

**SWAMI DESIKAN'S
NAVA MANI MAALAI**



**ANNOTATED COMMENTARY IN ENGLISH BY:
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CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Introduction to Navamanimaalai | 3 |
| Paasuram 1 | 6 |
| Paasuram 2 | 9 |
| Paasuram 3 | 13 |
| Paasuram 4 | 15 |
| Paasuram 5 | 17 |
| Paasuram 6 | 19 |
| Paasuram 7 | 21 |
| Paasuram 8 | 23 |
| Paasuram 9 | 25 |
| Paasuram 10 | 27 |
| Nigamanam | 29 |





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॥ श्री : ॥

॥ श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीमते निगमान्त महादेशिकाय नमः ॥

Navamani Maalai

நவமணிமாலை

INTRODUCTION

THE ORIGIN OF NAVA MANI MAALAI

Swamy Desikan settled in ThiruvahIndhrapuram in his twenties. He already had the special anugraham of Sri HayagrIvan and Periya Thiruvadi. He was performing unchivrutthi and KaalakshEpams there. One day, he had a great urge to have the darsanam of Sri VardarAjan of Kaanchi. Swamy took leave of Sri HemAbhja Valli SamEtha Sri DevarAjan and started on his trip to Kaanchi. He arrived at the banks of PeNNai river and was resting for the night there.

SWAMY DESIKAN'S DREAM AND THE LORD'S COMMAND

During his sleep that night, Sri DevanAthana appeared in his dream and commanded Swamy Desikan to return to His dhivya dEsam and compose Sri Sookthis about him. Swamy Desikan woke up and obeyed that command immediately by abandoning his planned journey to Kaanchi and returned to ThiruvahIndhrapuram.

There he composed 7 Tamizh Prabhandhams (MummaNik Kovai, Nava MaNi Maalai, Panthu, Kazhal, AmmAmai, Oosal, yEsal) and two Sanskritic works (Sri Deva Naayaka PanchAsath and Sri Achyutha Sathakam in PrAkrutham as well). Due to our DhurbhAgyam, the five Tamil Prabhandhams except MummaNik Kovai (MMK) and Nava maNi Maalai (NMM) are no longer available to us. Even in the case of MMK, only ten of the thirty paasurams are known today.

THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LORD'S COMMAND TO COMPOSE

Swamy Desikan acknowledges at two places the command of Lord DevanAthana to compose the Sri Sookthis by him. At the end of NMM, Swamy records his gratitude to the Lord this way :





“munthai maRai Mozhi Vazhi mozhi nee yenRu
Mukundhan aruL tantha payan peRREnAnE”

(MEANING):

I accumulated the fruits from the command of Lord Mukundhan (Moksha Daayakan) by executing His command to compose Sri Sookthis on Him. What He commanded me was to create Prabhandhams that have their meanings enshrined in the ancient VedhAs. That adiyEn accomplished with His blessings by composing seven Tamizh Prabhandhams and two Sanskrit-based SthOthra granthams on His glories.

In the eighth sLOkam of Sri DevanAyaka PanchAsath, Swamy Desikan refers again to the command of the Lord on the banks of PeNNai river once again with a telling upama (simile):

SamrakshaNIyam AmarAdhipathE tvyaiva
DhUram prayAtham api dhusthyaja ghADa bhandham
aakrushtavAnasi BhavAn anukampamAna:
SoothrA anubhaddha Sakuni kramatha: svaym maam

(MEANING):

Oh Lord Of ThiruvahIndhrapuram! AdiyEn was deeply tied to the ropes of SamsAram due to poorva Janma karmAs. That made me stay far away from You. In spite of that my unfortunate state, Your magnificent DayA flowed towards me. Otherwise, who else could have succeeded in saving me from my miserable state? Your immeasurable Dayaa pulled me to Your sacred feet and set me in the right track. Your pull is like the pull of the string attached to the leg of a bird by the owner of that bird as it flies away from its Lord thinking that it is independent. Swamy is referring here to ANDAL's words:

“UnRannODu uRavu namakku inku ozhikka OzhiyAthu” and
“unRannaip paaDip Parai kondhu yaam peRum sammAnam”

THUS WERE BORN THE TAMIZH AND SANSKRIT PRABHANDHAMS ON LORD DEVANAYAKAN AT THIRUVAHINDHRAPURAM INCLUDING NAVA MANI MAALAI.





SLOKAS AND COMMENTARY

श्रीमान् वेङ्कट नाथार्यः कवितार्किक केसरी ।

वेदान्ताचार्य वर्योमि सन्निधत्तां सदा हृदि ॥

shrImaan.h ve~NkaTa naathaaryaH kavitaarkika kesarI.

vedaantaachaarya varyo me sannidhattaam sadaa hR^idi.

SEGMENT ONE:

THE TITLE OF NAVA MANI MAALAI

The title indicates that there are nine gems (paasurams) strung together in the form of a beautiful necklace for adornment by the Lord of ThiruvahIndhrapuram. The nava (nine) MaNis or the nava rathnams are equivalent to the nine gems bequeathed as a treasure to us by AchArya RaamAnujA for whom Swamy Desikan's reverence was legendary. Nava also means New or rare. Swamy's choice of the word "nava" in the title can also be interpreted to mean that these paasurams (gems) are apoorva new gems mined by him for the kaimkaryam to the Lord.

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PAASURAM 1: THE ESSENCE OF NAVA MANI MAALAI PAASURAMS

ஒருமதியன்பருளங்க வர்ந்தன
உலகமடங்க வளர்ந்தளந்தன
ஒருசடையொன்றியகங்கைதந்தன
உரகபடங்களரங்குகொண்டன
தருமமுயர்ந்ததிதென்னநின்றன
தருமனிரந்த திசைந்து சென்றன
சகடமுடைந்து கலங்க வென்றன
தமர்களருந்து மருந்தி தென்பன
திருமகள் செய்ய கரங்களொன்றின
திகழ்து ளவுந்து மணங்க மழ்ந்தன
செழுமணி கொண்ட சிலம்பிலங்கின
சிலைதனில் அன்று ஓரணங்கு மிழ்ந்தன
அருமறையந்த மமர்ந்த பண்பின
அயன்முடி தன்னிலமர்ந்து யர்ந்தன
அருள்தர வெண்ணிய யிந்தைவந்தன
அடியவர் மெய்யர் மலர்ப்பதங்களே.

orumathiyanmaruLanga varnthana
ulakamadanga vaLarnthaLanthana
orusadaiyonRiyakangaithanthana
urakapadangaLarangukoNdana
tharumamuyarnthathithennan^inRana
tharumanirantha thisainthu senRana
sakadamudainthu kalanga venRana
thamar_ka Lurunthu marunthi thenbana
thirumagaL seyya karangaLonRina





thigazhthu Lavunthu maNanga mazhnthana
sezhumaNi koNda silambilangina
silaithanilan ROraNangu mizhnthana
arumaRaiyantha mamarntha paNpina
ayanmudi thannilamarnthu yarnthana
aruLthara veNNiya yinthaivanthana
adiyavar meyyar malarppathangaLE.

This is a sixteen lined verse (PathinARu Aasiriya viruttham) constituted by Four quartets. This Paasuram extols the glories of the Sacred ThiruvadikaL (the redeeming Feet) of Lord DhaivanAyakan. The miracles performed by these glorious feet and their parama Soulabhyam are saluted. The miracles performed by these auspicious feet during ThrivikramAvathAram, KrishNAvatham, RaamAvathAram are eulogized. Swamy Desikan concludes that the sacred feet of the Lord have now arrived at the dhivya dEsam of ThiruvahIndhrapuram to protect His BhaagavathAs. The chanda Nadai of the paasurams of this SrI Sookthi (Paasurams 1, 2, 3 and 8) have a beautiful musical effect as one recites. These paasurams are set to different TaaLams and have a lilting/mesmerizing effect. Let us study now the meanings of individual passages of this Paasuram :

“Adiyavar meyyar malar padhangaL oru mathi anbhar uLam kavarnthana”= The lotus feet of the Lord, who is unfailingly true to His ever loyal BhagavathAs keeps the minds of these dear one under His control.

“ulaham adanga vaLarnthu aLarnthana”= Those sacred feet grew to gigantic proportions during ThrivikramAvathAram and held the worlds under their sway and measured them.

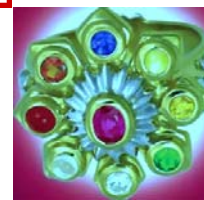
“oru sadAi onRiya Gangai tanthana”= They gave birth to the sacred Ganga river, which is united with the matchless matted locks of Lord SivA.

“uraha patangaL arangu koNDana”=They used the hoods of Serpent KaaLiyan as the dance stage.

“uyarnthathu dharumam ithu yenna ninRana”= They stayed as the highest of UpAyams for our protection.

“Dharuman iranthathu isainthu senRana”= They agreed to the request of Dharma Puthran and went on a mission of speaking for the PaaNDavAs at the court of DuryOdhana.

“sakaDam udainthu kalanga venRana”= They were victorious over SakatAsuran through a



powerful kick to destroy him.

“ithu tamarkaL arunthum marunthu yenpana”= These sacred Thiruvadis are the sure medicine for the BhagavathAs to overcome the disease of SamsAram.

“ThirumahaL seyya karankaL onRina”= They are united with the lotus red hands of Periya PirAtti.

“thihazh thuLavu unthum maNam kamazhnhana”= They carry the sacred fragrance of the shining TuLasi.

“sezhu maNi koNDa silambu ilangina”= They are united with the anklets (siLampu/ noopuram) containing the red gems.

“anRu silai tanil oru aNangu umizhnhana”= During the RaamaavathAram, they released the woman (Rishi Pathni), who had been trapped inside a stone due to Her husband's curse.

“aru maRai antham amarntha paNpina”= They have the glory of being seated inside the rare VedAnthams (Upanishads).

“ayan mudi tannil amarnthu uyarhna”= They grew further upward after being seated on the head of Brahma dEvan at Sathya IOkam.

“aruL tara yeNNi Ayindhai vanthana”= They arrived at ThiruvahIndhrapuram for the purpose of showering their grace on SaraNagathAs. How grand indeed are their SoulabhyaM?



Kaalinganarthanar- Oothukaadu



PAASURAM 2:

மகரம்வளரு மளவில்பெளவமடைய வுற்றலைத்தனை
வடிவுக மடமென வமர்ந்து கிரிதனைத் தரித்தனை
மலியுமசுரனு ரமிடந்து வசுதையைப்பெ யர்த்தனை
வலிகொளவுணனுடல் பிளந்து மதலை மெய்க்கு தித்தனை
பகருமுலக மடியளந்து தமர்களுக் களித்தனை
பரசமுனிவன் வடிவுகொண்டு பகைவரைத் துணித்தனை
பணியவிசைவில் தசமுகன்றன் முடிகள் பத்துதிர்த்தனை
படியுமுருவில் வருபிலம்ப வசுரனைத் தகர்த்தனை
நகரிதுவரையென வுகந்துவரை கரத்தெடுத்தனை
நடமொடிய லுபரியில் வந்துநலிவ றுக்கவுற்றனை
நலியும் வினைகள் செகுமருந்தின் நலமுறைந்த வெற்பினை
நணுகு கருடநதி கிளர்ந்த புனலுகப் பில்வைத்தனை
அகரமுதலவுரை கொள்மங்கை கணவனுக்களித்தனை
அடையும் வினதை சிறுவனுய்ய வருள்கொடுத்து யர்த்தினை
அடியு மணையு மெனு மனந்தனடி தொழக்க ளித்தனை
அவனிமருவு திருவயிந்தை யடியவர்க்கு மெய்யனே.

makaramvaLaru maLavilpeLavamadaiya vuRRalaitthanai
vadivuka madamena vamarnthu kirithanaith thariththanai
maliyumasuranu maidanthu vasuthaiyaippearth theduththanai
valikoLavuNanudal piLanthu mathalai meykku thiththanai
karumulaka madiyaLanthu thamarmaLuk kaLiththanai
parasumunivan vadivukoNdu pagaivaraith thuNiththanai





paNiya isaivu ill DasamukhanRan mudukaL paththuthirththanai
 padiyumuruvil varupilamba vasuranaith thagarththanai
 nagarithuvaraiyena vuganthuvarai karaththeduththanai
 nadamodiya lupariyil vanthun^aliva RukkavuRRanai
 naliyum vinaikaL segumarunthin nalamuraintha veRpinai
 nanugu karudan^athi kiLarntha punalukap pilvaiththanai
 akaramuthalavurai koLmangai kaNavanukkaLiththanai
 aadaiyum vinadhai siRuvanuyya varuLkoduththu yarththinai
 aadiyu maNaiyu menu manandhanadi thozhakka Liththanai
 avanimaruvu thiruvayinthalai yadiyavarkku meyyanE.

The Second Paasuram is set in IrupattheNN (28) SeerAsiriya Chanda Viruttham and also has 16 lines of echoing back and forth chanda nadai. It will be a treasure for Mrudhanga VidvAns to accompany during the singing of this Paasuram.

This Paasuram passages celebrate ThiruvahIndhrapura EmperumAn as DasAvathAran in style evocative of the AzhwArs in their paasurams. The PurANic reference to ThiruvahIndhrapuram is also included here. The anugrahams conferred on SamsAris, Brahma, Nithya Sooris like Adhi sEshan, Garuda and BhUmi DEvi at this KshEthram are referred to in this Paasuram. As “MoovarAhiya Oruvan”, Lord DevanAthan has the symbols of Lotus (for Brahma), the Third eye and Jadai (for Rudran) and Sankha-Chakram (for VishNu) in His Archa Vighram at Thiruvayindhali.

Swamy Desikan seems to have been inspired by the DasAvathAra Paasurams of Thirumnagai on Lord DevanAthan. Thirumangai sang only about Nrusimha, Raama, KrishNa and Vaamana avathArams. Swamy completed the coverage of the rest in this one paasuram.

MEANINGS OF THE PASSAGES OF THE SECOND PAASURAM

“avani maruvu Thiruvayinthalai adiyavarkku meyyanE”= Oh Lord who is true to His BhagavathAs presiding over the dhivya dEsam of ThiruvahIndhrapuram on this earth !

“makaram vaLarumaLavil pouvam adaya uRRu alaitthanai”= When You grew to a giant form as a Fish during Your MatsyAvathAram, you filled up the ocean and shook it.

“vadivu kamadam yena amarnthu giri tanai dariththanai”= During the KoormAvathAram, You stayed on the floor with steadiness and held the Mandhara mountain on Your gigantic





back.

“maliyum asuran uram idanthu Vasudhayai peyarththanai”= During Your Varaaha avathAram, You broke the chest of the aggressive HiraNyAkshan and lifted up Your divine consort, BhUmi DEvi.

“Vali koLL avuNan udal piLanthu mathalai meykku uthiththanai”= To keep Your bhakthA's words as true, You incarnated from a pillar, while tearing apart the chest of the mighty strong asuran.

“paharum ulakam adi aLanthu tamarhaLuku aLiththanai”= You presented to the DevAs, Your adiyavars, all the universes, which Bali declared were his own.

“Parasu munivan vadivu koNDu pahaivarai tuNiththanai”= You incarnated as ParasurAman and killed your enemies- the Kashathrians.

“PaNiya isaivu ill DasamukhanRan mudikaL patthu uthirththani”= You cut off the ten heads of RaavaNan, who refused to surrender at Your sacred feet.

“Padiyum uruvil varu Pilamba asuranai taharththanai”= As BalarAman, You destroyed the ill meaning Pralampa asuran, who appeared the form of gopan (Shepherd boy).

“nahari Tuvarai yena uhanthu varai karaththu yeduththanai”= You incarnated as KaNNan and lifted the Govardhana giri and held it with your little finger and protected all the residents of Gokulam.

“nadamodu iyalu pariyil vanthu nalivu aRukka uRRanai”= You incarnated as Kalki at the end of Kali yugam, rode on a dancing horse and chased away the ills of Kali yugam and established the dharmams of Krutha yugam.

“naliyum vinaikaL chekum marunthin nalam uRaintha veRpina (koNdanai)”= You took Your residence near Oushadha Giri, the auspicious mountain that is the curative medicine for the disease of SamsAram that torments the SamsAris.

“naNuhu Garuda nathi kiLarntha punal uhappil vaiththanai”= You accepted the dhivya theertham from the nearby Garuda Nathi as some thing pleasurable to You.

“urai koLL mangai kaNavanukku akaram mudhala aLiththanai”= You instructed Brahma Devan, --the husband of Sarasvathi Devi, who is of the form of speech--on all the VedAs.





“adayum Vinathai siRuvan uyya aruL kodutthu uyarththinai”= You blessed the son of Vinathai, Garuda and lifted him to occupy the auspicious position on Your flag.

“adiyum aNayum yenum Ananthan adi thozha kaLiththanai” = You are delighted by the worship of Your sacred feet by Aadhi Seshan, who is Your Sri Padhukai and comfortable bed.

In the fourth Paadham of this Paasuram, Swamy DEsikan refers to Brahma, Garuda, Aadhi Seshan and BhUmi Piratti. This reference is in accordance with the Sthala PurANam, which acknowledges the existence of four PuNya theerthams linked to the names of Brahma, Garuda, Aadhi Seshan and BhUmi Devi. These four theerthams were created by the above Four for the use and delight of the Lord and Swamy Desikan acknowledges the incidents referred to in the Sthala PurANam in the fourth Paadham.



Dasaavatharam





PAASURAM 3:

புரமுயர்த்த வசுரர்கட்கு ஓர்புறமுரைத்த பொய்யினான்
வரையெடுத்து மழைதடுத்த மழையொடொத்த மெய்யினான்
திரைநிரைத்த கடலெரித்த சிலைவளைத்த கையினான்
அருள்கொடுத்து வினைதவிர்க்கும் அடியவர்க்கு மெய்யனே.

puramuyarththa vasurar_katku Or_puRamuraththa poyyinaan
varaiyeduththu mazhathaduththa mazhaiyoduththa meyyinaan
thirain^iraththa kadaleriththa silaivaLaththa kaiyinaan
aruLkoduththu vinaithavirkkum adiyavarkku meyyanE.

The dhivya ChEstithams (Divine Mysterious acts) of Lord DEvanAthan become the subject matter for this Paasuram, which has 4 lines and has the viruttham of yEzhu (7) SeerAsiriya Viruttham. The destruction of ThripurAsurans, the Indhra Garva Bhangam during KrishNavathAram through the lifting of the Govardhana Giri to protect the inhabitants of gokulam and the teaching of lesson to Samudhra Raajan during RaamAvathAram at DhanushkOti are covered here as well as VeerarAghavan's destruction of RaavaNan and his city. Swamy Desikan instructs us that The Lord of ThiruvahIndhrapuram known for such divine acts will remove our sins with abiding compassion.

“puram uyarththa asurarhatkku ohr puRam uraittha poyyinAn”= For the three asurAs, who took the form of cities and caused too much harm to the world, You took the form of Bhouldhan and instructed the three AsurAs with false doctrines so that they lost their power and fell into narakam.

“varai yedutthu mazhai taduttha mazhayODu ottha mEyyinAn”= Oh Lord with the hue of the cloud during the rainy season ! You lifted and held Govardhana hill on Your little finger to protect the residents of Gokulam from the fierce stone rain ordered by Indhran.

“tirai niraiththa kadal yerittha silai vaLaittha kaiyinAn”= You are the Lord, who bent the bow to punish the king of the ocean, when he ignored Your request to grant permission to build a dam over him to reach LankA.





“aruL kodutthu vinai tavirkkum adiyavarkku MeyyanE”= The most merciful Lord, who chases away our sins with great compassion is the Lord of ThiruvahIndhrapuram known as adiyavarkku Meyyan.



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PAASURAM 4:

தேசொத்தாரில்லையெனும் தெய்வநாயகனார்
வாசக்குழல் மாமலராள் மணவாளர்
வாசித்தெழுமன்மதனார் மணற்றோப்பில்
மாசிக்கடலாடி மகிழ்ந்து வருவாரே.

thEsoththaarillaiyenum theyvan^aayakanaar
vaasakkuzhal maamalaraaL maNavaaLar
vaasiththezhumanmathanaar maNaRROppil
maasikkadalaadi magizhnthu varuvaarE.

This paasuram is in kali Viruttham and celebrates the famous uthsavam during the month of Maasi, when the constellation Makam is in ascendance. On that day, Lord Devanathan travels to the ocean near by and has His Thirumanjanam with ocean water (DevanAm



Thiruvaheendrapuram Devanathan





Pattinam) followed by Veda mantrams.

Sri HemAbhja Valli ThAyAr's other name is Taranga Mukha Nandhini. As a little child, She enjoyed very much the sight of breaking waves of the ocean touching Her feet in reverence. Her foster father, Bhrgu Rishi took Her to the sea side for pleasing Her. Later, Her husband made Her joyous by traveling with Her to the same sea side so She can enjoy the sight of the breaking of the waves.

When the Lord DevanAthana travels to the sea side, Swamy Desikan went on anuyAthra on these Uthsavams and is paying special tribute to that unique uthsavam (Kadal neerAttam), where Taranga Mukha Nandini takes delight in looking at the breaking waves on the Ocean shore.

“vaasa Kuzhal Maa MalarAL MaNavALar tEsu otthAr illai DhaivanAyakanAr”= Lord DhaivanAyakan, the husband of the lotus born lady (HemAbhjavalli) with the most fragrant tresses has no one who matches His tEjas.

“Masi Kadal aadi vaasitthu yezhum Mann mathan Aar maNal thOppil mahinzhnthu varuvAr”= Lord Dhaiva Naayakan travels to the sea side on the avabhrutha snAnam day of the BrahmOthsavam during the Month of Maasi and goes for a stroll in the sandy groves by the ocean and enjoys it immensely.





PAASURAM 5:

உருளுஞ்சகடமொன்றுதைத்தாய்
உலகமேழு முண்டுமிழ்ந்த ளந்தாய்
பொருளுமழலு மிறையாகப்
பூண்டேன் அடிமையினின் மீண்டேன்
இருளும் மருளுந் தருமந்நாள்
எழிலாராழிசங்கேந்தி
அருளுந்தெருளுந் தரவென்பால்
அடியோர் மெய்ய வந்தருளே.

uruLuncagadamonRuthaiththaay
ulagamEzhu muNdumizhntha Lanthaay
poruLumazhalu miRaiyaakap
pooNdEn adimaiyinin meeNdEn
iruLum maruLun tharuman^n^aaL
ezhilaaraazhisangEnthi
aruLuntheruLun tharavenpaal
adiyOr meyya vantharuLE.

In this aRuseerAsiriya Vruttham, Swamy Desikan prays for the boon of anthima smruthi (memory of Lord DevanAtham) during his last moments on this earth with “the ajn~Anam-chasing Chakram” and “the Jn~Anam-granting Sankham” in His hands just as he did in Gopala Vimsathi (adharAhitha chAru vamsanALaa: makutAlampI mayUra pinchamAlA; harineela silA vibhanga neelA: prathibhA: santu mamaanthima prayaaNe).

Oh Lord, who in your days as an infant resting in a cradle destroyed SakadAsuran with a swift kick of Your feet, when he approached your cradle with intentions to cause harm to You! Oh Lord, who destroys the seven worlds during the PraLya Kaalam, creates them in the Srushti kaalam and measures them during Your avathAram as Thrivikraman! Oh Lord who stays in ArchA form at ThiruvahIndhrapuram as adiyavarkku Meyyan! adiyEn has rejected the fruits





of arTam and kaamam as inappropriate for my well being and have rejected them. adiyEn has chosen Kaimkaryam to You alone as my vrutthi (livelihood). adiyEn may fail to think of You during my last moments on this earth due to my ajn~Anam and Vipareetha Jn~Anam. adiyEn is addressing my prayers now for You to appear before me with Your Chakram and Sankham during those last moments to drive away the enemies of Ajn~Anam and Vipareetha Jn~Anam with Your two powerful weapons.

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Thiruvaheendrapuram Moolavar





PAASURAM 6:

வஞ்சனை செய்த பூதனையை மலியுஞ்சாட்டை
மல்லரையோர் மதகளிற்றை வானோரஞ்சுங்
கஞ்சனை, முன்கடிந்தவனி பாரந்தீர்த்த
காவலனே கோவலனாய் நின்றகோவே
அஞ்சன முங்காயா வுமனையமேனி
அடியவர்க்கு மெய்யனே அயிந்தைவாழும்
மஞ்செனவே யருள்பொழியும் வள்ளலே நின்
வடிவழகு மறவாதார் பிறவாதாரே.

vanchanai seytha poothanaiyai maliyunchaattai
mallaraiyOr mathakaLiRRai vaanOranchuNG
kanchanai mun_kadinthavani paarantheerntha
kaavalanE kOvalanaay ninRakOvE
anchana mungaayaa vumanaiyamEni
adiyavarkku meyyanE ayinthaivaazhum
manchenavE yaruLpozhiyum vaLLalE nin
vadivazhagu maRavaathaar piRavaathaarE.

This paashuram set in YeNN (8) seerAsiriya Viruttham. Swamy Desikan visualizes the Lord of ThiruvahIndhrapuram as KrishNAvatharan and states that those blessed souls, who do not forget the unparalleled beauty of this Lord will never ever be born in this Karma BhUmi. Swamy Desikan assures us that those who have anthima smruthi of the Lord will be blessed with the anugraham of Moksham.

This Paasuram has links to the sIOkam in Sri Gopala Vimsathy referring to anthima smruthi. The memorable and almost cryptic passage from this paasuram is “Ninn Vadivazhahu MaRavAthAr PiRavAthArE” (One who does not forget the unparalleled beauty of Yours will never be born again in this karma bhUmi).





Swamy Desikan addresses the Lord as “Adiyavarkku Meyyan” (Natha Sathyan) here. The concept of the Lord being true to His devotees is a very important one for us to remember. He is Bhaktha sulabhan. Swamy Desikan salutes the Lord for all His upakArAmS to lighten the burden of Bhumi Devi by destroying BhUtanaI, SakadAsuran, the wrestlers in KamsA's court, the royal elephant, KuvalayApeetam and Kamsan during His incarnation as KrishNa BhagavAn. In spite of Your matchless valour, You incarnated as a simple cowherd in Gokulam. How can adiyEn describe adequately Your guNams of KaruNai and generosity for Your devotees, which drenches them with the blissful anubhavams all the time? Oh Lord who resides at all times at Ayindhai Maanahar (ThiruvahIndhrapuram)! Those noble souls, who enjoy Your incomparable beauty and Your hue as a bluish black mountain of coleryium and KaayAm Poo (blue flower) will be rid of all karma bhandhams and will never ever be born in this SamsArIc world.

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Therazhandur Ayan





PAASURAM 7:

மையுமாகடலும் மயிலுமாமழையும்
மணிகளுங் குவளையுங்கொண்ட
மெய்யனே அடியோர் மெய்யனே விண்ணோ
ரீசனே நீசனெனடைந்தேன்
கையு மாழியுமாய்க் களிறு காத்தவனே
காலனார் தமரெனைக் கவராது
ஐயனே வந்தன் றஞ்சலென் றருள் தென்
னயிந்தைமா நகர மர்ந்தானே.

maiYumaakadlumayilumaa mazhaiyum
maNikaLungu vaLaiyungoNda
meyyanE adiyOr meyyanE viNNO
reesanE neesanEnadainthEn
kaiyu maazhiyumaayk kaLiRu kaaththavanE
kaalanaar thamarenaik kavaraathu
iyanE vanthanRancha lenRaruL then
nayinthaimaa nagara marnthaanE

The seventh Paasuram set in yEzhu (7) seerAsiriya Viruttham. This paasuram is a prayer for freedom from the sufferings in narakam. Swamy Desikan requests the Lord for abhaya PradhAnam and freedom from the horrors of naraka Vaasam and punishments there by the servants of Yama dharman (KaalanaAr tamar yennaik kavaraAthu, anRu vanthu anjal yenRaruL). The reference here is to “Maa sucha:” section of the Charama sIOkam Swamy Desikan also refers to Gajendra calling “Aadhi MoolamE” and the Varadhan rushing to the elephant's rescue.

The poetic skills of Swamy Desikan in comparing the Lord's hues to many objects with blue color (assembly of Coleryium, Majestic blue ocean, the peacock, rainy season cloud, Indhraneela gem stone, Karu Neythal pushpam/NeelOthpalam) are self-evident. Swamy





performs SaraNagathy to the adiyavarkku Meyyan of Ayindhai now. He prays for the Lord's quick intervention during the last moments of his life (anthima Kaalam) and begs the Lord to save him from the pull of the approaching servants of Yama Dharman and seeks abhaya PradhAnam just as He did before for the GajEndhran struggling with the powerful crocodile.

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Gajendravaran Allikeni





PAASURAM 8:

மஞ்சலாவு சோலை சூழ யிந்தை மன்னு மன்னுசீர்
வரையெடுத்து நிரையளித்த மாசில் வாசுதேவனே
செஞ்சொலன்பர் சிந்தை கொண்டு தீதிலாத தூதனாய்த்
தேருமூர்ந்து தேசுயர்ந்த செல்வ தெய்வ நாயக
வெஞ்சொலாளர் காலதூதர் வீசு பாசம் வந்தென்மேல்
விழுந்தழுந்தி யானயர்ந்து வீழ்வதற்குமுன்ன நீ
அஞ்ச லஞ்ச லஞ்ச லென்றளிக்க வேண்டுமச்சுதா
அடியவர்க்கு மருளியக்கு மடியவர்க்கு மெய்யனே.

manchulaavu sOlai soozha yinthaI mannu mannuseer
varaiyeduththu niraiyaLiththa maasil vaasuthEvanE
sencholanbar sinthai koNdu theethilaatha thoothanaayth
thErumoorntu thEsuyarntha selvam theyva naayaka
vecholaalLar kaalathoothar veesu paasam vanthenmEl
vizhunthazhunthi yaanayarnthu veezhvathaRkumunna nee
ancha lancha lancha lenRaLikka vENDumachchuthaa
adiyavarkku maruLiyakku madiyavarkku meyyanE.

The 8th paasuram is set in pathinAnku (14) seerAsiriya Viruttham, the double of the previous yezhu seerAsiriya Viruttham. Swamy Desikan reminds the Lord of the many upakArams done by Him to those, who cried out to Him for protection, when they faced danger. And Swamy Desikan prays to Achyuthan (Adiyavarkku Meyyan /Natha Satyan/Sathya Vrathan) to come to his rescue by offering His RakshaNam before the Yama DhUthars arrive to cast their noose on him (kaala dhuthar veesu paasam yenn mEl vanthu veezhnthu azhunthi, yaan aayarnthu veezhvatharkku munnam, Nee ANJAL, ANJAL, ANJAL yenRu aLikka vENDum). The request is for the Lord to declare thrice the word “Anjal” (Abhaya pradhAnam) for his sake. Swamy Desikan will go on to create a magnificent Sri Sookthi revered now as Abhaya PradhAna Saaram later.





The deeply moving and endearing salutations of Swamy Desikan in this Paasuram are matchless in their beauty :

“Manju ulAvu sOlai Soozh Ayindhai mannum mannu seer VaasudEvanE !”= Oh Lord living eternally (nithya vaasam) at the dhivya dEsa of ThiruvahIndhrapuram, where the gently moving clouds travel amidst verdant groves !

“mannu seer Varai yedutthu nirai aLittha maasuil VaasudEvanE !”= Oh Lord of established residence of Your limitless, auspicious and blemishless guNams who lifted the Govardhana hill to protect the herds of cows and calves of Gokulam against the anger of Indhran !

“semm soll anbar sinthai koNDu theethu ilAtha thUtanAi Oorndhu tEsu uyarntha DhaivanAyaka!”= Oh Lord DhaivanAyaka who travelled to DuryOdhanA's court as a blemishless ambassador to convey the just request of the PaanDavAs, who were dear to You and who served later as the tEjOmaya SaaraTy for Your friend Arjuna!

“AcchuthA ! adiyavarkku maruL iyakkum adiyavarkku MeyyanE!”= Oh Lord who never abandons those who seek Your protection! Oh Lord who chases away their nescience of Your dear devotees and is true to them always!

“vemmm solALar Kaala dhUthar veesu paasam yenn mEl vanthu vizhunthu azhunthi yaann ayarnthu veezhvathaRkku munnam Nee anjal anjal anjal yenRu aLikka vENDum”= Before the Kaala Paasam of the harsh speaking servants of Yama dharman falls on me, knocks me of my feet and tightens its (paasam's) grip and makes me suffer, please rush to my side and protect me with assurances of freedom from fear from these Yama dhUthars!

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Geetopadesam





PAASURAM 9:

பொருத்தம் பொருந்தலும் போகுந்தவற்றுடன் பொய்ம்மதிமேல்
விருத்தங்கலிதுறை மேவுமழன்மதம் வேறினியென்
திருத்தமனத்தினிற் சேராவெமைத் தெய்வநாயக, நின்
வருத்தம் பொறாவருளால் மன்னடைக் கலங்கொண்டருளே.

poruththam porunthalam pOgunthavaRRudan poymmathimEl
viruththangalithuRai mEvumazhanmatham vERiniyen
thiruththamanaththiniR sEraavemaith theyvan^aayaka, nin
varuththam poRaavaruLaal mannadaik kalangoNdaruLE.

This Paasuram is set in KattaLai KalitthuRai format. And Swamy Desikan performs saraNAgathi here at the Thiruvadi of Lord Dhaiva Naayakan and thanks the Lord for blessing him to compose the nine Tamizh and Sanskrit Prabhandhams on Him. He acknowledges that he harvested the fruits of that Kaimkaryam commanded by the Lord (Mukundhan aruL tantha payan peRREn). He seeks now adaikkalam. His appeal for protection by the Lord is a moving one.

Oh DhaivanAyakA! For those who have vowed to perform only Kaimkaryams that please Your ThiruvuLLam, all his aparAdhams arising from ajn~Anam, Vipareetha Jn~Anam, the ever-growing kaamam and ego will be totally destroyed (“Poruttham porunthalam tavaRRudan poymmathi mEl viruttham kalitthu uRai mEvum azhal madham pOhum”). “poruttham porunthuthal” refers to Aanukoolya sankalpam. Poymmathi and Viruttham refer to ajn~Anam and vipareetha Jn~Anam. The ever growing flames of desire (Kaamam) is compared to the tongues of Agni fed by ghee (Azhal).

Swamy identifies himself as Aakinchanyan and ananya gathi and who is imperfect in all aspects (manaththinil thiruttham sErA yemmai) and performs his SaraNAgathy with great remorse (nirvEdham). He addresses the Lord as One with the unique grace that will not bear to see any sufferings on the part of His dear ones (Varuttham poRA Ninn aruLAI) and appeals to the Lord to give him permanent refuge and protection (nann adaikkalam koNDaruL). Swamy Desikan concludes this paasuram with a moving statement that there is nothing else to desire after having performed Prapatthi at the sacred feet of the Lord of ThiruvahIndhrapuram (ini vERu yenn?).





ThUppul Desikan





PAASURAM 10:

அந்தமில் சீரயிந்தை நகரமர்ந்த நாதன்
அடியிணைமேல் அடியுரையாலைம்பதேத்திச்
சிந்தைகவர் பிராகிருதம் நூறு கூறிச்
செழுந்தமிழ் மும்மணிக்கோவை செறியச் சேர்த்துப்
பந்து கழலம்மாளை யூசலேசல்
பரவு நவமணி மாலையிவையுஞ்சொன்னேன்
முந்தைமறை மொழிய வழிமொழி நீயென்று
முகுந்தனருள் தந்த பயன் பெற்றேன் நானே.

anthamil seerayinthal nagaramantha naatha
nadiyiNaimEl adiyuraiyalaimpathEththich
sinthaikavar piraakirutham nooRu kooRich
sezhunthamizh mummaNikkOvai seRiyach sErththum
panthu kazhalammanai yoosalEsal
paravu navamaNi maalaiyivaiyunchonnEn
munthaimaRai mozhiya vazhimozhi neeyenRu
mukunthanaruL thantha payan peRREn naanE.

(MEANING):

The Lord at ThiruvahIndhrapuram of matchless glory commanded me to sing the meanings of Vedhams in the form of sthOthrams. adiyEn followed the Lord's command on my head and composed sthOthrams extolling His sacred feet (1) Sri DevanAyaka PanchAsath in the great language of Sanskrit, which is the Mother for all languages (2) Sri Acchutha sathakam in the lilting praakrutham language, which Devi Saraswathy spoke when She was a child and (3) seven Prabhandhams of MummaNikkOvai, Panthu, Kazhal, Ammanai, Oosal, yEsal and Nava MaNi Maalai in chaste and rich language of Tamil. adiyEn has now fulfilled His command. All of these Prabhandhams and SthOthrams in the three languages are fit for anusandhanam by all the SaathvikAs.





ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS ON NAVA MANI MAALAI

Swamy Desikan named this SrI Sookthi as “Nava Mani Maalai” following the grammar traditions in observing the rules of Tamil poetry. In Tamil poetry, there are 9 types just like the nine gems in a Nava Rathna MaNi Maalai.

These Paasurams shine like the nine gems representing the nava grahams:

1. Ruby for Sun (Sooryan)
2. Pearl for Moon (Chandran)
3. Red Coral for Mars (AnghArakan)
4. Emerald for Mercury (Budhan)
5. Yellow sapphire for Jupiter (Guru)
6. Diamond for Venus (Sukran)
7. Blue Sapphire for Saturn (Sani)
8. Hessonite for (Raahu)
9. Cat's eye for (KEthu)

There are Veda Manthrams for each of the above nine grahams (Gems). Navagraha Saanthi Homam for those (non prapannAs) who wish to get the blessings of these individual grahams. A prapanna SrI VaishNavan does not perform worship to any one of these grahams but only to SrIman NaarAyaNan, the indweller of them all.

Many however wear Navarathna Maalai or the ring consisting of these nine gems with Ruby at the center and the rest in their allotted positions around the Sun in a square pattern to ward off Nava graha dhOshams.

Swamy Desikan in one of the powerful SrI RanganAtha PaadhukA Sahasra sIOkams paid tribute to the PaadhukAs of Lord RanganAtha as the controller of the power of these Nava grahams.

Two or three years ago, we were fortunate to present a double strand Nava Mani Maalai to ThiruvahIndhrapuram SrI DevanAtha PerumAl and a MummaNikkOvai to His Divine Consort Sri HemAbhjavalli ThAyAr. The concluding phase of that series of Kaimkaryam arrived during the SamarpaNam of the RathnAngi for Lord DeavanAtha PerumAL on September 16, 2005 at Ayindhai Maa Nahar during the annual PurattAsi Uthsavam for Swamy Desikan.

Garuda PurANam (68.17) and Agni PurANam (246.7-8) dwell on the auspiciousness





conferring power of these gems.

MACROSCOPIC VIEW OF THIS PRABHANDHAM

In this Prabhandham of Nava MaNi Maalai, Swamy Desikan speaks about the glories of EmperumAn's sacred feet and next about His ten avathArams. He follows it up with the salutation to the sacred theerthams created at ThiruvahIndhrapuram by Brahma, Garudan, Aadhi Seshan and BhUmi Piraatti on the banks of which the Lord stays with affection. Swamy Desikan next elaborates on the Lord's travel to the seas side during the month of Maasi to enjoy His uthsavam at the sandy dunes and points out that those who have not forgotten His beauty will be freed from the cycles of births and deaths. He concludes the Nava MaNi Maalai by pleading with the Lord to grant him abhaya pradhAnam during his last moments on earth and acknowledges his composition of nine SrI sookthis on the Lord of ThiruvahIndhrapuram (1 in Sanskrit, 1 in PrAkrutham and 7 in Tamil) in response to the command of the Lord.

THE VAIBHAVAM OF THE LORD'S SACRED FEET

oru mathi anbhar uLam kavarnthana

ulaham adanga vaLarnthu aLanthana

oru saDai onRiya Gangai tanthana

urha paDangaL angu koNDana (Nava MaNi Maalai Paasuram : Lines 1-4)

ஒருமதியன்பருளங்க வர்ந்தன

உலகமடங்க வளர்ந்தளந்தன

ஒருசடையொன்றியகங்கைதந்தன

உரகபடங்களரங்குகொண்டன

(MEANING):

The sacred lotus feet of Lord DevanAthan, who is true to His devotees, enchant the minds of the ParamaikAnthis and make them meditate on those holy feet all the time. Such are their Vaibhavam! Those sacred feet rose to a gigantic size and contained all the worlds under them. They created the GangA River and made Lord Siva a Parisuddhan by letting Him hold that sacred river in His matted locks. During KrishNAvathAram, those sacred feet used the hoods of the fiercely poisonous serpent, KaaLingan as the theater for their dance.





dharumam uyar nthathu ithu yenna ninRana
Dharuman iran thathu isainthu senRana
sakadam udainthu kalanga venRana
tamarkaL arunthum marunthu yenbana (Paasuram 1: Lines 5-8)

தருமமுயர்ந்ததிதென்னநின்றன
தருமனிரந்த திசைந்து சென்றன
சகடமுடைந்து கலங்க வென்றன
தமர்களருந்து மருந்தி தென்பன

(MEANING):

These sacred feet are powerful to grant adiyArs their desired phalans by manifesting as the unique and wonderous upAyam. They chose to go even to DuryOdhanan's court as an ambassador at the request of Dharmaputhrar. Those feet destroyed into shreds the asuran, who came in the form of a wheel to kill Him during KrishNAvathAram. They are saluted by the SaasthrAs as the insatiable nectar and medicine for removing the sufferings from worldly afflictions (SamsAra tApams).

thirumahaL seyya karankaL onRina
thihazh TuLavu unthum maNam kamazh nthana
sezhumaNi koNDa silambu ilangina
silai tanil anRu ohr aNangu umizh nthana (Paasuram 1: Lines 9-12)

திருமகள் செய்ய கரங்களொன்றின
திகழ்து ளவுந்து மணங்க மழ்ந்தன
செழுமணி கொண்ட சிலம்பிலங்கின
சிலைதனிலன் றொரணங்கு மிழ்ந்தன

(MEANING):

Those sacred feet unite with the tender hands of MahA Lakshmi, when She presses them. They are fragrant with the perfume of sacred TuLasi from the archana's of adiyArs. They shine with the luster of the gem-studded ankle ornament and add beauty to the rathna





silampu through their union. During RaamAvathAram, they blessed Ahalyai to appear again in Her beautiful form as the wife of Gouthama and freed Her from the curse of Her husband.

aru maRai antham amarntha paNbina

ayan mudi tannil amarnthu uyarntana

aruL tara yeNNi Ayinthal vanthana

Adiyavar Meyyar malar PaadhangaLE (Paasuram1 :Lines 13-16)

அருமறையந்த மமர்ந்த பண்பின

அயன்முடி தன்னிலமர்ந்து யர்ந்தன

அருள்தர வெண்ணிய யிந்தைவந்தன

அடியவர் மெய்யர் மலர்ப்பதங்களே

(MEANING):

Those sacred feet have the vaibhavam of housing themselves inside Upanishads (VedAnthams). They sat on the head of Brahma and rose further up. They arrived at Thiru Ayinthal to bless Their adiyars. Those are the lotus soft and beautiful feet of the Lord eulogized as Natha Sathyan (Adiyavar Meyyan).

कवितार्किक सिंहाय कल्याण गुणशालिने ।

श्रीमते वेङ्कटेशाय वेदान्त गुरवे नमः ।

kavitaarkika siMhaaya kalyaana guNa shaaline.

shrImate ve~NkaTesaaya vedaanta gurave namaH.

Srimate Sri Lakshminrisimha Divya Paduka Sevaka

SrivaNN Satakopa Sri Narayana Yatindra Mahadesikaya Nama:

Sarvam KrishNArpaNam asthu,

Daasan,

Oppiliappan KOil VaradachAri SadagOpan

