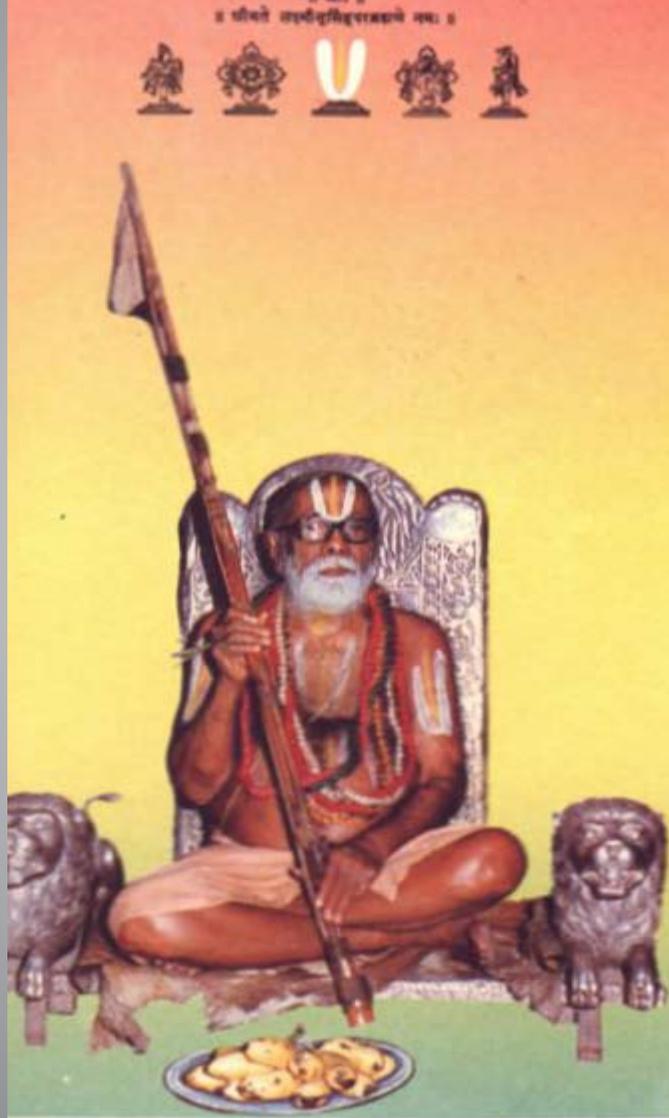


ಶೌಭಾರವಲ ಠಿ 44ಠೆ ಪಾಠಲ ಜೆಢಪುಠ ಠಿ
ಖಠಬೊಠ ಲಾಠಲ
ಙಠೆ ಠಢಾಠಾ ಠೆಢಙೊಠ ಪುಠಠಠೆಠ ಲಾಠಾಠೆಢಙೊಠ



By

Sri Oppliappan Koil Varadachari Sadagopan

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Sri Lakshmi Nrusimha ParabrahmaNE Nama :
Sri Vedaantha Desika Yatheendhra VaryAa namO nama:
Sri NaarAyaNa Yatheendhra Mahaa DesikAya namO nama:



H.H. 44th Pattam Sri Vedanta Desika Yatindra Mahadesikan

श्रीरङ्गनाथशठकोपयतीन्द्रदृष्टं लक्ष्मीनृसिंहशठजित्करुणैकपात्रम् ।

श्रीरङ्गवीररघुराट्शठकोपहृद्यं वेदान्तदेशिकयतीन्द्रमहं प्रपद्ये ॥

Birth date : Hastham, Aavani, Manmatha varusham (Aug, 1895)

Sanyasaasramam : Hayvilambi varusham, Karthigai, Sravanam (Nov 27, 1957)

Pattabishekam : Karthigai (Dec 6, 1957)

Paramapatham : Aangirasa varusham, 32nd day of Aadi, Krishna Truthiyai, Purattadi (Aug 16, 1992)

Nirvaham : 35 years

Brindavanam : Srirangam

AvaNI hastham , the birth day of one of the greatest yathisvarALs , who sat on the throne of AhObila Mata Peetam as the 44th SthAnAdhoathi Of Sri matam.



He is the great AchAryA, who built the southern Gopuram for Sri RanganAthA. His parent's name in this world was Sri RanganAthAn and Srimathi RanganAyaki. He performed the loftiest Kaimkaryam to Sriranga Divya Dampathis, Sri RanganAyaki SamEtha Sri RanganAthAn at a ripe age as Kaimkaryam by a vayOvrudhdhar to another vayOvrudhdhar. His unlimited mercy and dayA are well documented. At our house in ThiruviNNagar, our family had the great BhAgyam of receiving his Ponnadi, when he stayed twice for a few days. It is my great bhAgyam to dedicate a small samashti Kruthi in Raagam Hamsadhvani for this Parama hamsa MahA Purushar , a Vaazhi ThirunAmam and Vandhanam. May this Sri Vaikunta Vaasi continue to bless us all for all times to come!

AdiyEn places at the sacred feet of this Azhagiya Singar my humble salutations. AdiyEn will have another posting to cover the meanings of these salutations.

1. SAMASHTI KEERTHANAM (KRITHI WITH NO CHARANAM)

Raagam: Hamsadhvani, TaaLam: Aadhi

Pallavi: KanintharuLvAi KaruNaik kadale
KaathangaL kadanthu vanthadaintha Yemmai

Anupallavi:Sri Vaikuntam Vaazh Parama DesikanE
Jn~Ana ViLakkai yERRi yemmai kAppal

2.VAAZHI THIRUNAAMAMS

1. Sri RaamAnuja SiddhAnthA vijaya dhvajan VaazhiyE
2. Prapatthi Saasthratthai vaLarthOn VaazhiyE
3. BAha nadhik karayil uthitthOn VaazhiyE
4. AvaNi Hasthatthil avatharitthOn VaazhiyE
5. Jn~aNa ViLakkia yERRi ,iruL ahaRRiya Vitthahan VaazhiyE
6. Sakala KalyANa GuNa SampUrNan VaazhiyE
7. ParipUrNa BhOdha BhudhAgrEsan Naamam VaazhiyE
8. Sri Bhaashya Desikan yenRa pEr yedutthOn VaazhiyE
9. DayA Saagara sathakam aruLinOn Naamam VaazhiyE
10. Thiruppavaikku SubhOdhini yenRa VyAkhyAnam aruLinOn VaazhiyE
11. Sri Lakshmi Nrusimha KarAvampanam anugrahitthOn VaazhiyE
12. Sri Ranga Veera RaghurADD padha pannkaja HamsamAnOn VaazhiyE
13. AhObilatthil Raaja Gopuram kattinON VaazhiyE
14. ThiruvahIndhrapuratthil Karunkal Matam amaitthOOn VaazhiyE
15. MuppatthaindhaNDu ChAthurmAsyam kaNdaruLinOn VaazhiyE
16. Sritha vathsala PrabhuvAi ninRu rakshitthavan VaazhiyE
17. NaimisAraNyatthil Pattam sUdinOn VaazhiyE
18. InjimEdu Azhagiya Singar CharaNambhujA ShaDpadham AanOn VaazhiyE
19. Brahma Soothraartha Padhya Maalikai TanthOn VaazhiyE
20. PanchAmrutha, DhvAdasa sthOthrangal aruLinOn VaazjiyE

3.ACHARYA CHAATHUR VEDA VANDHANAMS

1. Sri Veera Raaghava MunIndhra KrupAvalampam DesikEndhram Aham BhajE
2. NirvyAja KrupA katAksha Vaibhava AchArya Rathnam Aham AasrayE
3. KalyANa SaanthAyaadhiGuNair Visishtam AchArya Varyam mansaa SmarAmi
4. Viraktha Moorthim, KaruNA Samudhram AchArya Saarvabhoomam sirasA Noumi

AMUDHA MOAZHIGAL OF PARAMAPADHA VAASEE, SRIVANN SATAKOPA SRI VEDANTHA DESIKA YATHEENDHRAR

It is my bhagyam to share with you the Amudha MoazhigaL of Paramapadha Vaasee, SrivaNN SatakOpa Sri VedAntha Desika Yatheendhrar, the Mahaan, who blessed the Achaarya peetam of the Ahobila Mutt. I hope you enjoyed his truly insightful summary of the individual verses of ThiruppAvai. Today, I will translate his moving essay on the glory of Prapatthi.

**Bhayam tyajatha bhadram vO dadhAthi karuNArNava: I
prapathyA tyaktha kOpassun pApinAmapi Madhava: II**

(meaning): Please abandon your fear ; He , the ocean of mercy blesses us with auspiciousness. Our Lord Maadhavan casts away His anger at those who have performed Prapatthi and chases away their sins and confers sarva mangaLam (on them with joy).

The adhikAris (qualified/eligible ones) who can practice Bhakthi yOgam in the manner prescribed by the VedAs are not too many; indeed it is doubtful that there has been any since NammAzhwAr attained Moksham through the practise of Bhakthi yOgam. Prapatthi maargam taught by our Lord to ArjunA is the most prevalent maargam for our deliverance form the cycles of birth and death (moksham).

The essence of Swami Desiakn's teaching is that Sriman NaarAyaNan gives the boon of equal moksham (sama moksham/no tAra tamyam) to all, who performed Prapatthi in the manner prescribed by sAsthrAs independent of their caste , creed , gender or status in life.

SaraNAgathi is of three kinds. One of them is the most important. The other two come next in significance. The most important one is called sva nishtai. Here, a mumukshu performs

kalakshEpam with a sadhAchAryan and learns about the anantha kalyANa guNAs of Sriman NaarAyaNA, His svarUpam , subhAsrayam (divya thirumEni); next he learns from the AchAryA about the svarUpa , rUpa guNAs of his own jeevAthmA followed by an understanding of the nature of SaraNAgathi, its limbs (angAs) and gets a clear conception of what is an angi. Afterwards, he learns about the appropriate manthram used to perform one's saraNAgathi and the tight correlations between the different angAs of saraNAgathi and the corresponding padhams of the prapatthi manthram. He learns about the particular padham that is connected with the angi part of saraNAgathi. Driven then by his virakthi and desire to reach paramapadham, he gets clear instruction from his achAryan about the prescribed and ancient method of performing saraNAgathi. At a time of his own choice, he then places the burden of protection of his athmA (the Lord's own property) at the sacred feet of Sriman NaarAyaNA , the owner of his athmA through the act of saraNAgathi (Bhara samarpaNam/Aathma nivedhanam). THIS IS SVA NISHTAI , THE HIGHEST MODE OF SARANAAGATHI.

There are not many, who have the needed qualifications to perform prapatthi through Svanishtai. It is doubtful, whether anyone has performed successfully svanishtai besides Swami Desikan some six hundred years ago. There may be some one, somewhere, but it is very doubtful.

The other two modes of saraNAgathi are known as AchhArya Nishtai and Ukthi Nishtai. People of all castes, creeds, gender or age are qualified to observe one or the other of these two modes of saraNAgathi.

The first of the two methods is Ukthi Nishtai. One stands in PrumAL sannidhi along with the AchAryA and looks at the PerumAL and repeats after the AchAryA, the words related to saraNAathi given as upadEsam by the AchAryA in a saastric manner.

The second of the two methods outside svanishtai is known as AchArya Nishtai. One approaches the learned AchAryan, falls at his feet and begs him to intercede with the Lord on his behalf. Then the AchAryan performs the saraNAgathi for his sishyan. AchArya Nishtai can be executed through a direct request or through an appeal not made in person. Some times, when one is too ill to travel to the AchAryA's side, then they write a letter or send a telegram, if it is an emergency, and beg the AchArya to intercede on his/her behalf through the performance of AchArya nishtai.

The compassionate AchAryAs themselves might elect to perform AchArya Nishtai for the children , dumb , blind , dim witted , lame and others, who are unable to participate in saraNAgathi fully due to their limitations of body or mind. The fruits of Moksham however is guaranteed for all of them. All are adhikAris for AchArya Nishtai and Ukthi Nishtai.

Lord Maadhavan controls His anger over the limitless sins accumulated by us, the Jeevans, and forgives our trespasses in the present and previous janmAs, once we perform saraNAgathi in the prescribed manner and blesses us with Moksha Sukham.

That we have many janmAs prior to saraNAgathi is clear from His own words, “ tava cha bahUni janmAni vyathithAni “. The sins accumulated over these span of many janmAs are beyond counting. Even the Lord has difficulty taking a measure of them. Even with all those limitless bundles of sins, the Lord out of His incomparable and infinite dayA quenches His anger and fulfills His promise made to ArjunA on the battle field:

**sarva dharmAn parithyajya mAmEkam saraNm vraja I
Aham tvA sarva pApEpyO mokshaishyAmi maa sucha : II**

You may still ask the question: Will the Lord give Moksham to one, who commits so many atrocities in this life and is recognized as a MahA Paapi ? The Lord will bless that MahA paapi too, since he has already said, “ saraNam vraja , sarva pApEpyO mokshayishyAmi “. After this categorical statement in GithA , there is no reason to doubt Him . It is foolish to intrepert the meaning of this charama sLOkam as promise to remove the sins collected in previous janmams only. It includes all the sins accumulated in this janmam as well. KUResa has said in this context:

“ Sri Ramachandran out of His infinite mercy forgave even the KaakAsuran , who committed the unpardonable offense of hurting Loka mAtha with his beak. Once that mahAparAdhi fell at Sri Rama’s feet and begged for protection, our Lord saved the asuran from the terrible damage of BrahmAstham. Therefore, I am hoping that the Lord will quench His anger at us, MahA paapis , when we perform SaraNAgathi and bless us with Moksham “.

Therefore, there is no doubt that even a MahA paapi will be protected by the all merciful Lord , if he performs saraNAgathi in this janmam. Do not be afraid. SaastrAs state that even if one has committed the heinous crime of killing one’s mother and father, the Lord will forgive even that person by controlling His anger, if he repents and seeks the Lord’s protection as a saraNAgathA.

Even if one has taken to stealing as a profession, even if one drinks alcohol inspite of his high birth as Brahmin, even if he acts like a friend and betrays one behind one’s back, even if he has committed brahmahatthi, even if he has coveted the wife of his AchAryA, even if he has murdered others, even if he has committed much worse sins, once he mutters the name of NaarAyaNA involuntarily or without intent during his last moments like AjAmiLan , then he is released of all paapAs according to Sukha Brahmam. If that is so, the effect of performing saraNAgathi recommended by the Lord in Bhagavadh GithA is bound to chase away all the paapams accumulated in this and previous janmAs. There need be no doubt about this. Therefore, we, the paapis can cast aside our fears and feel hopeful. Do not be deluded by the thought that you have to acquire tattva jn~nam through kalakshEpan and only thereafter qualify ourselves to perform saraNAgathi. What you have to do is to stand before your AchAryA in PerumAL sannidhi and repeat after the AchAryA the saranAgathi vaakyams, which state , “ I have given the object known as “ I “ to You ; please remove my paapams and protect me “. You do not even need to know , what that object referred to as “ I “ is.

AlavandhAr says in this context:

**VapurAdhishu yOpi kOpi vaa
guNa dhOshAni yathAtathA vaa I
tadhayam tava paadha padmayO :
ahamathyaiva mayA saampitha: II**

AlavandhAr says that Whatever may be the nature and attributes of this object known as aathmA, I have presented that object to You for protection.

Swami Desikan has pointed this tattvam in his Rahasya Traya Saaram and has said: “The Lord blesses even those, who do not have a full comprehension of the TattvAs and gives them Moksham, when they surrender to Him”.

PurANAs state that even a long term enemy of our Lord escapes damnation and is blessed with Moksham , when he performs saraNAgathi even during his last moments in his life due to some fortunate development. The example of KantAkarNan , an ancient enemy of the Lord is a testament to Lord’s dayA for one , who sought His refuge even after years of declared enimity.

I will cover in this posting an incident described by the PurANam about an enemy of the Lord, who received His blessings, when he surrendered finally to the Lord due to a fortuitous combination of circumstances.

H.H. the Azhagiya singar uses this incident to illustrate how it is not too late even for a sworn enemy of the Lord to receive His protection and blessings.



The incident of GhantA karNan

Once upon a time, there was a man with asura svabhavam with the name of Ghanta karNan. He hated SrIman NaarAyaNA steadfastly. He will not even look in the direction of SrIman NaarAyaNA or His bhakthAs. He cherished his enmity. He will not even let SrIman NaarAyaNA's name fall in his ear. To ensure that, he had tied big bronze bells on the top portion of each of his ears. If he sensed that anyone is going to utter the nAmAs of the Lord such as " NaarAyaNA , GovindhA " , he would shake his head violently so that the bells will ring and drown out the sound of the naamAs of the Lord. Even when he sensed the approach of the bhakthAs of the Lord , he will cause his bells over the ears to ring to avoid hearing the Lord's names.

He was however a great Siva Bhakthan. He will not eat without performing Siva PujA every day. He ate human flesh as well. He used to offer that and other flesh to Lord Siva. People used to run away from him for fear of being killed and eaten up. He roamed mostly in the forests and caves. The greatest joy for him was to perform puja for his ishta daivam , Lord SivA. He received a lot of blessings from his steadfast devotion to KailaasAdhipathi.

Lord SivA can bless one with long life as for MarkandEyan and kick Yama dharman with His feet. He can also bless His bhakthAs with Kailasa PrApthi. He can also make His devotees to develop bhakthi for SrIman NaarAyaNA. There is no doubt about that. That is why the sAsthAs state that one can realize bhakthi for SrIman NaarAyaNA ultimately, when one has bhakthi for Lord SivA untinged by bhagavadh dvEsham (hatred).

Ghanta karNan however performed PujA for Lord Siva while maintaining utter hatred for SrIman NaarAyaNan.

One day, a great sage by the name of Sankhu karNar crossed Ghanta karNan's path in the fores. The sage uttered the name of NaarAyaNA. When he heard the name of BhagavAn, Ghanta karNan went into a rage and started to shake his head violently that activated the bells. The sage misinterpreted the ringing of the bells to mean that Ghanta karNan(GK) was a bhakthA of BhagavAn , who was ecstatic about hearing the name of the Lord.

The sage approached GK to have "sathsangam". GK chased the sage away and answered the question of the sage and stated that he was a Siva Bhakthan. The sage asked GK the reasons why he was a Siva Bhakthan. GK did not answer him, but shouted back a question at the sage. He asked what sage Sankhu karNar was holding in his ears. The sage answered that he was holding the conches in his ears to realize moksham. GK asked what is moksham. The sage explained that it is the most blissful state, which cuts the cycles of births and deaths forever for the humans. GK asked the sage whether Lord SivA can confer that boon of moksham on him as his parama bhakthan. The sage said that he does not know and recommended that GK should take that question directly with Lord SivA.

GK rushed to KailAsam and requested that Lord SivA bless him with moksham. Lord SivA asked His bhakthan about the kind of moksham that GK desired. Gk answered: “ I want to get rid of all my difficulties on this earth , reach after my death the world of bliss from which there is no return to this earth “ . Lord SivA, who is parama dhayALu answered that Sriman NaarAyaNA alone can confer such a moksham on any one , who seek His protection through saraNAgathi.

GK was enraged at Lord SivA ‘s answer. He tore the bells from his ears and tied them on his hands (GhantA hasthan) and returned to the side of the waiting sage shouting “ NaarAyaNA , NaarAyaNA “. He described what happened at KailAsam and begged the sage to show him the place, where he can find Sriman NaarAyaNan.

The sage took pity on the suffering GhantA hasthan (GH) and pointed a yonder mountain and revealed that Sriman NaarAyaNan is there inside a cave of that mountain near a pond, where He was discussing with His consort, RukmiNi , about him (GH). The sage counselled GH to go to that cave and fall at the feet of Sri KrishNan and declere loudly that he was a helpless one (akinchanan) and he has no other recourse for protection (ananyagathi) and that he is falling at the BhagavAn’s sacred feet seeking His protction and moksham. The sage siad that BhagavAn will grant him the boon of Moksham, if he followed his instruction.

GH asked the sage as to what Sriman NaarAyaNan would look like so that he can recognize Him. The sage revealed that Sriman NaarAyaNA will be adorned with Sudarsanam, Paanchajanyam and His mace and will be seen in the company of Sri RukmANI.

GH got now more worried and queried the sage about the Lord avoiding him and not conferring the boon of Moksham because of his past enimity towards Him The sage assured GH that the Lord does not bear grudges and will respond immediately, when He hears the “ SaraNa “ sabdham and asked GH to approach the Lord with good thoughts and with MahA VisvAsam in Him as a grantor of Moksham.

GH took off to the entrance to the caves with some offerings of flesh in his hands, rang the bells in his hands and cried out with great longing “ NaarAyaNA , NaarAyaNA “. The Lord ran from inside the cave and GH fell at His feet and held on firmly to the lotus feet of the Lord and begged for forgivance and protection. The Lord wanted to shake his grip and run away from him. Sri RukmiNi dEvi interceded on behalf of GH and told Her Lord that it is not fair to abandon the SaraNAgathan. The Lord agreed and asked GH as to when he wanted Moksham. GH cried out and said that he wanted Moksham right away. The Lord granted his wish and mentioned that He is conferring Moksham to the younger brother of GH as well. At that moment, the jeevAthmA inside GH rose up from his falling body and ascended to Srivaikuntam via the archirAdhi maargam.

The sage SankhukarNar saw that uplifting sight and ran to the side of the Lord and begged for his own Moksham. Lord KrishNA responded and told him that he was not

ready for Moksham, since he had not fully turned himself away from the pleasures of samsAram and therefore he had to wait.

This story from purANam suggests that even long term enmity to Sriman NaarAyaNA will not stand in one's way to gaining the boon of Moksham from Him , once we perform SaraNAgathi to Him in the saastraic manner and beg for His merciful intervention.

Those who cry out for His protection like GjEndrA without knowing who exactly was the supreme Lord and yet shouted for protection with the prayer: “ O AdhimUlam , Lord of Gods ! I am unable to protect myself . I am at the end of my life. Please save me “. Sriman NaarAyaNA immediately ran to the side of Gajendran and rescued the king of elephants from the hold of the jaws of the crocodile. When Gajendra shouted out in fear and addressed “ the AdhimUlam “ , Indran , BrahmA , Pasupathi and other dEvAs knew that the appeal is not for them since they were not the supreme of supremes . They understood the message as being addressed to the one that has the qualifications to be known and saluted as Parabrahmam. Sriman NaarAyaNA responded to the animal king's cry. He responded similarly to the jeevAthmA inside the pot of curd (dadhi paandan) via AchArya nishtai and blessed that jeevan with Moksham.

Therefore, even if men or women or brahmin or otherwise, or from other creeds inside or outside India or sinners or puNyAsAlees or bhakthimAns or earlier sathrUs of the Lord, once they perform SaraNAgathi to LakshmIkAntham, He will not worry whether we are His mitrAs or chathrUs and will bless us all with Moksham in the spirit of His statements: “ sarva PaapEyO mokshyishyAmi “ and “ VibhishaNO vaa yathi RavaNO vaa”. He is dedicated to come to our rescue and as the ocean of mercy abandons His anger and disgust over our paapams and crowns us with the kireetam of Moksha saamrAjjyam. This is the essence of SaraNAgathi as taught to us by the Lord Himself and His AzhwArs and AchAryAs.



THIRUPPAVAI SAARAM

Translation of H.H. The 44th Pattam Jeeyar's Amudha Mozhi

Few weeks back, we celebrated Aadi Pooram , the birth day of ANDAL of Srivilliputthur, who blessed us with the nectar of ThiruppAvai. Although the Isvara Margazhi maasam is a few months away, I am thrilled today to read the essay of the revered 44th Azhagiya Singar of AhObila Mutt on the thirty paasurams of ThiruppAvai. It is such a wonderful and insightful essay that I thought it would be of wide interest to those, who can not access or read it in Tamil Language.

Sri BharadwAj Jaganathan, President of the Ahobila Matam of North America has copies of this book housing the article on ThiruppAvai. I have the blessed opportunity to acquire a copy of this monograph entitled “ Sri Azhagiya Singarin Amudha MozhigaL “. This monograph containing the Jeeyar's 32 essays have been released by Sri Nrusimha PriyA Trust. May the anugraham of His Holiness Sri VedAntha Desika Yatheendhra Maha Desikan, the builder of the Raaja Gopuram of Sri RanganAthA and strengthener of the edifice of Sri VisishtAdvaitam be with us always!

The divya prabhandham known as ThiruppAvai is capable of conferring immense auspiciousness (mangaLam). You can ask as to who are the beneficiaries of such mangalam. This special group of blessed seven are:

1. Those, who learnt ThiruppAvai from revered elders, made it part of their rote memory for recitation purposes and understood clearly the traditional meanings of the 30 paasurams
2. Those, who recite it daily in Bhagavad sannidhAnams at home or at temples
3. Those, who who have paripUrNa bhakthi for Sriman NaarAyaNA celebrated by the paasurams of ThiruppAvai and reverence for bhagavathAs with unquestioned bhakthi for the vibhava avathArams of Sriman NaarAyaNA such as Sri RaamA and Sri KrishNA.
4. Those, who have reverence for bhagavad bhakthAs of the type saluted by the ThiruppAvai paasurams and have a full comprehension of their own status as Bhagavadh Daasans
5. Those Bhagavadh Daasans, who stay that way along with reverence to bhagavathAs independent of whatsoever difficulties or losses or enimities that come their way in maintaining their reverence for BhagavAn and His BhagavathAs
6. Those, who dedicate all their efforts to Sriman NaarAyaNA (Sriman NaarAyaNa preethyartham ithi kAryam kruthavAn)
7. Those, who do not ask even Bhagavan for any fruits other than the boon of Moksham.

We make the vow here that ThiruppAvai will confer sakala mangaLams for the above group of blessed ones based on the following two facts:

1. In every one of her thirty ThiruppAvai paasurams , ANDAL has declared that Sriman NaarAyaNan , the fundamental cause of this universe ; She has declared that Sriman NaarAyaNan (veda prathipAdhyan) is the giver of all boons desired by us.
2. ANDAL has declared unambiguously in every one of those paasurams that Sriman NaarAyaNan is not only the grantor of the desired boons but He is also the provider of the fruits of those boons requested by us.

Her description and subsequent salutations of Sriman NaarAyaNan in every one of her thirty paasurams are:

- *. Sriman NaarAyaNan is none other than KaNNan (Sri KrishNan)/ to the first paasuram
- * He is KsheerAbdhi nAthan (the Lord reclining on Adhi Seshan in the milky ocean in yOga Nidra) / the second paasuram
- * He is the Lord , who grew immensely to measure the earth and the sky (Ongi UlagaLandhavan) , Vaamanan and Trivikraman (Third Paasuram)
- * He is Oozhi Mudalvan , Vaikuntha Naathan , PadmanAbhan and PanchAyudhan (

Fourth Paasuram)

* He is DamOdharan (Fifth Paasuram)

* He is PoothanA samhAran , sakatAsura SamhAraKan and Hari (Sixth paasuram)

* He is Kesavan and NaarAyaNan (seventh Paasuram)

* He is the lord of all gods/ DevAthi Devan (eighth paasuram)

* He is Maadhavan and Vaikunthan (Ninth paasuram)

* He is ThuzhAi mudi NaarAyaNan (One who has the fragrant Tulasi on His crown) / tenth paasuram

* He is Muhil VaNNan (one with the hue of the dark clouds of the rainy season) / eleventh paasuram



* He is Sri Raaman (Twelfth Paasuram)

* He is puLLin vaai keendAn(KrishNan) and the one who destroyed the rAkshasAs of LankhA (Sri Raman) / thirteenth paasuram

* He is the sankodu chakkaram yEndhum pankayakkaNNan (The lotus eyed-one , who adorns the divine disc and the conch on his hands)/ fourteenth paasuram

* He is the KuvAlayapeeta mardhanan (one who destroyed the royal elephant of king kamsA) / fifteenth paasuram

- * He is Mayan MaNivaNNan (sixteenth paasuram)
- * He is ulagaLandhAn , DEvathi DEvan (17th paasuram)
- * He is the Nappinnai Naathan (Lord of Nappinai) / eighteenth paasuram
- * He is malarmArbhan KaNNan (one whose chest is adorned by Vyjyanthi garland) / 19th paasuram
- * He is UpEndran (20th paasuram)
- * He is ParamjyOthi KaNNan (21st paasuram)
- * He is Paramapadha Naathan (22 nd Paasuram)
- * He is PoovaNNan (23rd paasuram)
- * He is Trivikraman , Raaman and KrishNan (Twenty fourth paasuram)
- * He is VasudEva suthan , YasOdha nandan (twenty fifth paasuram)
- * He is the “ aalinilayil paLLikondavan (one who rests on the leaf of a pupil tree during the time of the great deluge) / 26th pasuram
- * He is Govindhan (27th paasuram)
- * He is Govindhan , iRaivan (28th Paasuram)
- * He is the one saluted by the naamam , GovindhA (twenty ninth paasuram)
- * He is Madhavan , Kesavan , SelvatthirumAl (30th paasuram) .

Thus, every paasuram of ThiruppAvai celebrates Sriman NaarAyaNan as the supreme protector of every one , who sought refuge in Him. Every paasuram celebrates one or other avathArams of Sriman NaarAyaNA in an easy-to-understand manner. It has accomplished this excellent task like a gold smith enmeshes the different gems in a gold setting to create a beautiful ornament.

ThiruppAvai brings before our eyes the sarvOthkrushta Sriman NaarAyaNan and his avathArams (NaarAyaNa Murthys) without any doubts or confusion about their identity.

Paavai means a uruvam(form) with limbs such as hands , legs , head et al. Hence, our learned elders have called this Thiruppaavai as a Vighram. Thiru means MahA Lakshmi; Thiru also means Sriman NaarAyaNan. On this basis also, we conclude that ThiruppAvai is the vighram for MahA Lakshmi and Sriman NaarAyanan. Thiruppaavai is therefore the divya mangaLa vighram made up of the paasurams of ANDAL. We can now comfortably conclude that the Lord incarnated as Thiruppaavai for ANDAL. In the thirumEni (vighram) of Raaman , only BhagavAn is there; in the ThirumEni of SeethA devi , only MahA Lakshmi is there. In contrast, in the body of ThiruppAvai

(sabdha rUpa vighram) , both Lakshmi and Her consort take their united residence as the divya dampathis. This is the esoteric specialty of the incarnation of ThiruppAvai as an independent divine incarnation.

We will continue with the essence of each of the paasurams of ThiruppAvai as revealed to us by Paramapadha Vaasi, H.H Sri Vedantha Desika Yatheendhra Maha Desikan of Ahobila Mutt.

His Holiness the 44th Jeeyar of Ahobila Mutt states that ANDAL's abundant blessings fall on every one of those who recite the thirty verses of Thiruppavai at dawn during the month of Marghazhi, on those who go around the Divya Dampathi's temple performing bhajanai of Thiruppavai , on those who intrepret the individual paasurams in the format of UpanyAsams and on those who organize such upanyaasams for the benefit of the community.

Such blessings arise from the sacredness of Thiruppaavai. H.H. The Jeeyar sumamrizes the essence of this sacred Thiruppaavai for our benefit . As a great scholar and AchArya, he has blessed his sishyAs with upanyAsams on the paasurams consistent with the tradition of the well known commentaries of the PurvAchAryAs. In this essay however, H.H The Jeeyar adopts a different approach that is noted for its uniqueness. He talks as it were straight from his heart out of his compassion for all of us. He leaves aside the scholarly emphasis and talks almost colloquially to reach us. This is what touched my heart.



THE ESSENCE OF THIRUPPAVAI (PAASURAM BY PAASURAM)

- 1. MARGHAZI THINGAL:** Whatever act we perform, we should think of it as an auspicious act that is of service to others and that would gladden the heart of Bhagavan and as such will be noteworthy of celebration by the world.
- 2. VYAITTHU VAAZHVEERGAAL:** The Lord will make our days on this earth happy ones as long as we observe vratham like EkAdasi fasting , sing the glories of KsheerAbdhi Nathan and perform dhAna dharmams to the limit of our abilities .
- 3. ONGI ULAHALANDHA:** Bhagavan will bless us with progeny, home, wealth and sorrow-free life just as He conferred extraordinary wealth on Indra, if we sing about the glory of the vamanAvatharan, who incarnated as a dwarf and expanded to that of Trivikraman to measure with His two steps the earth and the sky.
- 4. AAZHI MAZHAIKANNAA:** If we with a heart laden with Bhakthi lose ourselves through sankeerthanam of the Lord's names, all the devathAs subordinate to Him will recognize us as the daasans of their Lord, Govindhan and take care of all of our needs with elan.
- 5. MAYANAI MANNU:** When we have MahA visvAsam in Sriman NaarAyaNan as our sole protector and meditate on Him, then He would bless us with righteous progeny and loving relatives in addition to removing all of our accumulated sins.
- 6. PULLUM SILAMBHINA KAAAN:** we should get up before dawn in Marghazhi and utter “ Hari , Hari “ for the banishment of our sins , acquisition of sarva mangaLams

and for possessing a mind free from confusions and doubts.

7. KEESU KEESU: We should welcome with reverence the bhagavathAs arriving at our home uttering the name of the Lord. We should listen with attention and respect their discourses on Bhagavan's naamAs and His stories described by the PurANAs.

8. KEEZH VAANAM: The Lord will take pity on us, eliminate our sins and fulfill our desires, when we consider each day as an auspicious day and perform arAdhanam for Him with reverence, joy and affection.

9. THUMANI MADATTHE: we should perform ThiruvArAdahnam for the Lord every day and during those occasions present the lamp sevai, incense sevai and keep the place of arAdahnam spotlessly clean and pure.

10. NORRU SUVARGAM: The tenth paasuram states that we should not hide away from BhagavathAs, when they come to our houses because of fear of responding to what they may ask of us. We should not display our miserly qualities to them and shun them. We should not hide behind locked doors and pretend as though we are not there. When we do not open our door and converse with them in a respectful manner, that house will slip away from us. Hence, we should welcome them, offer our salutations and make them comfortable and happy.

11. KARRUKKARAVAI: The eleventh paasuram teaches us that we should welcome the relatives or strangers even if they are poor or uneducated and should set aside our scholarship and wealth, while interacting with them, when they come to our houses.

12. KANAITHILAM KANRU: The twelfth paasuram recommends that we should offer arghyam, paadhyam to the great souls, who perform Govindha naama sankeerthanam and revere them as the dear bhakthAs of the Lord ; we should recognize that all of our paapams disappear at the sight of them and show our reverence to them.

13. PULLIN VAAI KEENDAANAI: The thirteenth paasuram instructs us to shake off our laziness and torpor and get up before dawn without fear of the cold, perform sandhyAvandanam as our daily ordained duty. It reminds us that we should not wallow in bed after sunrise or at sunset. To escape from accumulating paapams through such prohibited acts, we should not only wake up before dawn but also wake others, who may tarry in bed due to their own laziness.

14. UNGAL PURAKKADAI: The Fourteenth paasuram states that we should go daily to the temple of Sriman NaarAyaNA , offer our obeisance to Him and recite sthOthrams in praise of Him there independent of our busy schedules or inconveniences.

15. YELLE ILANGILIYE: The fifteenth paasuram suggests that we should prevent the children of the house from becoming lazy by teaching them to recite Vedams, Prabhandhams and sthOthrams. They should be kept busy until 9 p.m and should be woken up before dawn to engage in such auspicious acts.

16. NAYAKANAAI: This paasuram teaches us that the Lord with the flag of Garuda is the One, who removes all of the sins of a SaraNAgathA and blesses that jivan with unsurpassed bliss in Sri Vaikuntam. It teaches further that we should correct those, who are prevented from approaching the Lord and help them access the Lord through SaraNAgathi.

17. AMBARAME TANNEERE: The seventeenth paasuram asks us to respond to human misery appropriately even after taking refuge in the Lord through SaraNAgathi. It suggests that in difficult times, we should perform anna dhAnam to relieve the hunger of the poor, provide water and butter milk during the hot season to allay the thirst of the suffering and donate clothes to the needy and help.

18. UNDHU MADHALIRRIN: The eighteenth paasuram hints that the men and women independent of their status and wealth should offer their shAshtAnga namaskArams twice a day to their parents and in-laws.

19. KUTTHU VILAKKERIA: The nineteenth paasuram relates to the need for us to perform our daily duties with a pure heart during the day and to lie in a clean bed without theettu and yecchil at night and meditate on the Lord in a manner of our choice and then sleep.

20. MUPPATTHU MOOVAR: Twentieth paasuram suggests that we should rise before dawn, perform our anushtaanams, open the door of the Koil azhwAr and recite the ten thiruppaLLIyezucchi paasurams of Thondaradipodi and wake up the Lord; thereafter, we should offer our shAshtAnga namaskarams to Him and receive His blessings for engagement in the daily activities.

21. YERRA KALANGAL: The twenty first verse suggests that we should offer our salutations to the Lord by remembering His blessed parents as well through the words of Sage Valmiki “ KousalyA SuprajA Raama “ and prostrate ourselves before Him.

22. ANGANMAA J~NAALATTHARASAR: Twenty second verse reminds us that casting aside our egos and then prostrate before them.

23. MAARIMALAIMUZHAJIL: The twenty third paasuram recommends that during the time of festivals at the temples, we should enjoy the majestic gait of the Lord as he is taken around and take in the beauty of Him as He offers us His darsanam, while seated on His throne attended to by sevakaas on foursides performing fan kaimkaryam.

24. ANRI IVVULAHAMALANTHAAI: The twenty fourth paasuram entreats us to reflect with feeling over the many sufferings that our Lord underwent in His avathArams such as reducing Himself to the status of a beseecher of favors while asking for a gift of three steps of land as VamanA, losing His kingdom, when born as the son of DasarathA, roaming in wild forests, surviving on roots, fruits and tubers and being born as the

offspring of a pillar in HiraNyakasipu's court, which had no name, kulam or gothram during NrusimhAvathAram. We should reflect with gratitude and sing His praise over the sufferings that He went through to protect His bhakthAs and destroy the unrighteous.

25. ORUTTHI MAHANAAI PIRANDHU: The twenty fifth paasuram asks us to consider “ VaasudEva: Sarvam “ and” ninrathellAm nedumAl “ and to get deeply identified with the thought that all chEtanAs and achEthanAs are BhagavAn's sareeram. It asks us to wonder where the Lord is hiding and how He is testing us from there and to cope with these anxieties by considering “ VaasudEva: sarvam “ and achieve peace of mind.

26. MAALE MANIVANNAA: The twenty sixth paasuram asks us to be strict followers of saastraic injunctions and not to devise our own ways to intrepret saasthrAs to suit our convenience. It asks us not to be thaan-thOnRis and not to engage in activities prohibited by saasthrAs.

27. KOODARAI VELLUM: The twenty seventh paasuram asks us to think while dressing ourselves that this body is that of the Lord and therefore we are honoring it through beautifications. It asks us to partake food recommended by saasthrAs only after offering it to the Lord.

28. KARAVAIGAL PIN SENRU: This paasuram asserts that we can get BhagavAn's anugrahams only through gaining saastraic knowledge at the feet of one's AchAryA followed by performing the anushtAnams and manthrOpadesams taught by them.

29. SIRRAMSIRUKAALE: The twenty ninth paasuram reveals that all of us, whether we are of different castes, aasthikAs or naasthikAs, pandithAs or simple folks (paamarAs), Hindus or Muslims or Christians or Sri VaishNavAs , we are ALL the dasa bhUthAs or property of Sriman NaarAyaNA. Even if we wish to discard Him or He wishes to discard us , the relationship between us and Him can not be cut asunder. One who understands this cardinal and unbreakable relationship will be blessed to enjoy all asupiciousness.

30. VANGAKKADAL KADAINTHA: The thirtieth paasuram concludes that the above-referred avathAram of the Lord as Thiruppaavai is first and foremost among all of His avathArAs. Sri ANDAL is the Mother of this avathAram. Those, who offer their homage to this avathaaram every day would be fully blessed and protected by Sriman NaarAyaNA both here in His LeelA Vibhuthi and the hereafter in His Nithya Vibhuthi.

SrimathE SrivaNN SatakOpa Sri Vedantha Desika Yatheendhra MahA DesikAya Nama :

SrimathE Sri lakshmi Nrusimha Divya PaadhukhA Sevaka SrivaNN SatakOpa Sri NaarAyaNa Yatheendhra MahA DesikAya Nama :

Oppiliappan Koil VaradAchAri Sadagopan

Blend of wisdom, courage and benevolence

MY FIRST divine encounter with the 44th Jeeyar of the Ahobila Math, reverentially known as Mukkur Azhagiyasingar was full of significance. That was in August 1965, when I was planning to leave for the U.S., California University, to be precise. I had an audience with the Jeeyar in his native village Mukkur. The Jeeyar enquired with keen interest my family background, education and the purpose of my trip to America. As I prostrated before him, he showered plentiful akshate on me and also gave a handful Phala Mantrakshate prophetically saying, 'Gettikaran, Uyarnda Padavikku Varuve' — (smart fellow, you will reach a high position). I progressed in my career, never forgetting that all my achievements were on account of my Aacharyan's Kataksham. In my retired life, I am now beholden to pay homage to this seer of sagacious wisdom, indomitable courage and spiritual eminence on the occasion of his 107th Tirunakshatram on September 9.

Rangarajachar and Ranganayaki were the parents of Rajagopalachar as this Jeeyar was known in his Grihastha Ashramam. The planets in his horoscope were all in an elevated conjunction destining him to become the most illustrious pontiff of the Ahobila Math in the 20th century. In his 62nd year he assumed the mantle as the 44th Jeeyar in Naimisaranyam in December 1957, in the auspicious Sravana Nakshatram, in the Tamil month of Karthigai. Rajagopalachar in his Sanyasa Ashramam was named Srivan Sadagopa Sri Vedanta Desikan after the luminary Swami Desikan whose birth star was also Sravanam. Jeeyar reigned supreme for 35 years ministering the religious and spiritual services to his vast concourse of disciples.

Ever immersed in meditation on Malolan, the presiding deity of Ahobila Math, Sriman Sadagopa Sri Vedanta Desikan realised his oneness with Lakshmi Narashiman through his staunch Anushtanam. He was ever pure of body, mind and soul. Graceful and majestic was his gait even as that of the beautiful lion, Azhagiyasingar. In him the world of Ahobila Math lived, moved and had its being. He had an intuitive power to read into the hearts of his disciples and realise for them their unspoken wishes even beyond their wildest expectations. He had a watchful eye on the rights and duties of his sishyas to assiduously preserve the sampradayam. To himself, he was a strict task master, his daily life was but a silent example and an unspoken lesson in its perfect discharge of the manifold and complicated round of duties.

His grasp and mastery over Sri Bhashyam and Bhagavadvishayam was unsurpassed and peerless. His exposition and elucidation in Vidwat Sadas amazed the scholar and the layman alike. He had the memory power to recall apt aphorisms to astound the audience. His logic was clear and convincing. He was so keen and thorough in his discourses that he was regarded as the quintessence of Azhwars and Ramanuja's Bhakti and Gyana — devotion and knowledge par excellence. 'Abhinava Vedanta Desika' was an honorific

title he inherited for his incisive and lucid commentaries on Tiruppavai, Sri Bhashyam, and Rahsaya Trya Saram. The stotras he composed on Lakshmi Narashiman are recited daily during the Abhigamana Aradhanam in the Ahobila Math. He improvised the Madhurantakam Vishishtadwaita Research centre and the Nrisimhapriya Journal started by his predecessors.

When some persons tried to scuttle the samprokshanam of the Srirangam temple Rajagopuram in March 1987, he dared to go ahead with the muhurtam already fixed by him, which put the State Government in a fix. The then Vice-President, R. Venkataraman and the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.G. Ramachandran took charge of the situation and the consecration was performed as scheduled. The Jeeyar lauded the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister as 'Em Jeeyar' meaning one who gave succour in the hour of need. Among the masses he is known as Gopuram Swamy for the numerous temple towers he built and dedicated. The poor and the needy found in him an ever ready and large-hearted donor for celebration of marriages, upanayanams and obsequies. His magnanimity and generosity earned him the sobriquet 'Dana Shooru Karna'.

Sri Anantha Narashimachar, a close confidant of the Jeeyar sums up his eminence in an inimitable manner permutating the numeral 44. Four plus four denotes the eight auspicious attributes of the liberated soul — the Jeevan Mukta. Four multiplied by four enumerates the 16 virtues — Kalyana Gunangal — of Sri Rama narrated by sage Narada to Valmiki, which the Jeeyar donned on him most gracefully. Four minus four points to the infinity zero — Poojyam — the state of immanence in the Almighty as the Jeeyar was the very being of Lakshmi Narasimha. Four to the power of four, 256 added together signifies the 13 tiers of the Raja Gopuram of which he was the architect. Four divided by four point to the one and only towering Jeeyar in the annals of Ahobila Math.

Mukkur Azhagiyasingar radiates his divinity and spiritual brilliance on his perennial flow of pilgrims passing through the Mottai Gopura Vasal to worship Sri Ranganathar in Srirangam. He passed away on August 16, 1992, at the age of 97. His body is interned adjacent to his Acharyan, the 41st Jeeyar, Srivan Sadagopa Sri Lakshmi Narashima Sadagopa Yateendra Maha Desikan's Brindavanam (tomb) near the Dasavataram temple.

Courtesy " The Hindu "