

Reflections on NarasimhAvathAram



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SRI VARADACHARI SATHAKOPAN



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Maalolan Paadukai



Sri MaTam—Pathuka Aaradhanam by Srimath Azhagiya Singar



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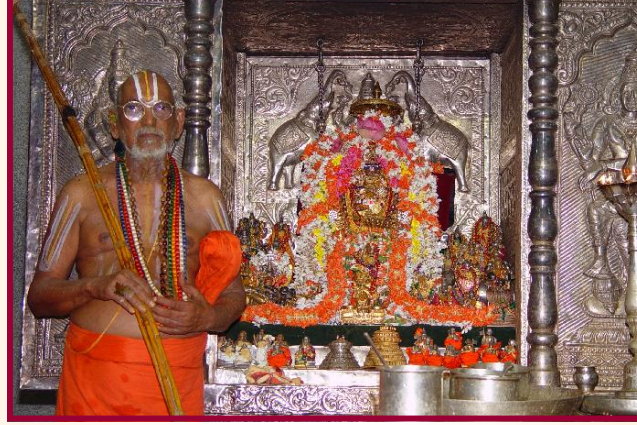


॥ श्रीः ॥

श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः

श्रीमते निगमन्त महादेशिकाय नमः

REFLECTIONS ON NARASIMHAVATHARAM



HH The 45th Jeeyar of Sri Ahobila MaTam

INTRODUCTION:

Sri Lakshmi Nrusimha Divya PaadhukhA Sevaka SrivaNN SatakOpa Sri NaarAyaNa Yatheendhra MahA DEsikan is the 45th and current Jeeyar of Ahobila Matam. He completed on November 21, 1996 his Seventieth birthday. This special anniversary (Sapthathi) was celebrated by all aasthikAs, Vaidhikha SreshtAs and AchAryAs at Thirupathi. A commemorative souvenir celebrating the scholarship and Kaimkaryams of this most merciful Acharya Saarvabhouman was released at that Mahothsavam in Thirupathi.

Sri Krishna Kalale met with the Jeeyar and brought back two souvenir issues. H.H. the Jeeyar instructed Sri Krishna Kalale to make some of the extraordinary information assembled in this souvenir on the internet for the benefit of Sri VaishNavAs of the World. Sri Kalale wrote to me and asked me to undertake this Kaimkaryam.

The wish of H.H., the Jeeyar is my command and therefore I have notified Sri Kalale that nothing will please me more than fulfilling the wishes of our most revered Jeeyar. What is assembled in the souvenir is of wide interest to all Sri VaishnavAs rooted in Bhagavadh RaamAnuja SiddhAntham. Hope you will find these useful to you as valuable source material. I seek the special blessings of H.H. the Jeeyar at the outset to complete this Kaimkaryam that is dear to his heart.





TANIYAN

Let us start with the recitation of the Taniyan of Prakrutham Srimath Azhagiya Singar

श्रीमद् रङ्गशठारि संयमिवराल्लब्धागमान्तद्वयम्

श्रीमद्वीररघूद्वहाद्यशठजित्पादारविन्दाश्रयम् ।

श्रीमद् वेदवतंसदेशिकयतेः कारुण्यवीक्षास्पदम्

सेवे रङ्गधुरीणशासनवशं नारायणं योगिनम् ॥

श्रीमते श्रीलक्ष्मीनुरुसिंह दिव्यपातुकासेवक श्रीवणशठकोप

श्री नारायण यतीन्द्र महादेशिकाय नमः ॥

ஸ்ரீமத்³ ரங்க³டொ²ரி ஸம்யமிவரால்லப்³தா⁴க³மாந்தத்³வயம்
ஸ்ரீமத்³ வீரரக⁴த்³வஹாத்⁴ய டெஜித் பாதா³ரவிந்தா³ஸ்ரயம் |
ஸ்ரீமத்³ வேத்³வதம்ஸ தே³ஸிகயதே: காருண்ய வீக்ஷாஸ்பத³ம்
ஸேவே ரங்க³து⁴ரிண ஸாஸநவஸம் நாராயணம் யோகி³நம் ॥

ஸ்ரீமதே ஸ்ரீலக்ஷ்மீந்ருஸிம்ஹ தி³வ்யபாதுகாஸேவக ஸ்ரீவண்²டெ²கோப

ஸ்ரீ நாராயண யத்³ந்த்ர மஹாதே³ஸிகாய நம:





THE AACHARYA PARAMPARAIS

The AchArya paramparais of Sri VaishNavism, are all derived from Sri Bhagavadh RamAnujA and his poorvAchAryAs, going all the way upto Sriman NaarAyanan Himself. The links among these uninterrupted chains of AchAryAs are profound and sacred. In each of the AchArya paramparAs, by Bhagavadh sankalpam, a great AchArya is "found" and he ascends the throne of that particular Acharya Paramparai and serves as a beacon for SadAchAram, Saddharmam and SanmArgam. Such AcharyAs remind us through their many daily activities that Bhagavath, BhAgavatha sEvA is the ultimate goal of a human being.

Tirelessly, such AchAryAs travel to the divya desams and homes of the sisHyAs, bring their aarAdhana Moorthys to these blessed homes, perform pancha samskArAs during these Vijaya YaathrAs, give pravachanams, initiate scholarly sadas to preserve the fine points related to the tattvams and most of all through ManthrOpadesams make all of us become the brides of Sriman NaarAyaNA through their power of tapas. This sacred act of our wedding to Sriman NaarAyaNA performed by our most compassionate AchAryAs has been celebrated by AzhwArAs in their Sri Sookthis and by Sri RaamAnujA through his SaraNagathi Gadhyam and other AchAryAs of his tradition in many of their granthams and sthOthrams.



Visvaksenar, Satakopan, Kaliyan, Bhasyakarar, Swami Sri Desikan
At Sri AhObila Matam





Prathama AchAryan—Sri Lakshmi Nrusimhan at AhObilam



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Senchu Lakshmi ThAyAr at AhObilam





Prathama AchAryan—Sri MAIOlan at AhObila MaTam



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Dolai KrishNan — At Sri AhObila Matam



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Following is the chart of AchArya Parampara, listed under www.ahobilamutt.org website. Thanks to Sri Dileepan Parthasarathy for creating links to provide the Thaniyan for each AchAryan in the parampara.

Samasrayana Paramparai	Kalakshepa Paramparai
1. Sriman NArAyaNA	1. Sriman NArAyaNA
2. MahAlakshmi	2. MahAlakshmi
3. ViswaksEnar	3. ViswaksEnar
4. Swami NammAzhvar	4. Swami NammAzhvar
5. Sriman NATHamuni	5. Sriman NATHamuni
6. Srimath UyyakkondAr	6. Srimath UyyakkondAr
7. Srimath ManakkAl Nambi	7. Srimath ManakkAl Nambi
8. Srimath ALavandhAr	8. Srimath ALavandhAr
9. Srimath Periya Nambi	9. Srimath Periya Nambi
10. Swami BhAshyakArar	10. Swami BhAshyakArar
11. Srimath EmbAr	11. Thiru Kurugaipiran PiLLan
12. Srimath ParAsara Bhattar	12. Srimath EngalAzhvan
13. Srimath NAnjeeyar	13. Srimath NadAdur AmmaL
14. Srimath NampiLLai	14. Srimath Appillar
15. Srimath Vadakku Thiruveedi PiLLai	15. Swami Sri DEsikan
16. Srimath SrirangAchAriyar	16. Sri NayinarAchAriyar
17. Srimath KesavAchAriyar	17. Sri Brahma Thanthra Swathanthra SwAmi
18. Srimath KamalavAsar	18. Gadikasatam AmmaL
19. Srimath KesacvAchAriyar	19. Srimath Athivann saThakOpan
20. Srimath Athivann saThakOpan	20. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 2 - 10
21. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 2 - 10	21. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 11 - 20
22. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 11 - 20	22. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 21 - 30
23. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 21 - 30	23. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 31 - 40
24. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 31 - 40	24. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 41 - 45
25. Srimath Azhagiya Singar 41 - 45	





SWAMI DESIKAN AND AACHARYA PARAMAPARA

In this context, Swami DESikan has been prolific and has blessed us with many saraNagathi granthams and eulogies such as NikshEpa RakshA, NyAsa TilakA, NyAsa DasakA, NyAsa Vimsathi, SaraNagathi Deepikai, AbhayaprAdhAna saarA, Adaikkala patthu in Tamil (Prapatthi dasakA in Sanskrit), GithArtha sangrahA, Charama sloka surukku, paramapadha sObhAnA, Achyutha SatakA, Rahasya SikhAmaNi and finally the magnum opus, Sri Rahasya Traya Saaram.



Thooppul KulamaNi SwAmi DESikan

In Achyutha Sathakam set in PrAkruThA language, Swami DESikan appeals movingly to the Lord of Thiruvaheendrapuram for help and succor, and begs the Lord to accept him as "the bride" at the marriage function of BharanyAsam (Aathma NikshEpam or SaraNagathi or Prapatthi). In the Rahasya grantham, Rahasya SikhAmaNi, Swami DESikan deals with the greatness of the Prapatthi doctrine and reminds us that the





Prapanna, who has performed Prapatthi under a SadAchAryA need not of his or her own accord perform anthiasmriti at the last moments of their lives on this earth.

I would like to make reference to yet another work of Swami DEsikan known as the (Sri) SampradhAya Parisuddhi. In this work, Swami DEsikan discusses the importance of AchAryAs in our sampradhAyam, the tattvAs and AchArya Paramparai from NammAzhwAr to Sri RamAnujA and his successors. A passage quoted often from (Sri) SamprAdhAya Parisuddhi that emphasizes the unity of thought that runs thru the different AchArya ParamparAs that are based in Sri Bhagavadh RaamAnuja samprahdAyam is as follows:

ஸ்ரீ பாஷ்யகாரருடைய சிஷ்ய ஸம்ப்ரதாயங்களில் ஒன்றிலும்
அர்த்த விரோதம் இல்லை; வாக்ய யோஜனா பேதமே உள்ளது
**"Sri BhashyakArarudaiya sishya sampradhAyangaLil onrilum
artha-virodham illai ; VaakhyayOjanAbhedhamE uLLadhu"**

Swami acknowledges that there is no basic conflict of thought in substantive tattvAs among the different Sri Vaishnava achArya paramparAs and the differences are limited to interpretative aspects. This passage is often cited to celebrate the significance of the Guru ParamparA and their underlying unitive relationships.



Hamsa Mudrai of Sri MaTam





HH THE 45TH JEEYAR OF SRI AHOBILA MATAM

H.H. the Jeeyar of Ahobila Mutt deeply believes in the above statement of SwAmi DEsikan and respects "the unity in diversity" theme that runs through the different sampradhAyAs of Sri VaishNavism and works closely with the other AchAryAs to spread the message of Bhagavadh RaamAnujA SiddhAntham. All the Jeeyars of other paramparAs were present at the 70th anniversary of the H.H. the Jeeyar of Ahobila Mutt to celebrate his scholarship and Kaimkaryam and wish him pallANDu.



NaarAyaNa YathIndra Maha DEsikan

One of the most moving articles in the Sapthathi malar is the one describing his acceptance of SanyAsa Aasramam from the hands of his AchAryA, H.H. the 44th Jeeyar of Ahobila Mutt on October 21, 1991 at the age of 64. The 44th Jeeyar is the great MahAn, who built the south gopuram for Sri RanganAthA, which could not be completed even by kings for hundreds of Years.

When I met H.H. the 45th Jeeyar at Bangalore soon after his initiation and he jokingly referred to his acceptance of the Aasramam at the time, when people are retiring from active life and that he was taking on the full administrative and spiritual leadership responsibilities for the 600 year old Matam. Since that time, he has provided extraordinary leadership and has traveled across India to bless His SishyAs many times that culminated recently in the opening of the new Ahobila Mutt building at Thirupathi;





a function presided over by the President of India. The illustrious kaimkaryam of H.H. the 45th Jeeyar was applauded by the President of India as matchless.

It is not often that we have the opportunity to learn about the details of the A a s r a m a S v e e k a r a N a m function of a Yathi that includes Jeeva SrArdham, prEksha manthra upadesam and the other rigorous rites of pasage into the order of Yathis. These information points would be of interest to many.



HH Prakrutham Azhagiya Singar in PURvasramam with HH Mukkur Azhagiya Singar

I will cover this topic and other items covered in the Saphthathi malar such as Pancha SamskAra ceremonies performed by this AchArya Saarvabhoman, the tightly orchestrated daily activities of the AchAryA, which were described movingly earlier by Sri jagannAthana during his travels with his/this AchArya.

There are many invited scholarly articles by great Sri VaishNavAs in this malar. I will include excerpts from them as I make progress with my lekhana Kaimkaryam.



Srimad Azhagiya Singars
(Back: 1, 21, 33 and 40, 34 and 41, 38 Front: 26, 27 41 To 44)





THE SALUTATION TO SRI AADHI VANN SATHAKOPA

Let us start with the salutation to the many MangaLa Moorthys that are enshrined in the silver mantapam of the Ahobila Matam, where Sri Lakshmi Narasimhan (MaalOlan) presides. He is surrounded by many ancient divya mangaLa aarAdhana moorthys of our poorvAchAryAs.



Sri Aadhi VaNN SaThakOpan—Kizh AhObilam

Commencing this series with a paasuram from Sri Adhi VaNN SatakOpa Yatheendhra Maha DEsikan Adaikkala Patthu will be more appropriate. This verse is part of a ten verses performing prapatthi to the First Jeeyar of Ahobila Matam, who was initiated into SanyAsa Aasramam at Ahobilam by Lord Narasimhan Himself. This verse is also one of the verses used in the Sri Sannadhi Saatthumurai Kramam:

ஆதி மறை உருவான ஆதிப்புள் வெற்பதனில்
சோதியென உலகெலாம் சுகம் பெறவே வந்துதித்த
ஆதிசூரு நரசிங்கன் அருளாலே யோகியான
ஆதிவண் சீர் சடகோபன் அடியிணை என் முடி மணியே

aadhimaraiuruvAna adhippuLL verpathaniI
sodhiyenavulahelAm sukam peravE vandhutthittha
adhigurunarasingham aruLAIEyOgiyAna
adhivaNN seer SatakOpan adiiNaiyen mudimaNiyE





With the split of the compound words, the paasuram flows this way for easy comprehension:

ஆதி மறை உருவு ஆன ஆதி புள் வெற்பு தனில்
 சோதி என உலகெலாம் சுகம் பெறவே வந்து உதித்த
 ஆதி குரு நரசிங்கன் அருளாலே யோகி ஆன
 ஆதிவண் சீர் சடகோபன் அடி இணை என் முடி மணியே
aadhi marai uruvu aana adhi puLL verpu tanil
sodhi yena ulahellAm sukam peravE vandhu udhittha
aadhi Guru Narasinghan aruLAIE yogi aana
aadhi vaNN seer SatakOpan adi iNai yen mudi maniyE

The paasuram refers to a wonderful event that happened at Ahobilam some 598 years ago.

The first line of the paasuram refers to two of the three mountains at Ahobilam. These three are known as GarudAchalam, vEdAchalam and achalAchala Meru. The salutation in this paasuram is to vEdAchalam, or the ancient vEdAs that took the form of the mountain named vEdAchalam (**aadhi marai-uruvu aana verpu**) and did penance and received the boon of protection from Lord Narasimhan. The first line also refers to GarudAchalam (**PuLL** =Veda purushan, Garuda), where Garuda performed tapas and got the boon of being the vaahanam for the Lord. AchalAchala Meru is the mountain between VedAchalam and GarudAchalam. Thus all the three mountains of Ahobilam are covered here as the sacred seat of BhagavAn Narasimhan.

The sacredness of these three mountains covered next by the second line and most of the third line of the paasuram:

சோதி என உலகெலாம் சுகம் பெறவே வந்து உதித்த
 ஆதி குரு நரசிங்கன்
sOdhi yena ulahellAm sukam peravE vandhu udhittha
aadhi Guru Narasinghan

These hills are sacred because of the avathAram of the resplendent jyothi (JwAlA Narasimhan) in nine forms (Nava Narasimhans) for giving comfort to the people of the world as the ancient Guru. The poet states that **Lord Narasimhan vandhu udhitthAn**. He chose the site, arrived there and revealed His auspicious forms for saving PrahIAdhA and the people of the world as the primordial Guru.

The rest of the pasuram deals with another miraculous event that occurred at Ahobilam some six hundred years ago in Lord NarasimhA's role as the aadhi Guru:





ஆதி குரு நரசிங்கன் அருளாலே யோகி ஆன
ஆதிவண் சீர் சடகோபன் அடி இணை என் முடி மணியே

aadhi Guru Narasinghan aruLAIE yOgi aana

aadhi vaNN seer SatakOpan adi iNai yen mudi maNiyE

This portion of the paasuram celebrates the event, which relates to the acceptance of SanyAsa Aasramam by a young man in his early twenties by the name of Kidaambi SrinivAsan born in ThirunArAyaNapuram He was commanded by BhagavAn Narasimhan to come to Ahobilam. SrinivAsan arrived at Ahobilam and was met by Lord Narasimhan, who appeared as an old sanyAsi and initiated SrinivAsan into sanyAsa Aasramam at the sannidhi of Achaarya RaamAnujA. The Lord appointed Kidaambi SrinivAsan as the first peetAthipathi of the Mutt revered as Ahobila Mutt today. BhagavAn Narasimhan also gave the daasa naamam for Srinivasan as Sri SatakOpa Jeeyar. This incident is referred to in the paasuram as "aadhi Guru Narasinghan aruLAIE yOgi aana aadhivaNN seer SaThakOpan".

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Depiction of Sri Lakshmi Nrusimha appearing as old sanyAsi and initiating SrinivAsan to SanyAsa Ashramam

This paasuram concludes with a salutation to the first jeeyar of Ahobila mutt: "aadhivaNN seer SatakOpan adi iNai yen mudi maNiyE". The poet and devotee of aadhivaNN SatakOpan points out that the sacred pair of feet of his achAryA rests on his head as sirOrathnam or mudi maNi or the jewel on the top of his head.





பெற்ற தாயாய் பத்தருக்கு பேதமில்லா தந்தையுமாய்
மற்றுமுள்ள சுற்றமுமாய் மன்னிய பொன்னிராசியுமாய்
எத்திசையும் என்னுடைய இன்னுருவாம் பாக்கியமாய்
உற்றமுனி சடகோப! உன் கழல்கள் அகலேனே

**peRRA thAyAi battharukku bedhamillA tanthaiumAi
maRRumuLLa suRRamumumAm manniya ponni raasiyumAai
yetthisaiyum yennudaya innuruvAm bhakkiyamAai
uRRamuni SatakOpa ! unn kazhalgaL ahaEnE**

Meaning: Oh, Aadhi vaNN SatakOpa! You are the biological mother to your devotees, the unquestionable father, the one who exists as the rest of the relatives and the golden auspiciousness that befall them. I have obtained as a great blessing your beautiful body (subha tanu, subhAsrayam) for my meditation. Oh, great AachArya! Oh, my bhAgyam! I shall never ever separate from your sacred feet.



"Unn KazhalgaL ahaEnE"





Sri Aathi VaNN SatakOpa YathIndra Maha DEsikan—ThiruNaarAyanapuram



Athivan Satakopa Yatindra Mahadesikan (1), Thirunarayanapuram

Founder of Sri AhObila MaTam



Sri Aathi VaNN SatakOpa YathIndra Maha DEsikan—With Lakshmi Nrusimha

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DIVYA DESAM OF AHOBILAM

Here I will briefly provide information on AhObila Divya Kshethram and include the meanings of the paasurams of Thirumangai on Sri Lakshmi Narasimhan, the presiding deity of this ancient Divya Desam.

I will start this with a slokam from Sri Lakshmi NarasimhAshtakam composed by Sri Vaadhikesari Azhagiya MaNavALa Jeeyar before summarizing the meanings of the ten paasurams of Thirumangai AzhwAr on Ahobila KshEthram. The Jeeyar's sIOkam begs the paripoorNa, parisuddha, lustorous moorthy, Narasimhan, to rescue him from the ocean of SamsAram, where he (the Jeeyar) is immersed and is sinking fast:

श्रीमदकलङ्कपरिपूर्ण शशिकोटि

श्रीधर मनोहर सटापटलकान्त

पालय कृपालय भावाम्बुधि निमग्नम्

दैत्यवरकाल नरसिम्ह! नरसिम्ह!

ஸ்ரீமத் அகலங்க பரிபூர்ண ஸஸிகோடி

ஸ்ரீதர மனோகர ஸடாபடாலகாந்த

பாலய க்ருபாலய பவாம்புதி நிமக்நம்

தைத்ய வரகால நரஸிம்ஹ! நரஸிம்ஹ!

Srimadh akalanga paripoorNa sasikOti

Sridhara ManOhara satApatalakaantha

paalaya krupAlaya bhavAmbhudhi nimagnam

daithyavarakAla Narasimha! Narasimha!



Sri SaTari of MaalOlan





THIRUMANGAI AZHWAR'S PAASURAMS ON AHOBILAM

Sri Sampath Rengarajan and Sri Dileepan have encoded the Tamil paasurams from NaalAyira divya prabhandham in Sri VaishNavA home page maintained by Sri MaNi VaradarAjan. Hence, I will confine my kaimkaryam to giving the meaning of the ten awe-inspiring paasurams of AzhwAr here these paasurams are found in between the AzhwAr's Periya Thirumozhi (PTM) paasurams on NaimisAraNyam (PTM 1.6) and Thiruvenkatam (PTM 1.8). The almost intimidating beauty of this Kshethram and the difficulties in getting there are described by the AzhwAr in his paasurams. These paasurams are set by the AzhwAr as conversations with his mind (Maanasa Sambhodhanam).



Thirumangai Mannan and Kumudavalli NAcchiAr

Paasuram 1

அங்கண்ஞாலமஞ்ச அங்கோர் ஆளரியாய், அவுணன்
பொங்க வாகம் வள்ளுகிரால் போழ்ந்த புனிதனிடம்
பைங்கணானைக் கொம்புகொண்டு பத்திமையால், அடிக்கீழ்
செங்கணாளியிட்டிறைஞ்சும் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே(1)
angkaN nyaalamanja angkOr aaLariyaay avuNan
ponnga aagam vaLLugiraal pOzhndha punidhanidam,
paingkaNaanaik kombu koNdu patthimaiyaal, adikkeezhch
chengkaNaaLi ittiRaincum SingkavEL kunRamE.(1)





Oh My mind! Let us offer our salutations to the Lord, who appeared as Narasinghan out of the pillar that the egotistic HiraNyan stuck with his fist. Our Lord had a form at that time, which was half-lion and half-man. That Nara-Simha roopam frightened all the denizens of this earth known for its beautiful places. The rising fury of Lord Narasimhan impelled Him to tear with His sharp nails, the body of HiraNyan, who offended the parama bhAgavathA, PrahlAdhan, who was His dear devotee.

At this sacred kshEthram, the lions of the forest with eyes red from their anger pull apart the ivory tusks of the green-eyed elephants and hasten to Lord NarasimhA's sannidhi and present those tusks to Him out of their bhakthi and salute Him. Oh, my mind ! Let us offer our salutations to the Lord at this AhObila KshEthram.

The asurA king, HiraNyan, was bloated with pride about his valor. When his son, PrahlAdA, asserted that the Lord is everywhere (Hari yengum uLan), HiraNyan disputed that statement of his son and challenged his son to show that the Lord was inside the sthambam (pillar) that he hit with his fist. The word Hari (ari in Tamil) means lion and uLan refers to Parama Purushan, who is pervasively present everywhere. The Lord did not want to make the words, "ari yengum uLan" false and he appeared out of the pillar to validate His devotee's statement. The ear shattering sound associated with His avathAram frightened all the jeevans and devAs of the world. They feared for their own lives. The Lord's fury was focused however on the offending asurA king.

This paasuram states that the lions from the forests surrounding Ahobilam came to the temple to honor their kula naathan, who presided over their land. They came with upahArams of their own choice (viz). the precious ivory tusks for use in the service to the Lord. Just as their Lord had the combination of ugram (ferocity displayed at HiraNyan) and Vaatsalyam (affection for His devotee, PrahlAdan), the lions of the forest had the simultaneous display of anger at the elephants and affection for their Lord. The lions killed the elephants and pulled out their valuable tusks, cleaned them and brought them to the sannidhi of the Lord as kaaNikkai to demonstrate their reverence.

Thirumangai's mangaLAsanam celebrates this kshEthram as "SingaveL kunram". SingaveL has been interpreted by Sri Utthamoor SwamigaL as "Singavezh kunram". He interprets the meaning two ways. In one intepretation, the Singha + Yezh (Singavezh) means the seven peaks just as in thriupathi (Yezhu malai); in another interpretation, "yEzh" refers to the ascending peak hitting the sky as Giri Raajan.





Paasuram 2

அலைத்தபேழ்வாய் வாளெயிறிறோர் கோளரியாய், அவுணன்
கொலைக்கையாளன் நெஞ்சிடந்த கூருகிராளனிடம்
மலத்தசெல்சாத்தெறிந்த பூசல் வந்துடிவாய்கடுப்பச்
சிலைக்கைவேடர்தெழிப்பறாத சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (2)

alaittha pEzh vaay vALL yeyiRu ohr KOLL ari aay , avuNan

kolaik-kayyALan nenju idantha koor uhirALan idam

malaittha selsAtthu yeRintha poosal vann-tuDi vaay kaduppa

silaikkai vEdar thezhippu aRatha SingavEL KunRamE (2)

The ferocious form of the HiraNya Samhara Murthy is visualized by the Azhwar in this paasuram. He salutes this kshethram as the place of residence of the Lord. Azhwar has the darsanam of the Lord with His mouth as big as a deep cave (pEzh vaai) and there he witnesses the gigantic tongue moving from side to side inside that mouth. The Azhwar sees the brilliantly shining teeth of the Lord in that mouth. He has the anubhavam of the Lord chasing HiraNyan with His majestic gait and witnesses the Lord piercing the chest cavity of the mighty HiraNyan with His sharp nails. The Azhwar reminds himself that Ahobilam is indeed the HiraNya Samhara Kshethram.

Here, the Azhwar experiences other commotions during his visit. He describes that scene as well to his mind. He says: "Oh, my mind! Please offer your worship to the Lord of this divya desam, where the hunting tribes of Ahobilam with their bows, arrows and snare drums fight noisily with the groups of pilgrims climbing the hills to have the darsanam of their Lord". The Azhwar suggests that the enduring affection and bhakthi of the pilgrims, who overcome their fear of the natives, who wish to protect their territory from "invading tribes" and save the Lord, the one who married one of their daughters, Chenju Lakshmi, from any harm that may befall Him. The hunters try to scare the groups of pilgrims, but do not succeed. The courage of the pilgrims to brave the dangers on the road to Ahobilam overpowers their fears and they undertake their pilgrimages.



Way to Ugra Sthambam





Paasuram 3

ஏய்ந்தபேழ்வாய் வாளெயிறறோர் கோளரியாய், அவுணன்
வாய்ந்தவாகம்வள்ளுகிரால் வகிர்ந்தவம்மானதிடம்
ஓய்ந்தமாவுமுடைந்தகுன்றும் அன்றியும்நின்றழலால்
தேய்ந்தவேயுமல்லதில்லாச் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (3)

yEntha pEzhvaay vaaLL yeyiRROr kOLariyAy avuNan
vaaynthaa aaham vaLLuhirAI vahirnthaa Ammaanathu idam
Oyntha maavum udaynthaa kunRum anRiyum ninRazhaIAI
tEyntha vEyum allathillaa SingavEL kunRame (3)

Here, the AzhwaAr describes the perils that the pilgrims encounter on their journey to this divya desam besides those caused by the members of the local hunting tribes. There are lions, tigers, wild elephants and other dangerous animals in the forests surrounding the narrow and rock-strewn path up the hill to the temple. The time is mid-day, when the Sun is shining fiercely and the heat is setting fire to the dry bamboo trees in the forest adjoining the pilgrim's path. Dark smoke and loud noise from exploding bamboo trees accompanies the fire. The animals of the forest are lying low. The grass under feet is smoldering from the forest fire. The heat from the fire is shattering the stones on the road and the stones are cracking and flying apart.



Ugra Sthambam





In spite of these dangers and obstacles, the pilgrims proceed with their determined journey up the hills to have the darsanam of the majestic Narasimha moorthy who has the giant jaws that match one another in their strength, a cave-like mouth and frightening canine teeth jutting out of that mouth.



"Pezh Vai" - Cave-like mouth

The devout pilgrims recognize this Narasimhan as the Lord of this KshEthram and as the one, who tore apart the mighty HiraNyan's body with His sharp nails alone. They salute this kshEthra nAthAn as the Veda Purushan, who never lets down His dear devotees and punishes the wicked, who harm His bhakthAs.



Ugra Sthambam



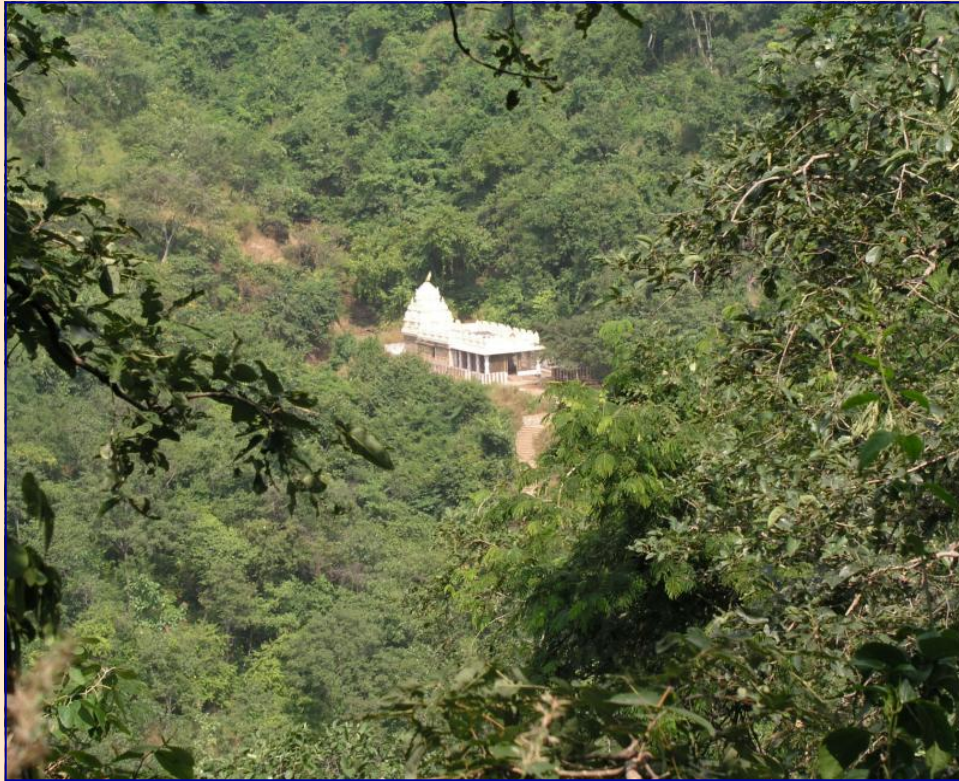


Paasuram 4

எவ்வம்வெவ்வேல்பொன்பெயரோன் ஏதலனின்னுயிரை
வவ்வி, ஆகம்வள்ளுகிரால் வகிர்ந்தவம்மானதிடம்
கவ்வுநாயும் கழுகும் உச்சிப்போதொடு கால்சுழன்று
தெய்வமல்லால் செல்லவொண்ணாச் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (4)

yevvam vevvEI Ponn peyarOn yEthalan inn uyirai
vavvi aahamvaLLUhirAI vahirntha ammAn idam
kavvu-nAyum kazhuhum ucchippOthodu kaal suzhanRu
DhaivamaIIAI sella oNNA SingavEL KunRamE (4)

Here, Thirumangai through a series of frightening and evocative images reminds us that this KshEthram is not easy to travel to by avaishNavAs (avaishNavAnAm aprApyam). Just as parama padham is hard to reach by those, who do not have the spiritual riches (avaishNavAs), AhObilam is not easy to reach by any one, who does not have the depth of devotion to the Lord. Those, who have that wealth of Bhakthi are guided and protected by the Lord of AhObilam to climb up and reach His sannidhi.



"தெய்வமல்லால் செல்லவொண்ணாச் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே"
"Daivam aIIAI sella oNNA SingavEL kundram"





The kshEthram is described as generally accessible only to the DevAs and people with deep devotion to the Lord. Here, the Lord tore into pieces the body of HiraNyan sporting a sharp spear in his hand and waving it at the Lord rushing at him. The Lord got hold of him and kicked the spear off and placed him in His lap and cleaved the asurA's chest and destroyed him for his offense against His Bhakthan, PrahlAdhan.

The AzhwAr describes a scene on the way up the hill during his pilgrimage to remind us of the terrors of the journey to the inaccessible place of residence of the Lord. The time is midday. The heat is scorching. People are staggering in that heat and fall down on the road side. The waiting dogs and the vultures lunge at them. Only those with Bahgavadh katAksham proceed further. Rest of the avaishNavAs does not make progress in their efforts to complete their pilgrimage to this awesome kshEthram. Only those with a pure mind filled with devotion for the Lord complete their pilgrimage to this "unreachable" kshEthram and others have many obstacles that interfere with their plans.

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Keezh AhObilam





Paasuram 5

மென்றபேழ்வாய் வாளெயிறறோர் கோளரியாய், அவுணன்
பொன்றவாகம் வள்ளுகிரால் போழ்ந்தபுனிதனிடம்
நின்ற செந்தீ மொண்டு துறை நீள்விசும்புடியிச்
சென்று காண்டற்கரியகோயில் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (5)

menRa pEzhvaay vaaLL yeyiRROr kOLariyAy avuNan
ponRa vAham vaLLuhirAI pOzhntha Punithanidam
ninRa senthee moNDu sooRai neeLL visumbUdu yeriya
senRu kaaNDaRkkariya Koil SingavEL KUnRamE (5)

Here, AzhwAr dwells further on the inapproachability of the temple, where the Lord presides. He states that in this KshEthram, where the Narasimha Moorthy with mighty jaws and sharp, shining teeth destroyed the avaishNavA, HiraNyA, the climbing flames of the wild fire reach skyward and the powerful wind spreads the heat and smoke all around and makes it extremely difficult to find one's path under one's feet to continue with the pilgrimage.

Even today, it is not easy to make a journey up the hills unless one is accompanied by a group of like-minded devotees. AzhwAr's determination to reach "unreachable" places is well known. Once, he stayed for six months at the foot hills of Thiruneermalai for the surrounding floods to subside and then he ascended the hill to perform the mangaLAsAsanam for the Lord of Thiruneermalai.



"சென்று காண்டற்கரியகோயில் செல்லும் பாதை"
Way to JwAIA Nrusimhar Shrine





Paasuram 6:

எரிந்த பைங்கணிலங்குபேழ்வாய் எயிற்றொடி:தெவ்வுருவென்று
இரிந்து வானோர் கலங்கியோட இருந்தவம்மானதிடம்
நெரிந்த வேயின் முழையுள் நின்று நீணெறிவாய்உழுவை
திரிந்த ஆனைச்சுவடுபார்க்கும் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (6)

yerintha paimkaNN ilangu pEzhvAi yeyiRRODu ithu yevvurvu yenRu

irinthu vaanOr kalangi Oda iruntha AmmAn idam

nerintha vEyin muDayuL ninRu neeNeRivAi uzhuvai

tirintha vaanaic-chuvadu paarkkum SingavEL KUnRame (6)

In this paasuram, Thirumangai states that the DevAs were frightened out of their wits at the intimidating appearance of the Lord as Narasimhan during the time of His incarnation to destroy the offending HiraNyan.

During that time, the Lord had eyes that were red from the flames of fire (anger) radiating out of them. He had the gigantic face of a lion with sharp and huge teeth. The DevAs were unable to comprehend this adbhutha and spine -chilling roopam of the Lord and ran away out of fear.

Thirumangai says that today, in this residence of the HiraNya -samhAra moorthy, bands of tigers hide in the crevices among the dense thickets of bamboos growing on the hillsides and wait to attack the unsuspecting elephants that roam in the forest. The AzhwAr begs his mind to meditate upon that adbhutha KshEthram of the Lord, where His valor and anger were displayed in equal measure.



Prahada Padi Cave





Paasuram 7:

முனைத்த சீற்றம் விண்கடப்போய், மூவுலகும்பிறவும்
 அனைத்துமஞ்ச ஆளரியாய் இருந்தவம்மானதிடம்
 கனைத்த தீயும் கல்லுமல்லா வில்லுடை வேடருமாய்த்
 தினைத்தனையும் செல்லவொண்ணாச் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (7)
munaittha seeRRam viNN sudappOy moovulahum piravum
anaiththum anja AaLariyAi iruntha AmmAn idam
kanittha theyyum kallum allA villudai vEdarumAy
tinaittanayum sella oNNA SingavEL KUnRamE (7)

Until the above (sixth) pasuram, the overawed Thirumangai dealt with the HiraNya SamhAram and the Lord's terrifying appearance at that time. Now, the AzhwAr shifts his attention to the anugraha roopam of the Lord responding to His dear devotee as PrahlAda Varadan.

During the time of His avathAram to destroy HiraNyan, the flames of His anger rose up and up and reached Satya Lokam, where BrahmA has his abode. The residents of Satya Lokam and BrahmA were overtaken by fear at the spreading flames of anger of the Lord. After the samhAram of HiraNyan, PrahlAdA approached the Lord at the behest of MahA Lakshmi and the Lord's anger was replaced by the great affection for His devotee.



MeI AhObilam from PrahlAda Padi

He became thus a santha Moorthy. MahA Lakshmi, BrahmA and other DevAs were able thereafter to approach the Lord.

Thirumangai points out that in the thiruppathi of the peaceful Lord, the only sounds of the day competing with each other loudly and shutting out any other sounds are the noises arising from the cracking of the bamboos exposed to wild fire, the shattering sound of the overheated stones as a result

of the same fire and the shouting of the excited hunters with bows chasing the animals that try to escape from the spreading ground fire. The AzhwAr requests his mind to concentrate on the glories of the Ahobila KshEthram, the abode of Saantha Narasimhan.





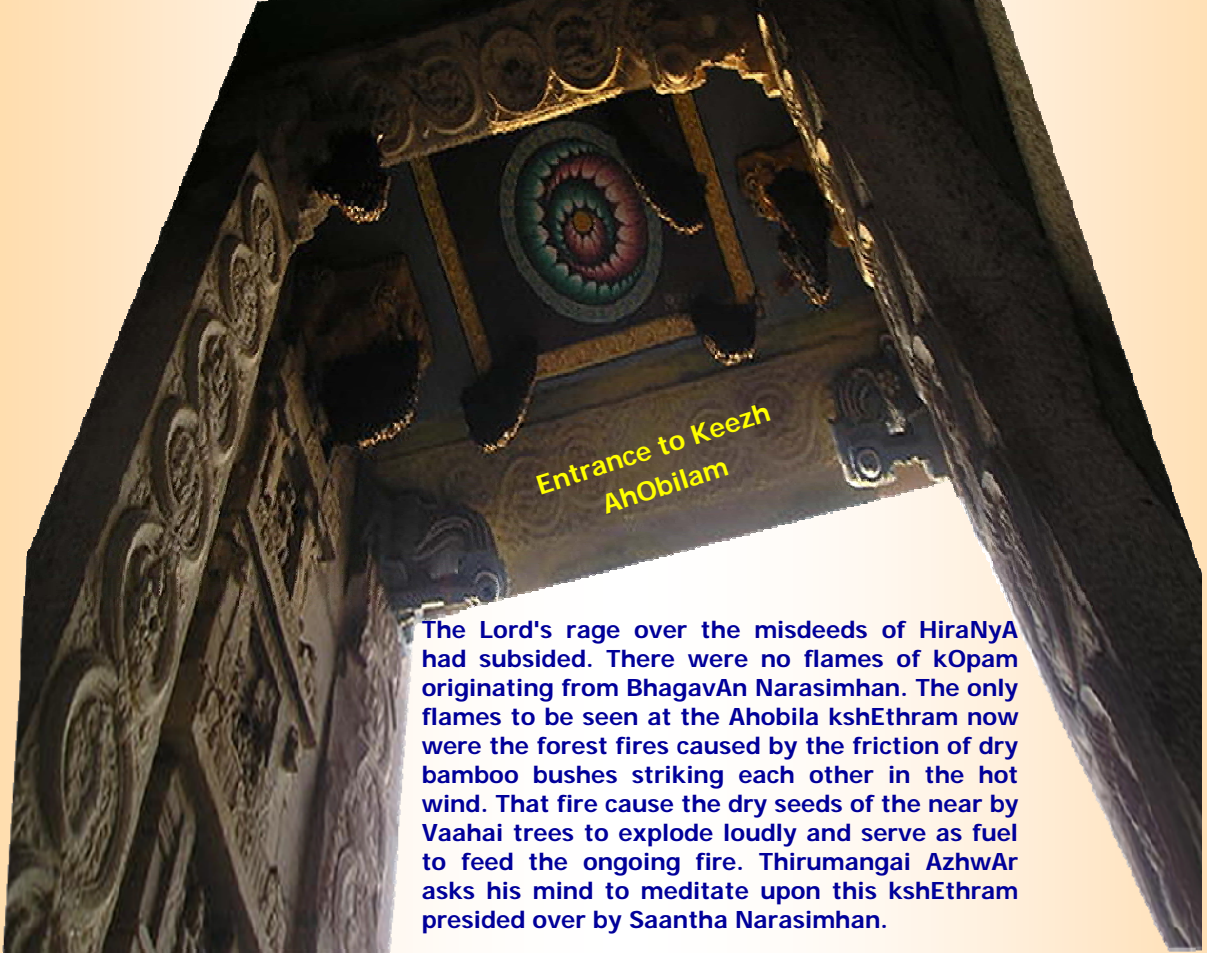
Paasuram 8:

நாத்தமும்ப நான்முகனும் ஈசனுமாய் முறையால்
 ஏத்த, அங்கோராளரியாய் இருந்த வம்மானதிடம்
 காய்த்தவாகைநெற்றொலிப்பக் கல்லதர்வேயங்கழைபோய்த்
 தேய்த்ததீயால்விண்சிவக்கும் சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (8)

**Naatthazhumbha Naanmuhanaum Isanum-Aay muRayAI
 yEttha angOr AaLariyAi iruntha AmmAn idam
 kaayttha vaahai neRRu olippak-kall athar vEynkazhai pOy
 TEyttha theyAI ViNN sivakkum SingavEL KunRame (8)**

Here, Thirumangai AzhwAr describes the changes in the Ahobila KshEthram after the HiraNya SamhAram. He now finds the chathurmukha Brahma and MahEswaran eulogizing Lord Narasimhan one after another for extended periods. Their tongues have become thick from that unceasing exercise of sthothram of the Saantha Narasimhan's soundharyam and anantha kalyAna guNams.

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The Lord's rage over the misdeeds of HiraNya had subsided. There were no flames of kOpam originating from BhagavAn Narasimhan. The only flames to be seen at the Ahobila kshEthram now were the forest fires caused by the friction of dry bamboo bushes striking each other in the hot wind. That fire cause the dry seeds of the near by Vaahai trees to explode loudly and serve as fuel to feed the ongoing fire. Thirumangai AzhwAr asks his mind to meditate upon this kshEthram presided over by Saantha Narasimhan.





Paasuram 9:

நல்லை நெஞ்சே நாம் தொழுதும் நம்முடை நம்பெருமான்
அல்லிமாதர்புல்கநின்ற ஆயிரந்தோளனிடம்
நெல்லிமல்கிக்கல்லுடைப்பப் புல்லிலையார்த்து, அதர்வாய்
சில்லுசில்லென்றொல்லறாத சிங்கவேள்குன்றமே (9)

nallai nenjE naamm thozhuthum nammudaya namperumAn
alli mAthar pulha ninRa aayiram thOLan-idam
nelli malhik-kalludaippap-pul ilai aarntu atharvaay
silli sill yenRu oll aRAtha SingavEL KunramE (9)

The ninth paasuram is a profoundly moving one. This gem of a paasuram that is used daily during the Sri Sannidhi Saatthumurai at Ahobila Matam. This paasuram and the subsequent phalasaruthi paasuram of Thirumangai AzhwAr are the first two paasurams recited during the occasion of saathumurai in front of Maalolan seated in the silver mantapam. I will attempt to give the word by word meaning of these two important paasurams.

PadhArthams:

nenjE! - Oh, my mind

nallai - you are indeed filled with auspicious qualities as a result of your meditation on our Lord of Ahobilam in response to my appeal

Nammudai NamperumAn - the one, who has specially blessed us with His darsanam, is our Sarva SwAmi.

alli maathar pulka ninra aayiram thOLan - He is the thousand- shouldered asritha vathsalan, who is embraced by the lady (mahA Lakshmi), who appeared in the lotus flower at the milky ocean during the time of churning for Amrutham.

(Aayiram ThOLAn) idam -- The preferred place of residence of this asritha Vathsalan as Lakshmi Narasimhan (MaalOlan) is the KshEthram of AhObilam.

In that kshEthram, Nelli trees grow to uncommon heights and during that growth, their long roots penetrate the stony ground (**nelli malhi kal udaippa**) and generate a loud noise.

In that kshEthram, the sound of the rustling of long leaves of coconut palm trees, date palm trees (eiccham tree) and the palmyrah trees by the wind are heard (**Pul ilai aarndhu**).

In that KshEthram, the mountain sides resonate with the sharp, awry and loud sound of





the crickets rubbing their legs in unison in anticipation of their mating season (athar vaai sil yenru ol aRatha SingavEL kunram).

Three kinds of sounds are heard by the AzhwAr at AhObilam (Viz). Kalludaippu oli, pullilai oli and silliyin silloli - The combination of those three sounds makes the KshEthram awesome to experience. Thirumangai's celebration of the untamed, natural beauty of AhObilam is most beautiful.

In the previous paasuram, Thirumangai referred to BrahmA and ParamEsvaran eulogizing Lord Narasimhan at the time, when he was not united with His Devi.

In this paasuram, AzhwAr celebrates the Lakshmi samEtha Narasimha roopam (MaalOlan). He is embraced by MahA Lakshmi and the bhakthAs can approach Him now with ease as Sriya: Pathi. The most merciful Mother of us is next to Him to intercede for us. Thirumangai is in a very happy mood over that darsanam of the Divya Dampathis in the united form and points that auspicious state to us and asks us to approach the Lord of AhObilam with reverence and ease.

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Shantha Moorthy





Paasuram 10:

செங்கணாளியிட்டிறைஞ்சும் சிங்கவேள்குன்றுடைய
 எங்களிசெனம்பிராணை இருந்தமிழ்நூற்புலவன்
 மங்கையாளன்மன்னுதொல்சீர் வண்டறைதார்க்கலியன்
 செங்கையாளன்செஞ்சொல்மாலை வல்லவர் தீதிலரே (10)

SengaNALi ittu irainjum SingavEL KunRudaya
YengaLeesan EmpirAnai irum-tamizh nooRp-Pulavan
MangayALan mannu tholseer vaNDu aRai thArk-Kaliyan
SenkaiALan senjol-mAlai valavar theethilarE (10)

Here, Thirumangai AzhwAr reveals that those, who learn, recite and understand the meaning of the ten paasurams offered by him to the Lord of AhObila KshEthram would never come across any inauspiciousness in their lives.

Those blessings come the way of the above bhAgyasAlis because of the bhakthi and kaimkarya sampath of the AzhwAr, who is rightfully revered as Kaliyan or the one, who did away with the cruelty of Kali purushan. The AzhwAr is also "sem kai aaLan" or the one, who has unlimited kaimkarya Sree as a result of his Bhagavadh kaimkaryam since the time of his initiation by the Lord Himself.

semkaNN aaLi ittu irainjum yengaL Isan -- The Lord, our sarva Swami presiding over AhObilam is sarvOpakAri and the red eyed lions present Him with ivory tusks of the elephants at this KshEthram.

... எம்பிராணை இருந்தமிழ்நூற்புலவன்
 மங்கையாளன்மன்னுதொல்சீர் வண்டறைதார்க்கலியன்

EmpirAnai irum-tamizh nooRp-Pulavan
MangayALan mannu tholseer vaNDu aRai thArk-Kaliyan --

the ruler of Thirumangai, Kaliyan wearing the garland of flowers inhabited by the honey drinking bees and known for his kaimkarya Sree sang sacred poems on the Lord of AhObilam, which are known for their poetic excellence and depth of devotion.

(Kaliyan) sem sol maalai vallavar theethu ilar --

Those bhakthAs, who reflect on the profound paasurams known for their depth of meaning and intensity of devotion, would be saved from any type of taapams during their existence on earth. No inauspiciousness will come their way due to the power of these verses eulogizing Lord Narasimhan of AhObilam.





THE DIVYA MANGALA VIGRAHAMS OF AHOBILA MUTT

The MangaLa moorthys at Sri Ahobila Matam are worshipped by the Azhagiya Singars daily. These moorthys have as their shrine, the silver mantapam that travels with the Azhagiya Singars.

There are 27 Aaradhana Moorthys of our poorvAchAryas as well as a number of rare SaaLigrama Moorthys that have the silver mantapam as their garbha gruham. They receive the worship of the Azhagiya singars daily and bless us. It will be a great bhAgyam to stand close to the Mantapam and have the darsanam of these archA moorthys during the times of daily worship by the Jeeyar and the Sri Sannidhi aaradhakar. The central spot in the silver mantapam is occupied by the ArchA bhEram of Sri Lakshmi Narasimhan (maIOla Narasimhan) of upper AhObilam.

1. Sri Lakshmi Nrusimhan (MaalOlan)

The chief archA morthy worshipped by the Jeeyars of AhObila Mutt is Sri Lakshmi Narasimhan known otherwise as MaalOlan. After the first Jeeyar, Adhi vaNN SatakOPa Jeeyar was initiated into sanyAsAsramam, he stayed at AhObila KshEthram and performed aarAdhanam for the Lord there. One day, he had the instructions from the Lord to travel with Him from village to village and bless the devotees, who would come to worship Him during such sanchArams and to spread the Bhagavdh RaamAnuja SiddhAntham. The Jeeyar was instructed to perform SamAsrayaNams, BaranyAsam and ManthrOpadesam to His dear devotees and to nourish the ubhaya vEdanthA tradition.

The Jeeyar was happy to receive this message from the Lord. He was not however sure as to which one of the nine uthsava Nrusimha moorthys of AhObilam to take with him on the sanchArams.

The Jeeyar seated all the nine ArchA bhEra Nrusimhans in one mantapam and prayed for guidance regarding the choice among them.

These nine Nrusimha moorthys of AhObilam are:

1. JwAIA
2. AhObila
3. MaalOla
4. KrODa
5. Kaarancha
6. BhArgava
7. yOgAnandha
8. ChathravaDa and
9. Paavana Nrusimhans





JwAlA



AhObila



MaalOla



KrODa



Kaarancha



BhArgava



YOgananda



Chatravaia



Paavana

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Kizh Ahobilam Temple Gopuram



Mel Ahobilam Temple Gopuram



JwAlA Nrusimhan Shrine



KrODa Nrusimhan Shrine



MaalOla Nrusimhan Shrine



Paavana Nrusimhan Shrine



BhArgava Nrusimhan Shrine



Karaancha Nrusimhan Shrine





The sannidhis of Bhargava Narasimhan, yOga Narasimhan and ChathravaDa Narasimhan are at lower AhObilam.

The sannidhis of the remaining six Narasimhans are at upper Ahobilam.

All of them gave their adhbhutha sEvai to Sri SatakOpa Jeeyar. When the Jeeyar closed his eyes in dhyAnam, MaalOla Nrusimhan appeared on the hands of the Jeeyar with a most beautiful smile. The Lord thus made the choice easy for the Jeeyar. This archA bhEram of MaalOlan has a sandal on His right foot indicating that He was ready for the travel from village to village with the Jeeyar. He has the most beautiful smile and embraces MahA Lakshmi with His left arm. That ArchA bhEram sits at the center of the silver Mantapam in a swing (dolai). He has AdisEsha over His head and Garuda Bhagavan at His sacred feet.



Sri MAIOlan





2. Sri SvarNa Azhagiya Singar

This is an ancient ArchA moorthy. During IjyAradhanam (mid day aarAdhanam), He is carried to the ThirumadaipaLLi (kitchen, where the food is prepared for the Lord) and He is offered NaivEdhyam there. The prasAdham blessed by Him is what is offered to us in the tadhyaAradhanam of the day.

The legend related to this SvarNa Nrusimhan is a sacred one. There was once a king by the name, PrathApa Rudran, who was a great Siva Bhakthan. Every day, his gold smith cast a fresh image of Lingam from the die for the king's puja. The king performed his puja, gave food, clothes and cows to the Brahmins and then partook prasAdham. During his travels, he was one day at AhObila KshEthram. He asked his gold smith to make a svarNa siva lingam for that day's puja. When the gold smith completed his casting, he was surprised to find the cast image from the die for Lingam came out as Nrusimhan. The gold smith tried two more times and each time, he had the same result. The king understood the message of the Lord of AhObilam and worshipped the svarNa Nrusimhan that day and had prathishtA for that vighram at the AhObilam temple and set aside funds for the daily aarAdhanam of that SvarNa azhagiya Singar. This moorthy is the one of which we have the darsanam today inside the silver Mantapam.



SvarNa Nrusimha





3. MangaLagiri Nrusimhan

He is revered as Paanaka Nrusimhan. PanakAradhanam is an ancient tradition every night at Ahobila Mutt, just as in MangaLa Giri kshEthram in Andhra PradEsh. He is sitting in a mantapam of His own inside the Silver mantapam, which was offered by Kuricchi SanthAnam Iyengar in memory of the paramapadha Vaasi, Sri InjimEttu Azhaghiya Singar, the 42nd Jeeyar of AhObila mutt.



MangaLagiri Nrusimha





4. Lord KaNNan

He is the one, who enjoys dOLOthsavam or the oonjal (swing) uthsavam at the home of devotees during the sanchAram of the Azhagiya Singars. This Mangala VignrahAm has bheejAkshharams (GopAla Manthram) on His ThirumEni. It is believed that AdisEshhA performs daily aarAdhanam to this divya mangalA moorthy. It is also well known that AchArya RamAnujA conducted daily aarAdhanam to this ancient Moorthy.

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Sri KrishNA





5. Sri RanganAthan

Next to SvarNa Lakshmi Nrusimhan, we have the darsanam of Lord RanganAtha resting on AdisEshA in Yoga Nidra pose. At His sacred feet, Sri Ranga Naayaki is seen offering kaimkaryam to Her Lord. It is believed that this Vigramam was in the aarAdhanam of Kovil KandAdai Sri ANNan Swamy and was given by him to the Matam. He was the renowned temple administrator and PurOhithA at the Periya Kovil at Srirangam.



Sri RanganAthan



6. Atthigiri VaradarAjan

His MangaLa Vighram was worshipped by the great Sri VaishNava AchArya, NadAthoor AmMAL, who earned his name as AmMAL (Mother) of the Lord because of his deeply moving milk naivEdhyam kaimkaryam to Sri VaradarAJA at Kaanchi. He made sure that the hot milk offered to the Lord was of the right temperature for His enjoyment.

The grand son of NadAthoor AmMAL, Sri KatikAsatham AmMAL was the AchArya for the first Jeeyar of AhObila Matam, Adhi vaNN SatakOpa Jeeyar. Sri KadikAsatham AmMAL gave his family aarAdhana Moorthy (Sri VaradarAJA with Bhu Devi and Sri Devi) to his dear disciple, when he learnt about the blessings of Nrusimhan to his sishyan.

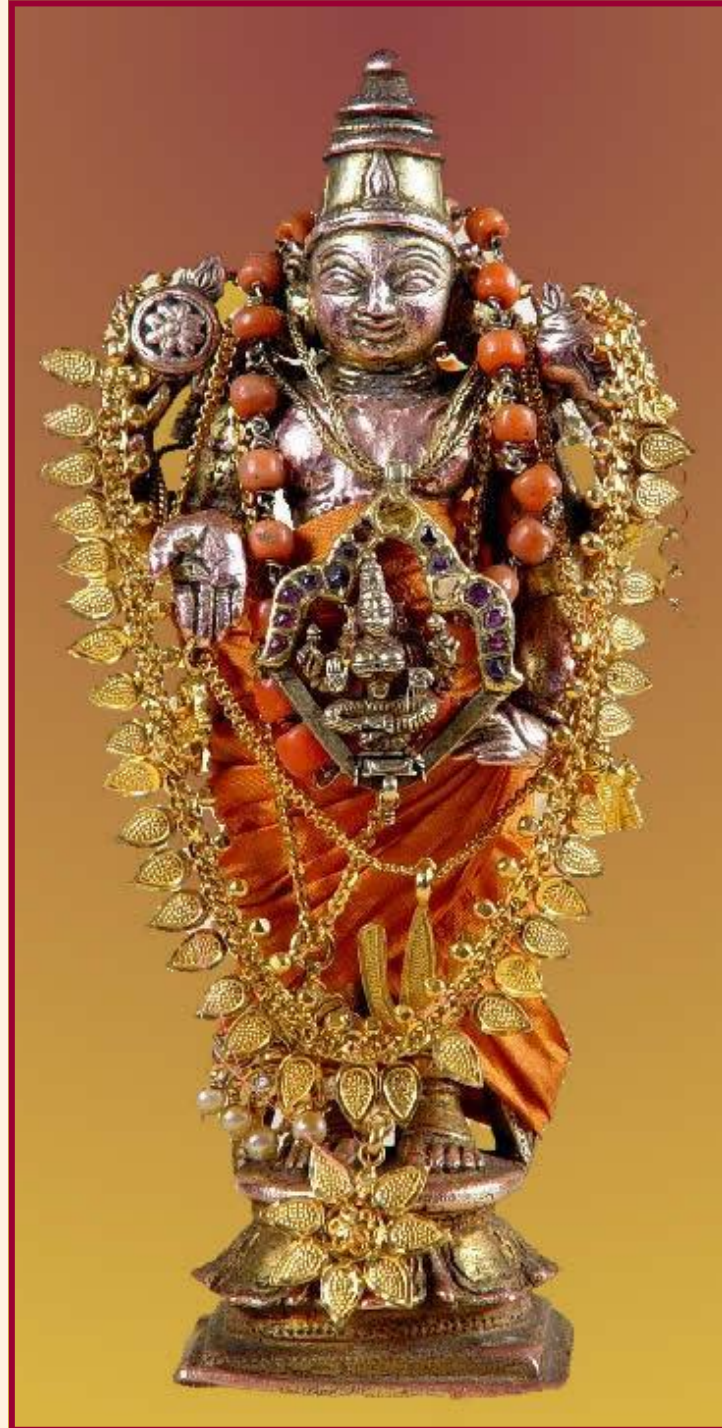


Atthi Varadhar



7. Sri SrinivAsan of Thiruppathi

In the silver mantapam, we have next the sEvai of Sri SrinivAsan with Sri AlarmEl Mangai thAyAr on His chest.



Sri SrinivAsar





8. Sri Sampath KumAran of MelkOte (ThirunArAyaNapuram)

Sri Sampath KumAran (Selva PiLLai) is the presiding deity of ThirunArAyaNapuram in KarnAtakA. The first Jeeyar was born at MelkOte during the year 1369 AD. Sri RaamAnujA and Swami DEsikan had spent many years there worshipping Thiru NaarAyaNan. The first Jeeyar's brindhAvanam (place of internment) is at MelkOte. In view of all these reasons, it is not surprising to see Sri Sampath KumAran residing with His Devi, Yathugiri NaacchiyAr inside the silver mantapam and going on sanchAram with the SanyAsis of AhObila Mutt to honor the native son of His KshEthram.

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Sri Sampath KumAran





9. Sri ParimaLa RanganAthan with Bhumi and Sri Devis

Sri ParimaLa RanganAthan is the anthima Rangan among the Pancha Rangans, who rest on the banks of Cauveri starting from Sriranga Pattinam (aadhi Rangan), Thiru Anbil, Srirangam (Kasthoori Rangan), Thirukkudanthai/KumbakONam (Hema Rangan) and Thiru Indaloor (ParimaLa Rangan) At Thiru Indaloor, the sacred river Cauveri (Mother-in-Law of Sri RanganAthA) joins Her Lord, samudhra Raajan after offering upachArams all along to Her son-in-law (MappiLLai), Sri RanganAthA. The Divya MangalA moortham of ParimaLa Rangan is resident in the silver mantapam with other Rangans.



ParimaLa Rangan





10. Sri Aaravamudhan of Thirukkudanthai

Hema Rangan is another of the blessed ArchA moorthys sanctifying the silver Mantapam of Sri Lakshmi Nrusimhan. This moortham reminds one of Kaarancha Nrusimhan in the sense that latter wears Saarangam and chakram like Sri Aaravamudhan (Sri Saaranga PaaNi).



Sri Aaravamudhan





11. Sri Lakshmi VarAhan



(Reminding one of Thiruviventhai Divya Desam)

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12. Sri BhUvarAhan



(Reminding one of Sri MushNam, the svyam-Vyaktha KshEthram)



13. Sri Adi Kesavan



(with ubhaya NaacchiyAr reminding us of the Lord of ThiruvAttAru, so dear to NammAzhwAr)



14. Sudarsana Moorthy



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15, 16. Srivilliputtoor AaNdAL and Sri Ranga MannAr



(who came from Srirangam to wed Her)

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17. Sri SeethA LakshmaNa samEtha Sri Ramachandran



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18. Sri Hayagreeva Bhagavan



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19. SwarNa NArAyaNan

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20.SwarNa Lakshmi Narasimhar



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21. Maragatha VeNugOpalan



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22. Vishvaksenar



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23. Nammazhwar



HH Nammazhwar MangaLAsanam



24. Kaliyan (Thirumangai Azhwar)



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25. Sri BhAshyakArar



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26. SwarNa Desikar



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27. Srimadh Adhi vaNN SatakOpa Jeeyar

(the founder of Ahobila Mutt at the command of BhagavAn NarasimhA Himself)



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SwarNa SaTAri

Many SaaLagrAma Moorthams of a rare kind as well as silver and gem-bedecked gold Sataris are also seen inside the Silver Mantapam, where MaalOlan swings in His dolai. The silver SaTAri is used for honoring AzhwAras and AchAryAs and the gold SaTAri is used to bless all of us.



SaaLagrAma Moorthams





PerumAL Paadukai



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I conclude this section with the prayer of PrahlAdha to Nrusimha Moorthy.

यत्र कुत्र कुले वासो येषु केषु भवोस्तु मे ।

तव दास्यैक भोगे स्यात् सदा सर्वत्र मे मतिः ॥

யத்ர குத்ர குலே யேஷு கேஷு பவாஸ்து மே ।

தவ தாஸ்யைக போகே ஸ்யாத் ஸதா ஸர்வத்ர மே மதி: ॥

yathra kuthra kuLE vaasO yEshu kEshu bhavOsthu mEh |

tava daasyaika bhOgE syAth sadhA sarvathra mEh mathi : ॥

Meaning : Whatever kulam befalls my lot, whatever janmam I am ordained to take, May I be blessed with the bliss of servitude to You, my Lord, and may my mind be forever and at all places be fixed in You.





THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD IN NRUSIMHAVATHARAM

Although the Lord has chosen to appear in many avathArams, NrusimhAvatharam is considered an exquisitely beautiful avathAram. The qualifying adjective of "beautiful "is not attached to any other avathArams according to our poorvAchAryAs. For instance, Sri VishNu sahasra nAmam describes BhagavAn NarasimhA as "Naarasimha Vapu: SREEMAAN". In Naanmuhan ThiruvandhAthi, Thirumazhisai salutes this beautiful avathAram as "AzhahiyAn thAnE ariyuravam thAnE". He is not beautiful because of having a man's body or lion's head. Both these mingle together to present the most beautiful svarUpam like the sugar dissolved in milk.

Although He is present as ArchA murthy in many divya desams, he is saluted as Azhahiya Singam at ThiruvallikkENi alone. Here, the Lord is present as Bhayankara Svarupam to HiraNyAn (Moolavar) and as the most merciful svarUpam to His bhakthan, PrahlAdhan, with His AahlAdha mudrai in one of his hands asking his dear Baala - BhagavathA to come near Azhagiya Singar. That name of Azhahiya Singam is borne by the MatAthipathis of AhObila Mutt even today.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD IN NRUSIMHAVATHARAM

The all comprehending NammAzhwAr states that the special glory of Lord NrusimhA can not be assessed by us. In the Thiruvaimozhi Paasuram 2.8.9, he salutes Lord NarasimhA this way to reveal His special glory and parathvam:

எங்குமுளன் கண்ணன் என்ற மகனை காய்ந்து
இங்கில்லையால் என்று இரணியன் தூண் புடைப்ப
அங்கப்பொழுதே அவன் வியத்தோன்றிய என்
சிங்கபிரான் பெருமை ஆராயும் சீர்மைத்தே

yengumuLan KaNNan yenra mahanai kaaynthu

ingillaiyAlenru IraNiyAn thooN pudaippa

angappozhudhE avan veeyatthOnria yen

SINGAPPIRAAN PERUMAI AARAYUM SEEMAITTHE

The meaning given for this paasuram by Sri V.N. VedAntha DEsikan is: "The proof that He is all pervasive was established by PrahlAdhA. He repeated: 'The Lord is every where'. The asuran, HiraNyA, is now to put to test this thesis. He tapped a pillar familiar to him from the moment of its making and positioning none could have played any trick. From that pillar, rending it asunder, the Lord NarasimhA came out. In a moment--nay, at the same moment, the asuran melted like gold in the fire. To prove PrahlAdA's words, 'HE is all pervasive', the Lord took the male lion-faced avathArA to match the masculine gender used by PrahlAdan (uLan). Without taking a form, The Lord would have done away with HiraNyA. But then, the world would only join the school that says that God





has no form. Hence, He took a visible form. My dear Narasimhan came out, therefore, proving that He is all pervasive, that He is supreme God, He has a form, and that He will appear to save His devotees, more so that He will confirm His devotee's contention. IS IT POSSIBLE TO DESCRIBE ADEQUATELY HIS GREATNESS?"

NampiLLai, who commented on this paasuram in his eedu was reminded of a Periya Thirumozhi paasuram and another one from PeriyAzhwAr Thirumozhi and includes them. Dr.VenkatakriShNan poses the rhetorical question "Is it not wonderful and appropriate that the blissful experience of blending the passurams of Thirumangai and PeriyAzhwAr, when meditating upon the rare form of the Lord having the features of a lion and a man?".

NAMPILLAI COMMENTS:

"When some one says that the Lord is everywhere, we should fall at the feet of the man, who says that. If your own son says that the Lord is everywhere, the father should be doubly happy about the jnAnam of his child. The reaction of the deluded HiraNyan was just the opposite. He got enraged at his bhagavathA-son and shouted at him. NampiLLai is now reminded of the paasuram of Thirumangai on TeLLiya Singham of ThiruvallikkENi :

பள்ளியில் ஓதிவந்த தன் சிறுவன் வாயில் ஓர் ஆயிர நாமம்
 ஒள்ளியவாகப் போதவாங்கதனுக்கு ஒன்றும் ஓர் பொறுப்பில்லனாகி
 பிள்ளையை சீறி வெகுண்டு தூண் புடைப்ப பிறை எயிற்றனல் விழி பேழ்வாய்
 தேள்ளிய சிங்கமாகிய தேவை திருவல்லிக்கேணி கண்டேனே
 --பெரிய திருமொழி 2.3.8

paLLiyil odhivantha tan siruvan vaayilOr aayira naamam
 oLLiyavAhip pOthaVAngathanukku onrumOr porupilanAhi
 piLLayai seeri vehuNdu thooN pudaippa pirai yeyiRRRanal vizhippEzhvaai
 TeLLiya singamAhiya thEvai ThiruvallikkENi kandEnE
 --Periya Thirumozhi 2.3.8

When children come home from their class on the first day at school, the parents ask with affection for the details of happenings at school and enjoy the Mazhalai vaaku (lisp) of the child. They are thrilled to have the experience of the child recollecting and describing the highlights of the day. HiraNyan on the other hand was mighty angry to hear his child praising Bhagavan NaarAyaNan as all pervasive and as the supreme among Gods and Living beings. HiraNyan declared that PrahlAdan was not his son. Thirumangai, who believes that any one, who utters the name of the Lord, is the sarva vidha bandhu (related by everyway) and identifies with PrahlAdA as his own son and





says "PiLLayai seeri" according to NampiLLai.

This mad HiraNyan furiously asks his son, you said that your Lord is everywhere, is He in this pillar? And hit a pillar that he chose with his fist. When NampiLLai is ready to describe the meaning of the above paasuram of Thirumangai, he is reminded of the anubhavam of PeriyAzhwAr in the following paasuram (PeriyAzhwar Thirumozhi: 1.6.9):

அளந்திட்ட தூணை அவன் தட்ட ஆங்கே
வளர்த்திட்டு வான் உகிர்ச் சிங்க உருவாய்
உளந்தொட்டயிரணியன் ஒண்மார்வகலம்
பிளந்திட்ட கைகளால் சப்பாணி
பேய் முலை உண்டானே! சப்பாணி

aLanthitta thooNai avan thatta aangE
vaLarnthittu vALuhir Singa uruvAi
uLanthotti IraNiyAn oNmArvahalam
piLanthitta kaihaLAI sappANi
peymulai undAnE SappANi

MaNavALa MaamunigaL has followed PeriyavAcchAnpiLLai's vyakhyAnam that had disappeared and reproduced it with emphasis on each word of this paasuram of PeriyAzhwAr.

MA NAVALA MAAMUNI'S LINE-BY-LINE COMMENTARY IS AS FOLLOWS:

"aLanthitta thooNai avan thatta": HiraNyan had constructed a victory pillar (Jaya Sthambham) in his darbhAr hall. HiraNyan chose the height and circumference of that pillar and had it placed at his sabhA mantapam to remind him of his many victories over the DevAs. That was the pillar, he chose to hit with his hand, while he queried his son about the whereabouts of the Lord. Bhagavan broke that pillar and came out of THAT pillar to counter any argument that He appeared out of any other pillar, where He (the Lord) was deliberately hidden inside by some one like a "trojan horse". Lord Narasimhan appeared out of the very same trusted pillar, which was created by HiraNyan himself.

"avan thatta": If any one other than HiraNyan had hit the sthambam, people might say that they carried inside their palm the miniature form of the Lord and passed it on to the sthambam. To avoid any controversy of this sort, the Lord appeared as a sequel to the asuran's own hand hitting the jaya sthambam.

"avn thatta aangE": Had the Lord appeared on another pillar after HiraNyan hit the Jaya sthambam, then people would say that the Lord was not there, where HiraNyan hit.





Therefore, the Lord appeared "aangE"(right there). The word "AangE"used by PeriyAzhwAr has a temporal and spatial element attached to it. We focused on the spatial element of Him appearing there so far. AzhwAr seems to have had the time element in mind as well. The moment HiraNyan hit the pillar with his palm, instantaneously the Lord appeared to quell the doubts of bhagavadh virOdhis that the Lord was not there due to any delay in His appearance.

"AangE vaLarnthittu": Unlike the other growing life forms that go through stages such as garbha vaasam, gradual growth and birth as an infant and continued growth thereafter, the Lord grew instantaneously many sizes larger than the asuran and pounced on the asuran, who had committed grave bhAgavatha apachAram.

The Lord's anger was not quenched even after destroying the asuran. Poygai azhwAr describes the fear of MahA Lakshmi to approach Her own Lord at that juncture: "PoomkodhaiyAL VERUVA ponpeyarOn maarvidantha VeenkodhavaNNar". Piratti hesitated to approach Lord Narasimhan. BrahmA and the others approached the Lord with PrahlAdhan in front. The Lord's anger subsided once he saw the child PrahlAdhA approaching Him. Achaarya RamAnujA is said to have explained this section of Poyhai's paasuram this way: "Even if the Lioness is showing its anger at the elephant, it will not stay away from from breast feeding its own infant".

Thus, the poorvAchAryAs of our tradition have understood the unmatched glory of NrusimhAvathAram and the Lord's matchless beauty and simultaneous display of anger at the aparAdhi and compassion for His devotee. Dr. VenkatakriShNan quotes another paasuram of NammAzhwAr in this context:

செல்ல உணர்ந்தவர் செல்வன் தன் சீர் அன்றிக் கற்பரோ
எல்லையிலாத பெருந்தவத்தால் பல செய் மிறை
அல்லல் அமரரைச் செய்யும் இரணியனாகத்தை
மல்லல் அரியுருவாய்ச்செய்த மாயமறிந்துமே.
--திருவாய்மொழி 7.5.8

sella uNarnthavar selvan tan seeranRikkaRparO
yellailAtha perundhavatthAI palasey miRai
allal amararaiccheyyum IraNianAkatthai
Mallal AriyuruvAiccheytha MAAAYAMARINTHUME
---Thiruvaimozhi 7.5.8

MEANING PROVIDED BY DR.VEDANTHA DESIKAN OF OPPILIAPPAN KOVIL:

"Any one, who has realized what real goal of life is, will not take interest in anything except the great Sri NrusimhA avathAram. I shall explain why. He is the really affluent





Lord (Mallal), the affluence being the attachment to His devotees. What is His prowess? He killed as in mere sport, the HiraNyA of great valour, who had acquired many boons to afflict the DevAs. MY LORD APPEARED IN A MIRACULOUS MANNER (maayam), WITHOUT VIOLATING CODES (of boon given to the asuran) ALSO".

Aasritha vaatsalyam is the wonderful lesson taught by Lord Nrusimhan. Dushta nigraham and sishta paripAlanam are interwoven tightly in this avathAram. That is why PeriyAzhwAr also celebrated Nrusimhan during his mangaLAsanam in ThiruppallANdu:

".....திருவோணத்திருவிழவில்
அந்தியம்போதில் அரியுருவாகி அரியை அழித்தவனை
பந்தனை தீர பல்லாண்டு பல்லாயிரத்தாண்டு என்று பாடுதுமே."
--திருப்பல்லாண்டு-6

".....ThiruvONatthiruvizhavil
andhiyampOthil ariyuruvAhi ariyai azhitthavanai
panthanai theera pallANdu pallAyiratthAndu yenru paadhuthumE"
-- ThiruppallANdu: Verse 6

It is important to note that PeriyAzhwAr as "ananya- prayOjanar and Bhagavadh prApthi kaamar" saluted NrusimhAvathAram and its glory in detail first and foremost in his ThiruppallANdu as Sriman NaarAyaNA appeared on the sky with His pirattis on the back of Garudan to bless the AzhwAr, who had won the contest at the court of PaandyA king to establish the parathvam of the Lord.

NammAzhwar salutes Nrusimhan as "Mallal ariyuru" in his Thiruvaimozhi paasuram (7.5.8). Mallal means sampath or Lakshmi. Mallal ari uru means therefore the form of the Lord as Sri Lakshmi Nrusimhan or MaalOlan, the nitya AarAdhana moorthy that landed in the palms of Adhi VaNN SatakOpa Jeeyar, the founder of the AhObila Matam and travels across the length and breadth of Bharatha Desam with the peetAthipadhis of this Matam. NammAzhwAr clearly states that those, who clearly understand the purusharthams of life (Sella uNarnthavar), will not take interest in any one other than Lord NrusimhA (Selvan tan seeranRikkaRpaRO).

Such a "sella uNarnthavar" is the 45th Jeeyar of AhObila Mutt, who has dedicated his life and taken sanyAsa aasramam to bless us all and to intercede for us as our AchAryA. He is a great Bhagyasaali and in that aspect, his importance can be understood from a paasuram of Thirumazhisai AzhwAr, who never minces his words:





மாறாய தானவனை வள் உகிரால் மார்விரண்டு
கூறாகக் கீறிய கோளரியை வேறாக
ஏத்தியிருப்பாரை வெல்லுமே மற்றவரை
சார்த்தியிருப்பார் தவம்.

--நான்முகந்திருவந்தாதி-18

**mARAYa dhAnavanai vaLLuhirAI mArvirandu
kooRAhakkeeriya kOLariyai - vERAhA
yEtthi iruppaarai vellumE maRRavarai
saatthi iruppaar tavam**

--NaanmuganthiruvandAthi-18

Here, Thirumazhisai states unequivocally that our ujjevanam (salvation) is assured by performing SaraNagathi at the sacred feet of the one, who worships NrusimhA as his principal aarAdhana moorthy. When we worship this aachaarya, who worships Nrusimhan, we acquire a unique glory of our own. Thirumazhisai is referring here to the concept that it is better to offer our salutations to the adiyArs of the Lord than to the Lord Himself. May we approach BhagavAn Nrusimhan with His key devotee Azhagiya Singar of Ahobila Mutt leading the way, just as PrahlAdhA did at the behest of MahA Lakshmi in approaching the angry Nrusimhan just after HiraNya SamhAram.

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Srimath Azhagiya Singar





SRI LAKSHMI NRUSIMHAN AND THIRUMANGAI AAZHWAR

The five Thirumangai paasurams on Sri Lakshmi Nrusimhan are affiliated with the following five divya desams:

1. Thiru SaaLagramam --Periya Thirumozhi 1.5.7
2. ThiruvEnkatam -- Periya Thirumozhi 1.10.5
3. Thiru Vaikuntha ViNNagaram-- Periya Thirumozhi 3.9.2
4. Thiru ArimEya ViNNagaram -- Periya Thirumozhi 3.10.4
5. Thiru ThEvanAr Thohai --Periya THirumozhi 4.1.7

Here we will cover the SaaLagrAma KshEthra paasuram.



Thirumangai and Kumudavalli NachiyAr Thiruveedi PurappAdu





THIRU SAALAGRAMA PAASURAM

This KshEthram is in Nepal. It is located 60 miles west of Kathmandu on the banks of Gandaki River. Like upper AhObilam, this divya Desam is not easy to reach. One has to travel by narrow foot paths in a sparsely populated area. Much of the year, the ice covered roads make the journey difficult.

The daring Thirumangai AzhwAr reached this "inaccessible" Divya Desam with AshtAksharam on his lips and performed MangaLAsAsanam to Sri Moorthy and His consort Sri Devi of this svayam vyaktha KshEthram. Among the 12 paasurams associated with this divya Desam, ten are by Thirumngai and the remaining two are by PeriyAzhwAr. One of the ten SaaLigrama KshEthra paasurams of Kaliyan pays tribute to NrusimhAvathAram.

A majority of Kaliyan's SaaLagrAma paasurams pay tribute to RaamAvathAram. It has been suggested that Thirumangai was focusing quite a bit on RaamavathAram here, since the Name of this Divya Desam (SaaLagRAAMAM) includes in it the Raama nAmam. Coming back to the Paasuram dealing with the NrusimhAvathAram (PTM 1.5.7), AzhwAr visualizes Lord Nrusimhan as Visva rUpee and salutes Him as it were by the first naamam of Sri VishNu Sahasra Naamam, (PraNavam) VisvAya Nama: This paasuram is as follows :

ஏனோர் அஞ்ச வெஞ்சமத்துள் அரியாய் பரிய இரணியனை
ஊனார் அகலம் பிளவெடுத்த ஒருவன் தானே இரு கடராய்
வானாய் தீயாய் மாருதமாய் மலையாய் நீர் உலகனைத்தும்
தானாய் தானும் ஆனான் தன் சாளக்கிராமம் அடை நெஞ்சே
--பெரிய திருமொழி--சாளக்கிராமக்ஷேத்திர மங்களாஸாஸனம்-7

**yEnOr anja venchamatthuL ariyAi pariya iraNiyana
oonErahahalam pilavu yeduttha oruvan thAnE iru sudarAi
vaanAi theyAi maaruthamAi malayAi alai neer ulahanaitthum
thAnAi thAnumAnAn tan SaaLagramamamadai nenjE
--Periya Thriumozhi--SaalagrAma kshEtra mangalAsAsanam-7**

This paasuram might have inspired Swami DEsikan to state in his Sri Sookthi, "ThriiOkyam yEthath akhilam Narsimha Garbham". PrahlAdA pointed out to his father, "YengumuLan Hari". He was attesting to the SarvAntharyAmithvam of the Lord. In the second part of his SaaLagrAma paasuram, Thirumangai salutes that all pervasive, Vishnu svarUpam of Nrusimha mUrthy eulogized by PrahlAdan.

Thirumangai visualizes the Lord's ugra svarUpam, when he jumped out of the pillar in





HiraNyan's sabhai. AzhwAr says that every one was afraid of that fierce form of Vaikunta Kanteeravan ("Naarasimha Vapu: SreemAn"). "YenayOr anja ari aayi" can be interpreted to mean also that every one except the garbha bhAgavathan, PrahlAdan, was afraid of Nrusimha svarUpam. That illustrious Lord of unmatched valor (oruvan thAnE) destroyed the arrogant HiraNyan in a fierce battle by tearing the asuran's fat chest into two ("vemsamatthu pariya IraNiyanaI oon aar ahalam piLavu yeduttha oruvan thAn")



"இரணியனை ஊனார் அகலம் பிளவெடுத்த ஒருவன்"

IraNiyanaI oon aar ahalam piLavu yeduttha oruvan

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In the second half of this paasuram, Thirumangai reveals to us the truths housed in Brahma SutrAs and Upanishad passages about the sarvAntharyAmithvam of the Lord. For instance, Brahma Sutram 1.3.1 clearly states "DhyubhvAdhyayatanam svasabdhAth" (The abode of heaven and earth - mentioned in MundakOpanishadh II.2.5) is verily Brahman, because the unique term used about Brahman occurs therein. The above referred Upanishad passage says: "He in whom the heaven, the earth and the sky are woven, the mind also, with all the vital airs, know Him alone as the Self, and leave off other words, He is the bank (sEthu) of the immortal".

Thirumangai instructs us that the Akshara Brahman (Imperishable Brahman) referred to in BrihadAraNyaka Upanishad and Brahma sutra 1.3.10 is the support for the two flames (moon and Sun), sky (aakAsam), fire (Agni), wind (vaayu), oceans, the universes and their beings through His aathma svarupam. Brahma sutram (1.3.10) states, "AksharamambharAnthadruthE:"(The imperishable, referred to in Br. Upanishad III.8.11 is the supreme Brahman,because we find it declared in this passage supports even that which is the end of ether). The profound statement of Yaj~navalkyA in Br. Upanishad in his discussions with Gargi is what the AzhwAr might have in mind, when he recognized the sarvAntharyAmithvam, Visva rUpam of Nrusimhan as :

".....ஒருவன் தானே இரு சுடராய்
வானாய் தீயாய் மாருதமாய் மலையாய் நீர் உலகனைத்தும்
தானாய் தானும் ஆனான் தன் சாளக்கிராமம் அடை நெஞ்சே"

"-----oruvan thAnE iru sudarAi,
vAnAi theyAi mAruthamAi malayAi alai neer ulahu anaitthum
thAnAi thAnumAnAn tan SaaLagrAmamadai nenjE "

Here, AzhwAr salutes the Divya MangaLa vighraha visishtan, Nrusimhan, who through His aathama svarUpam became the two lights (Sun and the Moon), Sky (van), fire (Thee), wind (Maarutham), mountain (malai), ocean with billowing waves (alai neer aayi), entire universe and all its beings (ulahu anaitthum aayi).

The corresponding message found in Br. Upanishad is:

"That which is above the heaven and below the Earth, Which is also between the heaven and Earth, which is in the past, present and future, that is woven as warp and woof in the AkAsA".

Thirumnagai AzhwAr's first 100 verses (Mudal patthu) are extraordinary in scope and content. They set the stage as it were for the rest of his AruLichcheyals to flow like a river of nectar.

In the first thirumozhi of this patthu (VaadinEn), the incomparable benefits that accrued to him from the AshtAkshara UpadEsam from the Lord Himself are saluted and





the glory of NaarAyaNa naamam is celebrated.

In the second Thirumozhi (VaalimAvalatthu), AzhwAr begged his mind to reach the divya desam of Thirupirithi (NandaprayAg) and worship the archA mUrthy there revered as Parama Purushan.

AzhwAr visualized the Lord of this Thiruprithi as KsheerAbdhi nAthan (at ThiruppARkadal), the adhAra sakthi of all avathArams (AvathAra mUla sthAnam). Here, the Lord is indeed reclining in the bhujanga sayanam pose as in the divya dEsam, ThiruppARkadal, which can not be visualized by our mortal eyes. At Thirupirithi, AzhwAr seems to suggest that we can enjoy Parama padha nAthan to our heart's content in the ArchA form with out j~nAna chakshus at this divya dEsam.

In the third Thirumozhi (MuRRa mUtthukkOI), he pointed out that all of us should travel to BadrikAsramam, the place of residence of the DevathA of AshtAkshara manthram, much before old age cripples us and limits our movement.

In the fourth Thirumozhi (YenamunAhi), he uses the description of BadrikAsrama divya dEsam dear to him to instruct us that AshtAksharam can bless us with every thing that we desire. There is nothing that it can not do for us.

In the fifth Thirumozhi (Kalaiyum Kariyum), he reaches SaaLagRAAMA kshethram, the place of residence of all mUrthys, and explained to us that the darsanam of Sri MUrthy there would yield us the equivalence of the blessings arising from the reciting of the thousand names of the Lord. One of the Paasurams salutes Sri Nrusimha BhagavAn (1.5.7) and that is the paasuram that has been covered in the above paragraphs.

In the sixth Thirumozhi (VaaNiIA muRuval), He recognized NaimisAraNyam, where the Lord is present in the form of the forest where all the noble sages performed the great SOMa Yajnam. He assessed that all of his sins would disappear there, because of the sanctity of this Divya Desam.

In the seventh Thirumozhi (AngaNmA j~aalam anja), he moved southward from the mountainous north to AhObilam and through ten exquisite paasurams covered in an earlier posting saluted the Lord of AhObilam hills.

Here, he was awe struck by the fierce beauty and the inaccessibility of the HiraNya SamhAra KshEthram and revealed that Azhagiya Singan, the bhaktha sulabhan presides over this divya dEsam.

In the eighth Thirumozhi (Kongialarndha malar), he begged his mind to reach the blessed divya dEsam of ThiruvEnkatam and explained to us that ThiruvEnkatamudayAn is the unfailing object of refuge for those, who sought His lotus feet as their sole protection.

In the ninth Thirumozhi (ThAyE TanthayE yenru) and the tenth Thirumozhi (kaNNAR





kadal soozh Ilangai), Kaliyan continued with his salutation to the Lord of saptha giris. Here, he enjoys the anishta nivrutthi (banishment of inauspiciousness) as a result of the built-in power of the "Nama: sabdham 'of' NaarAyaNAya Nama:"portion of the AshtAkshara mahA manthram.

It is in the tenth Thirumozhi, we find the AzhwAr's salutation to Lord Nrusimhan (1.10.5) following his earlier namaskaraNams to this avathAram at the divya desams of SaaLagrAmam and AhObilam.

adiyEn will now discuss this particular ThiruvEnkatam Paasuram celebrating ThiruvEnkatamudAyAn as BhagavAn Narasimhan.

தூணாய் அதனூடு அரியாய் வந்து தோன்றி
 பேணா அவுணன் உடலம் பிளந்திட்டாய்
 சேணார் திருவேங்கட மாமலை மேய
 கோள் நாகணையாய்! குறிக்கொள் என்னை நீயே.
 --பெரிய திருமொழி 1.10.5

thooNAyathanoodu ariyAi vanthu thOnRi
 pENA avuNan udalam piLanthittAi
 sENAr ThiruvEnkata maamalai mEya
 kONAKaNayAi ! kuRikkoL yennai neeyE
 -- Paasuram 1.10.5 of Periya Thirumozhi

Padha Arthams:

thooN aayi : by becoming the pillar first (as sarvaAnthAryAmi)

athan oodu : and then incarnating in the middle of that pillar (stambham)

ari aayi : as half-lion and half-man (Nrusimha roopiyAi)

vanthu- having entered (that pillar) in a trice and stayed there

thOnRi -- (and then) jumping out of it as NrusimhAvathAran

pENA avuNan udalam pilanthittAi : to tear into two, the body of the asuran HiraNyan -- who did not recognize your parathvam --with your nails alone.

In the second half of this paasuram, Thirumangai AzhwAr makes a personal appeal to the Lord of Saptha Giri, who has taken up his residence at ThiruvEnkatam from his erstwhile Provenance of ThirupaaRkadal, to remember him and to bless him as he blessed PrahIAda before as Saantha Narasimhan





sEN aar: at the tall peaks of ThiruvEnkatam hills visible over a considerable distance

mEya: (You as) the one has nitya vaasam there

kOLL: (with Your) majestic form

naakam aNayAi: (after leaving your adishesA bed in the milky Ocean), Oh, sEsha sAye!

nee yennai kuRikkoLL: Please remember to bless me out of Your own sankalpam (now that You have moved over to the lofty hills of ThiruvEnkatam from your restful and soft bed of Adhi sEshA at the milky ocean) just as You blessed the long-suffering prahlAdhha during your avathAram as Nrusimhan.

Here, AzhwAr reflects on the Lord leaving His moolasthAnam at KsheerAbdhi (milky ocean) and rushing to enter the Jaya sthampam in the court of the disrespectful asuran (HiraNyan) to validate the statement of His bhakthan (PrahAdhan) that "Hari is everywhere; He is in this pillar and also in that blade of grass". You tore apart the offending asuran with the sheer power of your sharp nails

Now that you have descended from your comfortable bed at the milky ocean and taken up permanent residence on top of ThiruvEnkatam hills to perform Your duties as the DayA sindhu to tend to the well being of the "SaraNAGatha sasya maaline" (the rows and rows of the crop of saraNAGathAs), You must remember me and bless me!

The Lord hailed later by Swami DEsikan in his dayA sathakamas "Pala vitharaNa dhaksham, pakshapaathAnabhij~nam, praguNam anuvindhEyam" (efficient in giving the boons besought, totally impartial, one known for His renowned kalyANa guNAs and easy to approach/bhaktha sulabhan) responded immediately to Thirumangai's soulful plea for special attention. He entered the AzhwAr's mind and shone there. He thus responded with alacrity to Thirumangai's sincere pleading.

In the next paasuram (Periya Thirumozhi 1.10.6), the joyous and grateful Thirumangai thankfully acknowledged the pervasive presence of ThiruvEnkatamudayan in his mind with the statement,

" மின்னார் முகில் சேர் திருவேங்கடம் மேய
என் ஆனை என்னப்பன் என் நெஞ்சில் உளானே."

"min aar muhil sEr ThiruvEnkatam mEya

Yen aanai yennappan yen nenjil uLAnE"

Meaning: The Lord of ThiruvEnkatam with the lustre of the dark blue rainy cloud incorporating the golden hue of lightning in its midst is my Lord. He is my nithya bhOgyan, the insatiable nectar of every moment. He is now taken up His residence in my nenju (the cave of my heart). The usage of the words "Min aar muhil sEr", to describe the aprAkrutha hue of the Lord is highly evocative. The Lord has the dark





bluish hue of the water-laden clouds of the rainy season. Sri Devi (AlarMEl mangai) residing forever on His chest has the bright golden color of a flashing lightning. The combination of their hues is that of "Nava megha garbhA SowdhAmini "{new dark blue cloud of the rainy season incorporating the gold colored (HiraNya VarNAm) lightning in its midst}.

Thirumangai celebrated the NrusimhAvathAram at ThiruvEnkatam in this exquisite manner and received the instantaneous blessing of the Lord of the seven hills.

Prior to the continuation of remaining three paasurams of Kaliyan on BhagavAn Nrusimhan in the context of his MangalAsAsanams of the three ThirunanAngoor Thiruppathis, a brief summary of the eleven ThirunAngoor Thirupathis is included. Hope this information would be useful to sEvArthis of these divya dEsams, celebrated by Kaliyan through 112 exquisitely beautiful and bhakthi-laden paasurams.

The two divya dEsams of ThiruvAli -Thirunahari and Thiru KaazhiccheerAma ViNNagaram are very close to these eleven divya desams. There are 43 paasurams on ThiruvAli -Thirunahari (42 by Thirumangai alone) and ten for KaazhiccheerAma Vinnagaram. Thirumangai's birth place Thirukkurayaloor is near by and it is understandable that he performed MangalAsAsanam on these 13 divya desams with many (165) paasurams.

Each Thai AmAvAsyai day, the archa mUrthys of the 11 Thirunangoor Divya Desams come together and offer sevai to Thirumangai and through him to us for his magnificent vaachika kaimkaryam. There are separate mantapams side by side for each of the eleven EmperumAns and they spend a day with Thirumangai there. Thirumangai AzhwAr is seated on Hamsa Vaahanam during this occasion befitting his role as ParakAla Naayaki.

We will now see the details of these 11 temples.





1. ThirumaNimAdakkovil

It is five miles east of SeerhAzhi railway station, which is the arrival point to visit these temples by train. KaazhiccheerAma Vinnagaram is half a mile from this railway station, where ThAdALan presides with Mattavizhum Kuzhali NaacchiyAr.



ThirumaNimAdakkovil NARayaNa PerumAL Thirukkovil

As an aside, ThirukkAzhiccheerAma ViNNagaram is famous for number of things.

First, the presiding deity (ThaadaLan) is Thrivikraman giving us the sEvai with panchAyuthams.

Second, there is a beautiful ArchA mURthy of Sri Raamachandran with maravuri (dress made of barks) worn during his vana vAsam with Janaki MaathA and Sowmithri.

Third, this is where Thirumangai defeated Thiruj~nana sambhandhar in a poetic contest with his superior skills as a poet and received as a prize the "VeRRi vEI" and the title "Naalu kavi paNdithar".

Fourth, KaazhiccheerAma ViNNagaram is famous for the ten Saka Muka TamizhMAlai Patthu celebrating a number of DasAvathArams of the Lord.

Fifth, OushadhAdri here is famous because of Swami DESikan's deep affection for the





presiding deity, Selva Daiva Naayakan, just as Selva PiLLai of Melkote was dear to Sri RaamAnujA.

Coming back to Thiru maNimAdakkOvil, NandAviLakku PerumAL and His consort, Pundareekavalli ThAyAr rest under PraNava VimAnam, the Lord is also known as NaranArAyaNan. Thirumangai starts his first Paasuram majestically by addressing the Lord as, "NandhA viLakke aLatthaRkariyAi NaranaaraNanE ---". Thirumangai celebrates the Lord as the eternal lamp with undimishing Jyothi and as the one whose kalyANA guNAs can not be assessed fully. He visualizes the Lord as the NaarAyaNan, who performed upadesam to him, the Naran and addresses the Lord as NaranArAyaNan.

AzhwAr celebrated the Lord as gajendra Varadan who responded with alacrity to the call for help by the king of elephants, when the crocodile grabbed its legs in the lotus pond. AzhwAr salutes the Lord as UpEndran, PoothanA samhAran, VathsAsura anthakan, KaaLiya nardhanan, the teaser of young Gopis and as the winner of Nappinnai's hand in a svayamvaram through the destrcution of the seven oxen.





2. Thiruvaikuntha ViNNagaram:

The Lord's name here is VaikuntanAthan; ThaamaraikkaNNan and Nediya PirAn. Thaayar is saluted as Vaikunthavalli ThAyaar. They sit under the Anantha Satya Varthaka vimAnam. In this sthalam, Thirumangai celebrated the Lord as NrusimhAvathAran. In the first paasuram, the AzhwAr briefly salutes the Lord as Narahari ("Salam konda IraNiananathu ahalam maarvam keendu"). He refers to the Lord as the Nrusimhan, who tore the chest of the egotist, HiraNyan, who though that he was a svathanthra purushan, who controlled his own destiny.



Thiru Vaikuntha ViNNagaram Vaikuntha Naathan Thirukkoviil

After devoting one line to Nrusimhan in his eight-lined paasuram, Thirumangai is overcome with the feeling to enjoy NrusimhAvathAram more. Hence, he devotes the entire second paasuram to the mangalAsanam of BhagavAn Nrusimhan. AzhwAr recognizes this divya dEsam as the preferred vAsasthalam of Lord Narasimhan. AzhwAr explains why this divya dEsam is especially dear to the Lord. He states that this KshEthram has sarva samritthi (prosperous by all counts), (Viz) worldly wealth, presence of the Lord, Veda Samritthi, naadha samritthi, vichAra saasthra samritthi through the inhabitation of the scholars who are living embodiments of the Vedaas, their upAngAs and Tarka, VYAkaraNa, Neethi saasthrAs.

AzhwAr devotes the first three lines of the second paasuram to the description of





NrusimhAvathAram and the destruction of Bhagavatha ApachAri, HiraNyan:

திண்ணியதோர் அரி உருவாய் திசை அனைத்தும் நடுங்க
தேவரோடு தானவர்கள் திகைப்ப இரணியனை
நண்ணி அவன் மார்வு அகலத்து உகிர் மடுத்த நாதன்
நாள் தோறும் மகிழ்ந்து இனிது மருவியுறை கோயில்
—பெரிய திருமொழி--திருநாங்கூர்-திருவைகுந்த விண்ணகர
திவ்ய ஷேத்திர மங்களாஸாஸனம்--2

tiNNiyathOr ariuruvAi tisai anaitthum nadunga

dEvarOdu tAnavarhaL tikaippa IraNiyanaI

naNNI avan maarvu ahalatthu uhir maduttha Naathan

nAdOrum mahizhthinithu maruviurai koyil -----

All the ten directions reverberated with the ear-piercing sound of the Lord, when He jumped out of the sthambam, when HiraNyan mockingly hit it in response to his son's statement that the Lord is everywhere. The attahAsam and the garjanam of the Lord echoed in every direction and dEvAs as well as the asurAs were filled with a sense of terror. They did not know the cause of that thunderous sound shattering the sky and earth. The adhbhutha Kesari ran towards HiraNyan and grabbed him. Then the Vaikunta Kanteeravan placed the wriggling HiraNyan on His lap and with His sharp nails tore apart the chest of the asuran for his offenses against His bhakthan. AzhwAr concludes that this KshEthram, Thiru Vaikuntha ViNNagaram, is the preferred residence of the Vaikunta Kanteeravan.

In the Bhagavatha mELa nAtakam, PrahIAda charitham, Melattur Venkatarama saasthri, a predecessor of saint Thyagaraja describes the awesome experience of the world during NrusimhAvathAram in a telling manner:

katuvadi keta keta keta mani putami atharagA

jatini saptha saagaramulu saala kalakaka

atukatukuku alatanusuntataripetharakaA

asurulata vikithamai Narahari aavaginchunu

The aakAsam reverberated with the mighty sounds and shook, the seven oceans had tsunAmi waves and the waters were agitated profoundly. The earth shook. The asuraas were terror stricken at the moment, when the Lord jumped out of the Jaya Sthambham of HiraNyan's darbhaar hall. The sound and fury associated with the avathAram has been captured by MelattUr Bhagavathar in a manner described by Thirumangai.





3. Thiru ArimEya ViNNagaram:

Here the uthsavar is chathurbhujha GopAlan; the mUlavar is KudamAdu kUtthan.ThAyAr"s name is Amrithagatavalli. Vimanam is Ucchasringam.



Thiru ArimEya ViNNagaram Koil GOpuram

Here, Thirumangai had the darsanam of the Lord with His two dEvis on either side pleading for the erring chethanAs:

திருமடந்தை மண் மடந்தை இருபாலும் திகழ
தீவினைகள் போயகல அடியவர்கட்கென்றும்
அருள் நடந்து இவ்வேழ் உலகத்தவர் பணிய வானோர்
அமர்ந்தேத்த இருந்த இடம் பெரும் புகழ் வேதியர் வாழ்
தரும் இடங்கள் மலர்கள் மிகு கைதைகள் செங்கமுநீர்
தாமைரைகள் தடங்கள்தொறும் இடங்கள்தொறும் திகழ
அருவிடங்கள் பொழில் தழுவி எழில் திகழு நாங்கூர்
அரிமேய விண்ணகரம் வணங்கு மட நெஞ்சே.

--பெரிய திருமொழி--திருநாங்கூர் திவ்ய ஷேத்திர மங்களாஸாஸனம்--1





thirumadhanthai maNN madanthai irupaalum thihazha
 ttheevinaigaL pOyahala adiyavahatkkenrum
 aruL nadanthu ivvEzhulahatthavar paNiya vaanOr
 amarnthEttha irundha idam -----Nangoor
 ArimEya ViNNagaram vaNangu mada nenjE

--Periya thirumozhi--thirunaangoor-1

The Lord responds readily to the pleas of His two dEvis and forgives the aparAthams of the chEthanAs at this Divya Desam. Swami DEsikan has celebrated the special pleading by Sri Devi and Bhu Devi in the following two slokams of DayA sathakam to illustrate the intercession of the two dEvis on our behalf:

समस्त जननीं वन्दे चैतन्य स्तन्य दायिनीम् ।

श्रेयसीं श्रीनिवासस्य करुणामिव रूपिणीं ॥

-- दया शतकम् ६

Samastha jananeem vandhE
 Chaithanya sthanya dhAyineem |
 SrEyaseem srinivaasaya
 KaruNAmiva RoopiNeem ||

— Dayaa shatakam 6

वन्दे वृषगिरीशस्य महिषीं विश्व धारिनीम् ।

तत् कृपा प्रतिघातानामं क्षमया वारणं यया ॥

— दया शतकम् ७

VandhE Vrushagireesasya
 Mahisheem visvadhaarineem |
 TathkrupA prathigAthAnAm
 kshamayaa vAraNam yayA ||

— Dayaa shatakam 7





4. Thiru dEvanAr thohai:

This is the fourth of the ThirunAngUr divya dEsams. It is located at a distance of four miles from SeerkAzhi in the south eastern direction. Under the Sobhana VimAnam, DaivanAyaka PerumAL and Kadal MaamahaL nAcchiyAr offer darsanam in ninra thirukkOlam. The dEvAs assembled in big numbers here to confer on the ways to fight the asurAs, who tormented them. Hence the KshEthram got its name. The ThAyAr's name suggests that she is the daughter of the King of Oceans (Kadal MaamahaL) and incarnated during the time of churning of the milky ocean for nectar. Hence, AzhwAr appropriately addresses the Lord here as Maadhavan or the consort of MahA Lakshmi, whose auspicious glances support and sustain the world as indicated by AaLavandar's salutation "jagath samastham yadapAnga samsrayam". She resides at the chest of the Lord and thus gives Him the names Maadhavan, MaalOlan (Lakshmi Nrusimhan) and, Lakshmi NArAyaNan.



ThirudEvanAthan Thirukkovil

In this kshEthram known for the PirAttis, who are the root causes of their Lord's glory, Thirumangai begs his mind to salute the Lord, whose anger was quenched by MahA Lakshmi through her suggestion for PrahIAdA to approach Her angry Lord:

ஓடாத வான் அரியின் உருவம் அது கொண்டு அன்று
உலப்பில் மிகு பெரு வரத்த இரணியனைப் பற்றி
வாடாத வன் உகிறால் பிளந்தவன் தன் மகனுக்கு
அருள் செய்தான் வாழும் இடம் மல்லிகை செங்கழுநீர்





சேடேறு மலர் செருந்தி செழுங்கமுகம் பாளை
செண்பகங்கள் மண நாளும் வண் பொழிலின் ஊடே
ஆடேறு வயல் ஆலை புகை கமழு நாங்கூர்
அறிமேய விண்ணகரம் வணங்கு மட நெஞ்சே.
--பெரிய திருமொழி--திருநாங்கூர் திவ்ய க்ஷேத்திர மங்களாஸாஸ
னம்--4

**OdAtha aaL ariyin uruvam athu kondu anru
ulappil mihu peruvaratthu IraNiyanaI paRRi
vAdAtha vaLL uhirAI piLanthu avan than mahanukku
aruL cheythAn vAzhumidam-----
arimEya ViNNagaram vaNangum Mada NenjE**

— Periya Thirumozhi--Thirunaangoor--4

Padha Arthams:

Anru: on that day, when the Lord had to keep PrahIAdA's statement as true

Athu: the most wonderful form

OdAtha aaLL ariyin uruvam kondu: (you took the most wonderful form) of indefatigable Nrusimhan

Ulappu il mihu peru varatthu IraNiyanaI paRRi: (and) grabbed the dushta asuran, HiraNyan, who was famous as the possessor of countless boons from semi-Gods

vAdAtha vaLL uhirAI piLanthu: (and) tore him apart with the power of your sharp and strong nails that know no fatigue.

avan tan mahanukku aruL seythAn vAzhumidam: This is indeed the place of residence of the one (Nrusimhan), who blessed the child of that asuran, HiraNyan.





5. ThiruvANN PurushOththamam

Under Sanjeevighraha VimAnam, PurushOththaman stands at this kshEthram with His consort revered as PurushOththama Naayaki.



ThiruvANN PurushOththaman Thirukkivil

The Lord is celebrated in the 15th chapter of Bhaghavadh Gita as PurushOththaman and gives there the clues to recognize Him.

He says:

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निवुष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनमं च ।

वेदैस्त्र सर्वैरहमेव वेदयो वेदान्त कृत् वेद विदेव चाहम् ॥

sarvasya chAham hrudhi sannivushtO
mattha: smruthirj~nAnamapOhanam cha |
vedaisccha sarvairahmEva vEdhyO
VedAntha kruth Veda vidhEva chAham ||

Meaning: I reside in the hearts of all chEthanAs. Memory, perception and loss of that





faculty arise from Me. I am verily that which has to be comprehended by all vEdAs. I am indeed the author of vEdAnthA, and the knower of the vEdA am I.

He goes on to say: "AthOsmi IOkE vEdE cha prathitha: PurushOtthama:". Therefore, am I in the world and in the vEdAs celebrated as the PurushOtthamn (the highest and the noblest PurushA).

Earlier in that chapter of Srimadh Bhagavadh Gita, PurushOtthaman has said that the Yogis striving for perfection see Him dwelling in their heart cavities, but the unrefined (AkruthAthmana:) and unintelligent (achEthasa:), even though striving, see me not.

Thirumangai, as a Parama Yogi, understood very well the PurushOtthama doctrine of the Lord of ThiruvaNN PurudOtthamam. One name of Thirumangai was "AruL Maari". He was indeed the recipient of ManthrOpadEsam from the Lord Himself. Therefore, the AzhwAr understood the PurushOtthama Vibhoothi of the Lord as revealed by the Aadhi Kavi Valmiki, when he dwelled upon the PurushOtthama LakshaNam of Sri Ramachandra:

"Aanrusamsyam anukrOsa: srutham, seelam, dhama: yama: RaaghavAn sobhayanthE shat guNA:"

Scholarship, culture, sadhAchAram, forbearance, self-control, SaraNyathvam is the six guNAs that characterize the PurushOtthamathvam of Raaghavan according to Valmiki. Thirumangai has celebrated Sri Raama as PurushOtthaman in many of his paasurams including the ones at ThiruvaNN PurudOtthamam.





6. Thiruchemponchey Kovil

This divya desam is considered as the central gem of the 11 ThirunAngUr divya desams (Naayaka MaNi). The presiding deity (uthsavar) is PERaruLALan (Varadhan). The mUlavar is Sempon RanganAthAn. ThAyAr is Allimaamalar NaacchiyAr. Thirumangai placed 10 paasurams at the lotus feet of these ArchA Moorthys.

Thirumangai salutes the Lord with His consorts, Sri DEvi and Bhu DEvi. He recognizes Him as the water-laden, dark cloud of the rainy season, which cools us off from the scorching heat of the taapams of SamsArA. In the first paasuram, AzhwAr declares that all his anxieties are over now that he has had the sevai of PERaruLALan with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi at Thiruchchemponsey kovil.



Thiruchemponchey PERaruLALan Thirukkovil

AzwhAr suggests that the Lord acquired His name as pERaruLALan (the great boon giver), because of the presence of Sri Devi a Bhu DEvi on his sides. AzhwAr declares that he had the darsanam of the Lord with ubhaya NaacchimArs (kandu), held that vision in his heart (kondu) and had his salvation as a result (uynthu ozhindEnE).

In yet another paasuram, AzhwAr states that the Lord of Semponseykoil is like the compassionate mother responding with alacrity and concern to alleviate the sufferings of her child. Avyaja KaruNai of the Lord in His role as Daasarathi is referred to here by the AzhwAr.





7. ThiruttheRRiambalam

At this divya desam, PerumAL's naamam is SenkaNmAI and His naacchiyAr's name is Sengamalavalli. He gives us darsanam in bhujanga sayanam. Kaliyan salutes Him as Aapath sahAyan in his ten paasurams. He gives prominence to NeeLA DEvi in more than one paasuram. In one, he is awed by the valour of the Lord, who destroyed seven mighty oxen to win the hand of Nappinnai.



ThirutheRRiambalam PaLLikonda PerumAL Thirukkovil

Azhwar remembers that the Lord took all that trouble to win Nappinnai as His bride. What did he do? The father of Nappinnai had seven strong black oxen with dangerous, curved horns like scimitars, mighty temper, strong legs and fierce appearances. Any one, who wanted to compete for the hands of Nappinnai, had to subdue those bulls in combat. All those, who contended to get Nappinnai's hand in marriage, were gored by the bulls in their fights. Nithya Noothana YuvA (KrishNA) entered the bull ring, subdued and destroyed the bulls. He became the winner of this Kanya sulkam and married Nappinnai, who is none other than NeeLA Devi saluted by NeeLA sUktham as, "NeeLAM dEveem saraNamaham prapadhyE sutharasitarasE nama: GruNAhi--"and "MahA dEvyai cha vidhmahE VishNu pathnyai cha dheemahi ".

May we obtain the blessings of SenkaNmAI KaNNan through the grace of Nappinnai piratti celebrated by AaNdAL in Thiruppavai as well!





8. Thiru MaNikkodam

PerumAL and ThAyAr's naamams are Sri MaNikkoda nAyakan and Thiru MAMahaL NaacchiyAr. Kaliyan points out that this divya dEsam in the middle of the fertile Cauvery delta is full of all auspiciousness (Sarva Sampaths):

பூம்புனல் பொன்னி முற்றும் புகுந்து பொன் வரண்ட எங்கும்
தேம்பொழில் கமழு நாங்கூர் திருமணிக்கூடத்தானே.

poompunai Ponni muRRum puhundhu pon varaNda yenghum

tEmpozhil kamazhu NaanGoor ThirumaNikkudatthAnE

"**Odhalaz pozhil ThirumaNikkUda nAthAr**" stands under the Kanaka vimAnam on the banks of divine Cauveri River and gives us His blessed darsanam with His DEvi. AzhwAr recognizes Him as "Pinnai seviththOL puNarntha venthai" (the Lord, who is in union with Nappinnai pirAtti). He also salutes Him as Jaanaki RamaNan:

பெருமகள் பேதை மங்கை தன்னோடும் பிரிவிலாத
திருமகள் மருவும் நாங்கூர் திருமணிக்கூடத்தானே.

perumahaL pEthai mangai tannOdum pirivilAtha

ThirumahaL maruvu Naangoor ThirumaNikkUdatthAnE

AzhwAr salutes the wife of Raghu vamsa tilakam and the dear daughter of the king Janaka, who is the embodiment of dharmam and J~nAnam here as the NirdhOsha KalyANa guNa svarUpi and the cause of the auspiciousness of the Lord of this Thiruppathi. AzhwAr recognizes Him as "**Moovaril mUrthy mudalvan**" (the first among the trinity). He concludes his tribute to this KshEthram by pointing out the blessed people, who have the darsanam of the Divya dampathis here, would be blessed with all auspiciousness in their lives on earth and will enter Sri Vaikuntam thereafter.



ThirumNikkoodam VaradarAjan Thirukkovil





9. ThiruveLLakkuLam (aNNan kovil)

This divya dEsam is celebrated as DakshiNa Thiruppathi. This is the birth place of Kumuda valli NaacchiyAr, who married Thirumangai and was instrumental in transforming him into a Sri VaishNavan. Under the shade of TatvathOdaka vimAnam, KaNNan gives us His darsanam with His pirAtti, PoovAr ThirumahaL NaacchiyAr. Thirumangai's saraNAgathi here is a moving one. He addresses the Lord endearingly with the epithet, aNNA and prays: "ThiruveLLakkuLatthuL aNNA! AdiyEN idari kaLayAyE, nediYayai! AdiyEn idar neekke!". He continues to implore the Lord to remove all the obstacles standing in his way to get moksham. His moving prayers show his aathuram and intense desire to obtain the divya dampathi's blessings:

"ஆனாய் அடியேனுக்கு அருள் புரியாயே"

aanAi adiyEnukku aruL puriyAyE!

"திருவெள்ளக்குளத்தானே! எல்லாவிடறும் கெடுமாறு அருளாயே"

ThiruveLLakkuLatthAnE! Yellavidarum kedumARu aruLAYE!

"சீரார் பொழில் சூழ் திருவெள்ளக்குளத்துள் ஆராவமுதே அடியேர்க்கருளாயே"

seerAr pozhil soozh ThiruveLLakkuLatthuL AarAvamudhE! AdiyErkkaruLAYE!

"மாலே என் வல்வினை தீர்த்து அருளாயே"

MaalE! Yen valvinai theerttharuLAYE!

"திருவெள்ளக்குளத்துறைவானே ஆவா அடியேன் இவன் என்று அருளாயே"

ThiruveLLakkuLatthuraivAnE! AavA! AdiyEn ivan yenru aruLAYE!



ANNan Kovil





These paasurams have been intepreted by our pUrvAchAryAs as the commentary on the the second section of the sacred Dhvaya manthram. Kaliyan is understood to have prayed to the divya dampathis for pUrNa kaimkarya anugraha siddhi through Dhvaya manthram (PadmAsahAya saraNAgathi manthram according to Swami DEsikan). This sacred dhvaya manthram is considered as the dawn for the dark night of praLayam (KaaLa raathri by Swami DEsikan ("PrathyUshathAm bhajathi samsruthi KaalarAthrE:").

May we understand and practise the meanings of these paasurams of Kaliyan that are close to the Dhvaya manthram and obtain the anugraham of the aNNan Koil Divya Dampathis!





10. ThirukkavaLampAdi

This thiruppathi is at a distance of seven miles from SeerkAzhi. Here, Sri GopAla KrishNan stands under Svayambhu vimAnam with His dEvis, Madavaral Nangai, Sengamalvalli nAcchiyAr, RukmiNi and SatyabhAmA waiting His bhakthAs this temple has AarAdhanam only once each day at 10 AM. It is very much different in this aspect from other temples with pancha kaala pUjas. Close to this divya dEsam is ThirukkurayalUr, the birth place of Thirumangai AzhwAr. Three furlongs off from ThirukkurayalUr in the opposite direction of ThirukkAvaLampAdi is Mangai matam, where AzhwAr conducted TadheeyAradhanams to Sri VaishNavAs to win the hand of Kumudavalli NaacchiyAr. At ThirukkurayalUr, there is a beautiful and majestic archA mUrthy of BhagavAn NarasimhAn. One can relate Thirumangai Azhwar's names, adayAr seeyam and arattu amukki, to that of Lord Lakshmi Nrusimhan. Seeyar means a Lion. AdayAr means mARRAR or those, who are bhagavadh dvEshis (enemies of the Lord). Like Sri Nrusimhan, Kaliyan with his sword and shield as well as the spear went after the enemies of the Lord like a Lion goes after its prey. Thus he shares the guNam of Nrusimhan. Arattu amukki means the one who crushes the ones, who have ill will towards the BahgavathAs. Here again, we can see the guNa saamyam with the Lord Nrusimhan.

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ThirukkAvalampAdi RAjagOpAlan Thirukkovil





Coming back to ThirukkAvaLampAdi thiruppathi, one of the Pancha KrishNa kshEthrams of ChoLa naadu, Thirumangai performed SaraNagathi to KaNNan, Just as Arjuna did at KurukshEthram:

यच्छ्रेयः स्यन्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे

शिष्यस्ते ऽहं शाधि मां प्रपन्नम् ॥

"YacchrEya: syanniscchitham brUhi tanmE
sishyasthEham Maam tvAm PRAPANNAM"

Arjuna in the state of Aakinchayam begged the Lord to do whatever that He considered appropriate and auspicious for him as a Sishyan and Prapannan. Tirumangai in a similar mood of utter helplessness appealed to the Lord nine times in his paasurams and recognized Him as his upAyam for the rakshaNam:

"காவளம்பாடி மேய கண்ணனே கலை கண் நீயே"

"KaavaLampAdi mEya KaNNanE kaLai kaN neeyE"

May we seek the blessings of Sri Gopala KrishNan and Mada varal mangai (MahA Lakshmi) in the manner in which Thirumangai showed us the way and perform SaraNagathi and benefit!



11. ThiruppArthan PaLLi

This divya dEsam is at a distance of two and half miles from ThirunAngUr. The ArchA mUrthys are Sri TAmaraiyAL kELvan and Sri Tamarai nAyaki. They stand under nArAyaNa vimAnam. In addition to the ten paasurams of Thirumangai, there is a Eleventh paasuram for tis KshEthram by Poygai AazhwAr in Mudal ThiruvandhAdhi.

TAmaraiyAL kELvan means that He is the Lord of MahA Lakshmi. We can also intrepret this name of His to mean that He is the one who listens to the sipArisu of Sri Devi to forgive our trespasses and grats us Moksham. In this context ParAsara Bhattar has saluted MahA Lakshmi's greatness in his guNa rathna kOsam as exceeding that of Her Lord:

श्रियः श्रीः श्रीरङ्गेशय! तव च हृद्यां भगवती

श्रियं त्वत्तो ऽप्युच्चैर्वयमिह फणामः शृणुतराम् ।

दृशौ ते भूयास्तां सुखतरलतारे श्रवणतः

पुनर्हर्षोत्कर्षात् स्फुटतु भुजयोः कञ्चुकशतम् ॥

Sriya: sree: Sri RangEsaya! Tava cha hrudhyAm Bhagavatheem
Sriyam tvathoapyucchai: vayamiha PaNAma: sruNatarAm |
dhrusou tE bhooyAsthaam sukha taraLatArE sravaNatha :
punarharshOthkarshAth spurath bhujayO : kanchukasatham ||



ThiruppArthan PaLLi Sri PArthasArathy Thirukkivil



Meaning: My Lord! Sri RanganAthA! You indeed are the one enhances the beauty of your Devi (Thiruvukkum ThiruvAhiya selvan). She is your prANa nAdi (Life force). She is equal to you in her six guNAs such as J~nAnam, Balam, tEjas, Isvaryam et al. We assess that She excels you through her guNam of PurushakAram.

Sri ParAsara Bhattar was indeed the purOhithar of tAmaraiyAL kELvan (Sri RanganAthA). If any one can understand the relative excellence among the divya dampathis, he is eminently qualified to do so! Hence, he bluntly stated about her superiority in this way.

AhIrbudhnya Samhithai sIOkam states that BhagavAn and Lakshmi are sarva sEshis when one approaches them through the upAyams of Bhakthi and /or Prapatthi, one obtains j~nAnam that is equivalent to paripUrNa brahmAnubhavam. This arises from the orientation, "oNN tAmaraiyAL kELvan nOkkum uNarvu". When approached in this manner, we recognize the presence of the Divya Dampathis as antharyAmi Brahmam without any separation and are a unitary principle as stated in the samhithai sIOkam:

नारायण परं ब्रह्म शक्तिर्नारायणी च स ।

व्यापकावाति सम्श्लेषात् एकतत्त्वमिवोदितौ ॥

nArAyaNa param Brahma sakthirNArAyaNee cha saa |

vyApakAvathi samsIEshAth ekatattvamivOdhithou ||

He is the Lord, who went after the nectar of femininity, while dEvAs focussed on the nectar that would make them free from old age and death ("ViNNavaramudhuNa vamudhil peNNamudhunda emperumAn"). She is the nectar of nectars that arose out of the milky ocean. His love for Her will not permit Him to ignore Her sipArisu (PurushakAram) for us, the erring jeevans. He demonstrates His dayA svarUpam in response to Her recommendation and intercession and blesses us with Moksham. Swami DEsikan explains this extraordinary relationship between the divya dampathis this way in Sri Rahasya traya Saaram:

" இன்னமுதத்தமுதாலிரங்கு திருநாரணனே

மந்திய வண் சரண் மற்றோர் பற்றின்றி வரிப்பவர்க்கே"

"InnamudatthamudAlirangu ThirunAraNanE

manniya vaN SaraN maRROr paRRInRi varippavarkke "

Thirumangai remembered the special anugraham of ParthasArathy to ArjunA and entered into the role of parakAla nAyaki and reminded the Lord that "she" will follow the model of AalrmElmangai, who vowed not to leave her husband's chest even for a fraction of a second (AhalahillEn).





The paasurams of Paarthan PaLLI are through the mouth of the mother of ParakAla nAyaki. The mother reminds the Lord that her young and beautiful daughter is intoxicated with His beauty and is spending all of her time awaiting His arrival. The mother is clearly worried about the obsession of her daughter and describes her daughter's pitiable plight to the Lord of Parthan PaLLI :

நாடி என் தன் உள்ளம் கொண்ட நாதன் என்றும் நான்மறைகள்
தேடி என்றும் காணமாட்டா செல்வன் என்றும் சிறை கொள் வண்டு
சேடுலவு பொழில்கொள் நாங்கை தேவதேவன் என்றென்றோதி
பாடகம் சேர் மெல் அடியான் பார்த்ததன்பள்ளி பாடுவாளே!

--பெரிய திருமொழி --திருபார்த்ததன்பள்ளி மங்களாஸாஸனம்--7

naadiyenranuLLam konda nAthan yenrum nAnmaRaigAL
tEdi yenrum kANamAttA selvan Yenrum siraikoLL vandu
sEduLavU pozhil koLL nAngai dEvadEvan yenrenrOdhi
paatakam sEr melladiyAL PaarthanpaLLI pAduvALE

--Periya Thirumozhi--Thiru Partthan PaLLI --7

The mother says that her daughter insists that tAmaraiyAL kELvan has come by and entered her heart. She says that the vEdAs are searching for Him everywhere not knowing that their EmperumAn has taken up residence in her heart. She blurts out that the vEdAs are dismayed. She spends all her time decorating Herself with ankle ornaments (silampu) and other jewelery awaiting your arrival. In between, she is singing about the glory of Your Thiruppathi and Your kolatthirumEni (beautiful form). Thirumangai described his deep love for SrIman NArAyaNA of this KshEhtram through the words of his mother here.

May we all be blessed by Thirumangai's tributes to the ArchA mUrthys of the eleven ThirunAngUr divya desams and benefit from shtira bhakthi to the Divya Dampathis.

AzhwAr ThiruvadigaLE SaraNam

Dasan,

Oppiliappan KOvil VaradAchAri saThakOpan

कवितार्किक सिंहाय कल्याण गुणशालिने ।

श्रीमतेवेङ्कटेशाय वेदान्त गुरवे नमः ।





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