an unstoppable force. The other kalyana gunams are subservient to Daya Devi eager to do Her bidding. Daya Devi of such lofty stature engages in an act of great daring, namely casting Her compassionate eye-glances on one who has sinned greatly and is therefore the lowliest of forms, that is absolutely unfit for viewing according to the Sastras. The state of this sinner is such that he is constantly engaged in forbidden acts (**akR^itya karaNa**), while readily giving up prescribed acts (**kR^ityAnAm varjanam**). Not only that he is steeped in apacharams (**bhagavat bhAgavata** and **nAnAvida**). These acts make him a prime candidate for Bhagavad nigraha sankalpam (punishment at the hands of Bhagavan). However, it is quite astonishing that Daya Devi selects this being for casting Her compassionate eye-glances. Does this enhance the greatness of Lord Srinivasa? This is the theme explored in this decad. This is in the manner of a son that has erred greatly and arrives home to discover that his father has discerned this act of sin and is extremely angered. As a result, he throws the child out of the house and declares that there shall be no food for the son for a couple of days. However, the son's mother exudes compassion and pacifies the boy with the words that the harsh tone of his father was only due to the anger arising from the son's sinful act and not any indication of the father's lack of affection for the son. She further advises her son to come back in a couple of hours when the father's anger has subsided, and he would be welcoming of the son. How does this come about? Does the father know about this or not? This is described in the "**vaicakShaNyaM**" tribute of the previous verse. In this context it may be noted that there are two categories of people - one that would intercede on behalf of the errant son while the angry father is on a rant in an attempt to becalm him or another group of people who would wait for the angry father to finish his outburst before making a case for the errant son on the grounds that the son is inherently good natured. Something beyond his control caused him to act in a sinful manner, for which he deserves to be excused. "He is after all our son. If he is punished thus, where will he go for a couple of days? He has no refuge besides us. Is this fair to him?" reasons the mother. This calls for extraordinary skill on the part of the mother. This is the act engaged in by Daya Devi by casting Her compassionate eye-glances on the errant son. This at once increases the greatness of Lord Srinivasa for rescuing an errant baddha jivan, while at the same time assuring the errant being, who would otherwise be a prime candidate for receiving punishment at the hands of the Lord, that he is in safe hands due to Her kataksham. This is an act of great daring, which is skillfully undertaken by Daya Devi. The inner meaning is that rather than intervening in the heat of the moment and thereby causing an increase in the

Lord's anger, which could easily result in Him declaring "You are supporting this egregious violator of My commands. You must be completely out of Your mind. You too leave My Presence along with him." Instead Daya Devi acts in a manner that enhances the Lord's glory while simultaneously redeeming the errant jivan. Thus, Daya Devi's act of transforming the Lord's nigrāha sankalpam (punishment) towards those who have sinned greatly into one of anugraham (protection) greatly increases the Lord's glory. How is this possible? This is impossible for anyone. How then does Daya Devi accomplish this task? This is answered in this verse of the Daya Satakam "vR^iShagiri pater hR^idhyA vishvAvatAra sahAyinI kShapita nikhilAvadhyA devi kShamAdi niShevitA bhuvana janani puMsAM bhogApavarga vidhAyinI vitamasi pade vyaktiM nityAM bibharShi daye svayam."



This verse outlines six reasons that establish the equivalence between Daya Devi and Mahalakshmi Thayar. The commentator for this verse, Sri. U.Ve. Tiruvahindrapuram Devanatachar Svamin (not to be confused with the Acharyas of yesteryears, Sri Tiruvahindrapuram Svami or Ayya Devanatachar Svamin), provides a unique anubhavam for this verse. After hearing 71 verses of glorification, Daya Devi enquires of Svami Desikan “Oh Svami! What is the use of submitting this tribute?” To this Svami Desikan responds “I see none else worthier of praise” for which Daya Devi enquires “I am a mere quality. I have to be necessarily associated with a person, in whom I seek refuge for this characteristic to be brought out.



Therefore, you would be better off glorifying the individual in whom I have sought refuge so that you can realize your goal and attain the desired benefit? What is the use of submitting your tribute to Me who is entirely dependent on someone else?"



Svami Desikan responds “When one is overcome by a state of extreme infatuation or excessive affection and experiences separation from the dearest object, it is common for the individual to pay obeisance to sentient as well as insentient beings without distinction. This is from the work of Kalidasa who states “kAmasAhi prakR^iti kR^ipaNA cetanAcetaneShu” reflecting the fact that one afflicted by a deep sense of infatuation is unable to make the distinction between sentient and insentient beings. How so? In the **Megha Sandesham**, a message is conveyed by a man for his beloved (from whom he is separated) through the clouds. Is it even possible for the cloud to understand this and deliver the message properly? Nevertheless, he instructs the cloud to deliver the message that he is residing in the Ramagiri Ashramam. Andal beholds the clouds and declares “What a great bhAgyam you have been bestowed with! You enjoy intimate contact with the hills of Tirumala which is the chosen place of residence for Lord Srinivasa. Please convey my message to Lord Srinivasa, that my mind is filled with grief on account of separation from Him but yet is engaged in constant contemplation of Him. In order to get rid of the heat arising from this separation, it is imperative for me to enjoy the cool contact with Him. Specifically, I wish to enjoy the same type of close contact with Lord Srinivasa that you enjoy. In fact, I am envious of this fact.” Is the cloud capable of delivering this message? Yet it is the anxiety of the poet that causes this outpouring in the spirit of the statement “gADavam mAdhaH praNaya padavI prApa vArtAnabhij~ne” (In such times of such a predicament one resorts to messaging via insentients.) For example, Svami Desikan employs a swan in the kAvyam **HaMsa sandesham** to convey the message of Lord Rama to Sita in His moment of grief arising from separation from Her. It is immaterial to Svami Desikan whether or not the swan is able to deliver this message properly. This is merely intended to be a mechanism for transmitting the message of grief of the emperor being separated from the empress. Using this background, Svami Desikan answers Daya Devi’s question with the statement “It is immaterial to us whether You bless us or whether Lord Srinivasa in whom You have sought refuge graces us. My overwhelming bhakti for You causes me to engage in this outpouring in Your praise. Hence this glorification is dedicated to You.” Daya Devi responds “I am merely a guNam. In fact as per your **guNeShu sArvabhaumi** tribute earlier, there is no doubt that I am the empress of Lord Srinivasa’s auspicious qualities. However, there is the well-established practice in the world that only one in whom I have sought refuge ought to be glorified. Why don’t you submit your praise to Him?” The answer to this question is provided in the present Daya Satakam verse.



shreyasIm srinivAsasya karuNAmiva rUpiNIm

Svami Desikan first notes that Daya Devi is no different from Mahalakshmi Thayar as per the earlier tribute of “**shreyasIm srinivAsasya karuNAmiva rUpiNIIm**”. That is if a concrete form were to be assigned to the Daya guNam it would absolutely have to be Mahalakshmi Thayar. Thus, there is no distinction between Daya Devi and Mahalakshmi Thayar. Hence, a tribute to Daya Devi is a tribute to Mahalakshmi Thayar, which would be elevating for Lord Srinivasa. This is what has been undertaken in the present instance. The acts arising from one’s body causes joy or sorrow for one’s Atma. For example, if one adorns one’s body with sandalwood paste, does it give joy to the body or to the Atma? It is indeed for the latter. Likewise, Mahalakshmi Thayar, and Daya Devi are inseparable. Thus, if Daya Devi is the sariram, Mahalakshmi Thayar is the Atma. In this instance the relationship is reversible too. Thus, any upakarams rendered to the sariram bring great joy to the Atma. Hence, Daya Devi and Mahalakshmi Thayar are not distinct from each other. Therefore, a glorification of one of them automatically becomes a glorification of the other. Svami Desikan provides six reasons for this oneness. The sambodhanam in this verse is “Oh Devi Kshama!” Again the sambodhanam at the conclusion of this verse “**vitamasi pade vyaktiM nityAM bibharShi daye svayam**” is noteworthy.

This refers to the fact that Daya Devi is both Piratti (Mahalakshmi Thayar) as well as Daya guNam. The first reason for this is captured in the tribute “**vR^iShagiri pater hR^idhyA**” coming about due to Thayar’s residence in the vakShasthalam (chest/heart) of Lord Srinivasa. Svami NammAzhvar echoes this sentiment best in his famous SaraNagati Pasuram of the Tiruvaimozhi “**akala illEn iRayum enRu alarmElmangai uraimArba**” to denote the fact that Mahalakshmi is not even for a moment separated from Lord Srinivasa. Svami Desikan too attests to this fact in the **Bhagavad dhyAna sopanam** salutation “**shrlvatsena prathitavibhavaM shrlpadanyAsadhanyaM madhyaM bAhvormaNivararuchA ranjitaM rangadhamnaH**” (Beholding the chest of Lord Rangantha, one encounters the Srivatsa mole. This is a source of great joy. The chest region becomes sanctified due to the touch of Thayar’s feet. Svami Desikan declares that this region becomes **dhanyam** (thankful or gratified) due to the contact with Thayar’s feet.) This is further reflected in Svami Desikan’s **DevanAyaka PancAshat** tribute “**shrlvatsa kaustubharamA vanamAliKA~NkaM cintAnubhUyalabhate caritArthatAM naH**” (The chest area of Lord Devanayaka is adorned by the Srivatsa mark, the kaustubha gem, Mahalakshmi, and the vanamAla garland, which greatly enhances His beauty. Saluting this region of the Lord gives rise to a sense of fulfillment of one’s birth.) The point to be observed here is that Svami Desikan is offering a mangalasanam

to Daya Devi in this verse. Daya Devi is never separated from Mahalakshmi, who is never separated from Lord Srinivasa. Thus, Daya Devi is never separated from Lord Srinivasa. Another salient point in this context is that Daya represents an auspicious attribute. For example, one may be hailed for one's valor. However, the place where precisely this is found in the person cannot be pin-pointed. It can only be exhibited by his display of fearlessness. However, with respect to DayA guNam its



place of existence in Lord Srinivasa can be uniquely identified. This is the heart of Lord Srinivasa. This in fact is the reason for Lord Srinivasa to be called **dayALu** (kind-hearted one due to Daya Devi taking up residence there).

Thus, a reason for the equivalence between Daya Devi and Mahalakshmi Thayar comes about due to their common place of residence in Lord Srinivasa's heart from this Daya Satakam verse tribute. This raises a question that the Lord's chest/heart region is adorned by the Srivatsa mark, the kaustubha gem, Thayar, as well as the vanamAla garland. Since Daya Devi exists in the same place as Thayar along with them, how then can the uniqueness of Daya in terms of Mahalakshmi Thayar be concluded? Could Daya denote the other items adorning the Lord's chest region. This is answered in the tribute "**vishvAvatAra sahAyini**" of this Daya Satakam verse. The Purusha Suktam salutation

"**ajAyamAno bahudhA vijAyate**" refers to the fact that the Lord who is not required to take any birth takes many births. This is meant entirely for redeeming common people like us, who have sinned greatly and are subjected to a seemingly

interminable cycle of births and deaths. Therefore, Lord Narayana undertakes numerous avatarams for this purpose. This is reflected in the Rg Vedam tribute 3.8.4 “**saushreyAn bhavati jAYamAnaH**” It has been stated here that due to karma, commoners like us are subject to numerous births. Each birth is determined in accordance with one’s prevailing karma for that birth. However, when it comes to the Lord’s Avatarams, these are entirely governed by His sankalpam. In each of our births we endure numerous travails on account of our karma. However, in each avataram of the Lord His glory only increases. This is on account of the fundamental difference in the cause for His Avataram (**sankalpa pUrvakam**) and our birth (**karma anuguNam**). The increase in the Lord’s glory comes about due to the fact that in each of His avatarams, He is engaged in the task of protecting His seekers (errant baddha jivans, who have no other recourse for redemption). The list of those redeemed only increases in each of the Lord’s avatarams. In order to accomplish



the purpose of each of His numerous avatarams, He is accompanied by Daya Devi. This is the import of the “vishvAvatAra sahAyini” tribute.



vishvAvatAra sahAyini

The tribute “rAghavAtve bhavatsIta rukmiNi kR^iShNa janmani anyeshu cAvatareShu viShNornityAnapAyini” from the ViShnu PurANam highlights the fact

that in each of the Lord's avatarams, He is accompanied by Mahalakshmi. If the Lord incarnated as Rama, He was accompanied by Mahalakshmi in the form of Sita. In the incarnation of Krishna, He was accompanied by Mahalakshmi as Rukmini. In a like manner, in all of His incarnations, He was never for a moment separated from Thayar. In keeping with this scriptural authority, Svami Desikan documents



Mahalakshmi Thayar's inseparability from Srinivasa in all His incarnations through the "vishvAvatAra sahAyini" salutation of this Daya Satakam verse. She ensures that the Lord successfully accomplishes the purpose for each of His incarnations. The Ramayanam tribute "tulya shila vayorvR^iddhAm" (There cannot be an appropriate description for the age, beauty, or glory of Lord Narayana. However, in this respect He is matched by a similar incarnation of Thayar, who is His constant companion.)

One may ask that Lord Narayana took the form of a Brahmachari during the Trivikrama avatAram. Where was Thayar present with Him during this time? Did He not incarnate alone? This is answered through the tribute "kR^iShNAjInena samvR^iNNvan" reflecting the fact that Mahalakshmi is always present in the Lord's VakShasthalam. The Trivikrama avataram was no exception and hence he was not separated from Mahalakshmi even though He took the form of a Brahmachari. During this incarnation, Lord Narayana was apprehensive of being identified through this eternal association with Mahalakshmi Thayar due to Her residence in His heart by Mahabali and thus being disqualified as a Brahmachari, which would make Him ineligible for receiving the gift of charity from Mahabali. In this context, the Lord is reluctant to ask Thayar to take residence elsewhere since His avatara kAryam (purpose of His incarnation) cannot be accomplished without Her support. Therefore, He masks Her presence in His chest area using the kR^iShNAajInam (deer-skin) covering, which is commonly used by all Brahmacharis. Thus, it is established that Mahalakshmi Thayar accompanies the Lord in each of His incarnations. Since She is no different from Daya Devi, it follows that Daya Devi accompanies the Lord during each of His incarnations as evidenced in the "vishvAvatAra sahAyini" glorification. Svami Desikan employs the usage "karuNA kAkutsthaH" to describe the fact that the defining trait of the Rama avataram was KaruNa. Likewise, in each avatAram of the Lord, the purpose of the incarnation was realized only on account of KaruNa - Daya Devi. In the Rama AvatAram, the Lord time and again demonstrated that He is the Saranagata rakShakan (one who upholds His sworn position to protect those who have surrendered to Him). kR^ipai is critical to ensure this. For example, Kakasura was protected on account of his SaraNagati to Lord Rama. According to the RamayaNam salutation "kR^ipayA paryapAlayet", it was entirely on account of Daya Devi, that the protection of Kakasura came about. In the kR^iShNa avatAram, His abundant compassion is frequently on display. For example, Draupadi uttered the praise of Lord Krishna through the salutation "hA kR^iShNa dvAraka vAsa". In response, Lord Krishna laments through the statement "ruNam pravruddhameva manye" that He is

forever in debt to Draupadi for not being able to do enough in response to Her appeal. More precisely, Lord KR^iShNa states that He has only fulfilled the cry of anguish pertaining to one of the names uttered by Draupadi. His debt to Her for submitting the appeal through other names still remains and that it is increasing in the manner of interest accrued on debt. This is entirely due to Mahalakshmi Thayar, who accompanied Lord in His avataram of KR^iShNa. Since She is no different from Daya Devi, it is again Daya Devi that is responsible for bringing to fruition, the purpose of the Lord's avatAram. One may enquire that the Lord incarnated as ParashurAma and will incarnate as Kalki. In these avatarams, Lord Narayana is a ruthless annihilator. What is the role of Daya Devi in these manifestations? Here too there is a role for Daya Devi, which will be discussed in the next decad of the Daya Satakam. Even the seemingly ruthless act of destroying evil forces in these incarnations is in fact a blessing (**anugraham**) for them. This is brought about by Daya Devi. When Bharata visited the Ashramam of BharadvAja in his quest to bring back Lord Rama from the forest, the sage advised Bharata not to regret the actions of Kaikeyi in banishing Lord Rama to the forest. Instead, he noted that she has performed a great service, which benefits the entire universe. How so? By banishing Lord Rama to the forest, she has paved the way for the destruction of the rakshasa clan that has been harassing sages residing in the forest and engaged in austerities. If Lord Rama had not come to the forest, there would be no opportunity for Him to encounter the Rakshasas. They are not going to come out seeking battle with Him. Instead, they would merrily go about their task of disrupting the penance of sages, who would be rendered helpless and forced to endure the torture. Thus, it is entirely due to Kaikeyi's doing that great fame will come about. This again is an act of Daya Devi. Thus, the avatAra kAryam (purpose of the avatAram) is realized due to an act of Daya Devi. This is again an equivalence between Mahalakshmi Thayar and Daya Devi, a second reason outlined in the tribute "**vishvAvatAra sahAyini**" of this Daya Satakam verse. Another reason comes about from the salutation "**kShapita nikhilAvadhyA devi**". The anvaya kramam (prose order) for this tribute is "**nikhilAvadhyA kShapita devi**". The meaning of this tribute is that **aniShTa nivR^itti** (removal of undesired happenings or acquisitions) and **iShTa prApti** (realization of desires that bring auspiciousness). The first one "**aniShTa nivR^itti**" is an essential step to the realization of "**iShTa prApti**", which follows as a natural consequence. For example, one may desire to acquire great wealth. If this is realized but comes with the baggage of constant ailment, which drains all the wealth, the accrual of great wealth becomes pointless in that he is unable to enjoy this. Thus, the ailment becomes aniShTam in this instance. Only when this is

vitamasi pade vyaktiM nityAM bibharShi daye svayam



removed is the individual able to enjoy the wealth. Thus, it is imperative for aniShTa nivR^itti in order to realize iShTa prApti. Mahalakshmi Thayar/Daya Devi ensure that aniShTa nivR^itti first takes place before iShTa prApti is naturally realized. This is documented in the tribute “nikhilAvadhyA kShapita” of this verse, which alludes to the removal of all obstacles that come in the way of realizing one’s desires. This is ensured by Mahalakshmi Thayar/Daya Devi. The inner meaning is that Daya Devi destroys our sins and renders us fit for acceptance by Lord Srinivasa. This is another cause for the equivalence between Mahalakshmi Thayar and Daya Devi. Svami Alavandar declares in the Chatushloki “shreyonahyaravindalocana manaH kAntA prasAdAdhR^ite samsR^ityakShara vaiShNavAtdvasu nR^iNAm sambhAvyate karhicit” (The benefits of Bhogam, Kaivalyam, and Moksham will not accrue to Sri Vaishnavas, without the grace of Thayar, who is the beloved of Aravinda lochanan-Lord Narayana.) Thus, it is established that once Thayar’s kataksham is cast on an individual, all manner of elevated benefits follow. In order for this to come about, all obstacles coming in the way of realizing these benefits need to be destroyed. This is brought about by the grace of Mahalakshmi Thayar. In a like manner, Daya Devi too ensures the destruction of one’s sins that come in the way of realizing lasting and bountiful fruits. In this context, the greatest benefit is that of moksham resulting in eternal service for the Divya Dampatis in Sri Vaikuntam. The bond of karma arising from one’s sins and good acts are the impediments coming in the way of one’s moksham. These are completely destroyed by Daya Devi/Mahalakshmi Thayar. Hence, the equivalence. Next comes the tribute “kShamAdi niShevitA” from this Daya Satakam verse. “KShama” denotes forgiveness epitomized by Bhumi Devi. The usage “Adi” refers to Nila Devi. They serve as assistants to Mahalakshmi Thayar in the task of protecting Saranagatas. They in fact function as sharIrams of Mahalakshmi Thayar. However, they do not exhibit any envy or jealousy toward Thayar. This is due to the fact that they exist as the sharIram of Thayar. For example, our body is endowed with limbs and other sense organs. However, these are never in competition with one another. If the eyes cover themselves with dark glasses to seek relief from the heat, the foot does not complain that the eyes are soothing themselves. However, the feet have to contend with the heat. Thus, relief for any part of the body counts as relief for the entire body. In a like manner, the ubhaya nAcchiyArs, BhUmidevi and Nila Devi function as the limbs of Mahalakshmi Thayar so to speak and hence are eager to render service to Her. This is the import of the salutation “kShamAdi niShevitA”. In the case of Daya Devi, we observe that She too is kShamAdi niShevitA due to the fact that She is the empress of all kalyana gunams of Lord Srinivasa. Thus, qualities

such as forbearance automatically become subservient to Daya Devi and are eager to do Her bidding. Kakasura's offence towards Sita Devi was forgiven entirely on account of KaruNa. Specifically, Lord Rama's anger in that instance was controlled by the Daya guNam. The Lord acquires the title "daNDa dhAratvam" on account of the fact that He metes out punishment to those who have sinned. However, this too is controlled by the command of Daya Devi. Samudra raja incurred apachAram towards Lord Rama. However, protecting those who surrender to him is the Lord's sworn position. This is documented in the Vedam tribute "baddhyam prapannam na prati prayacChati", which means that even if one's crime is such that he deserves death by hanging at the gallows, the moment he performs SaraNagati, he must be protected at any cost. In keeping with this dictum even though Samudra raja incurred apacharam towards Lord Rama and deserved to be punished, on account of his SaraNagati to Lord Rama, he was spared of the punishment. Instead, his adversaries were punished with death. The reason for this transformation was entirely Daya Devi. Thus, it is established that Daya Devi transforms all the heat generating characteristics of Lord Srinivasa into that which is cool and soothing. This needs to be understood in the context that Daya Devi transforms the nigraha sankalpam (punishment) of Lord Srinivasa into one of anugraham (blessing) for those who perform SaraNagati. Svami Desikan illustrates another important concept in the Paduka Sahasram. Kshama (forbearance) is at the command of Daya Devi. Lord Narayana took the incarnation as Rama. It may be observed in general that the purpose of the incarnation was to destroy Ravana. However, in the context of Daya Devi, it was meant to erect the bridge across the ocean, which will be discussed in the next decad. Here, it must be noted that had KShama been present and operated at the command of Daya Devi, Lord Rama would not be able to accomplish the purpose of killing Ravana and would have instead found a way to reform him so that he could be forgiven. Therefore, Paduka Devi, who symbolizes KShama, was sent back to rule over Ayodhya, while Lord Rama remained in the forest. This is documented in the Paduka Sahasram tribute "pAdAvani prabhutarAn aparAdhavargAn sODuM kShama tvamasi mUrtimatIkShamaiva tatvAM vihAya nihataH paripanthinaste devena dAsharathinA dasha kaNThamukhyAH". In the Daya Satakam, Svami Desikan highlights the equivalence between Daya Devi and Mahalakshmi Thayar. In the Paduka Sahasram, Svami Desikan outlines the equivalence between Paduka Devi and Kshama (Bhumidevi). The import of this tribute is that even when one who is an emperor of sins (one who has sinned greatly), the Padukas are capable of tolerating these sins and grace the individual. Thus, if the the Padukas were present by the Lord's side, they would have brought

about a reconciliation on some grounds and ensured the forgiveness of Ravana. Hence, the purpose of the avataram would remain unfulfilled. Therefore, Lord Rama graced Bharata with the Padukas as a result of his SaraNagati seeking the return of Lord Rama, to rule over Ayodhya. This enabled Lord Rama to accomplish the purpose of the incarnation. Thus, the tribute “kShamAdi niShevitA” provides the fourth reason for the equivalence between Daya Devi and Mahalakshmi Thayar. Next the “bhuvana janani” salutation from this Daya Satakam verse is examined. “bhuvana janani” denotes that Thayar is cause for creation for all beings of the universe. She is the mother of the entire universe. She exudes overbearing motherly affection for every being in the universe. Therefore, the title “bhuvana janani” becomes befitting.

The ViShNu puraNam salutation “tvaM mAtA sarvalokanAm deva devo hariH pitA tvayai viShNunAcAmba jagatvyAptaM carAcaram” becomes relevant in this context. The import of this salutation is that Lord Narayana is the father of the entire universe, while Mahalakshmi is the mother. The creation of all beings comes about on account of Lord Narayana and Mahalakshmi as a routine. With respect to Daya Devi, She too is the cause for creation of the entire universe as documented earlier in verse 17 through the salutation “acidavishiShTAn praLaye jantUn avalokya jAta nirvedA karaNakaLebarayogam vitarasi vR^iShashailanAtha karuNe tvam” (Moved by the existence of all beings existing in an inert state during the time of praLayam, Daya Devi pleads with the Lord to engage in the task of creation so that these beings can be assigned life forms and endowed with senses to experience joys and sorrows with the intent that these beings put their bodies to good use for Bhagavad kaimkaryam through the adoption of either bhakti yogam or Prapatti. Thus, Daya Devi too begets the title “bhuvana janani”. Sri Kuresha salutes this aspect of Thayar in the shri sthavam through the eulogy “yasyA vlkShya mukhaM tadi~NgitaparAdhIno viddhattekhilaM krIDeyaM khalu nAnyathAsya rasada syAdaikarasyAttayA”. This establishes the fact that both Lord Narayana and Thayar have an equal part to play in the process of creation of the universe. In the guNaratna kosham salutation Sri Parashara Bhattar declares “shriyai samastacidacidvidhAnavyasanaM hareH a~NgIkAribhirAlokaiH sArthayantyai kR^itonjaliH” (Lord Narayana engages in the task of creation with a great deal of effort. Srushti is carried out in accordance with one’s karma. This gets complicated when it comes to even a single sentient being. What should be the ordering of the karma. How much of the effect of the puNyasa and pApas does the individual have to endure? In what sequence and what time? Should the individual be afforded a chance at redemption? All of these issues pose considerable challenges when it



tvam vitamasi pade svayam nityAM vyaktiM bibharShi

comes to the creation of a single sentient being. What then would be the complexity that comes about in the process of creating the entire universe with millions and millions of sentient and insentient beings, their numerous pre-determined interactions on the basis of karma? This is indeed a gargantuan task carried out by Lord Narayana and hence the descriptor “with a great deal of effort”. Once this is determined, He looks at Mahalakshmi Thayar for Her approval. Only upon gaining Her approval does the Lord complete His task of creation. Sri Parashara Bhattar states that only to gain the approving eye-glances of Thayar does Lord Narayana undertake the task of creation of the universe with a great deal of effort.) This completes the exposition on the fifth reason for the equivalence between Mahalakshmi Thayar and Daya Devi.

Finally, the last reason for the equivalence is outlined in the salutation “pumsAm BhOgapavarga viDhAyini” of this Daya Satakam verse. Conferring the blessings of Bhogam (aishvaryam, material wealth) as well as apavargam (moksham) is the task of Mahalakshmi Thayar. Likewise, Daya Devi too confers all material benefits to her seekers. Not only that she ensures that those seeking moksham unfailingly are granted this benefit. This is the implication of the tribute “puMsAM bhogApavarga vidhAyini. The manner in which this is granted is quite instructive. For instance if one by sheer happenstance begets the opportunity to have a darsanam of Sri Ranganayaki Thayar at Srirangam and submits a prayerful offering with folded hands in anjali mudra, Thayar immediately grants his desires be they aishvaryam (wealth in the material sense), akSharagatim (Kaivalyam), or Parama Padam (Moksham) in accordance with the Gunaratnakosham tribute “aishvaryamakSharagatiM paramaM padaM vA kasmaicidAnjali bharaM vahatevitIrya.” Furthermore, having granted this Sri Ranganayaki Thayar laments that She has not done enough in response to this act on the part of the individual carried out with great effort. This is captured in the Gunaratnakosham tribute “asmainakinciducitaM kR^itamityathAmba”. Sri Parashara Bhattar concludes the Gunaratnakosham verse with the salutation “koyamudAra bhAvaH” (I am at loss for words to describe Your compassion). This precise sentiment is captured by Svami Desikan in the “puMsAM bhogApavarga vidhAyini” tribute of this Daya Satakam verse. Thus, just as Mahalakshmi Thayar is capable of conferring Bhogam, apavargam, and moksham to Her seekers, Daya Devi too grants these benefits to Her seekers is the import of this tribute. Typically a large gathering of Bhaktas arrives each day at the Venkatam hill to offer prostrations for Lord Srinivasa. Not all of them desire moksham. Daya Devi grants them all of their desires and in time causes them to seek moksham, which also She grants. This completes the

exposition on the six reasons for the equivalence between Mahalakshmi Thayar and Daya Devi and establishes the equivalence beyond any doubt. Therefore, Svami Desikan answers Daya Devi through the statement “Oh Mother! Rest assured that I am not merely glorifying a mere guNam. Instead, I am glorifying that guNam, which when assigned concrete form is Mahalakshmi Thayar!” Daya Devi of such glorious attributes performs an important task as documented in the salutation “*tvam vitamasi pade svayam nityAM vyaktiM bibharShi*” of this Daya Satakam verse. Namely, Sri Vaikuntam, which is beyond the reach of tamas (tamo guNam) and is replete with Shuddha satvam, acquires a radiance that is sustained by Mahalakshmi Thayar/Daya Devi. In Sri Vaikuntam, Thayar is always seen in the form of Mahalakshmi. In the Rama avataram, She takes the incarnation of Sita to match the attributes of Lord Rama, while in the Krishna avataram, She incarnates as Rukmini to ensure a corresponding match. Likewise, Daya Devi too reveals Her pristine form in Sri Vaikuntam, while morphing in accordance with the needs of each avataram of the Lord. In all other places, Daya Devi reveals Herself in accordance with the demands of the situation in keeping with the Bhakti of those who seek the Lord, and in proportion to their mahavishvasam in the Lord while performing sharaNagati. This establishes the fact that Daya Devi is no different from Mahalakshmi Thayar and thus glorification of Daya Devi is in fact a glorification of Mahalakshmi Thayar. The inner meaning is that Daya Devi performs all the functions of Mahalakshmi Thayar. Here the commentator for this work, Sri. U.Ve. Tiruvahindrapuram Devanathachar Svamin (not to be confused with the Acharyas, Tiruvahindrapuram Swami or Ayya Devanathachar Swami), observes that due to the tribute “*vitamasi pade vyaktiM nityAM bibharShi daye svayam*” Daya Devi is the *nirhetuka kR^ipa* (the mercy that is inherent and needs no cause to come forth to rescue Her seekers). If one enquires, where this exists, the answer from this tribute is unmistakably Sri Vaikuntam - the place which is beyond the reach of tamas. However, in prakrutimaNDalam (all worlds below Sri Vaikuntam), the Daya of Lord Srinivasa flows as “*sAhetuka*” (namely requiring a cause to emanate). The inner meaning is that one’s prayer, or the contact with Bhagavatas and their prayers becomes the cause for invoking Lord Srinivasa’s Daya. As a consequence, one becomes privy to the grace of Lord Srinivasa. Thus, it is incorrect to declare the Lord’s Daya as “*nirhetuka*” (causeless). In the *prakR^iti maNDalam*, it is very much “*sahetuka*” (requiring cause due to one’s effort). There is no doubt that it is only the Lord’s Daya that protects all beings. However, only some seem to be privy to this while others are not. This is accounted for by the “*sahetuka*” nature of Daya in *prakR^iti maNDalam*. In summary, it is concluded that Daya Devi is no different

from Mahalakshmi Thayar and that glorification of Daya Devi is not a tribute to a mere guNam. Instead, it is a salutation for Mahalakshmi Thayar. Since both of them are associated with Lord Srinivasa, due to Their residence in the heart of Lord Srinivasa, due to accompanying Him in each of His avatarams, due to removal of all obstacles in the path of His seekers, due to Their role in the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the universe, serving as the mother of the universe, granting the wishes of the seekers be it aishvaryam, kaivalyam, or moksham, and revealing Themselves in Their pristine form in Sri Vaikuntam, which is beyond the reach of tamas, gaining Her kataksham requires an effort of Bhakthi on our part. She stands ready to gush forth in response to this act of Bhakti. Thus, in order to gain the kataksham of Lord Srinivasa an effort on our part is called for. Recognizing our inability to adopt the nuances of Bhakti yogam, if one submits an appeal of utter helplessness to Daya Devi and requests Her grace in the manner of Svami NammAzhvar's "aDi^{keezh} amarntu pukuntene", one is guaranteed of Her grace. With this prayerful thought, we conclude the exposition of this verse."

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

"Throughout this stotram, Svami Desikan addresses Daya. The appendage Devi is added, to give Her a concrete shape and a reality. This verse has the purport of asserting that Goddess Mahalakshmi has all the attributes of Daya Devi. This identification is brought about by Svami Desikan using sLEDai, the poetic skill of words with double meaning.

You are close to the heart of the Lord; You accompany the Lord in all His avatarams; You are the force that removes all evils and misfortunes of the devotees; You enjoy the assistance of Bhumi Devi (who epitomizes forgiveness). You are the mother of all creations. You confer pleasure, affluence, as well as the eternal anandam of moksham. You take Your own form as Mahalakshmi in Sri Vaikuntam - eternal, concrete, material form, so to say, You do this of Your own accord.

A few additional observations are in order: Our Philosophy is strictly monotheistic. Many brethren of ours term this as pantheism, because of popular, ignorant notions. Lord Narayana is ONE GOD. If we attribute three consorts, Lakshmi, Bhumi Devi, and Nila Devi to Him, it is strictly in conformance with Vedic authority. The other Devis are alluded to only for convenience of reference. They are qualities personified. Indeed, Mahalakshmi partakes of the Daya quality. The poetic genius of Svami Desikan weaves in our imagination, the concept of Daya as a consort. This has been introduced in verse 6 of this stotram and is reiterated here."

Sloka 73

स्वयमुदयिनः सिद्धाद्याविष्कृताश्च शुभालयाः

विविध विभव व्यूहावासाः परं च पदं विभोः ।

वृषगिरि मुखेष्वेतेष्विच्छावधि प्रतिलब्धये

दृढ विनिहिता निश्चेणिस्त्वं दये निज पर्वभिः ॥ ७३ ॥

svayamudayinaH sidhdAdhyA viShkR^itAscha shubhAlayAH

vividha vibhava vyUhAvAsAH paraM ca padaM vibhoH |

vR^iShagiri mukheShveteShvicChAvadhi pratilabdhaye

dR^iDha vinihitA nishreNistvaM daye nija parvabhiH || 73



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

“We are enjoying the eighth decad of Svami Desikan’s Daya Satakam, wherein he documents the numerous anugrahams and upakarams undertaken by Daya Devi for our benefit. The previous verse outlined six reasons for the equivalence between Daya Devi and **anugrahamaylm** (in whose dictionary, the term punishment does not exist), Mahalakshmi Thayar. In this verse, Svami Desikan visualizes Daya Devi as a ladder, that enables one to climb up. Just as we use a ladder to access hard to reach desirable objects, Daya Devi enables us to attain all elevated benefits. Due to karma all of us suffer from bondage to samsara and are thus experiencing great travails. This is in the manner of “**punarapi jananam punarapi maraNam**” reflecting an interminable cycle of births and deaths. For struggling beings like us, Daya Devi paves the way to attain moksham, which guarantees residence in Sri Vaikuntam, while engaging in the constantly blissful activity of Kaimkaryam to the Divine Couple. This is the purport of this Daya Satakam verse. This verse is “svayamudayinaH sidhdAdhyA viShkR^itAscha shubhAlayAH vividha vibhava vyUhAvAsAH paraM ca padaM vibhoH vR^iShagiri mukheShveteShvicChAvadhi pratilabdhaye dR^iDha vinihitA nishreNistvaM daye nija parvabhiH” Lord Srinivasa incarnates in five forms (para, vyUha, vibhava, archa, and hArdha). Param denotes His form in Sri Vaikuntam. This is documented in the **AShTAKShara mantra dhyAna slokam** salutation “savyaM pAdaM prasArya shrIta duritaharaM dakShiNaM kunjayitvA jAnunyAdhAya savyetaramitarabhujaM

nAgabhoge nidhAya pashcAdbahudhvayena pratibhaTashamane dhArayan
sha~Nkha cakre devibhUShAdi juShTo janayatu jagatAM sharma
vaikuNThanAthaH”.



The import of this tribute is that Lord Narayana is seen in Sri Vaikuntam as seated on Adishesha with one foot hanging down and the other folded along with Sri Devi, BhUmi Devi and NIlā Devi. He is adorned with the emblems of the discus and conch. Next comes the vyUha forms of Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. These are the forms that are responsible for the acts of SR^iShTi, stithi, and praLayam undertaken by Lord Narayana. He is also seen in reclining form in the milky ocean. This too is the vyUha form. Vibhava is the form that He takes in incarnations such as Rama, Krishna, Narasimha et al. Then comes the Hardha avataram, which denotes the Lord's residence as the indweller (**antharyami**) of all beings in the universe. The archa form denotes the murtis at various Divya Desams. The Divya Desams are glorified in this verse. Residence at these Divya Desams has the impact of gradually reforming the individual, and leading him to seek moksham through the adoption of Bhakti yogam or prapatti. This is elaborated upon in considerable detail in Svami Desikan's Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram. In this context, Lord Narayana is visualized as a tree that bears luscious fruits. These fruits denote the puruShArthAs. One needs to arrive near the tree and climb it in order to lay hands on the fruits. How is it possible to climb this tree? We are short-statured and thus cannot climb this tree by ourselves. Therefore, we need an auxiliary aid for this purpose. Svami Desikan describes the role of Daya Devi and Her mahopakaram in this instance. In the concluding verse of the **Varadaraja Panchasat**, Svami Desikan declares "iti vihitamudAraM ve~NkaTeshena bhaktyA shR^iti subhagamidaM yaH stotrama~NgIkaroti karishikhariviTa~NkasthAyinaH kalpavR^ikShAt bhavati phalamasheShaM tasya hastApaceyam" The tribute "karishikhariviTa~NkasthAyinaH kalpavR^ikShAt" reflects the fact that Lord Varadaraja is the wish-fulfilling tree that resides on top of the elephant-shaped hill (**karishikhari**). This is a permanent wish fulfilling tree unlike other trees which may be seasonal or may exist for a time. This tree has the characteristic of making available bountiful fruits within one's reach as documented in the tribute "iti vihitamudAraM ve~NkaTeshena bhaktyA shR^iti subhagamidaM yaH stotrama~NgIkaroti" (One who embraces this stotram and recites it with focus, is sure to be graced by the wish-fulfilling tree resident on top of the elephant-shaped hill by making available all fruits within the reach of their arms.) Likewise, in this instance, Lord Srinivasa is visualized as the wish fulfilling tree. Here, we are short-statured and need an aid to access the fruit on offer from Lord Srinivasa. In the **SaraNagati Dipika Stotram** Svami Desikan declares "udbAhubhAvamapahAya yathaiva kharvaH prAMshuM phalArthamabhiyAcati yogicintya evaM suduShkaramupAyagaNam vihAya sthAneniveshayati tasya vicakShaNastvAm".



The salutation “**udbAhubhAvamapahAya yathaiva kharvaH**” refers to a short statured individual seeking to partake of fruit that resides on an extremely tall tree. However, the fruit is not within reach and has to be accessed with help. In this instance, he requests a tall individual to pluck the fruit so that he can partake of it. What if the tall man plucks the fruit and keeps it to himself and does not give it to the short one? Rest assured that such an individual will not be approached for this purpose. Svami Desikan compares himself to the short statured one, in terms of being unable to conform to the onerous prescriptions of karma yogam, jñAna yogam, and bhakti yogam. Instead, he submits a request to the tall man (Lord Narayana) to stand instead of these practices and grant him the same elevated benefit of moksham that is the privy of the Bhakti yogam practitioner. In the context of the present Daya Satakam verse, Svami Desikan states that one need not go seeking the help of a tall man. Instead Daya Devi functions as the ladder that can be climbed in a step-by-step manner to access the fruits on offer from the tree known as Lord Srinivasa. Rather than gaining from someone else, fruits collected from one’s own effort acquire a completely different taste. In another instance, the Divya Dampatis of Srirangam are taking a walk along the banks of the Chandra PushkaraNi during which they stop by near the ponna maram (gold-bearing tree so to speak) as documented in the tribute “**shrirangarajakaranamR^ita shAkhikAbhyo**” Lord Ranganatha plucks a flower from this tree and places it on Thayar’s hair as an adornment. Thayar enquires of Lord Ranganatha about this act to which Lord Ranganatha replies “This is no ordinary tree. It is the gold-bearing tree, which grew hearing Svami NammAzhvar’s Tiruvaimozhi. The fragrance of the flower from this tree is consequently, uniquely enchanting. This is quite different from the fragrance of flowers yielded by ordinary trees. That is why I chose this flower as a decoration for Your hair.” This is documented in **Sri Ranganaja Sthavam** by Sri Parashara Bhattar as a tribute by way of mangalasasanam to the tree. In a like fashion, the fruits gained by one’s own efforts of reaching up a tree and plucking them have a singularly unique flavor. In this context, Daya Devi functions as a ladder replete with many steps that enables the short statured individual to climb up to reach the fruit-bearing branch. One of these steps corresponds to residence in a Divya Desam. Adopting residence at the Divya Desam gives rise to a yearning for Lord Srinivasa in a plethora of ways. For example, if one adopts residence in a Divya Desam one is routinely graced with the darsanam of Lord Narayana during the nitya utsavams at which time the utsava murti is brought out in procession. Thus, as long as one is not atheistic, the individual is guaranteed of bhagavad anubhavam in some form or another.



Thus, Divya Desa vasam is a valuable mechanism to bring one closer to Lord Narayana simply on account of the number of opportunities for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam on offer. This is documented in the tribute “svayamudayinaH sidhdAdhyA viShkR^itAscha shubhAlayAH vividha vibhava vyUhAvAsAH paraM ca padaM vibhoH” of this Daya Satakam verse. This describes the place where Lord Srinivasa has taken root. The salutation “svayamudayinaH” alludes to the fact that the Lord arrived at the Venkatam hill on His own accord. Therefore, kshetrams such as these are termed as svayam vyakta kshetrams. Others in this category include Srirangam, SrimushNam, Totadri, Salagramam, Pushkaram, BadarikAshramam, and Naimisharanyam. The Kanchi mAhatmyam describes Kanchipuram also as a svayam vyakta kshetram. The Lord took residence at these places on His own accord through AvirbhAvam. The salutation “sidhdAdhyA viShkR^itAscha shubhAlayAH” refers to the fact that the Lord arrived at these kshetrams to grace the Siddhas, Devas, and Rishis, who engaged in austerities to gain a darsanam of the Lord. Thus, the Divya Desams became sanctified on account of the tapas undertaken by these elevated individuals and the Lord arriving to grace them as a result. For example, Lord Dakshina Venkatesha took root at Oppiliappan Koil to grace Rishi Markandeya. Likewise in some other Divya Desams, the Lord arrived to grace Devas who had undertaken penance there. The fact that the Lord arrived in this manner to grace the Devas at these Divya Desams confers the status “saidham” to these kshethtrams. The Pancharatra Sastram categorizes the Divya Desams as svayam vyaktam, saiddham, daivam, and manusham. Saiddham denotes those kshetrams that acquire siddhi on account of Siddhas and Maharishis. Daivam denotes those kshetrams that come about due to devatas undertaking penance there to seek the grace of Lord Narayana. For example, Lord Narayana arrived as Varadaraja at Kanchipuram as a result of the yaj~nam undertaken by Brahma. This is an example of Daivam. Manusham denotes the class of kshetrams sanctified on account of the efforts of bhagavata uttamas (foremost Bhagavatas) and those that have been rendered sacred by mangalasasanams from Azhwars. In these Divya Desams, the Lord is described as “AviShkR^itAscha shubhAlayAH” denoting the fact that the Lord revealed His prescence at these Divya Desams. Next, we examine the tribute “vividha vibhava vyUhAvAsAH paraM ca padaM vibhoH”. The salutation “vibhoH” refers to the fact that Lord Narayana is the master of the universe - one who is all pervasive, one who controls the existence and activities of all beings in the universe. He begets Vibhavam on account of His incarnations and due to His presence as the archa murti at various Divya Desams. Significantly, this does not come about from His eternal residence in Sri Vaikuntam.

Daya Devi is the Divine Ladder that helps us reach Moksha



Svami NammAzhvar salutes this aspect of Lord Narayana in the **Tiruvaimozhi** tribute “Ican vAnavarkku enban enRAI atu tEcAmO tiruvenkaDatAnukku nICanEn niRaionRumilEn en kaN pAsam vaitta paramcuDar cOtikkE” (The greatness of Lord Srinivasa comes about not on account of showering His grace upon nitya suris but due to the fact that He deems the lowliest of beings - adiyen, as worthy of His grace and brings me near to Him). Svami Desikan follows the lead of Svami NammAzhvar in capturing this sentiment in this Daya Satakam verse and declares that the glory for Lord Srinivasa arises not on account of His residence in Sri Vaikuntam but due to His numerous avatarams (Rama, Krishna, Narasimha et al) to grace those who have surrendered to Him through His residence as the arca murti at Divya Desams. Furthermore, it may be recalled that the **Rg Veda** tribute 3.8.4 “saushreyAn bhavati jAYamAnaH” documents the fact that in each of His avatarams, the Lord acquires added fame due to His avataram coming about on account of His sankalpam, whereas all beings of the universe beget birth in accordance with their karma. Thus, our births represent a diminishing stature, whereas the Lord who incarnates each time acquires an increase in His stature. The inner meaning is that even though one may choose to stay away from the Lord, through His numerous acts of compassion, the Lord ensures that the individual gets closer and closer to Him. This is the underlying reason for the Lord acquiring added glory in each of His incarnations. It may also be remembered that this comes about entirely due to the grace of Daya Devi. Likewise, Divya Desams such as Ayodhya, and Mathura gain added sanctity due to the fact that Lord is ever present in these places and is anxiously waiting to grace his seekers. This sentiment is echoed in the tribute “mathurA nAma nagarI puNyA pApahara shubha yatrA nityaM sannihito hariH” (The city named Mathura is sacred/auspicious because it is capable of destroying one’s sins.) The reason for this is that even if one has sinned greatly, if one visits Mathura and performs snanam in the Yamuna river, one gets cleansed of all of their sins. Upon destruction of one’s sins, all auspiciousness springs forth. All this comes about due to the fact that Lord Narayana is ever-present here. Thus, the avatara sthalams of Ayodhya and Mathura acquire sacredness due to the Lord’s unceasing presence. Next comes the tribute “vibhoH paraM ca padaM”. The all-pervading Lord Narayana occupies the elevated place of Sri Vaikuntam as the master. These Divya Desams as well as Parama Padam, glorious as they are, they are topped by Lord Srinivasa’s residence in the Venkatam hill as described by the tribute “vR^iShagiri mukheShu eteShu” of the present Daya Satakam verse. The reason for this will become apparent later on. In all the Divya Desams mentioned above Lord Narayana stands ready to grace us as outlined in the tribute “arcitArtha paridhAna

dlkShitaH” The Lord has taken root at these Divya Desams only to grant the purushArthams of Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha sought by His supplicants. The tribute **“icChAvadhi pratilabdhaye”** from this Daya Satakam verse highlights this fact. The **“icChAvadhi”** salutation also refers to the fact that the ultimate puruShArtha of moksham is definitely granted to sharaNagatas. Not only this, in accordance with one’s bhakti, the fruits that need to accrue to those seeking the Lord at these Divya Desams, is also unfailingly granted. This is the import of the **“icChAvadhi pratilabdhaye”** salutation. This also refers to the fact that the Lord has no quotas or limits on how much He grants and to how many He grants the Purusharthas. He is saluted as **“koLLa kuRaivilan vENDittellAm tarum kOtilan”** in the Azhvar pasuram. This too is captured in the **“icChAvadhi pratilabdhaye”** tribute of this Daya Satakam verse. Additionally, this tribute alludes to the fact that the power of Lord Narayana to grant desired purushArthas is limitless. It is not diminished in any way regardless of the number of people to whom He grants these purushArthas.

This Daya Satakam verse further visualizes the wish fulfilling Lord resident in these Divya Desams as a tree bearing luscious fruit. The question is how to reach up and pluck the fruit from this tree? Daya Devi functions as a ladder for this purpose as highlighted in the salutation **“nija parvabhiH”** of this Daya Satakam verse. Specifically, this ladder is replete with a number of steps. Depending on one’s bhakti, they may climb up all the way or stop after a few steps. Daya Devi ensures that they get the fruits in accordance with their bhakti corresponding to the number of steps they climb. Thus, in this instance, the footsteps of the ladder correspond to one’s bhakti. The tribute **“dR^iDha vinihitA nishreNistvaM”** notes the difference between the ladder known as Daya Devi and a common ladder. Common ladders have a finite time span after which they wear out. Due to repeated use, the footrest at the various steps can break. Additionally, the wall supports of the ladder too can wear out due to usage. However, the Daya ladder is available for all time and remains unchanged regardless of the number of people that climb up. A common ladder can cause one to slip and fall. However, the Daya ladder provides a firm foothold ensuring that one does not slip and enables a steady step-by-step progression all the way to moksham. The steps in a ladder are useful for climbing up as well as getting down. In the context of the Daya Devi ladder, She enables common beings like us to climb up. At the same time, this ladder is a convenient mechanism for the descent of Lord Srinivasa. It is the ladder of Daya Devi that Lord Srinivasa uses to descend from Sri Vaikuntam and take on the arca avatarams, hardha avatarams, and the like.



dr̥iDha vinihita nishreNistvaM

For those who attain Sri Vaikuntam through arcirAdhi mArgam due to the performance of either Bhakti yogam or prapatti, there is no return to earthly existence in accordance with the **Chandogya Upanishad** statement “**na ca punarAvartate na cha punarAvartate**”. If one has to return from a place, it can be only on account of two reasons. First among them is that the residents of the place deem that the individual has spent sufficient time and that he needs to go back to where he came from. Second is that the individual gets tired of the place and desires a return. In the case of those attaining Sri Vaikuntam as described here, Lord Narayana never wants to let go of them and send them back to the earth as described in the salutation “**j~nAnivAtmaivate matham**”. On the other hand, He facilitates their permanent residence in Sri Vaikuntam whereby they can constantly enjoy His grace and take delight in rendering kaimkaryam to the Divine Couple. The individual too takes delight in rendering eternal kaimkaryam and is never satiated. Also, the incentive to leave one place for another comes about only if the new destination has something better to offer than the present place of residence. In this instance, there is nothing superior to the benefit of attaining residence in Sri Vaikuntam and rendering eternal kaimkaryam for the Divya Dampatis. Therefore, there is no incentive to leave Sri Vaikuntam. Therefore, the residence in Sri Vaikuntam for those who get there through arcirAdhi mArgam is in the manner of “**na ca punarAvartate na ca punarAvartate**” (Point of no return). Svami Desikan goes a step further in the tribute “**vR^iShagiri mukheShu eteShu**” to elaborate on the fact that “nitya suris” in Sri Vaikuntam desire to offer their prostrations to Lord Srinivasa at the Venkatam hill. This sentiment is echoed by Svami NammAzhvar in the **Tiruvaimozhi** salutation “**imayOr atipatiyE**” denoting the fact that the Chief of the Nitya Suris is Lord Srinivasa, who has taken root at the Venkatam hill. This is further evidenced in the tribute “**ennALum ninRimayOrgalEtti iRainji inaminamAi meinA manattAl vazhipADu ceyyum tiruvEnkaDattAnE**”. (Nitya Suris celebrate the glory and render praise of Lord Srinivasa. They arrive in large numbers to prostrate before Lord Srinivasa. They offer their salutations through mei nA-mind, body, and speech.) Thus, in order to ensure that lowly beings like us can become privy to the grace of Lord Srinivasa of such loftiness, Daya Devi serves as a ladder to facilitate access. This concludes our exposition of this Daya Satakam verse.”

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

“The Lord, who is at the top, namely Paramapada descends down in various forms:

1. svayamvyakta murtis and similar arca forms in various shrines at the behest of Siddha seers.
2. Various avatars (known as Vibhava) such as Matsya, Rama and others.
3. VyUha forms such as Sankarshana et al.
4. Hardha form-as the indweller of all beings
5. Above all as the arca murti at the Venkatam hill, counted among the arca forms

These constitute a ladder of easy steps through which one can ascend. You are his ladder, strong and capable of sustaining one's ascent. The rungs of the ladder constitute different stages of fulfillment. This verse is also suggestive of the fact that the Lord's descent into this world is on account of the Daya Devi ladder. So too is the ascent of a devotee through different stages conferred by Daya Devi. The rungs of the Daya Devi ladder correspond to the different stages."



Sloka 74

हितमिति जगद्दृष्ट्या क्लृप्तैरक्लृप्त फलान्तरैः

अमति विहितैरन्यैर्धर्मायितैश्च यदृच्छया ।

परिणत बहुच्छद्मा पद्मासहाय दये स्वयं

प्रदिशसि निजाभिप्रेतं नः प्रशाम्यदपत्रपा ॥ ७४ ॥

hitamiti jagad dhR^iShTayA kluptair aklupta phalAntaraiH
amati vihitair anyair dharmaayitaischa yadR^icChayA|
pariNata bahucChadmA padmA sahAya daye svayaM
pradishasi nijAbhipretaM naH prashAmyad apatrapA| | 74



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

Daya Devi's upakaram for us in terms of a ladder was described in the previous verse. She renders Her upakarams for us in many ways - especially for sharaNagatas, who seek the ultimate bliss of eternal kaimkaryam for the Divine Couple in Sri Vaikuntam. On the other hand, we try our best to stay away from Lord Srinivasa. Instead, we are caught up in the swirl of Samsaram causing us to believe that the experiences of pain and pleasure in this world are the only things of importance. This causes us to seek ways for bettering our lot in the present world that we exist, which is what we consider as ultimate purushArtha. This is not something that we are engaged in for a day or two. Instead, it has been in vogue for a long time involving innumerable births spanning eons of time. Even for beings like us, Daya Devi desires to grant the ultimate purushArtha of moksham. However, to deserve this, an eligibility criterion is called on our part.

Specifically, Daya Devi submits an evocative appeal on our behalf to Lord Srinivasa to grant moksham. However, even though Lord Srinivasa is inclined to grant the request, He is unable to due to the fact that He only seems to find the individual to be replete with numerous faults. To this Daya Devi responds "Who says that this individual is bereft of guNams? I shall enumerate them for You Svami." She specifically states that even though the individual has sinned greatly, he has performed some good acts. These good acts would yield results that ensure that the individual reaps full benefit from them. For example, an individual may be a total atheist. However, on account of some good act, he may be endowed with

great wealth. In this instance, his good act has resulted in an accumulation of a great deal of wealth, thereby exhausting all the consequences of his good act.

However, Daya Devi seizes upon all such instances for an individual and highlights them to Lord Srinivasa. Thereby She ensures that the individual begets the parama purushArtha of moksham. This in a nutshell is the import of this Daya Satakam verse. This verse is “hitamiti jagad dhR^iShTayA kluptair akrupta phalAntaraiH amati vihitair anyair dharmAyitaischa yadR^icChayA pariNata bahucChadmA padmA sahAya daye svayaM pradishasi nijAbhipretaM naH prashAmyad apatrapA||”. Kids usually accumulate money by putting it in a piggy bank. These days even banks offer novel schemes for accomplishing this. After the money attains significant value, it can be used for expenses incurred by the child. Instead of saving the money, if the child had the money to spend, it would be expended on frivolous causes. Instead accumulating the money makes the amount significant and enables putting the money to use for a good cause. In a like manner, Daya Devi accumulates all the good acts committed by jivans like us. The accumulation of these good acts is highlighted in the proper context by Daya Devi to Lord Srinivasa. She specifically uses this to impress upon Lord Srinivasa that the jivan accumulated good acts make him deserving of moksham. The tribute “hitamiti jagad dhR^iShTayA kluptaiH” from the present Daya Satakam verse illustrates the fact that the little acts of piety engaged in by the jivan are accumulated by Daya Devi. In this context, there are five kinds of sukrutams (good acts). These are prAsangika sukrutam, anushangika sukrutam, abuddhipUrvaka sukrutam, yadhruChika sukrutam, and finally sAmAnyA buddhimUla sukrutam. Even if one may have sinned greatly, one may have performed at some point any one of these five kinds of sukrutam.

The tribute “hitamiti jagad dhR^iShTayA kluptaiH” denotes the fact that according to the commonly accepted universal standard, one may engage in certain good acts. This is called prAsangika sukrutam. For example, one may engage in the construction of a well or a pond to offer water to humans and animals. Participating in such an act either through a financial contribution or by hands-on engagement through bodily effort in the task of construction is known as prAsangika sukrutam. It is well known that engaging in this type of activity is good. However, the results of such a good act are hard to discern. Specifically, it is impossible to quantify the benefit accruing from such an act and identify when the benefit comes about. Thus, not knowing the consequence or time of arrival of the fruit for such an action, if one engages in a good act, it is in the manner of “hitamiti jagad dhR^iShTayA kluptaiH” In another instance, one may be engaged in the task of anna dhAnam.



Another who may not have the means to undertake this nonetheless gets motivated and makes a small contribution with a request to be included in this noble task is another instantiation of “**hitamiti jagad dhR^iShTayA kluptaiH**”, namely undertaking a noble task by commonly accepted standards. The next salutation from this Daya Satakam verse “**aklupta phalAntaraiH**” denotes anushangika sukrutam. For example, the result of a good act of one Bhagavata accruing to another is an example of anushangika sukrutam. Specifically, if a learned one known to us, who has undergone formal adhyayanam is walking amidst great discomfort in sweltering heat, welcoming him to one’s home, offering him water and providing fan service to soothe him from the heat is an act of puNyam. If this learned one is accompanied by another learned one, not known to us but is similarly welcomed and offered the same courtesy, the sukrutam arising from this act is described by the salutation “**aklupta phalAntaraiH**” This is the anushangika sukrutam. Next, the tribute “**amati vihitaiH**” from this Daya Satakam verse describes the abuddhipUrvaka acts of puNyam (good acts that are performed unknowingly). One may ask here that it is difficult to knowingly engage in good acts. How then could one possibly engage in good acts unknowingly? For example, a fisherman is engaged in the act of collecting fish in the Ganga river. By accident, his fishing net falls into the river. The fisherman descends into the Ganga river to retrieve his net. In the process he performs Ganga snAnam and continues the act of fishing. Even so, the time that he took a dip in the Ganga river by sheer happenstance (to recover the net), corresponding to the time of eclipse (arbodayam/mahodayam). Then, he begets a great puNyam of having performed Ganga snAnam at the time of eclipse. This act of puNyam came about unknowingly and in an unplanned manner due to sheer accident. This is known as abuddhipUrvaka sukrutam. Next comes the salutation “**yadR^icChayA dharmAyitaischa**” of this Daya Satakam verse, which describes the act undertaken unintentionally. For example, one may set out to do something. In the process, the individual accidentally performs a good act. Let’s say one visits the kshetram of Srirangam to attend an auspicious occasion in one’s family such as a wedding or upanayanam. In the process, the individual decides to go to the Temple of Ranganatha and not only that also decides to seek the blessings of his Acharya. It is common to state that “I came to attend an auspicious occasion in my family as a by-product of which I was able to get a darshan of Lord Ranganatha and my Acharyan” but not the other way around. This sort of a good act is known as yadrucCha sukrutam.





For instance, if one is going on an errand and on the way encounters a Veda parayana ghoshti. Let's say the individual did not have time to properly prostrate before the ghoshti but hurriedly undertakes a pradakshiNam (clockwise circumambulation) of the ghoshti. This becomes a yadrucCha sukutam. The Sastras state that when one sees sumangali women, Veda parayana ghoshti, and Brahmanas, one must undertake a pradakshiNam to them as a mark of respect. If this comes about in an unexpected manner it is yadrucCha sukutam. Next comes the salutation “anyair dharmayaitaischa”. For example, if one is engaged in anna dhanam, those who are hungry are prime candidates for receiving this according to the statement “annasya kshuditam patram”. In that group if there happens to be a great Brahman, who has performed extensive adhyayanam of the Vedam, who happened to be there by sheer accident and no planning on the part of the performer of the anna dhanam, a great benefit accrues to the performer. This is a major sukutam. Now Daya Devi turns to Lord Srinivasa and states “You have decreed that this individual has sinned greatly and has not undertaken even a single noble act that is worthy of Your grace. However, I shall enumerate his numerous good acts, which have been accumulated as if in a piggy bank. Not one of them has yielded fruit as yet! In the manner of “hitamiti jagad dhrishitayA kluptaiH” he has taken part through a token contribution (either monetarily or through bodily effort) in the performance of several noble tasks such as digging of wells and ponds to offer water to thirsty beings. This has earned him puNyam. He has offered relief from the sweltering heat to people he knows and a great Bhagavata accompanying these people, who is unknown to him. This earns him even more puNyam. This is his anushangika puNyam. Without his knowledge, he has performed Ganga snanam and Samudra snanam during puNya kalam such as grahaNam. This accrues abuddhipurvaka sukutam. As per local parlance in Kanchipuram, he happened to arrive in order to purchase “ettha kOl”. However, in a totally unplanned manner, he managed to get a darsanam of Garuda Sevai for Lord Varadaraja. Thereby, he has gained yadrucCha sukutam. His noble acts are not limited to these few instances. In a like fashion, he has undertaken numerous good acts. All of them are yet to bear fruit. The accumulation of all these acts results in a mountainous pile of good acts. If he is deemed unfit for moksham, who would You consider worthy of moksham Svami?”

This dhrishitAntam elucidated by Svami Desikan through an appeal from Daya Devi to Lord Srinivasa is known as “kaLatthu mODu”, that which arises when paddy is harvested from crop. These days even though a machine is used to sift the grain, the place where the paddy is brought and purified is still known as “kaLatthu



mODu”. People bring the crop and after collecting the grain leave for their homes. The remnants from the paddy, which is mixed with sand and the like is then taken by other poor people, who come to the kaLatthu mODu to clean up the place. With some effort, when the grain is separated from the contaminants, it serves as food for a couple of days due to the accumulation of large quantities of residual grain. In a like manner Daya Devi accumulates the good karma for an individual from his numerous births in various forms and highlights this to Lord Srinivasa as a significant collection of good acts on the part of the individual. She then submits the appeal to Lord Srinivasa that the individual due to this collection of good acts is a fitting receptacle for the grace of Lord Srinivasa.



The tribute “*nijAbhipretaM naH*” from this Daya Satakam verse refers to the fact that the intent of Daya Devi is to ensure that all beings in the universe attain moksham. She brings this to fruition by demonstrating to Lord Srinivasa an accumulation of good acts on the part of an individual, rather than expending the good acts by granting them trivial benefits in accordance with each act. This sets the stage for Daya Devi to formally request the boon of moksham for the individual from Lord Srinivasa. Daya Devi gains delight when as a result of Her efforts described herein, She causes an individual to resort to Bhakti yogam or Prapatti with the sole objective of gaining moksham. In fact, She considers it a slur against Her if She is unable to successfully make the case of moksham for the individual and is quite

ashamed due to this. The import of this verse is that Daya Devi rids Herself of this shame by ensuring that even common individuals like us are able to gain moksham. Again, the anubhavam of Sri Parashara Bhattar with Ranganayaki Thayar is quoted here “An individual has to go from the northern entrance to the southern side of the temple. If one were to take the route from Uttara Veedi to Chithra Veedi, the commute is rather long. Thinking of this, the individual decides to take the short cut through the inner route of the Temple. During this sojourn, the individual submits a prayer with folded hands in Anjali mudra and performs a pradakshiNam for Ranganayaki Thayar.





This simple act on the part of the individual is viewed as something that has been undertaken with a great deal of effort and Thayar stands ready to reward him with every conceivable benefit including moksham and yet thinks She has not done enough. She yearns to grant him more. Sri Parashara Bhattar describes this through the salutation “*kasmaichidanjali bharaM vahate vitlrya*” depicting the fact that for the offering of a prayerful submission with folded hands that requires considerable effort, Ranganayaki Thayar is ready to offer him everything he wants and more (aishvaryam, kaivalyam, and moksham) as

documented in the salutation “*aishvaryamakSharagatiM paramaM padaM vA*” but yet feels that She has not done enough as documented in the salutation “*asmai na kinchiducitaM kR^itamityAthAmba!*”. Sri Parashara Bhattar expresses his astonishment at the act of Thayar and exclaims that he is at a loss for words upon beholding the compassion of Ranganayaki Thayar as documented in the tribute “*tvaM lajjase kathaya ko(a)yamudAra bhAvaH*” Svami Desikan goes a step further in this verse in that at least the individual in question in Sri Parashara Bhattar’s tribute has offered a prayer to Thayar with folded hands. However, here it is not known if the individual submitted a prayerful offering with folded hands. Instead Daya Devi highlights an accumulation of all the acts of goodness undertaken by the individual and makes the case that the individual deserves the ultimate purushArtham of moksham resulting in ceaseless Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. Thus, Daya Devi comes to one’s rescue in a plethora of ways. With this prayerful offering we request that Daya Devi’s grace falls upon all of us and we conclude the exposition of this verse.”

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



“The Daya flow towards an individual is initiated by a series of steps in a chain process. A good deed however small and done unknowingly too may be the first step. The Lord takes such a small step as very significant and sets in an array of Daya-conferring, Daya-informed blessings. It is impossible to designate such a chain of fortunate steps as purely **nirhetuka** (causeless). If we were to do so, we would not be able to account for a similar chain being absent for another individual. That is, we would attribute this to an act of partiality on the part of Lord Srinivasa (vaiShamya doSham for one who is known to be pakSha pAthAna bhigyam).

aj~nAta sukrutam is a concept. Azhvar Tiruvaimozhi 10.8.1 reminds us that his spelling out the name of Tirumaliruncholai in a casual, accidental manner, causes the Lord to enter the Azhvar’s heart and reside therein. This verse lists a variety of good deeds that could possibly arise in an individual. The Lord waits for one such a force of a good deed, a pretext to enter our hearts and our life so to speak.

Oh Daya Devi! You step in; You seek to find some good in me; some pretext, more precisely. You then recommend my case to the Lord. You make Him confer upon me what is good. This good is evolved in Your own imaginative convolution of thinking process. What is good for me is the criterion. You do so much for us.

1. Good, as believed in the world includes acts such as construction of Temples and digging tanks and wells.
2. While undertaking a good deed, as a by-product, additional good may arise unintentionally.
3. While on a routine mundane act, one happens to perform a holy act; for example, while chasing a cow accidentally a pradakshiNa of a temple comes about.
4. While on the errand of a mundane act, one happens to perform a holy act, feeding a friendly guest, who is known to be a great Bhagavata.
5. All these acts are designated in this verse. The fundamental point herein is that when we are not conscious of the nature of an act, Daya reckons the good and induces the Lord to take note and encourage the person towards more good.”



Sloka 75

अतिविधिशिवैरैश्वर्यात्मानुभूतिरसैर्जनान्

अहृदयमिहोपच्छन्दैषामसङ्गदशार्थिनी ।

तृषितजनतातीर्थस्नानक्रमक्षपितैः नसां

वितरसि दये वीतातङ्का वृषाद्रिपतेः पदम् ॥ ७५ ॥

atividhishivairairishvaryAtmAnubhUti rasairjanAn
ahR^idayamihopacChandyaiShAmasa~NgadashArthinI |
tR^iShitajanatatilrthasAnakramakShapitainasAM
vitarasi daye vItAta~NkA vR^iShAdripateH padam | | 75



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

“Lord Srinivasa out of His overbearing desire to protect us, inherently possesses an abundance of compassion. Some individuals may be compassionate for a short while at times. However, these instances may be few and far between. On the other hand, Lord Srinivasa is always filled with compassion. Additionally, He is known as “vrAtharakshaikadIkShe” due to His sworn position to unfailingly protect those who have surrendered to Him. All that is called for is “rakShApekSham pratIkShate” denoting the fact that Lord Srinivasa merely expects an appeal for protection and is waiting for this appeal to bestow His daya flow.

Due to the Lord’s disposition of yearning to rescue His supplicants, even if they did not ask for Moksham, Daya Devi accumulates the little acts of good committed by the supplicant and highlight this as a significant good act. Using this as pretext, She requests Lord Srinivasa to confer upon them the elevated boon of Moksham. This was the purport of the previous verse. It is important to understand two points in this context - siddhopAyam and sAdhyopAyam. Lord Srinivasa serves as the means as well as the end. It is not due to any doing on our part. The Vedam declares “yamevaiSha vR^iNute tena labhyaH” (Only one that is chosen by the Lord is able to attain Him). Thus, Lord Srinivasa’s sankalpam becomes extremely important in this instance. It is entirely due to His sankalpam that He causes supplicants to seek Him and grants them moksham. He also serves as the means for them to gain moksham. siddhopAyam is the import of the exposition thus far.



Daya Devi strives to ensure Her devotees are blessed with Moksham

Next comes the issue of **sAdhyopAyam**. Specifically, since the Vedam declares that only one chosen by the Lord can gain moksham, is it then acceptable for one to merely wait for Bhagavad Sankalpam to ordain that their turn for moksham has arrived and do nothing in the interim? Svami Desikan answers this quite emphatically in the negative. In order to invoke the grace of Lord an act on our part is called for. That is when we will be blessed by the Lord. Specifically, the act of Bhakti yogam or Prapatti is treated as a pretext by the Lord to shower His grace and grant moksham. This is known as **sAdhyopayam**. The act of Bhakti yogam or Prapatti causes the Lord to develop a favorable disposition towards the individual resulting in the torrential flow of His grace, which grants moksham. This is a **sUkShmArtham** (hidden meaning) of the Sastram as it pertains to sAdhyopAyam. Thus, there is no ambiguity about the fact that sAdhyopAyam is necessary to invoke the grace of Lord Srinivasa, who is the siddhopayam, to readily grant moksham. The reason for the Lord to develop a favorable disposition towards one who has adopted sAdhyppayam is undoubtedly Daya Devi. This is the import of the previous verse. However, do all supplicants come to Daya Devi seeking moksham? The answer is most definitely no. Instead, they look for a plethora of worldly pleasures and benefits after enjoying which, they may become inclined to seek moksham. Even with respect to these people, it is Daya Devi's intense desire to bring them on the right path and seek moksham, after realizing the transient nature of other benefits that they dearly long for. She accomplishes this task by first granting them all they desire and then causing them to realize the transient nature of these comforts so much so that they develop a disposition of utter disgust towards these and seek out the lasting wealth of eternal Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This verse is "**atividhi shivair aishvaryAtmAnubhUti rasairjanAn AhR^idayam iha upacChandyaiShAM asa~Nga dashArthinI tR^iShita janatA tIrtha snAna krama kShapitainasAM vitarasi daye vItAta~NkA vR^iShAdri pateH padam**". Daya Devi knows what is good and what is bad for us. Therefore, we should accept whatever She confers upon us. For example, when a sick person is examined by a doctor, the prescribed medicine may be bitter or sweet. Additionally, painful injections may be required to rid the patient of the disease. The doctor adopts a course of treatment with the sole objective of ridding the patient of illness. Likewise, Daya Devi's sole objective is to reform suffering baddha jivans and rid them of their seemingly endless cycle of births and deaths. She is fully aware of the course of action required for each individual and thus follows the prescribed path for each individual. Due to the glorification "**pradishasi nijAbhipretaM**" from the previous verse, Daya Devi is well aware of what is good and what is bad for each individual.



Daya Devi knows what is good and what is bad for us

In this context, She considers it Her mission to ensure that these suffering jivans seek the ultimate puruShArtham of moksham and enables them to gain it. An important point to be noted in this regard is the process by which Daya Devi reforms errant baddha jivans. For instance, we attend upanyasams and kalakshepams to gain wisdom from learned scholars. Their instructions emphasize the performance of trikAla sandhya, undertaking dharma kAryams, always being engaged in Bhagavad kaimkaryam, being devoid of the sense of I and my (ahankaram and mamakAram), never getting dejected and always exhibiting enthusiasm for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, not refraining from engaging in Bhagavad Kaimkaryam on some pretext or the other, and realizing that engaging in such kaimkaryam confers upon us the status of princes. When hearing this message, it sounds extremely convincing. However, a little while later it invariably gives rise to the reasoning “The scholar expounded on a set of truths in his upanyasam. However, as a practical matter is it possible to shake free from the shackles of laukika life like going to work and being engaged in worldly matters?” This causes one to go back to their old ways.

The reason for this is either a lack of understanding of one’s svarUpam (essential nature) or even having realized one’s svarUpam, one is still engaged in ways and deeds that are totally opposed to their svarUpam due to strong prevailing vAsanAs (tendencies to gravitate towards the forbidden acts). These are the main causes for one to be entangled in samsAra and engaged in the performance of acts that are totally opposed to one’s svarUpam. The vAsanAs can be understood from the example of a fan which is spinning. When switched off, it still takes a while for the fan to stop spinning. The role of vAsanAs is similar in that even if one has attained knowledge of one’s svarUpam, it takes a while to root out tendencies opposed to one’s svarUpam. As a consequence, one is engaged in these forbidden acts. The ultimate puruShArtham is that of ceaseless Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. The bliss arising from kaimkaryam to Bhagavan and His Bhagavatas is most enjoyable. Instead, we hanker after trivial pleasures and consider them to be the ultimate goal. Daya Devi showers Her grace precisely to rid us of these tendencies. This is described in detail in this verse of the Daya Satakam.

Svami Desikan’s exposition on dR^iShTAntams (defining perspectives) is matchless. The practices underlying the Sri Vaishnava tradition are not subject to change in accordance with commonly accepted norms of the world. When one examines the Upanishads for example, quite often one finds that the Upanishad extol an object or thing in the universe and then use this to make an important point about Bhagavad viShayam.



eka vijñānena sarva vijñāna

This is known as “**eka vij~nAnena sarva vij~nAna**” (If one understands one thing, they understand everything.) This is highlighted through an example. Clay is the essential ingredient in making pots and other utensils. In a like manner, it must be understood that Brahman (Supreme Being) is the cause for everything in the universe. Svami Desikan follows the path outlined by the Upanishads to make his point pertaining to Bhagavad Vishayam through a commonly accepted worldly example. It is quite common for kids to have a couple of holidays for school ahead of their exams. However, on the day before their exam, there is the prospect of an absorbing game of cricket on offer, which greatly appeals to the kids. The game while no doubt exciting, will take away valuable exam preparation time from the kids. Thus, the mother of the kids offers them the reward of watching the cricket game if they complete their studies the previous day. This act on the part of the mother, which satisfies the desires of her kids, while at the same time accomplishes her objective is known as “**upacandanam**”. Another example is the promise of reward by one’s father conditional on the individual excelling in his studies.



Daya Devi confers upon us all that we seek in terms of material comforts and wealth

Svami Desikan demonstrates an application of this principle with respect to Bhagavad Vishayam. Specifically, the salutation “*atividhi shivair aishvaryAtmAnubhUti rasaiH*” highlights the fact that Daya Devi confers upon us all that we seek in terms of material comforts and wealth. Most commonly, if one is offered the choice between moksham and material comforts, one would opt for the latter rather than the former. Daya Devi first grants the individual their desires from a material perspective and then ensures that they realize the transient nature of these benefits, in that they only last for a while and that they are destructible. This causes the individuals to develop a sense of disgust in that their efforts have been engaged in trivial pursuits. Daya Devi then induces them to seek out the lasting purushArtham of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, which is indestructible, and leads them to moksham. It is quite common for residents in India to desire for travel overseas to lands of opportunity in order to acquire great wealth. However, the residents of those foreign lands, who immigrated from India, aver that it is far better to remain in a village in India than to be subservient to some unknown individual in a foreign land. Thus, those who have acquired wealth in foreign lands come to realize its transitory nature, and actively seek to discourage others from following the same path. Therefore, it is possible for one who greatly longed for a given benefit to sour from the experience and develop a sense of not wanting it anymore. This comes about only after the experience of travel to the foreign land and undergoing travails in the process of gaining wealth. In the instance of the present Daya Satakam verse, Daya Devi first grants the seekers all they want in terms of material wealth and allied comforts. After a while, the individual sours from the experience and realizes the transient nature of these benefits causing them to be dispassionate about these benefits and instead seeking the lasting benefit of uninterrupted Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, which confers eternal delight. This is the import of the tribute “*atividhi shivair aishvaryAtmAnubhUti rasairjanAn*” which states that common people are first rendered happy by Daya Devi granting them their desires. Here it may be asked is there a *tAratamyam* (upper limit) to happiness? Some people may be of the disposition that due to anugraham of Bhagavan they have been blessed with sufficient material wealth and that they have even been able to set apart a portion of their earning for their future after their working days. Thus, they are quite content with their lives. There is a second group of people that constantly aspire for more and are never satisfied no matter how much wealth they have gained. The reason for one’s contentment also needs to be examined. Most likely it comes from the inability to gain more wealth, known as “*alAbha prayuktam*”.



Daya Devi is the ultimate state of bliss above which nothing else exists

However, if the same individual was endowed with ability to gain more wealth and afforded opportunities to realize this, it is doubtful whether the disposition of contentment will come about. There is definitely a “tAratamyam” (gradation in terms of the degree of wealthiness) in this regard. For example, one may be the collector for a small village panchayat. This is definitely a position of importance. However, the collector of larger district enjoys perks and privileges of a bigger scale in comparison. Thus, the joy arising from such a position is much greater. Likewise, the head of a state and nation have increasingly greater perks, privileges, and authority leading to an increase in one’s happiness. The village Panchayat chief, who exudes contentment, does so on account of the fact that he has neither the resources nor the opportunity to gain positions of increased authority. It is due to this ‘alAbhaprayuktam” that the contentment comes about. The gradation or limits of happiness denoted by “tAratamyam” is expounded upon by the Vedam in the statement “saiShA(a)anandasya mImA(gam)sA bhavati yuvA syAt sAdhu yuvA(a)dhyAyakaH.” This is referred to as AnandamImAmsa (a state of joy). This comes about in the context of enquiry about the ultimate state of bliss above which nothing else exists. The Vedam expounds on this fact through the statement “yuvA syAtsAdhuyuvA(a)dhyAyakaH.” Everyone likes to be youthful. This is a cause for great joy. Even greater is the joy of a young one who is learned in the scriptures and is passing on this knowledge to his near and dear ones. However, if such an individual is afflicted by disease, the joy is diminished. Therefore, the Vedam declares “AshiShThaH” (one who is free from disease. This also means “sarvAn dEvAn namasyanti” namely one who has obtained the blessings of all the devas). Next the Vedam glorifies “dR^iDhiShThaH” (one who has firm resolve and is consistent in his speech and behavior). The Vedam follows this with the tribute “baliShThaH” to denote one who is strong. It is insufficient if one is endowed with all this but is poor. Therefore, the Vedam adds the qualification “tasyeyaM pR^ithivI sarvA vittasya pUrNA syAt” to denote one that has great wealth enabling him to get anything and everything on earth that he desires. Such a person’s delight is described in the Vedam as “sa eko mAnuSha AnandaH” (a unit of joy). A hundred times this unit of joy denotes the joy of manuShya gandharva. A hundred times the unit of manuShya gandharva Ananda denotes one unit of deva gandharva Ananda and so forth culminating in the declaration “sa eko brahmaNa AnandaH” denoting the Supreme Bliss. Prior to this the Vedam describes “prajApaterAnandAH” corresponding to the joy experienced by one who begets the status of the four-faced Brahma. This far exceeds the joy of all others below him. This is alluded to in the salutation “atividhi” of this Daya Satakam verse.



sa eko brahmaNa AnandaH

Next comes the tribute “shivaiH” from this verse. This denotes the joy of one who occupies the position of Siva, the destroyer. This is eloquently captured in Svami NammAzhvar’s Tiruvaimozhi Pasuram “pesa ninRa civanukkum piraman tanakkum piRarkkum nAyakan avanE kapAlanan mOkkatthukkaNDu kONmin teca mA matiL sUzhntazhakAya tirukkurukUr ataNuL lcan pAl Oravam paRaital ennAvitilinkiyarkkE” (It needs to be understood that the glory of Lord Narayana is beyond compare. However, for the purpose of illustrating this fact, a comparison with Siva is undertaken in this verse. The very fact that Siva is chosen in this instance lends substance to the Ananda experienced by the occupier of this position). Thus, the tribute “atividhi shivair aishvaryAtmAnubhUti rasairjanAn” from this Daya Satakam verse denotes the fact that Daya Devi confers the blessings of the joys of Brahma, Siva, and more (denoted by Kaivalyam - the ability to enjoy one’s Atma) to Her seekers. The inner meaning of this tribute is that it causes one to reflect on whether the joys experienced in prakR^ita lokam measures up to the joy experienced by the occupier of the position of Brahma and Rudra. This may be possible if one’s experience in their present birth corresponds exclusively to their puNya karma and is untainted by any pApa karma. In that instance, their experience of joy could be greater than that of Brahma and Rudra. How so? The positions of Brahma and Rudra are attained as a result of great penance. However, the occupier of those positions is subject to the results of their good and bad karma. If affected by bad karma, their joy becomes diminished. Thus, one’s joy as a result of their earthly existence experiencing exclusively their good karma can outweigh the joy of those blessed with the positions of Brahma and Rudra. For example, Brahma experienced the loss of the Vedams due to the Vedas being stolen by the asuras, Madhu and Kaitabha as documented in the salutation “vedApahAraka gurupAtaka daitya plDAdi Apat vimocana”. It must be remembered that the greatest wealth that Brahma possesses is that of the Vedam. When this was stolen from him, he lost his radiance and effulgence. Bereft of the Vedam, he could not perform his function of creation of the universe. This caused him great anguish. Likewise, Siva too experienced anguish due to his apacharam towards his Acharya/father, Brahma. As a consequence, he was forced to beg for alms. Thus, amidst the joys of Siva lokam, the occupier of the position of Siva is subject to travails such as this as a result of the pApa karma. The tribute “AhR^idayam iha upacChandyaiH” from this Daya Satakam verse refers to the fact that Daya Devi confers these benefits of the joys of the positions of Brahma, Rudra, and more in the manner of upachandanam.



Daya Devi commands us to come to the Venkatam hill

Namely, if a child is incentivized to perform well in studies by the offer of a reward, it denotes upachandanam. Here it must be noted that the child has a greater fondness for the reward rather than the intention to excel in studies. However, the use of the reward as an incentive causes the child to take the studies seriously and perform well. Likewise, Daya Devi uses the joyous experiences from the positions of Brahma, Rudra, and more as incentive for the seeker to turn their attention towards moksham, which grants the ultimate bliss. This then leads to the question whether Daya Devi confers these rewards on Her supplicants knowing fully well that they are detrimental to their ultimate goal? Daya Devi knows very well that these joys are transient and destructible. However, She uses them as upachandanam knowing that by incentivizing Her seekers, they will eventually turn around and seek moksham.

Where does Daya Devi grant this? It is answered in the salutation “iha” denoting the Venkatam hill. The import of this tribute is that Daya Devi stands ready to grant all that Her seekers desire. However, She urges them to come to the Venkatam hill to formally make the request. Central to this requirement is Daya Devi’s objective of causing Her seekers to turn towards moksham. For common men, the ultimate puruShArtham is food (annam). For the devatas, it is the offering of havis through yaj~nams. For worms and other insects, it is the intense desire to be engulfed by filth from drains. However, the sat-atmAs (pure ones) regard Bhagavad Kaimkaryam as the ultimate puruShArtham. Daya Devi’s message to all these individuals is that whatever be their ultimate puruShArtha, She commands them to come to the Venkatam hill and that She would grant the request. This is Her way of inducing people to come to Her so that She can point them towards the ultimate puruShArtham of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, which may not be the goal of these seekers. One can literally count on one’s fingertips those that desire moksham among the scores of Bhaktas arriving at the Venkatam hill with a plethora of requests for Lord Srinivasa. On the other hand, it is common to encounter folks that come with desires of their children getting highest distinction in their education, or desiring marriage of their children, or advancement in their chosen professional field, or seeking large amounts of wealth, or seeking freedom from diseases/illness. However, it is very hard to encounter one who desires to be associated with sat-viShayam, Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, BhAgavata Kaimkaryam, AchArya Kaimkaryam and the like for themselves, and for their near and dear.



Daya Devi stands ready to grant all that Her seekers desire



Daya Devi instills the desire in Her devotees to perform sharaNAgati to the feet of
Lord Srinivasa

Thus, for people, who desire all manner of material benefits, Daya Devi instructs them to come to Tirumala, where She stands ready to grant them everything and more. Their desires are denoted by “sangam” (craving for wealth and other material objects). For these beings, Daya Devi causes “asa~Nga dashArthinI”. That is Daya Devi’s intent is to rid them of their desire for sangam. Specifically, Her instruction for them to come to the Venkatam hill is for the sole purpose of highlighting the fact that their desires denoted by “sangam” are transient and will be destroyed at some point of time or the other. One needs to look no further than the great kings like Manu and MAndhAta, who were ancestors of Lord Rama, to discern this fact. Daya Devi’s objective is to impress upon Her seekers that their deep-rooted desires for trivial and transient benefits is inappropriate. This is captured in the salutation “tR^iShita janatA tIrtha snAna krama kShapitainasAM” of this Daya Satakam verse. This is in the manner of a thirsty man, who is ready to partake of bottled water from anyone, being offered the benefit of snAnam in the Ganga river, which not only quenches his thirst but also rids him of all of his sins. Daya Devi’s modus operandi with respect to those desiring “sangam” is described through this example. The inner meaning is that Daya Devi encourages Her seekers to come to the Venkatam hill, and assures them that all their desires will be granted. Not only that, as a bonus, She causes them to realize the transient nature of these benefits and instead instructs them to resort to the Lord’s feet to gain the lasting bliss of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam arising through moksham.

This is further elaborated upon in the salutation “vitarasi daye vItAta~NkA vR^iShAdri pateH padam” of this Daya Satakam verse. In accordance with the **Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram** declaration “vinnavarum mannavarum virumbum veRpu venkaTa veRpena viLankum veda veRpE”, the salutation of this Daya Satakam verse “vR^iShAdri pateH padam” denotes the Venkatam hill, which is sought after by the nitya sUris of Sri Vaikuntam as well as residents of this universe. The instruction herein from Daya Devi to all seekers is “Please come to the Venkatam hill. I shall grant everything you desire.”

The tribute “vItAta~NkA vitarasi” denotes the fact that Daya Devi cleanses us and causes us to be freed from fear. The cleansing here is a reference to the destruction of one’s karma causing them to crave for trivial benefits. Furthermore, once the individual has resorted to the feet of Lord Srinivasa for gaining the



vItAta~NkA vitarasi

ultimate purushArtham, there is no fear at all. They are freed from all base desires and seek only opportunities for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. This also comes as a relief for Daya Devi, who then declares “My objective has been realized”.

In summary, through this verse Svami Desikan establishes the important fact that Daya Devi encourages Her seekers to come to the Venkatam hill and assures them that She will grant them everything they desire. With time, She causes them to realize that these desires for trivial and impermanent benefits is inappropriate. Instead She instills in them the desire for the lasting benefit of Bhagavad Kaimkaryam, which is readily realized through sharaNAgati to the feet of Lord Srinivasa, and causes them to perform Prapatti.”

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

“Oh Daya Devi! For those people who have been recognized by You as deserving Your guidance to the Moksha path, You design a careful elevatory project. They might be tempted by great seats of power such as Brahma and Shiva. If they begin to strive for such offices woe unto them! So also is kaivalyam, the bliss of contemplation on one’s atma. What do You do in regards to them? You inveigle them to Tirumalai. You expose the divine form of Lord Venkatesha to them. It is really a holy immersion in sacred waters so to say. They enjoy the bath physically too; it is cool, refreshing, and invigorating. The incidental consequence is that they become freed of sins. Now You can without any shame or guilt elevate them to the eternal bliss of Sri Vaikuntam.

It is important to note the use of the salutation “tR^iShita janatA tlrtha snAna krama kShapitainasAM.” Thirsty people get down in a cool pond.; they then get a holy bath in the sweltering summer heat. There is a rule - if one bathes in the Ganga, one is freed from the sultriness as well as from one’s sins. By application of this rule, excuse, forgiveness, and destruction of one’s sins comes about due to the arrival at the Venkatam hill and by the performance of sharaNAgati to the feet of Lord Srinivasa. The point to be noted here is that one dives into the pond for obtaining relief of physical discomfort from the sweltering heat. However, not only do they gain that benefit but also as a bonus receive assurance of attaining Paramapada. Where can one get a bonus, that exceeds the routine prize by many orders of magnitude?”



Sloka 76

वृषगिरि सुधा सिन्धौ जन्तुर्दये निहितस्त्वया

भव भय परीताप च्छित्त्यै भजन्नघमर्षणम् ।

मुषित कलुषो मुक्तेरग्रेसरैरभिपूर्यते

स्वयमुपनतैः स्वात्मानन्द प्रभृत्यनुबन्धिभिः ॥ ७६ ॥

vR^iShagiri sudhA sindhau jantur daye nihitastvayA

bhava bhaya pariitApacChityai bhajannaghamarShaNam |

muShita kaluSho mukteragresarairabhi pUryate

svayam upanataiH svAtmAnanda prabhR^ityanu bandhibhiH | 76



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin: "This verse is "vR^iShagiri sudhA sindhau jantur daye nihitastvayA bhava bhaya pariitApacChityai bhajannaghamarShaNam muShita kaluSho mukteragresarairabhi pUryate svayam upanataiH svAtmAnanda prabhR^ityanu bandhibhiH". The previous verse highlighted the fact that Daya Devi grants prayojanAntharam (all that Her seekers wish for). Furthermore, She induces in them a desire to seek moksham and ensures that they beget this. In this verse, Svami Desikan highlights the upakaram of Daya Devi for Her seekers, whose sole objective is the parama puruShArtham of moksham. As is well known, it is possible to gain moksham through Prapatti in the manner of "etAt dehAvasanemAm" (at the end of earthly existence). Instead of letting them languish for the remainder of their earthly existence upon performance of Prapatti and then granting moksham, Daya Devi ensures that they are blessed with ample opportunities for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam either through bodily efforts or other means. As a result, they are also graced with other aishvaryams. The salutation "vR^iShagiri sudhA sindhau jantur daye nihitastvayA bhava bhaya pariitApacChityai bhajannaghamarShaNam" illustrates the fact that there exist two oceans - one of samsaram and the other consisting of the Divine Flow (amR^itam - the life-giving elixir so to speak) of Lord Srinivasa. The former is replete with heat arising on account of a plethora of difficulties. If one is caught up in this ocean, they will only drown and have no chance of crossing over this ocean. This ocean is also replete with fear of many kinds.



bhava bhaya pariitApacChityaiH

The Srinivasa ocean in one fell swoop destroys the fears as well as the heat arising from the samsara ocean as evidenced by the tribute “**bhava bhaya pariitApacChityaiH**”. This is brought about by Daya Devi by causing the jivans who have surrendered to undertake a deep- immersion in the Srinivasa ocean. As a result, one’s fears as well the heat from the samsara ocean are destroyed at once. The inner meaning is that for one unskilled in swimming, it becomes impossible to cross over the samsara ocean. Each time he tries to stay afloat, the waves of the samsara ocean cause him to be thrown deeper in the ocean, increasing his fears of drowning. This is the fear that is destroyed by contact with the Srinivasa ocean. The heat that is generated by the samsara ocean on account of the difficulties encountered therein due to **adhyAtmika** (caused on account of one’s body), **adhibhautikam** (arising from fellow inhabitants of the earth like thieves for example, unexpected collapse of one’s residence, or meeting with an accident when taking a walk), and **Adhidaivikam** (coming about from natural sources- earthquakes, wildfires, **ativR^iShTi** and **anAvR^iShTi** arising from excessive rainfall or famine for example). These have several meanings. However, in the context of this verse we shall adopt one of them. The fear arising from these three types of difficulties is also destroyed by contact with the Srinivasa ocean. The usage of “**nihita**” in this salutation is significant in that these beings do not voluntarily come seeking an immersion in the Srinivasa ocean. Instead Daya Devi compels them to undertake the immersion leaving them with no choice. This is very much in the manner of a concerned mother forcing a recalcitrant child to undertake an oil bath. The forced immersion into the Srinivasa ocean, which is verily the ocean of **amR^itam**, denoted by the “**sudhA sindhau**” salutation immediately destroys one’s fear of drowning in the samsara ocean. Additionally, Daya Devi, by forcing the immersion in the Srinivasa ocean also causes a destruction of one’s fears on account of **adhyAtmika**, **adhibhautikam**, and **Adhidaivikam** induced difficulties which characterize the samsara ocean. The resulting heat too caused in the samsara ocean for these beings is destroyed on account of the Daya Devi enforced immersion in the Srinivasa ocean. Next the salutation “**bhajannaghamarShaNam**” from this verse refers to the insurance offered by this Daya Devi enforced immersion. For example, we take out insurance to guard against natural disasters impacting our place of residence, health insurance, life insurance, automobile insurance and the like. However, these insurances do not offer guarantees against damage from various causes or ensure that these disasters will not occur. Instead, they merely mitigate the impact of the damage through monetary compensation. However, the Srinivasa Ocean offers the guarantee that one will never be impacted

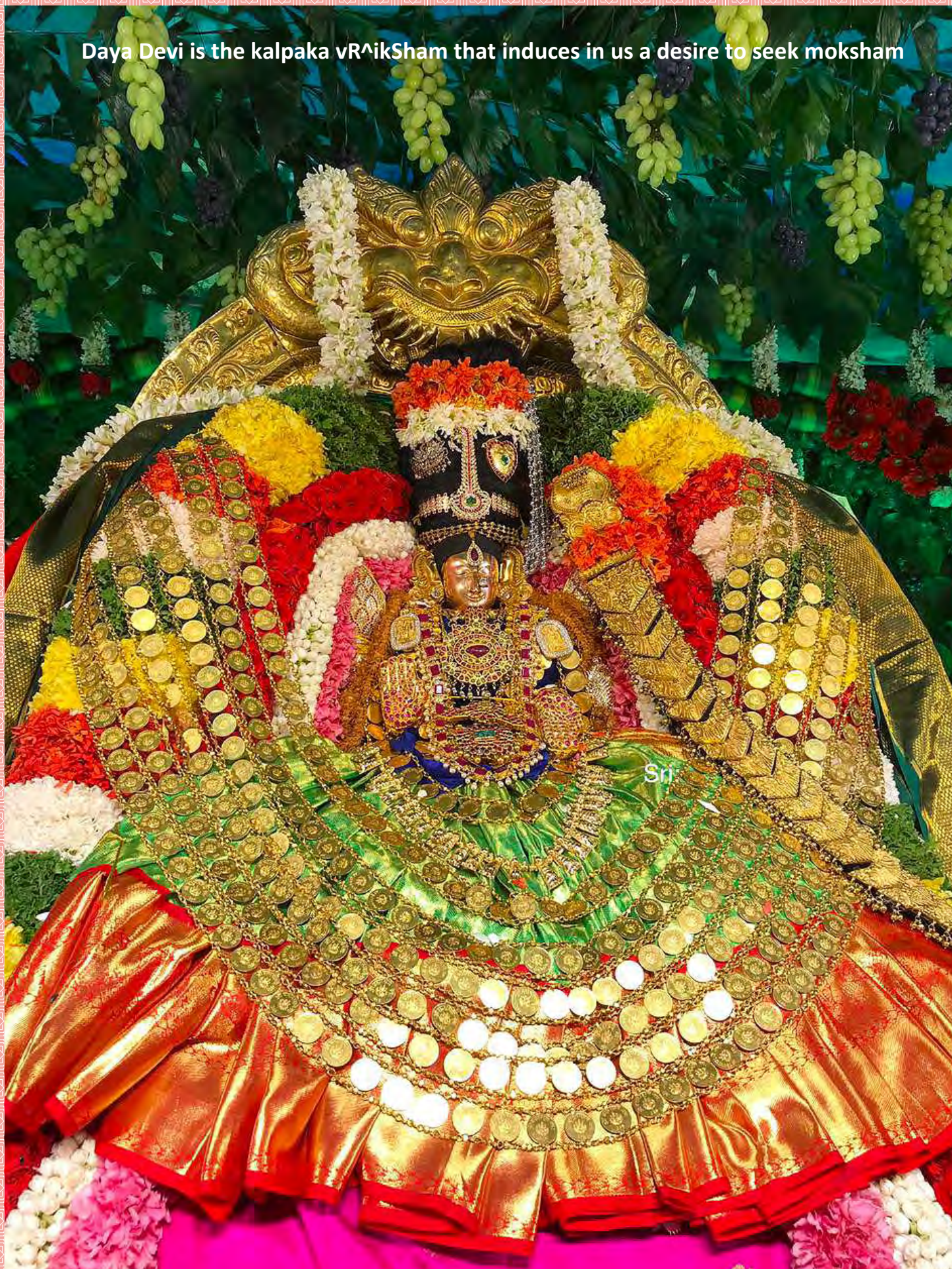
by the difficulties and fears arising from the samsara ocean. Therefore, Daya Devi forces the immersion of these beings in the Sudha Sindhu of the Srinivasa ocean.



Daya Devi leads us to the immersion in the Sudha Sindhu of the Srinivasa ocean

The usage of “jantuH” in this context denotes all beings (human and animals). This is a reference to the fact that all beings (human and animals) are eligible for prapatti (sarvAdhikAram). Bhakti yogam requires one to be a tri-varNika (belonging to the Brahmana, kshatriya, or Vaishya caste) to undertake the upAsana. However, Prapatti is suitable for all regardless of caste, creed, gender, affiliation, or form. This can be adopted by anyone who does not have the wherewithal to undertake the arduous prescriptions of Bhakti yogam. All that is called for is an appeal for protection to Lord Srinivasa accompanied by an admission of one’s inability to undertake the nuances of Bhakti yogam due to lack of knowledge or strength. This is denoted by the salutation “bhajannaghamarShaNam” is considered next. This means destruction of one’s sins. In this context, it denotes the fact that performance of Prapatti is pApa nivR^itti (destruction of one’s sins comes about on account of the act of Prapatti). A second meaning for this tribute is the performance of snAnam. One performs snAnam to rid oneself of impurities in the body.

Daya Devi is the kalpaka vR^ikSham that induces in us a desire to seek moksham



In the context of Prapatti, the snAnam ensures a destruction of impurity external as well as internal to one's body. There are several ways of performing snAnam. The most significant among them is the dharmashAstrokta snAnam. In accordance with the procedure for this snAnam one recites the aghamarShaNa sUktam while performing the snAnam.

A few mantrams from the aghamarShaNa sUktam ([Listen to audio here](#)) are discussed here: “hiraNyashR^i~Ngam varuNam prapadye tlrtham me dehi yAchitaH yanmaya bhuktamasAdhUnAm pApebhyashca parigrahaH” “yanme manasA vAca karmaNA vA duShkR^itam kR^itam tanna indro varuNo bR^ihaspatiH savita ca punantu punaH punaH” This is a prayer submitted to VaruNa, the Lord of the waters. The implication here is that the Vedam tribute is meant for Lord Narayana, the indweller of VaruNa. The mantram starts with an appeal to VaruNa through the salutation “hiraNyashR^i~Ngam varuNam prapadye tlrtham me dehi yAchitaH” to render the water suitable for one's bath.

This is then followed by a prayer in the submission “yanme manasA vAca karmaNA vA duShkR^itam kR^itam” to rid one of sins arising from objects received from evil ones as well as for any sins committed through mind, body, or speech and render one pure. In a like manner freedom from a number of impurities is requested as documented in the salutations: “R^itaM ca satyaM cAbhiddhA-ttapaso(a)dhyajAyata tato rAtrirajayata tata-ssamudro arNavaH” “samudrAdarNavA dadhi samvathsaro ajAyata”. These mantrams are to be rendered while performing snAnam through immersion in the water body. Performance of snAnam while reciting these mantrams rids one of sins and impurities. Due to this fact, the set of mantrams is termed as aghamarShaNa sUktam - that which destroys all blemishes. The mantrams “akAryakAryavakIrNI steno brUNahA gurutalpagaH” “varuNo (a)pamaghamarShaNa-stasmAt pApAt pramucyate” refer to VaruNa, whose indweller, Lord Narayana, is aghamarShaNan - one who destroys all kinds of sins. The shastras recommend performance of nitya snAnam through the rendition of the aghamarShaNa sUktam. Just as the aghamarShaNa sUktam accompanied immersion, or immersion in the Ganga River destroys one's sins, the Srinivasa ocean immersion too destroys one's sins. The import of the tribute “bhajannaghamarShaNam muShita kaluSho mukteragresarairabhi pUryate svayam upanataiH svAtmAnanda prabhr^ityanu bandhibhiH” from this Daya Satakam verse is that performance of sharaNAgati at the feet of Lord Srinivasa once and for all destroys one's sins in the manner of the aghamarShaNa sUktam accompanied snAnam.

amR^ita sindhu

Upon ridding one of their sins, this immersion in the amR^ita sindhu of Lord Srinivasa guarantees the individual a spot in Sri Vaikuntam at the conclusion of their earthly existence in the manner of the **Nyasa Dashakam** salutation “**etat dehAvasAnemAm tvatpAdam prApaya svayam**”. What then for the remainder of time of earthly existence for the jivan upon performance of Prapatti? Svami Desikan answers this by noting that Daya Devi grants the individual all kinds of happiness that awaits one prior to reaching Sri Vaikuntam during the earthly existence. That is these beings receive all aishvaryam, and kaivalyam benefits during their earthly existence prior to attaining the bliss of eternal kaimaryam in Sri Vaikuntam. It is helpful to recall here, Sri Parashara Bhattar’s **GuNaratna Kosham** tribute “**aishvaryamakShara gatim paramam padham vA**” denoting the fact that Ranganayaki Thayar stands ready to grant all manner of aishvaryam, kaivalyam, and moksham benefits to one who by sheer accident submitted a prayerful appeal with hands folded in anjali posture. In a like manner, Daya Devi having assured us of a spot in Sri Vaikuntam makes available all kinds of opportunities for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam during our earthly existence after Prapatti thus giving us a sneak preview of the great treasure that awaits us in Sri Vaikuntam. In the **SharaNAgati Dlpika** tribute “**divye pade niyata ki~NkaratAdhirAjyaM dAtuM tvadlya dayayA vihitAbhiShekAH AdehapAtAmanaghAH paricaryayA te yunjAnacintya yuvaraja padam bhajanti**”. Svami Desikan declares that “those who have performed sharaNAgati at the feet of their AcArya, have been coronated as crown princes in the vast kingdom of ceaseless kaimkaryam for Lord Narayana in Sri Vaikuntam due to Your Daya, Oh DlpA PrakAsha!” The coronation as a crown prince formally telegraphs the intent that the individual is in line for acquiring the kingdom. The attainment of the kingdom occurs upon reaching Sri Vaikuntam at the end of one’s earthly existence. In the interim period after performance of sharaNAgati, the individual serves as a crown prince, who partakes of the anubhavam of blemish-free kaimkaryam to Lord DlpA PrakAsha. This comes about on account of Daya Devi due to the performance of sharaNAgati.

The same message is conveyed in this Daya Satakam verse through the “**bhajannaghamarShaNam**” tribute. As a consequence, Daya Devi ensures that one gets a sneak preview of the bountiful treasure that awaits us in Sri Vaikuntam in the form of numerous blemish-free Bhagavad Kaimkaryam opportunities. Additionally, the pleasures of aishvaryam and kaivalyam that precede moksham are granted to these individuals by Daya Devi. All this comes about as a natural consequence of one’s sharaNAgati. In fact, these aishvaryam and kaivalyam pleasures seek refuge in the sharaNAgata and cause him to render blemishless

kaimkaryam to Lord Narayana during the remainder of his earthly existence in addition to ridding him once and for all from the fears and heat of the samsara ocean. Thus, with a prayerful offering to the Srinivasa ocean to rid us of the heat and fear of samsara, while rendering us pure in the manner of the aghamarShaNa snAnam aDiyEn seeks the blessing of being anointed as a crown prince due to the performance of sharaNAgati at the feet of AcAryas and enable us to engage in blemish-free kaimkaryam during the remainder of our earthly existence. With this offering, we conclude the exposition of this Daya Satakam verse.”



The pleasures of aishvaryam and kaivalyam that precede moksham are granted to us by Daya Devi.

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin: “Oh Daya Devi! You have transported this creature to the bliss of a bath in the cool pond of nectar called Sri Venkatesa. This immersion is not only cool, relieving, but also rejuvenating and re-generating for one who has suffered fear and sultriness in this hot summer of samsara. There is a hymn known as aghamarShaNa sUktam in the Vedas, prescribed for chanting before a bath, in order to ward off all sins.



The cool pond for rejuvenating and re-generating us from the sufferings of samsara

Could I then call this bliss of witnessing the personage of Sri Venkatesa as equivalent to an ashamarShaNā bath! Yes. The Darshan of Sri Venkatesa is so potent.; it confers on one the honor of an aghamarShaNā-preceded bath, a ritual that removes sins and makes one pure, orthodox, pollution-free, and sin-free. The equivalence of the darshan of Sri Venkatesa to prapadana ritual is also suggested. What aghamarShaNā sUktam accompanying a ceremonious bath secures for one, Prapatti also does.

The reward is the person's relief from all sins. Not only that, Daya Devi presumably compares his sadhana with anyone's achievement in the spiritual path. She says to Herself: "This being has had an aghamarShaNā snAna. He is a Prapanna. On that very score, he is eligible for Moksham. I cannot equate him with anyone who takes a ritualized bath. He is a Prapanna; He has enjoyed a sanctifying bath in the holy pond called Sri Venkatesa. Even if I grant him additional boon of SvAtmAnubhava, I would still not have done the due. Hence let him enjoy kaivalya first and then go to the ultimate bliss of Parama Padam".



Sloka 77

अनितर जुषामन्तर्मूलेऽप्यपाय परिप्लवे
कृतविदनघा विच्छिद्यैषां कृपे यम वश्यताम् ।
प्रपदन फल प्रत्यादेश प्रसङ्ग विवर्जितं
प्रतिविधिमुपाधत्से सार्धं वृषाद्रि हितैषिणा ॥ ७७ ॥

anitara juShAmantarmUle(a)pyapAya pariplave
kR^itavidanaghA vicChidyaiShAM kR^ipe yama vashyatAm |
prapadana phala pratyAdesha prasa~Nga vivarjitaM
pratividhimupadhatse sArdhaM vR^iShAdri hitaiShiNA | 77



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachar Svamin: “We are enjoying the glory of Daya Devi as described by Svami Desikan in this decad. The seventy seventh verse is “anitara juShAmantarmUle(a)pyapAya pariplave kR^itavidanaghA vicChidyaiShAM kR^ipe yama vashyatAm prapadana phala pratyAdesha prasa~Nga vivarjitaM pratividhimupadhatse sArdhaM vR^iShAdri hitaiShiNA”. The previous verse described the role of Daya Devi in forcing jivans to undertake an immersion in the nectarine ocean of elixir known as Lord Srinivasa. As a consequence of this immersion, the sins committed by the jivan are destroyed. Not only that, due to the forced immersion, Daya Devi guarantees moksham for the jivan. Prior to granting moksham, Daya Devi also ensures that the jivan is blessed with anuSha~Ngika phalan (benefit of residence in Svarga lokam) in keeping with the Vedam (Taittiriya Brahmanam) tribute “AshAste(a)yaM yajamano(a)sau ayurAshAste suprajAstvamAshAste sajAthvanamAshAste uttarAM devayajyAmAshAste”. This Vedam salutation highlights the yaj~nams that one needs to perform in order to gain residence in svarga lokam. Svarga lokam is gained upon the end of one’s earthly existence. Would one then undergo suffering until the end of their earthly existence and then gain the benefit of Svarga vAsam? Svami Desikan answers this with a firm negative. In keeping with the Vedam declaration referenced herein, Svami Desikan states that the performance of Prapatti ensures that the yajamAnan (performer of Prapatti) is blessed with long life, good children, and the ability to perform great yagas to gain Svarga vAsam.





Quite often we encounter sale advertisements of buy one get one free. In a like manner, while performance of Prapatti guarantees one of the ultimate PurushArtham of moksham, other purushArthas (ayurArogyamaishvaram, kaivalyam) too come about as a by-product. This verse addresses the questions of sins knowingly committed after performance of Prapatti. Specifically, if one knowingly commits sins, upon performance of Prapatti, one has to necessarily endure light punishment during one's lifetime. The question that arises is whether these sins could be an obstacle to gaining moksham. Svami Desikan answers the question in this verse by noting that the grace of Daya Devi ensures that these sins will not be an obstacle for one's moksham. When one surrenders to Lord Srinivasa, He grants us boons in the manner of the declaration "abhilashita durApa ye purA kAma bhogAH jaladhinivajalaughAH shevishanti svayam naH"(Lord Srinivasa automatically grants all unfulfilled but sought after bhogams (luxuries), in the manner of ocean waves joining the ocean waters). Thus, all that one desires is granted as a by-product of one's sharaNAgati to Lord Srinivasa. In this verse, Svami Desikan asserts that not only do we gain these fruits as a result of sharaNAgati but also we are freed from all kinds of fear. Specifically, one that has performed sharaNAgati, will not be subject to the vice-like grip of Yama, which necessarily comes about otherwise to those who have sinned. Due to prarabdha karma, one is engaged in countless sinful acts. After performance of Prapatti, the prarabdha karma pertaining to the individual for the remainder of their earthly existence can cause them to engage in sinful acts. Would these in any way be impediments to one's moksham is the question answered in this verse. Svami Desikan unambiguously states that the grace of Daya Devi ensures that these sins would not constitute barriers for one's moksham. The salutation "anitarajuShAmantarmUle(a)pyapAya pariplave kR^itavidanaghA vicChidyaiShAM kR^ipe yama vashyatAm" opens with the sambodhanam "kR^ipe" (Oh Daya Devi! You have come to our rescue in a plethora of ways and rendered numerous upakarams). The tribute "anitarajuShAm" refers to those beings who seek refuge in Lord Narayana alone to the exclusion of all other deities. These beings only desire the parama purushArtham of uninterrupted Bhagavad Kaimkaryam and spurn all other prayoJanAntara phalan (material benefits). Tirumazhisai Azhvar acquired fame for unambiguously establishing the Para Tattvam (Supremacy of Lord Narayana). The Azhvar's works of nAnmukhan tiruvantAti and Tirucchanta Viruttham document this in a lucid manner leaving no room for doubt. Usually, the nAnmukhan tiruvantAti is rendered during specific utsavam days at Divya Desams, when Lord Narayana is in Sesha VAhanam (serpent bed of AdisheSha) in the Paramapada

nAthan tirukkolam (posture as the Lord of Parama Padam). This is meant to illustrate the fact that the Lord of the Divya Desam is no different from Lord Narayana in Sri Vaikuntam. This nAnga utsavam is meant solely for highlighting the supremacy of Lord Narayana. The specific pasuram rendered during this occasion is “tiRampElmin kaNDIr tiruvaDi tan nAmam maRantum puRam tozhA mAntar iRainciyum cAtuvarAip pOtuminkaL enRAn namanum tan tUtuvaraik kUvi cevikku” (Yama instructs his messengers to be extremely careful while dealing with one who considers the name of Lord Narayana as the supreme purushArtham, and has no trace of association with any other deity. Yama further instructs his messengers that if they encounter such a person, they must offer respectful prostrations and seek the blessings of this person). The inner meaning is that one who is a Vaishnava considers himself subservient to Lord Narayana alone and to no other deity. Not only is he subservient to Lord Narayana but also to Bhagavatas of Lord Narayana. In fact, the ultimate form of Kaimkaryam is that rendered to Lord Narayana’s Bhagavatas. For example, Lakshmana distinguished himself through exemplary Kaimkaraym to Lord Rama and thus was seshan. Bharata was a Bhagavata who subjected himself completely to the will of Lord Rama (Paratantryan). Shatrughna rendered Kaimkaryam to Bharata alone (Bhagavata Kaimkaryam), which trumped everything else. Thus, his glory was even greater than that of Lakshmana. This is captured in the Valmiki Ramayanam salutation “shatR^ighno nitya shatR^ighnaH” denoting the fact that Shatrughna had no enemies. The inner meaning is that he was bereft of all ahankaram and mamakaram - rid of the sense of I and My - which are the enemies that regularly take hold of common beings. This exemplifies VaishNavatam. This message is embedded in the Pasuram of the Azhvar as well. Not only that, the Azhvar instructs us that one should have no misconceptions about the supreme being. Specifically, he forbids the glorification of other deities besides Lord Narayana, as the supreme being. In this context an important question arises. Shiva as Ahibudhnyan was a great Bhagavata. Svami Desikan in the Srimad Rahasyatrayasaram salutes him as “sarvaj~nanAna Rudranum”. Is Rudran not aware of who the supreme being is? In fact in the MantrarAjapada stotram salutation “dAsabhUtAH svatassarve hyAtmAnaH paramAtmanaH ato(a)hamapi te dAsaH iti matvA namAmyaham” Ahirbudhnyan declares that all beings in the universe are servants of Bhagavan Nrusimha. In a like manner he too is subservient to Bhagavan Nrusimha and offers respectful salutation. Then is it wrong to engage in worship of Shiva as the parama Bhagavata? First, it is absolutely unacceptable to engage in belittling Shiva. The reason for avoiding worship of Shiva, is to remove all confusion about who is the supreme being.



"maRantum puRam tozha mAntar"

SvAmi Desikan – Mulavar and Utsavar - Tirukkacchi

This is the import of the Azhvar's tribute **"maRantum puRam tozha mAntar"**. The instruction from the Azhvar's tribute further forbids association with those who regard anyone besides Lord Narayana as the supreme being. The exhortation of Yama to his messengers is that if they encounter an individual who regards Lord Narayana as the supreme being and has no trace of association with any other deity, such a person must be respectfully saluted and prostration at his feet must be performed. Yama also instructs his messengers not to exhibit their ruthlessly

cruel disposition in the presence of such a Vaishnava and instead adopt an extremely sAtvic disposition towards such an individual.)”

The instruction of the Azhvar is also echoed in the VishNu puranam salutation “**vadati yamaH kila tasya karNamUle parihara madhusUdanaM prapannAn prabhurahamasmi nR^iNAM na vaiShNavAnAm**”. Meaning: “I am recognized as Yama the Lord of death. Everybody lives in the knowledge that they cannot escape my noose. Therefore, I am Prabhu (Lord) for these beings. However, for those who have performed sharaNAgati to Lord Narayana, I am not Prabhu. Understand this instruction carefully.” Normally one does not admit to one’s deficiencies in the open. In keeping with this dictum, Yama whispers in the ears of his attendants, his lack of Lordship over sharaNAgatas. In this Daya Satakam verse the tribute “**anitara juShAm**” refers to those who regard Lord Narayana alone as the supreme being and have no trace of association with other deities. Furthermore, their singular desire is that of uninterrupted Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. For such beings the grace of Daya Devi ensures that any sins accrued upon performance of sharaNAgati are wiped out in keeping with the salutation “**antarmUle(a)pyapAya pariplave**”. For example, let’s say one performs sharaNAgati to Lord Narayana. Subsequently, they knowingly engage in a sinful act. This causes apAyam (contact with sins). In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of this, one first needs to comprehend the essential nature of sins. Only then can one appreciate the difference between sins committed knowingly and unknowingly. The prakAram of sins is of three kinds. The first of them refers to the sins committed prior to the performance of SharaNAgati. Post-Prapatti sins are of two kinds - those committed unknowingly and those committed knowingly. This is in addition to the prevailing prArabdha karma related sins that have begun yielding consequences. The first category is known as sancita pApam, pertaining to sins committed prior to the performance of SharaNAgati. These sins have been accumulated over innumerable births spanning several aeons of time. It is impossible to predict when a certain kind of sin committed would yield consequences. Some sins may yield consequences immediately while for some others the consequences bear out after a certain time period. For example, if one undertakes an act that accrues great puNyam, the results will be immediate. Similarly committing grave sins also yields immediate consequences. However, other puNyams and pApams have a certain order for their consequences to become evident. These types of karma are known as sancita karma. The sancita karma is wiped out by the performance of Bhakti yogam or prapatti. The second kind of sins pertains to the karma that is instrumental for the individual’s current

birth. It is the karma that has begun yielding fruit. This is known as prArabdha karma.



antarmUle(a)pyapAya pariplave

During the performance of prapatti, moksham is sought at the end of the current birth (dehAvasAnam). The agreement therefore is to endure the prevailing prarabdha karma until the end of one's life. This is known as abhyupagata prArabdha karma. Performance of Prapatti destroys all karma except the abhyupagata prArabdha karma. The next category of sins pertains to those accrued after the performance of Prapatti. These are of two kinds - those committed

unknowingly (abuddhipUrvakam) and those committed knowingly (buddhipUrvakam). Examples of the first kind would be the accidental destruction of insects when cleaning our homes, or accidental destruction of pests when cutting vegetables, or accidentally trampling upon insects when walking. These are sins committed unknowingly. These sins do not result in any consequences for the sharaNAgata since they came about due to sheer accident. Next the category of sins committed knowingly is addressed. These come about due to karma vAsanas that prevail even after the performance of Prapatti. This is akin to a spinning fan, which does not come to a stop immediately after the switch is turned off. For those who are uttama adhikAris (those having a comprehensive knowledge of the svarUpam of Prapatti and the nuances underlying its practice), sins of this kind do not accrue at all. However, for others it is likely that sins can be committed in this manner. Even if this arises in accordance with the declaration “anitara juShAmantarmUle(a)pyapAya pariplave” from this verse, Daya Devi ensures that it does not become an impediment for their moksham as evidenced by the statement “anagha kR^it” from this verse. Namely, Daya Devi remembers that the individual has performed sharaNAgati. If one observes Lord RanganAtha, He is seen bearing the abhaya hastam. This is indicative of the fact that He need not be repeatedly reminded that the individual has performed Prapatti. Lord RanganAtha remembers this in accordance with the tribute from SvAmi Desikan’s AbhayapradAna sAram “prAyaH prapadane puMsAM paunaH puNya nivArayan”. In fact, this posture suggests that it is sufficient to perform Prapatti once. The act needs no repetition. Likewise, Daya Devi too recognizes that the individual has performed sharaNAgati. Even if the individual engages in buddhipUrvaka pApam upon performance of sharaNAgati, Daya Devi ensures that the sharaNAgati performed for moksham is not nullified. Instead, the blemishless Daya Devi, saluted as “anagha” in this verse, comes to their rescue. It must be noted that Daya Devi is superior to Lord Srinivasa in one respect. When Lord Srinivasa beholds an individual, He sees both the guNam and dosham in the individual. He then metes out consequences in accordance with their guNam and doSham. However, Daya Devi only sees their guNams and turns a blind eye to their doShams. The word nigraham does not exist in Her dictionary—recall the YatirAja Saptati tribute “anugR^ihamayIM vande nityaM aj~nAta nigrahAm!” This is the reason for Daya Devi’s glorification as “anagha” in this verse. Her compassion for sharaNAgatas who may engage in buddhipUrvaka pApam becomes apparent in the tribute “yama vashyatAm vicChidya” of this verse. This is indicative of the fact that Daya Devi ensures that these beings are freed from the clutches of Yama even though they engage in buddhipUrvaka pApam.

“anaghaH”







The usage of words is also instructive. In the RAMAyaNam, HanuMAn's first words to Lord Rama upon his return from Lanka are "dR^iShTA sIta" indicative of the fact that Lord Rama was anxious to hear about the sighting of Sita and therefore, Hanuman's first word set Lord Rama at ease at once. This is also reflected in the Kamba RAMAyaNam tribute "kaNDEn sItaiyai". Svami Desikan treads in the path revealed by Valmiki Bhagavan through the usage "vicChidyaishAM kR^ipe yama vashyatAm". This is meant to assure sharaNAgatas who may agonize over the fact that their sins committed knowingly could come in the way of their moksham. In one

fell swoop Svami Desikan assures sharaNAgatas that their buddhipUrvaka papam is no impediment to their moksham courtesy Daya Devi. Thus, the usage of "vicChidya" for sharaNAgatas, freeing them from the clutches of Yama is in the same manner of Hanuman's assurance to Lord Rama of sighting Sita. This raises a question whether such sins can be wiped out as a result of undertaking Bhakti Yogam. Svami Desikan illustrates the essential difference between Bhakti yogam and Prapatti through this verse. Specifically, the salutation "prapadana phala pratyAdesha prasa~Nga vivarjitaM" from this Daya Satakam verse reflects this point in keeping with the Vedam declaration "na khalu bhAgavata yama vishayaM gacChanti" (Bhagavatas of Lord Narayana will never be subjects of Yama). This is also reflected in Svami Desikan's AbhIti sthavam tribute "na tasya yama vashyata naraka pAtabhItiH kutaH" This assures sharaNAgatas that they will never become subjects of interest to Yama. When this is the case, the question of enduring narakam for their sins becomes a moot point. Thus, this benefit accrues exclusively to Prapannas and is not a consequence of vidhya mAHatmyam arising from Bhakti Yogam. The tribute "prapadana phala pratyAdesha prasa~Nga vivarjitaM" is reflective of Lord Srinivasa's contemplation "This individual has performed

sharaNAgati. However, he continues to engage in buddhipUrvaka pApam. How then can he be redeemed?" Discerning this trace of hesitation on the part of Lord Srinivasa, Daya Devi, intervenes and renders the ground fertile for the individual's moksham by removing any reservations that Lord Srinivasa may have. It is important to note the difference between Bhakti yogam and Prapatti. For sharaNAgatas, there is a prarabdha khaNDam pertaining to their prarabdha karma. For example, one may have sinned and as a result may be required to endure three births in human form. However, due to some good act, if in the first birth itself he resorts to Prapatti, the prarabdha karma pertaining to that birth alone prevails until the end of that life after which the individual begets moksham. The prarabdha karma pertaining to the remaining two births is wiped out at the time of performance of Prapatti. However, a Bhakti yogam practitioner is necessarily required to endure the consequences of all prarabdha karma and only when a zero balance of karma prevails does he gain moksham. Elevated individuals like Vidura are practitioners of Bhakti yogam. Even though he has been practicing upAsanam of Bhakti Yogam for several births, due to some prarabdha karma, he was born in the shudra clan. Dharma vyAdha is another similar example. This is the essential difference between Bhakti yogam and Prapatti. The practitioner of the former is required to endure the consequences of all prarabdha karma until there is a zero balance. Whereas for a Prapanna, only the prarabdha karma pertaining to their present birth needs to be endured. Daya Devi along with Lord Srinivasa, who only has the well-being of sharaNAgatas in mind as evidenced by the salutation "vR^iShAdri hitaiShiNAM sArdhaM" of this verse, come to a consensus that even the engaging of buddhipUrvaka papam should not come in the way of moksham for the Prapanna. How then does this come about? The answer is contained in the tribute "pratividhim" of this Daya Satakam verse. Namely, if the sharaNAgata is of mR^idu (soft-hearted) nature, Daya Devi ensures that he engages in PrAyashcitta Prapatti to wipe out the consequences of post-sharaNAgati buddhipUrvaka pApam. On the other hand, if the sharaNAgata is of kaTiNa (hard hearted) nature, laghu daNDanai (light punishment) is administered to endure the consequences of buddhipUrvaka pApam. This takes place during the lifetime of the sharaNAgata and thus wipes out the consequences of such pApam. The tribute "sArdhaM" (sAyukte apradAnasya) reflects the importance of Daya Devi in this context. Specifically, Her role in suggesting "pratividhi" as a means to wipe out the consequences of buddhipUrvaka papam committed after Prapatti, arising from Her discussion with Lord Srinivasa meant for our well-being is highlighted in this verse of the Daya Satakam."





EmperumAn and Sri Daya Devi discuss the best remedies to be adopted by erring jlvans to attain Moksham

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

“Consider the case of devotees who forsake all other deities for worship and other paths as well, never having any ambition except Your service (**anitarajuShAm**). With respect to transgressions incurred by them consciously, You cannot naturally dismiss them since they are done knowingly. However, You sympathize with them since they have acquired the qualification of Prapannas. You would shudder at the thought of them going to hell. You would ask “How can I allow this to happen?” You perhaps confer with the Lord. He is glorified as one who is only intent on the well-being of His devotees. Perhaps with His concurrence, You prescribe and motivate the Prapanna to adopt an appropriate expiation ritual (Prayashcittam) - indeed even a Prayashcitta Prapatti as a kind of ParihAram for

sins committed knowingly. This removes all obstacles for his moksham. This pariharam could even be a repeat Prapatti as an extreme remedy for an extreme violation.

Note that this is a consistent picture. If transgressions are done knowingly, one has to suffer the consequences when alive. Otherwise, these sins become unexpended karma. It is for the elimination of this possibility that a second Prapatti is recommended as a last resort.”



Sloka 78

क्षणविलयिनां शास्त्रार्थानां फलाय निवेशिते

सुरपितृगणे निर्वेशात् प्रागपि प्रलयं गते ।

अधिगत वृषक्षमाभृन्नाथामकाल वशंवदां

प्रतिभुवमिह व्याचख्युस्त्वां कृपे निरुपप्लवाम् ॥ ७८ ॥

kShaNa vilayinAM shAstra arthAnAM phalAya niveshite
surapitR^igaNe nirveshAt prAgapi pralayaM gate |
adhigata vR^iShakShmAbhR^innAthAmakAla vashaMvadAM
pratibhuvamiha vyAchakhyustvAM kR^ipe nirupaplavAm || 78



We first quote the anubhavam of Sri. U.Ve. Valayapettai Ramachariar Svamin: “This verse is “kShaNa vilayinAM shAstrArthAnAM phalAya niveshite surapitR^igaNe nirveshAt prAgapi pralayaM gate adhigata vR^iShakShmAbhR^innAthAmakAla vashaMvadAM pratibhuvamiha vyAchakhyustvAM kR^ipe nirupaplavAm”. Here Svami Desikan alludes to the results arising from nitya and naimittika anushtana karmas. The fruits for these karmas are granted by various deities. Now even these deities are not permanent occupants of their respective positions. Since these deities are very much part of Prakruti mandalam, they are subject to constant change. In that case an important question that arises is: If these deities too are destructible, who would then grant the benefits underlying the nitya and naimittika karma? This becomes all the more relevant, since it is impossible to identify when one’s karma begins to yield fruit. It could be in one’s lifetime or in subsequent births without being able to determine the exact time. Thus, if one undertakes a karma with a specific objective, what happens if the deity that grants that objective ceases to exist? Who would then be responsible for granting the benefit? This is definitely a laukika dR^iShTAntam (common world held perspective). For example, one may be engaged in a line of work. If he is approached with a request to help in a matter pertaining to his work, he may even be kindly inclined to do so when the matter arrives within his purview. However, before this occurrence, if he ends up leaving the job, all efforts in approaching him for help becomes a wasted exercise.



Likewise, if the deities who accept offerings of nitya and naimittika karma and dispense appropriate rewards cease to exist, who would grant the appropriate rewards? Would this not then be a wasted exercise in the same vein described herein? Svami Desikan addresses this issue in the present verse. One is required to undertake deva karyams and pitru karyams in keeping with shastraic injunctions. Pitru karyam becomes quite important. The common perception is that Pitru karyams are considered inauspicious happenings. However, a close examination of the mantrams underlying their practice reveals that these karyams are intended to invoke the blessings of Pitrus for the well-being of the performer and their progeny. The salutation that describes the Deva karyams is “devatodeshena havis samarpaNam” Thus, when one undertakes yagams for these devatas, these devatas dispense the appropriate fruits. Here is where the Mimamsa position needs to be considered. Specifically, they aver that the consequences for a prescribed act should be immediately, akin to turning on a light fixture by flipping a switch. Namely, if karaNam (act) prevails, kAryam (consequence) has to follow immediately. Going by this logic, when one undertakes a yagam to attain svarga vAsam, the benefit does not accrue immediately upon the performance of the yagam. Instead, it comes about only after the end of one’s earthly existence. The statement “apUrva dvAra” refers to the fact that these yagams are the reason for securing svarga vAsam. However, the actual svarga vAsam comes about only after the end of one’s earthly existence. These yagams become the sadhanam for attaining the benefit. This is the considered position of mimamsakas.

However, the position of the Srivaishnava Sampradayam is that the performance of yagams pleases Lord Narayana. As a result, one begets the elevated boons of residence in svargam and the like. It must be understood that acts undertaken to incur the pleasure of Lord Narayana are puNyams, while those that incur His displeasure denote pApams. When it comes to other deities, “devatodeshena havis samarpaNam” denotes the fact that these deities confer benefits on account of the status accorded to them by Lord Narayana. It must also be borne in mind that Lord Narayana, as their in-dweller, is responsible for granting these benefits. This is captured in the Srlmad Bhagavad Gita statement “yo yo yAM yAM tanuM bhaktaH shraddhayAarcitumicChatI tasya tasyAcalAM shraddhAM tAmeva vidadhAmyaham” and the Tiruvaimozhi pasuram “avaravar tamatamatu aRivaRi vakaivakai avaravar iRaiyavar ena aDi aDaivarkaL avaravar iRaiyavar kuRaivilar iRaiyavar avaravar vitivazhi aDaiya ninRanarE”. The import of these salutations is that Lord Narayana, who is the indweller of deities sought after by their followers, confers the boons desired by them.



Lord Narayana is the indweller of deities

akAla vashaMvadAM

As a consequence, Lord Narayana has established a well-known hierarchy with respect to deities and their ability to grant specifically sought benefits. In the context of this Daya Satakam verse, the reference is to benefits, which can be destroyed in a moment, for which course of action is prescribed in the shastras as outlined in the salutation “kShaNā vilayinAM shAstrArthAnAM phalAya niveshite”. The next salutation “surapitR^igaNe nirveshAt prAgapipralayaMgate” from this Daya Satakam verse establishes that an array of devas and pitrus are lined up by Lord Narayana as the grantors of these benefits. For example, a yagam performed for Vayu Devata as attested by the Vedam Rk “vAyavyabhi shvetamalabhetabhUtikAmaH” results in Vayu granting the benefit of a gentle soothing breeze that is refreshing. The position of Vayu is occupied by a certain being. What if his time in that position ends before he can grant the benefit for one who has undertaken the yagam for Vayu?

This is answered in this Daya Satakam verse through the salutation “adhigata vR^iShakShmAbhR^innAthAmakAla vashaMvadAM”. This tribute highlights the fact that Daya Devi, who has sought refuge in Lord Srinivasa as His Consort, is not subject to any limitations of space or time and hence is in existence at all times. This is highlighted in the salutation “akAla vashaMvadAM”. Thus, She assures the followers of these sura pitru gaNas that even if their deity of choice, who is devoutly worshipped, ceases to exist, Daya Devi stands in their stead and confers the benefit that needs to come about to their followers. This is akin to being a guarantor for debt. In this instance since the deities have been worshipped through appropriate yagams and received the havis, they incur a debt to the worshippers. Thus, they become obligated to grant the desired benefit to their worshippers. However, if their end comes about before this debt can be discharged, Daya Devi stands in their place as a guarantor to relieve these devatas of this burden of debt. Here it must be noted that the granting of the sought benefit does not come about immediately. Instead, it is realized at an appropriate/prescribed time. In the event that the worshipped deity ceases to exist before that time, they would incur an undischarged debt to their followers. Not only that their followers now gain the stature of those who have given something to these devatas that has not been reciprocated in kind. Thus, it remains an incomplete transaction. Lord Krishna declares in the Mahabharata “ruNam pravruddhAmivame manye”. This is in response to Draupadi’s appeal of “shankhacakra gadhApANe dvArakA nilayAcyuta”. The import of Lord Krishna’s statement is that He considers Himself to be indebted to Draupadi due to her sharaNagati in her appeal for protection. Specifically, Lord Krishna states that He has only responded by saving Draupadi from disgrace in the

royal court due to the Govinda nAmam. However, in her appeal, Draupadi submitted several more nAmams, for which she has not been suitably compensated. This is in the manner of debt that is constantly accruing interest. With regard to deities saluted in the nitya and naimittika karmas, they incur a debt due to accepting the havis and the like from yagams. If they do not grant the boons as a result of this offering, it remains an unrealized debt. This would then cause the performers to ask whether they should even undertake the performance of these rituals since the benefits underlying their performance are not guaranteed.

Therefore, Svami Desikan highlights the important role of Daya Devi, who is present at all times without any exceptions, as the guarantor for these potentially undischarged debts. This is reflected in the salutation “**pratibhuvamiha vyAchakhyustvAM kR^ipe nirupaplavAm**” of this Daya Satakam verse. The implication here is that those well versed in the Shastras, recognize Daya Devi to be the guarantor for undischarged debts of devatas and pitrus, who receive offerings of havis and tarpaNam through yagams. Thus, it is unequivocally established that the one who grants the benefits for nitya and naimittika karmas is undoubtedly Daya Devi. Just as Lord Narayana exists at all times as evidenced by the Vishnu sahasranamam tribute “**sadaikarUparUpAya**” (namely one who is unaffected by Karma and is therefore not subject to change of any kind), Daya Devi too exists at all times. This is the import of this Daya Satakam verse. This verse emphasizes the important point pertaining to the difference in the cause for the Lord’s avataram and that for our birth. The former is controlled entirely by the Lord’s sankalpam, which causes Him to undertake numerous avatarams. The latter is governed solely by one’s karma.

Thus, His avatarams and leelas are entirely due to His sankalpam. However, all changes that come about to us are strictly functions of our own karma. Daya Devi also is present at all times just like Lord Narayana. She too is unaffected by karma. Therefore, She functions as the guarantor for all undischarged debts incurred by devatas, who are endowed with the powers of granting specific benefits to their followers. “**phalam upapattateH**” is the SriBhashyam tribute that highlights the fact that Lord Narayana is the grantor of all boons sought from various deities. Svami Bhashyakarar establishes this fact through numerous pramaNas (valid sources of knowledge). This sentiment is echoed by Svami Desikan in this Daya Satakam verse through the elevated role of Daya Devi. Thus, one who is worshipped in danam, yagam, and homam is Lord Narayana, who has appointed specific deities endowed with the powers of granting the appropriate boons for the performance of these karmas.



Svami Desikan has documented in this verse that Daya Devi stands as the guarantor for these deities in the event they cease to exist before the time for granting the appropriate boons comes about. Thus, if one has mahavishvasam in Daya Devi, She ensures that even the most trivial acts undertaken by Her followers are rewarded with the appropriate benefit. Svami Desikan states that this is not a position that he is taking. Instead, he is merely re-stating what has been established by discerning seers. On this note, we conclude the exposition of this Daya Satakam verse.”

We then quote the anubhavam of Sri U.Ve. Shaili Patrachariar Svamin: “This verse refers to a pious individual, who may perform Shastra-ordained rituals, Vedic rites, some of which are intended to please devas like Indra and Pitrus (manes) as the case may be. They too are time-bound like us; only that their life-time is very long. Daya Devi! The good of any Prapanna, accruing to him because of performing ordained Vedic rituals like sacrifices or Pitru-propitiating acts would not vanish in case the life-time of the object of the ritual expires. You become the guarantor. You are eternal. What a wonderful arrangement!”



Sloka 79

त्वदुपसदनादद्य श्वो वा महाप्रळयेऽपि वा
वितरति निजं पादाम्भोजं वृषाचल शेखरः ।
तदिह करुणे तत्तत्क्रीडा तरङ्ग परम्परा-
तरतमतया जुष्टायास्ते दुरत्ययतां विदुः ॥ ७९ ॥

tvad upasadanAd adya shvo vA mahA pralaye(a)pi vA
vitarati nijaM pAdAmbhojaM vR^iShAcala shekharaH |
tadiha karuNe tattat krIDA tara~Nga paramparA
taratamatayA juShTAyAste duratyayatAM viduH | | 79



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

“The seventy-ninth verse is tvad upasadanAd adya shvo vA mahA pralaye(a)pi vA vitarati nijaM pAdAmbhojaM vR^iShAcala shekharaH tadiha karuNe tattat krIDA tara~Nga paramparA taratamatayA juShTAyAste duratyayatAM viduH. The previous verse outlined the fact that Lord Narayana has appointed deities endowed with the power of granting specific boons to their followers. They too are jivAtmas like us. However, they may have a much longer life span. Svami Desikan describes this in the **Srimad RahasyatrayasAram** as “orE cankiliyilE kaTTappaTTiruppavarka”. This salutation describes the state of one who is requesting benefits from other devathas besides Lord Narayana. Specifically, it is akin to that of a person bound by shackles requesting another bound by the same shackles to be freed from bondage. In particular, when one seeks benefits from these other deities, it is impossible to know when the requested benefit will be granted. Furthermore, uncertainty arises if the deity ceases to exist when the time comes about for granting the requested benefit. Svami Desikan highlighted in the previous verse the fact that Daya Devi stands as the guarantor for these deities and ensures that their followers receive the sought-after benefits at the appropriate time. An important concept highlighted in this instance is that Lord Narayana resides as the indweller (**sarvAntarAtmatvam**) of all beings, devatantaras included as attested to by the Vedam Rk “**antarbahishca tatsarvam vyApya nArAyaNaH stithaH**”.

antarbahishca
tatsarvam
vyApya
nArAyaNaH
stithaH



Therefore, He is responsible for granting all boons sought from these deities with Daya Devi functioning as the guarantor for these deities. This is also a concept established by Svami Bhashyakarar “sarva shaktya upapattyatvam”. For example, Agni, need not refer to the devata Agni. According to aparyotAna vR^itti, this denotes the indweller (antarAtma) of the deity denoted by Agni. It also admits the meaning of the form “agram nayatiti agniH” (that which takes us from our present state to an elevated state). Thus, in this instance it refers to Lord Narayana alone. sarva shabda vAcyatam, namely all usages in the Vedam glorify Lord Narayana without exception. It also denotes “sarva karma samArAdyatvam”. Namely, karmas performed for any devata ultimately reach Lord Narayana, who grants the fruits for these karmas, denoted by “sakala phala pradatvam”. These facts were captured in the previous verse. Other deities are capable of granting “ekaika phalapradatvam”. For example, the slokam “Arogyam bhaskarAdicChet shriyamicChet hutAsanAt ishAnAt j~nAnaM icChEt mokSham icChet janArdanAt” documents this fact. Worship of Surya confers good health, while worship of Agni gives the boon of great wealth. Worship of Siva grants one great knowledge, while worship of Janardana confers mokSham. Lord ViShNu is hailed as “sakala pradopi viShNuH” attesting to the fact that all others in the above verse are capable of granting specific boons. However, Lord Narayana grants everything. Furthermore, it was established in the previous verse that Daya Devi is the cause for this.

In the present verse, Svami Desikan declares “Oh Daya Devi! It is sufficient to gain refuge at Your Feet. For one who begets this, all fruits big and small (aihiKam, amuShmikam, kaivalyam, and mokSham) come automatically.” This is readily seen in practice. Scores of Bhaktas arrive at the shrine of Lord Srinivasa at the Tirumala hill. Each of them has a specific boon that they desire from Lord Srinivasa. They gain the desired benefits and thus come repeatedly to offer their prayers to Lord Srinivasa time after time, regardless of the travails encountered in the process. Among these Bhaktas, it is impossible to know those who seek moksham to the exclusion of all else. For example, one may have in mind prayers for Lord Srinivasa to rid them of ailments, or success in academic pursuits for their children, or seeking employment, or desiring the marriage for their progeny to a suitable bride/groom following which they wish to perform kalyana utsavam for Lord Srinivasa. Because Lord Srinivasa unfailingly grants these boons to His seekers, they make return visits to Tirumala to offer prayers to Lord Srinivasa. Since He stands ready to grant boons big or small sought by His seekers, He is saluted by a large number of Bhaktas on a daily basis. If Lord Srinivasa remained alone on the Venkatam hill, there was no chance of Him readily granting these boons. It is

entirely on account of Daya Devi's presence by His side that Lord Srinivasa begets the disposition of granting boons big or small sought by His Bhaktas.



Lord Srinivasa forgives our sins due to the eternal presence of Thayar /Sri Daya Devi

The reason for this is the fact that if Lord Srinivasa was at the Venkatam hill by Himself, He would readily observe the transgressions on the part of His Bhaktas. This would only serve to increase His anger and thus arouse His **nigraha sankalpam** (disposition to mete out punishment in accordance with the severity of the offence). In the **Godha Stuti** Svami Desikan offers the tribute "**karmAnubandhiphaladAnaratasya bhartuH**" to denote the fact that the Lord metes out consequence in accordance with one's karma. If one has erred greatly, he receives punishment appropriate for the errors. On the otherhand if one has engaged in pious acts, he begets the fruits commensurate with these acts. Never would the Lord adopt the disposition of forgiving the transgressions and gracing these individuals. It is only on account of Mahalakshmi Thayar that the transgressions of His Bhaktas remain masked from the Lord's view. Since Daya Devi is no different from Mahalakshmi Thayar, it is even appropriate to associate Daya Devi as the Atma for the form of Mahalakshmi Thayar alone. Due to this eternal presence of Thayar/Daya Devi by the side of Lord Srinivasa, He begets the

disposition of gracing His Bhaktas with everything they seek, regardless of their transgressions. The salutation “tvadupAsanAt” has two meanings - one denoting the state of those who seek refuge in Daya Devi and the other denoting the fact that Daya Devi seeks out jivans to dispense Her grace. Here it becomes important to note that Daya is a mere guNam. How could one seek refuge in Daya? The import of this tribute is that one “who seeks the one that Daya Devi has sought refuge - Lord Srinivasa” is always graced. The implication here is that Lord Srinivasa is always



under the command of Daya Devi and never denies Her request. This is true at all times including the present, immediate future, as well as at the time of mahApraLayam as evidenced by the tribute “tvad upasadanAd adya shvo vA mahA pralaye(a)pi vA vitarati nijaM pAdAmbhojaM vR^iShAcala shekharaH” of this verse. This highlights the fact that the Feet of Lord Srinivasa serve as a guaranteed refuge for seekers at all times including mahApraLayam. This then leads to the question why not grant every being refuge immediately? Why the long wait until their well-being is realized? The answer to this question is contained in the tribute “rakShApekShAM pratIkShate”. All the Lord is looking for is an appeal for protection on the part of the supplicant. This is the sole reason for Lord Srinivasa’s arrival from Sri Vaikuntam to the Venkatam hill in keeping with the tribute “mAyAvi paramAnandam tyaktvA vaikuNThamuttamaM

svAmi puShkaraNi tIre ramayA sahamodate". This statement explicitly attests to the fact that Lord Srinivasa, replete with joy in the supreme abode of Vaikuntam has given up residence there. Instead, He has taken root at the banks of the SvAmi PuShkaraNi along with His consort Rama (Daya Devi) solely to grace those who come to the Venkatam hill seeking Him. This raises another question. Does a formal request for protection need to be submitted for the Lord to shower His grace? Can this not be done without such a submission? The Sastras explicitly forbid the offering of protection/grace to those who do not seek it in keeping with the declaration "aprArthito natopAye". It must be borne in mind that the Sastras would never document anything that goes against commonly accepted practices from a laukika perspective. For example, one may be in need for vastrams and he may submit a prayer to Lord Srinivasa to grant him an abundance of Vastram. Another may make a similar request for great wealth. A third may seek knowledge in the arts and so forth. Yet another may desire success in the competitive entrance exams for admission to the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT). With this in mind they submit an offering of a certain number of coins tied in yellow cloth to Lord Srinivasa. Thus, such prayers are granted only when requested and not otherwise. Similarly, a person in a position of great authority can grant a seeker a job only if the latter makes the request. One does not make a job offer in a pre-determined way to someone who may be struggling to make ends meet out of concern for their plight. What if the latter spurns the job offer? Thus, for gaining all manner of laukika benefits, one needs to make a formal request. Otherwise, it will simply not come about. Likewise, the performance of sharaNagati also requires submission of a formal appeal to Lord Srinivasa. goptR^itva varaNam is a necessary angam (accessory of Prapatti) for successfully gaining the sought benefit, that highlights this fact. Likewise, for gaining the parama puruShArtham of moksham, one needs to submit a formal appeal to Lord Srinivasa to enable the successful practice of Bhakti Yogam or admit to one's incapability for adopting this and thus resorting to sharaNagati. Without such an appeal, it is difficult to invoke the Lord's grace. This appeal/prayer is referred to in the salutation "rakShApekSham pratIkShate". This prayer is formally documented as "goptR^itva varaNam", which is an important angam of Prapatti. Thus, Lord Srinivasa along with Daya Devi has arrived at the Venkatam hill expecting the submission of this appeal from His devotees. He stands ready to protect them upon hearing this appeal. We are still examining the first meaning of the tribute "tvad upasadanAd adya shvo vA mahA pralaye(a)pi vA". Those who seek refuge in Daya Devi are assured of the benefit of succor at the Feet of Lord Srinivasa, either today, or in a while or before mahApraLayam sets in. The

other import of this tribute is that in order to gain the anugraham of Daya Devi one needs to gain the anugraham of Lord Srinivasa through surrender to His Feet. How then can one gain the anugraham of Lord Srinivasa.? This is possible by undertaking the Aj~nA anuj~nA kaimkaryams for Lord Srinivasa, which greatly pleases Him and as a consequence opens the flow of His anugraham. This establishes a mechanism for invoking the grace of Lord Srinivasa. The Aj~na and anuj~na kaimkaryams are of several types. Some of them are geared towards gaining aihika phalams (material benefits). These karmas are of three types - upaya upAyopAyam. These are the acts that lead one towards apavargam (mokSham). These include yadR^icChasukR^itam, which is the result from a good act undertaken in a totally unplanned manner by sheer accident. As a result, one gains AcArya sambandam and thus adopts the upAyam for mokSham. The second is of the form of a good act undertaken knowingly with full awareness of the resulting benefit as documented in the salutation “dharmAyitalshca” from a previous verse (Verse 74). These could include acts such a digging of a well or constructing a pond near a temple or even the construction of a temple, construction of a nandavanam which offers a supply of flowers for making garlands for Lord Narayana, undertaking the performance of yAgams, as well as giving charity, engaging in homams and japams, undertaking prostrations and circumambulation of Lord Narayana at temples. These are for obtaining material benefits or aihika phalam. Some acts are directed specifically for gaining mokSham - these include the nuances of karma yoga, j~nAna yoga, and Bhakti yoga as well as Prapatti for one who does not have the knowledge and the strength to adopt the arduous prescriptions of Bhakti yoga. Thus, a number of acts have been outlined by means of which one can gain the grace of Lord Srinivasa for various purposes. The Lord dispenses His grace in accordance with the prescribed acts that one has adopted. One who cannot bear the existence of even a single wasted moment during which he has not engaged in some form of kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasa, is ready for mokSham, which is duly granted by Lord Srinivasa. This is evidenced in the tribute “yan muhUrtaM kShaNamvApi vasudevo na cintyate sA hAniH mahat Chidram sA brAntiH sa ca vikriyA”. This is the state of Paramaikantins, who are engaged in the singular thought of Kaimkaryam for Lord Narayana. For such persons, the grace of Lord Srinivasa is instantaneous. If they acquire the status of Arthis, mokSham is immediately granted through Artha prapatti. If they submit the prayer “etat dehAvasAnemAm tvatpAdaM prApaya svayam”, mokSham is granted to them at the end of their earthly existence. At that point they are granted an aprAkR^ita sharIram (a body that is totally different from that they had during earthly existence) and blessed with the bliss of eternal kaimkaryam for the Divine

Couple at their permanent bode, Sri Vaikuntam. Karma yogam, jñAna yogam and Bhakti yogam are also available. The statements “anaditamhita phalam”, “kartavyam ityAnukalau” reflect the fact that karmas undertaken without expectation of any rewards, are guaranteed to result in Bhagavan’s anugraham. However, due to whatever duShkR^itam (bad karma) that may have arisen, unless the Bhakti yogam practitioner endures all consequences of prArabdha karma, mokSham does not come about for them. This is the considered position of the Sastras. One the other hand one may have undertaken numerous good acts in the spirit of the salutation “dharmAyitalshca” or incurred “yAdR^icChika sukR^itam” (as defined earlier). When the appropriate time for receiving the fruits from these actions comes about, the Lord’s grace may cause the individual to seek an AcArya and gain the means to mokSham by way of Bhakti yogam or Prapatti. Thus, the salutation “adya” from this verse denotes the state of those who have undertaken Artha prapatti, while the tribute “shvo vA” refers to those who request moksham at the end of their earthly existence. The usage “mahApraLayepi vA” denotes the granting of mokSham to Bhakti yogis. It must be emphasized that the salutation here does not literally refer to mahApraLayam. Instead, it denotes the granting of mokSham to Bhakti yogis, when their prArabdha karma has been fully expended. It also applies to elevated jivans occupying the status of Brahma, who may decide to undertake the upAsana of Bhakti or prapatti. In this case, the Sastram states that moksham is granted only when they complete their duration of occupation of their elevated post as determined by Lord Narayana. Since the post of Brahma prevails until the onset of MahApraLaya, he has to necessarily wait until his tenure comes to its pre-ordained conclusion. Thus, it is established that one’s mokSham is guaranteed either instantaneously, or in some time or after an extended period when one seeks refuge at the feet of Lord Srinivasa. The import of the verse so far is that Lord Srinivasa graces us with the upAyam of His Lotus Feet as our guaranteed refuge for seeking mokSham. The salutation “vR^iShAcala shekharaH” refers to Lord Srinivasa, who is standing on top of the Tirumala hill and never violates the command of Daya Devi. The implication here is that the Divya Mangala Vighram of Lord Srinivasa adorns the Venkatam hill. The Lord of such magnificence, replete with the marks of the shankha (conch), padma (lotus), and gadA (mace) on His feet, which exude the fragrance of the Vedas, makes the Feet available to those who have sought refuge in Daya Devi. The inner meaning is that Lord Srinivasa, who grants the nitya sUris and ubhaya nacchiyArs (Sri Devi, Bhū Devi, and Neela Devi) in Sri Vaikuntam the bliss of enjoying His Lotus Feet, enables us too to partake of the same anubhavam due to His arrival

at the Venkatam hill. This is the import of the tribute **vitarati nijaM pAdAmbhojaM vR^iShAcala shekharaH**".



One may ask what is so great about the Feet of Lord Srinivasa? The glory of the Feet is enjoyed by Periya Azhvar through his **PeriyAzhvAr Tirumozhi Pasuram** (1.3.1) describing the baby Krishna sucking at the toe of His foot with great relish. The Pasuram is "**cltakkaDaluL amutanna tEvaki kOtaik kuzhalAL acOtaikkup pOttanta pEtaik kuzhavi piDittu cuvaittuNum pAtakkamalankal kANirE pavaLa vAylr vantu kANirE**." The salutation "**cltakkaDaluL amutanna**" highlights the difference between the ocean of Lord Krishna's feet and the commonly encountered ocean. The former is ocean of nectarine elixir (amR^itam), while the latter has salty water. Furthermore, the latter contains the badaba agni, which cannot be extinguished at the time of PraLayam. Thus, the reference in the Azhvar pasuram pertains to the nectarine ocean. This baby Krishna, born to Devaki was handed to Yasodai through

the kotai kuzhal. Further, the little baby is seen sucking His toe with great relish by holding it with His little hand and enjoying the taste. The Azhvar invites attention to the posture of this child lying majestically on the banyan leaf in this manner. The Azhvar salutes Devaki as the bearer of this ocean of amR^itam in her garbham and delivering Him to the world. Therefore, She is hailed as “tiruvinvaDivu tEvaki”. The “cltakkaDal” is in reality, the ocean of Daya. The salutation from a prior verse(verse 22) “kalashodadhi sampadobhavatyAH karuNe sanmati manthasamskR^ItAyAH amR^itAmshamavaimi divya dehaM mR^ita sanjIvanamanjanAcalendoH” becomes relevant here. Namely Daya Devis is the ocean that lets Herself be churned to produce by way of amR^itam the Divyamangala vigraham of Lord Srinivasa, who is made available to all without distinction of any kind. He is glorified in this salutation as “mR^ita sanjIvanamanjanAcalendoH” which attests to the fact that He is capable of reviving one from a dead state. In this context, death is the state of remaining far away from contact with Lord Srinivasa. Thus, revival from this state denotes the help of Lord Srinivasa in ensuring that one develops a taste for Bhagavad Kaimkaryam.



vaTasya patrasya puTe shayAnaM bAlaM mukundaM manasAsmarAmi

Lord Srinivasa, who bestows the anubhavam of His Feet to all His seekers, as Krishna is seen enjoying the anubhavam of the same Feet through the Azhvar Pasuram! The “vaiShNava bhogya lipsayA” tribute from Sri Parashara Bhattar becomes relevant here. The desire to enjoy His own Feet comes to the Lord due to the fact that this is the object of supreme enjoyment for VaiShNavas. The Lord is left wondering “What is the flavor inherent to these feet? May be I too should partake of it.” Thus, He is enjoying His own Feet in the manner described in the shloka “karAravindena padAravindaM mukharavinde viniveshayantam vaTasya patrasya puTe shayAnaM bAlaM mukundaM manasAsmarAmi” (The little child with lotus-hands, lotus-feet, lotus-lips is sucking the big toe of His foot reclining on the banyan leaf. My mind contemplates on this infant Lord Mukunda.)

The second reason for this enjoyment is explained through the analogy of a pregnant mother partaking of food out of concern for the well-being of her child in the womb. In a like manner, Lord Narayana holds all sentient and insentient beings in their subtle state in His stomach during praLayam. Realizing that the sole source of nourishment and protection for these beings lies in His Feet, He is seen sucking on His toe with relish. These feet, which are a source of supreme enjoyment for the Lord Himself as described in the Azhvar pasuram are bestowed to all His seekers by Lord Srinivasa, who has taken root at the Venkatam hill. The reason for this disposition of Lord Srinivasa is Daya Devi. This raises the question, of some being granted the anubhavam of His Feet instantaneously, while some others gain this in time and yet others wait an extremely long time to beget this anubhavam. Instead, why not grant the anubhavam to all at the same time? This is due to the fact that each of these beings in the universe have committed pious acts. They need to be rewarded for this suitably. Thus, the time at which they receive the anubhavam of Lord Srinivasa’s Feet is an ordering based on the pious acts that they have undertaken.

Next the salutation “tadiha karuNe tattat krIDA tara~Nga paramparA taratamatayA juShTAYaste duratyayatAM viduH” is considered. Svami Desikan has described Daya Devi as verily the Ganga river. This river has extremely cool waters. It is extremely pure. Daya Devi too shares these characteristics and is replete with waves. Ultimately just like the waves merge with the Ganga river, once we seek refuge in Daya Devi, our deliverance at the feet of Lord Srinivasa is assured. The large waves take a while to subside, while the smaller waves subside instantaneously. The manner of granting the bliss of the Lord’s Feet is similar in this regard and is dispensed either instantaneously, after a while, or after a long while, in accordance with the extent of the pious acts undertaken by the individuals. The



Daya Devi is verily the cool and pure Ganga river

key message herein is that seeking refuge in Daya Devi guarantees the bliss of enjoyment of Lord Srinivasa's feet.

The other interpretation of “**tvadupAsanAd**” is now examined. Daya Devi seeks out jivans to bestow Her grace. If She sets out thus, the attainment of Lord Srinivasa's feet is bound to follow. A question that arises here is that “if Daya Devi seeks out jivans to bestow Her grace, will She necessarily be accompanied by Lord Srinivasa on this errand?” The answer is: Absolutely! Lord Srinivasa is a parama kAruNikar (extremely compassionate one). His intent is to grace one and all to ensure their well-being. This will become evident in the next decad, where Svami Desikan describes the principal avatarams of Lord Narayana and points out that these avatarams come about on account of Daya Devi.

In particular, while discussing the Rama avataram, Svami Desikan points out that the reason for this avataram is the construction of the bridge across the ocean. The destruction of Ravana was a secondary objective. Even the war with Ravana was meant only to dispense His grace. If Ravana's destruction was the sole objective, this could have been swiftly accomplished by the use of the BrahmAstra during Lord Rama's opening encounter with him. Instead, Lord Rama demonstrated to Ravana, that He was the supreme being and that there was still an opportunity for reform and seeking refuge if Ravana had a change of heart. Lord Rama sent him back with the message “You have fought well today. Go back to your palace and get rest. Come back refreshed for battle tomorrow”. The intent was to afford Ravana an opportunity to express remorse for his outrageous actions upon beholding the Divya mangala vigraham of Lord Rama and perform a surrender, while restoring Sita to Lord Rama. This would ensure the well-being of Ravana. In the context of the Daya Satakam verse, Daya Devi seeks out jivas to grace them. She is followed by Lord Srinivasa, who has given up residence in His eternal abode, Sri Vaikuntam, to take root at the Venkatam hill. Svami Desikan in the ParamArtha Stuti, while discussing the disposition of Lord Rama declares “**yadi vA rAvaNa ityudIritaM te**”. The context is the sharaNagati of Vibhishana, for which there ensued a spirited discussion in the Vanara camp. At that juncture, Lord Rama declared “Let alone Vibhishana, who you describe as belonging to the adversary camp. Even if Ravana himself arrived and sought refuge, I stand ready to grant it.” Lord Rama further states “**dattamasyAbhayam pura**”, which reflects the fact that it may seem as though the Lord encouraged the discussion among the Vanaras. However, in reality He granted abhayam to Vibhishana, while the latter was airborne and made the request. The discussion was a mere formality since Lord Rama wanted to ensure a welcome for Vibhishana from the Vanara army.

Daya Devi seeks out jivas
to grace them



The inner meaning is that Lord Rama wanted the puruShakAratvam from Anjaneya, who had the role of an AcArya, to accept the sharaNAGati of Vibhishana. Thus, it is beyond reasonable doubt that the Lord too seeks out jivans with the sole intent of gracing them and thus accompanies Daya Devi on this mission. In the mangalasasanam to TirukAtkarai in his Tiruvaimozhi pasuram 9.6.10, Svami NammAzhvar declares “vArikkoNDu unnai vizhunkuvan kANil enRu ArvuRRa ennai ozhiya ennin munnam pArittu tAn ennai muRRa parukinAn kAr okkum kATkaraiyappan kaDiyanE” Svami NammAzhvar approaches the Lord of TirukATkarai with the intent of enjoying Him by devouring Him. However, the Lord at this Divya Desam would like to enjoy the Azhvar in the same manner. Svami NammAzhvar affirms that if the separation between him and the Lord was 100 feet, and if he took steps that brought him ten feet closer, the Lord rushed out and covered the remaining 90 feet to get near the Azhvar. Svami NammAzhvar employs the salutation “kaDiyan” (hard-hearted one) and thus the Lord’s position is even more astonishing, reflecting the Lord’s abundant vAtsalyam. Here the Azhvar has adopted nAyika bhavam. In this state the only goal for the nAyika is to enjoy their nAyakan (master). In this state it is relevant to ask whether one can swallow with one’s eyes an object. The Azhvar answers this in the affirmative through the salutation “vArikkoNDu unnai vizhunkuvan kANil enRu ArvuRRu” The implication here is that the exact functioning of each sense organ is immaterial. The sense organs can operate interchangeably is the position of Svami NammAzhvar. The Azhvar states “Emperuman beholding me with the desire to enjoy Him and rushing towards Him, responds in kind by rushing even further to accept me!” Thus, the Azhvar instructs us that if we take one step towards the Lord, He traverses a mile to meet us. This arises on account of the Lord’s intense desire to enjoy His parama Bhaktas. This is the manner of the anubhavam when it comes to Daya Devi seeking out jivans to confer Her grace. This is the second meaning of “tvadupAsanAd”. Once Daya Devi adopts this position, what follows is “adya shvo vA mahA pralaye(a)pi vA vitarati nijaM pAdAmbhojaM”. Namely, these jivans are graced with the Feet of Lord Srinivasa either instantaneously, or after sometime or after an extended period of time. It may be recalled that during the Krishna avataram, Kamsa fearing death at the hands of Devaki’s eighth child sets out to kill her. At that time Vasudeva pleads with folded hands and appeals to Kamsa to spare Devaki’s life. First, he tries to use words of wisdom from Vedanta. Specifically, Vasudeva addresses Kamsa as “adya vA abda shataMte vA mR^ityurvai prANinAM dhruvaH” (Once one is born, death is inevitable. This may happen in a short while or after a long time. Why do you worry about this?) It is a different matter whether those words were heeded



Lord Srinivasa, resides at the banks of the SvAmi PuShkaraNi along with His consorts to grace those who seek Him

or not. For example, when one starts a job, the retirement age is pre-determined and made known at the outset. Having this knowledge enables us to accept the inevitable end date with poise. Again, this causes different reactions. Some may desire extension of their working days, while some others may look forward to wrapping up their work by the pre-determined retirement date. Likewise, at the time of our birth, our lifespan is pre-determined by Lord Narayana. However, the important point to note is that we are not aware of the time of our death. That is why one who is ninety years of age desires to live for 120 years in the manner of Svami Bhashyakarar. Again, if one is aware of the time of one's end, it would spark widely varying reactions, with some being content with their lifespan and some others seeking a longer lifespan in the manner of one seeking an extension to one's employment. Just like the end of one's life is pre-determined at the time of their birth, so too is the guarantee of attaining Lord Srinivasa's feet for those who have sought refuge in Daya Devi. Lord Krishna declares in the Bhagavadgita "mama mAyA duratyayA". The implication here is that regardless of the intensity of one's tapas and japam, it is impossible to overcome the overwhelming events arising on account of Lord Narayana's mAyA. However, this Daya Satakam verse provides the assurance that those who adopt Daya Devi as their sole refuge are effortlessly able to overcome the events arising on account of Lord Narayana's mAyA. Thus, Daya Devi's grace becomes a pre-requisite for overcoming events dictated by Lord Narayana's mAyA. Therefore, two important points are established in this verse. (1) Those who seek refuge in Daya Devi are bound to receive the grace of Lord Srinivasa since He never violates Her command (2) Those who receive the grace of Daya Devi are effortlessly able to overcome the effects of Lord Narayana's mAyA-avidya, karma vAsana and the like. avidya gives rise to misconceptions that the body itself is the Atma (not knowing the distinction between the body and soul), svatantrAtmabhramam (namely that we are the masters of all we purvey and thus have a sense of complete independence instead of recognizing our complete dependence on Lord Narayana, who makes everything possible for us.) Thus, regardless of whether we seek refuge in Daya Devi or She seeks us out to confer Her grace, due to the appeal of "rakShApekShAM pratIkShate", if we take two steps towards Her, She traverses miles to bless us.

The benefits from Her blessings are bound to come about either instantaneously, or in some time or after a long time. However, the benefit from Her blessing of getting Lord Srinivasa's feet is guaranteed. This is the key message from this Daya Satakam verse.

rakShApekShAM pratikShate



With the prayerful thought of seeking Daya Devi's grace on account of which we are guaranteed the bliss of enjoyment of Lord Srinivasa's lotus feet, we conclude the exposition of this Daya Satakam verse."

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

"Oh Daya Devi! By reason of my having surrendered unto You, I am sure He will grant me the fruit of Moksha bliss today, tomorrow or at long last at the time of the great deluge. It is only a matter of time. That the Moksha fruit is definitely promised for me is NOT IN DOUBT. The indefiniteness is understandable in terms of the following model.

The Daya flow torrent comes. There are waves, big, medium, small, and the like. I am in one spot. The wave is to submerge me to liberate me. When it is going to submerge one cannot be exactly predicted. So it is that I say I will definitely enjoy the fruit one day. The flow cannot be arrested and cannot be avoided. How can it be? It is insurmountable just like the Lord's mAyA."



Sloka 80

प्रणिहितधियां त्वत्संपृक्ते वृषाद्रि शिखामणौ

प्रसृमर सुधा धाराकारा प्रसीदति भावना ।

दृढमिति दये दत्तास्वादं विमुक्ति वलाहकं

निभृत गरुतो निध्यायन्ति स्थिराशय चातकाः ॥८०॥

praNihita dhiyAM tvat saMpR^ikte vR^iShAdri shikhAmaNau

prasR^imara sudhA dhArAkArA prasIdati bhAvanA |

dR^iDhamiti daye dattAsvAdaM vimukti valAhakaM

nibhR^ita garuto nidhyAyanti sthirAshaya chAtakAH | 80



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

“This verse is “praNihita dhiyAM tvat saMpR^ikte vR^iShAdri shikhAmaNau prasR^imara sudhA dhArAkArA prasIdati bhAvanA dR^iDhamiti daye dattAsvAdaM vimukti valAhakaM nibhR^ita garuto nidhyAyanti sthirAshaya chAtakAH.” The previous verse highlighted the fact that once one seeks refuge in Daya Devi, moksham is assured. There need be no doubt about this fact. There are two concepts known as ayogya vyavacChedham and anyogya vyavacChedham. These are illustrated through examples. First, “sha~NkhaH padara eva” The term eva is reflective of ayogya vyavacChedham in that a conch cannot be of any color other than white. Thus, it establishes the fact that the conch is undoubtedly white. In other words, the conch cannot be seen bereft of the white color. Next, anyogya vyavacChedham is considered. The statement “pArtha eva dhanurdharaH” illustrates this. The import here is that the skill of archery cannot be seen in anyone else besides Partha (Arjuna). In the context of the previous Daya Satakam verse, ayogya vyavacChedham comes about from the statement that when one seeks refuge in Daya Devi, one’s moksham is guaranteed. There is no question of not getting this benefit.

In this Daya Satakam verse Svami Desikan describes the role of Daya Devi in bestowing Bhagavad anubhavam to great yogis as well as commoners like us. The salutation “praNihita dhiyAM tvat saMpR^ikte vR^iShAdri shikhAmaNau prasR^imara sudhA dhArAkArA prasIdati bhAvanA” alludes to the fact that there

are two routes for moksham - namely Bhakti yogam and Prapatti. For Bhakti yogis undertaking the prescribed upAsanam, the shAkShAtkAram (direct experience) of Lord Narayana, is made possible by Daya Devi. The upAsanas start with yama niyama prANaYAmas and culminate in samAdhi. Samadhi is the state wherein Bhagavad anubhavam becomes possible. This comes about due to the grace of Daya Devi. Even to gain an inclination for adopting the upAsana, takes an extraordinary act of **tapas**.

In the **paradevatA pAramArthyAdhikaram** of **Srimad RahasyatraysAram**, Svami Desikan states “sUryasyaivat yo bhaktaH saptajanmAntharam naraH tasyaivat prasAdena rudra bhaktaH prajAyate shankarasyAt yo bhaktaH sapta janmAntharam naraH tasyaivat prasAdena viShNu bhakta prajAyate vAsudevasya yo bhaktaH saptajanmAntharam naraH tasyaivat prasAdena vAsudeve praLlyate”. (If one has seven births as a Bhakta of Surya, he begets the eighth birth as a Bhakta of Rudra. Upon completion of seven births of Bhakti to Rudra, one is blessed with birth as ViShNu Bhakta. After seven births as a viShNu Bhakta, he becomes united with Vasudeva and attains moksham.) Thus, it is established that one needs to endure several births replete with Bhakti in order to gain bhakti for Lord Vasudeva.

In the **DevanAyaka PancAshat** salutation “ye janmakoTibhirupArjita shuddha dharmAH teShAM bhavaccharaNabhaktiratIva bhogyA tvajjlIvitaistridashanAyaka durlabhaistaiH AtmAnamapya kathayaH svayamAtmavantam.” Svami Desikan declares that after an extremely large number of births one attains the state of singular Bhakti for Lord Devanayaka. These beings consider the path of Bhakti yogam for the feet of Devanayaka as the object of supreme enjoyment. The same sentiment is echoed in the tribute “tvat saMpR^ikte vR^iShAdri shikhAmaNau” of this Daya Satakam verse. The import of this tribute is that Lord Srinivasa, who is never separated from Daya Devi, stands as the adornment for the Venkatam hill. The inseparability of dampatis is also alluded to by Kalidasa in the context of his **Raghuvamsham** tribute “vAgarthAviva saMpR^iktau vAgartha pratipattaye jagataH pitarau vande pArvatiparameshvarau” denoting that the speech and underlying meaning are inseparable in the manner of his arAdhya mUrthi of Parvati and Siva. Here Svami Desikan emphasizes the inseparability of Thayar from Perumal through the salutation “tvat saMpR^ikte vR^iShAdri shikhAmaNau” to denote the fact that without Daya Devi, there is no Perumal and vice versa. The alankaram of Lord Srinivasa for the Venkatam hill is documented in Svami NammAzhvar’s **Tiruvaimozhi** Pasuram “tilatam ulakukkAi ninRa tiruvEnkaDattemperumAnE”. The Venkatam hill stands as the alankaram for the entire universe. Lord Srinivasa is jewel in the crown serving as the adornment for the Venkatam hill!

amR^ita dhArA



The tribute “**praNihita dhiyAM**” denotes those whose minds is replete with singular focus on Lord Srinivasa, and on account of His grace engage in upAsana of Bhakti yogam. For such beings, the tribute “**prasR^imara sudhA dhArAkArA prasIdati bhAvanA**” indicates that their dhyanam increases multi-fold. Their dhyanam itself is in the form of “**prasR^imara sudhA dhArAkArA**”, namely their dhyanam is in the form of a torrential flow of amrutam that is gushing forth in all directions. Due to their focus on Lord Srinivasa and His resulting grace, their dhyanam attains samAdhi, when sAkShAtkAram - direct experience of Bhagavan becomes possible. Svami Bhashyakarar defines dhyanam to be “**taila dhArAvat avicChinna smR^iti santAna rUpam**”, which means that the constant thought of Lord Srinivasa occurs in the manner of continuous uninterrupted flow of oil, without obstruction.

Svami Desikan goes one step further in discussing this concept in the context of Daya Devi’s anugraham in that he describes the dhyanam in terms of amR^ita dhAra - torrential flow of amR^itam. The reason for this is Lord Srinivasa’s eternal association with Daya Devi. The inner meaning is that Daya Devi ensures the fructification of the upAsana of Bhakti yogis on account of Her eternal association with Lord Srinivasa, which results in His grace for them. The import of this salutation is that one needs to develop a sincere desire to seek Lord Srinivasa, while going to offer prostration to Him. Without this sincere desire, the act of offering prostration to Lord Srinivasa does not gain a sense of fulfillment. In the context of Bhakti yogis, their upAsana is accompanied by a sincere desire to seek Lord Srinivasa. Hence their efforts are successful. Daya Devi induces in them the sincere desire to seek Lord Srinivasa, ensuring the success of their efforts. In days of yore, due to this reason, elders would instruct children to develop a disposition to seek Lord Srinivasa. For example, the months of Chaitra and Vaikasi are replete with Brahmotsavams at various Divya Desams. Would it not be a great experience for children to gain Bhagavad anubhavam by visiting these Divya Desams? For this to come about, elders must necessarily instruct their children in the importance of taking part in these utsavams. Only when such a desire is firmly instilled, will one experience regret of not having partaken of the Bhagavad anubhavam during a given year on account of other circumstances. During adiyen’s growing years in Navalpakkam, Brahmotsavam would take place at Kanchipuram every year. In the present day one has to worry about troubling someone for a ten day stay in order to take part in the Brahmotsavam activities. In those days, it was not an issue at all. Visitors would sleep at the Temple. Daily rituals of snanam and anushtanam would take place easily due to the availability of a lake/pond in the Temple premises.

Sri PerarulAa PerumAL – Sri Kanchi



Availability of food was not an issue either due to the large number of tadhlyArAdhanams that were on offer. All one needed to bring along were the Vastrams, Tiruman petti (box for Tiruman), and chombu (small pot like vessel). One could then be blissfully engaged in parayanam and Bhagavad Kaimkaryam. During the utsavams the Lord is tilted from one side to the other by the Kaimkaryaparas to provide a beautiful sevai. Instructing young kids in the nuances of such sevais gives rise to a desire for them to witness these utsavams in person and experience the Bhagavad Sevai. The swaying of the ornaments and garlands adorning the Lord during these Utsavams, when the utsava murti is tilted from one side to the other is a glorious sight. The description of ornaments on specific utsavam days is another captivating aspect of the sevai. So too is the description of the playing of musical instruments and rendering of specific songs. For some, the most captivating feature of these utsavams is the variety of dishes on offer by way of prasadam. In this manner, instructing people in specific aspects of the utsavam that appeal to them, one can arouse interest and spark a desire for participation in these utsavams. This is a step-by-step process, which culminates in the instruction that Bhagavad anubhavam is the ultimate puruShArtham, which needs to be sought by all and can only be granted by Lord Narayana. Acharyas alone can influence common people to get the underlying message from this final instruction. Not only that, the desire and enthusiasm for the kaimkaryam should forever remain unsatiated. Never once should the feeling set in that this is the same utsavam that we enjoyed the previous year. Therefore, it is alright to miss out on the festivities this time.

For example, the avatara utsavam for Sri Varadaraja Perumal takes place in a special manner each year starting with Tirumanjanam early in the morning followed by the rendition of Svami Desika stotrams. Just because one was able to take part in the utsavam once, they should not rest content. Instead, it should translate into the yearning for repeated sevais year after year. This anubhava parivAham (gushing out) is important for those undertaking the upAsana of Bhakti yogam. The one who induces this anubhavam is Daya Devi as documented by Svami Desikan in this Daya Satakam verse. The dhyAnam as defined earlier blooms fully for Bhakti yogam upAsakas in the manner of the amR^ita dhAra. This is made possible entirely due to Daya Devi. The tribute “dR^iDhamiti daye dattAsvAdaM vimukti valAhakaM” documents the fact the anubhavam of dhyanam, which is unfailingly granted to these upAsakas, and which is extremely sweet tasting like the nectarine elixir is on account of Daya Devi. The salutation “vimukti valAhakam” denotes the fact that the dhyanam which culminates in moksham is in the form of

a cloud. The implication is that these practitioners of the upAsana view moksham as the rain bearing cloud.



The Rain-bearing Cloud

The reason for this is that those suffering from the sweltering heat of the summer, anxiously look forward to relief from the onset of rain. They behold the rain-bearing cloud with a sense of great expectation. The cool rain offers relief from the scorching heat and sultriness. In a like manner, these yogis too look forward to moksham with the expectation of relief from samsAric heat and sultriness. The inner meaning is that Lord Srinivasa in the form of the rain-bearing cloud grants these upasakas the ultimate puruShArtham of moksham. Svami Desikan further affirms through the tribute “dR^iDhamiti daye dattAsvAdaM” that the attainment of this benefit is certain for these upAsakas. Their demeanor in this regard is captured in the tribute “nibhR^ita garuto nidhyAyanti sthirAshaya chAtakAH” The upamAnam (simile) here is that these Bhakti yogam upAsakas resemble the ChAtaka bird, which only partakes of fresh rain water and spurns the offering of all

other water bodies no matter what. The ChAtaka bird is anxiously looking at the rain-bearing cloud for the guaranteed imminent rainfall to quench its thirst. Likewise, the Bhakti yogis are looking at the rain-bearing cloud known as Srinivasa for their guaranteed deliverance, which ensures complete Brahma anubhavam. Thus, it is established in this verse that when one begets the blessings of Daya Devi, moksham through the grace of Lord Srinivasa is guaranteed. The tribute “*nibhR^ita garuto nidhyAyanti*” refers to the fact that the Chataka bird has its wings folded while viewing the rain-bearing cloud. In a like manner, Bhakti yogis possessed with firm conviction focus their thoughts on Lord Srinivasa alone. Lord Srinivasa is glorified as “Vimukti valAhakan” (rain bearing cloud that guarantees moksham).



With Her blessings moksham is guaranteed

It is the considered position of a few commentators that this verse exclusively pertains to practitioners of Bhakti yogam. Some others take the position that the first two lines of this verse document the state of Bhakti yogis, while the last two lines describe the state of Prapannas. The latter interpretation is presented

now. Specifically, the last two lines of this verse highlight the fact that mumukshus (those desirous of gaining moksham) who do not have the means to pursue the arduous prescriptions of Bhakti yogam, resort to sharaNAgati. These akinchanas (helpless ones), are guaranteed of the grace of Lord Srinivasa due to the efforts of Daya Devi, which causes them to adopt Prapatti. These Prapannas as well as Bhakti yogis have Lord Srinivasa as the singular focus of all their upAsanas. They do not resort to devatAntharas for anything. In this regard they resemble the Chataka bird, which only partakes of fresh water from the rain-bearing cloud while spurring the offering from all other water bodies.



Once She graces prapannas, there is no need for devatantaras

The implication here is that once the grace of Daya Devi is gained, there is no need to approach devatAntharas for anything. The tribute “**nidhyAyanti sthirAshaya chAtakAH**” emphasizes the fact that the Chataka bird looks at the rain-bearing cloud with firm conviction that the cloud will deliver rain, which will quench the thirst of the bird. In a like manner, Prapannas and Bhakti yogam practitioners are blessed with the firm conviction that Lord Srinivasa has arrived at the Venkatam hill, giving up residence in Sri Vaikuntam, only to bestow His grace on them. The kALa megham of Lord Srinivasa is described in the verse “**vR^iShagiri kriShNamegha janitAm**” as one that delivers all from samsaric heat. In this verse the same sentiment is echoed in a slightly different context. Specifically, Lord Srinivasa is described here as “**vimukti valAhakam**”. Svami Desikan documents the state of Prapannas in the **nyAsa tilakam** tribute “**prAyaH prapadane puMsAM paunaH punyaM nivArayan**” denoting the fact that sharaNAgati for the sake of one’s moksham needs to be performed only once. This is conveyed by way of assurance from Lord Ranganatha in having His hand in a slightly raised abhayam posture affirming to one and all that “Performance of Prapatti at His feet once is sufficient. There is no need to remind Him repeatedly of this fact.” Likewise, in this verse Svami Desikan declares that Prapannas, who have secured the grace of Daya Devi, engage in dhyanam of Lord Srinivasa alone with their hands held on their hearts replete with the knowledge that they are assured of the Lord’s protection in the same manner as the Chataka bird, with folded wings looking at the rain-bearing cloud for water to quench its thirst. Thus, both perspectives about this verse - one pertaining to Bhakti yogis and the other outlining applicability to both Bhakti yogis and Prapannas are equally valid.

Thus, verses 71-80 focus on the Bhagavad anubhava rasam and Daya Devi’s elevated role in facilitating this for Prapannas and Bhakti yogis. The key import of these verses is that once Daya Devi’s grace is secured, one’s moksham and hence complete BrahmAnanda anubhavam is guaranteed. This is affirmed by the Bhagavadgita salutation “**nehAbhikrama nAsho(a)sti pratyavAyo na vidyAte**”. This salutation contains the answer to self-doubt that may plague one that has undertaken a good act along the lines of “I have undertaken this good act. However, this has been interrupted. Would the effort be wasted?” The answer from this salutation is a resounding **no**. In a like manner, if one has sought refuge in Daya Devi the effort is never wasted. Through Her numerous upakAras one becomes the beneficiary of all manner of benefits culminating in Moksham. Her role in guaranteeing complete BrahmAnanda anubhavam for those who have sought refuge in Her is highlighted by Svami Desikan in verses 71-80. Not only that, Daya



tEnum pAlum neiyum kannalum amutum ottE

Devi stands as the guarantor for devatAntharas, who grant their followers specific benefits, at the appropriate time, in case these devatas cease to exist when the time comes for granting their followers the benefits of their pious acts. Also, when Lord Srinivasa who is inclined to bestow His grace on His supplicants beholds them, He is unable to discern any good act on their part. At that juncture Daya Devi intervenes and highlights the numerous pious acts that they have undertaken knowingly and unknowingly. At the same time, She points out to Lord Srinivasa that these beings have not been rewarded for these acts and thus causes Lord Srinivasa to bestow them with moksham. Thus, this decad of verses documents the mahopakAram rendered by Daya Devi in a myriad of ways culminating in the securing of BrahmAnanda anubhava rasam. In order to be able to offer prostration to Lord Srinivasa and gain Bhagavad anubhavam, the grace of Daya Devi becomes central. Specifically, the sweetness inherent to honey, milk, and sugarcane juice can be readily experienced. However, the taste of amR^itam cannot be readily experienced. In this instance, Daya Devi makes it possible for enjoying the amR^itam known as Lord Srinivasa in keeping with the salutation “tEnum pAlum neiyum kannalum amutum ottE”. Thus, this set of ten verses enables one to gain Bhagavad anubhavam. This is made possible entirely due to the compassion of Svami Desikan. The next set of ten verses document Lord Srinivasa’s easy accessibility through His numerous avatarams starting with the archa form and then outlining the ten principal avatarams coming about due to the grace of Daya Devi. This set of ten verses corresponding to the ninth decad is set to Prithvi meter.”

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

“This refers to the bliss of Bhakti-dhyana. Oh Daya Devi! Lord Srinivasa is in Your eternal embrace. Fortunate people - of course, Prapannas, who now engage in loving meditation as Phala-bhakti (distinct from Bhakti yogam as upAyam) are given to tasting of an ambrosia-flow, unceasing, elevating and mind-warming. Who has granted such a continuous shower? It is Lord Srinivasa, who as the bestower of moksham is guaranteed to redeem these beings at the appropriate time. The Prapannas enjoy the sweet shower. They have been for the past many years longing for this rain, just as the Chataka birds with unfluttering wings, silently taste the ambrosia of the Bhakti mode. This dhyana enjoyment is equivalent to ocular perception of the Lord. So, the prospective blissful beatitude is granted as a preview!”