Sri Bhutat Azhwar’s
Irandam Thiruvandhadhi
(Text with a Free Translation and Commentary)

by

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Sri Sthalasayana Perumal with Ubhaya Naachiar and Sri Bhutat Azhwar at Mahabalipuram

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DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE CHERISHED MEMORY OF MY ELDEST BROTHER SRI. N.GOPALAKRISHNAN, RETIRED CHIEF FINANCIAL CONTROLLER, NEYVELI LIGNITE CORPORATION, NEYVELI, TAMIL NADU.
FOREWORD

The four thousand hymns in Tamil (தமிழ் திருநல் விரைவுகள்) sung by the Azhwars (saints immersed in the Divine) from the South of India have been a treasure house of gems, which shed light on the philosophic tenets of the Vedas and the Upanishads elusive even to the most learned. Swami Desikan, the great acharya and a renowned scholar of the 13th century A.D, had the following verse in Sri Guruparamparaa Saaram about the garlands of hymns woven by the Azhwars:

They in fact inspired Sri Ramanuja to propound the Visishta Advaita philosophy in later years. The advent of the Azhwars has been referred to in the Srimad Bhagavata Puraanam (Sk XI-5- 39-40). The Azhwars all hailed from the region in Tamil Nadu adjoining the rivers Cauveri, Paalar and Tamrabarani. They were all from different walks of life; different social strata, but not all contemporaries. Yet they were amazingly unified in their vibrant divine experiences and their philosophic views. The causal principle underlying all existence for them was not an impersonal reality but the most Auspicious Person, Sriman Narayana with all the glorious attributes, the most important attribute being His compassion, represented by “Sri”, the divine mother Mahalakshmi, ever resident in His heart. They directly experienced the Divine in the totality of the creation and their love of the Divine flowed in the form of beautiful poetry, enriching the path of devotion or Bhakti. Their
works convey the “Sareera-Sareere-Bhava” implying that the physical world is the body of the Lord and the Lord represents the life and soul of the physical world. The unconditional compassion (“nirhetuka kripa”) the Lord has for His creation, is the means to overcome all bondage resulting from one’s actions. For them, the Lord was not only the way or the means but also the goal.

The first three of these great sages, namely Sri Poikai Muni, Sri Bhutat Azhwar and Sri Pey Azhwar, were called the Mudhal Azhwar for they were the pioneers. They were contemporaries. Sri Thirumazhisai Piran, the fourth in the list, also must have lived around the same time as the Mudhal Azhwar, since there is good internal evidence from the works of the Azhwar for this. The Mudhal Azhwar were from the vicinity of the modern city Chennai. The author has referred to the story of the origin of the Naalayira Divya Prabhandam in the coming together of the Mudhal Azhwar in Thirukkovaloor, one dark stormy night in a small corridor at the threshold of a house, and how the presiding deity from Thirukkovaloor temple, Lord Trivikrama, along with Sri Mahalakshmi, eager to mingle with His devotees, appeared amongst them although not revealing His presence. However, the Azhwar felt this indirectly as a sense of pressure in that small space. This led to the spontaneous outpouring of the three sweet and fragrant garlands of verses, each containing one hundred pasurams in the “andadhi” style, each following the other, beginning with Sri Poikai Muni, his poetic arclight beaming on the invisible Lord, in a resplendent cosmic vision then and there. This story is referred to in Sri Poikai Azhwar’s Mudal Thiruvandadhi:

Irandaam Thiruvandadhi is the work of Sri Bhutat Azhwar. It is a masterpiece of Tamil poetry; a beautiful garland of one hundred verses. While Sri Poikai Azhwar glorified the cosmic aspects of the Lord by
starting with “அம்ம தேவியா”, Sri Bhutat Azhwar starts with “அழுமை தேவியா”, lighting a lamp with devotion as the base, love as the oil, the sweet mind as the wick and the knowing Self as the shining flame offering all of them to the Lord. Sri Bhutat Azhwar had the special grace of the Lord from the early days of his life for he refers to the divine vision even as he was “in-utero”,

— அன்னூர்
குண்டைக்கும்பால் கிளிக் காட்டுபவத்தை அன்றிய கிளிக்கும்பால் பந்தைக் கிளிக் (87)

“இன்று நாற்குறிச் செய்துக்கும்பால் பார்க்கும் கொண்டு”
“Fire of knowledge burns all actions into ashes” says Sri Krishna in the Geetha (4-37).

While knowledge is essential for liberation, true spiritual knowledge leads naturally to superior devotion (“Bhakti”) which is intense love of the Divine. Perfect தேவீ நீர் often at the end becomes a superior பந்தத்து. For instance, Sri Aadi Sankara, a great தேவீ also has done several works of pure devotion such as “Bhaja Govindam”, “Sri Ranganathashtakam” and others. This was true of all the Azhwar’s for their bhakti was based on true and clear spiritual knowledge. Sri Bhutat Azhwar exemplifies this quite clearly. Perhaps for this reason, Sri Bhuta Piran, although second in the list of the twelve Azhwar’s, is actually mentioned first in a single benedictory verse commonly recited:

புரி ஆடி புருஷாடிசாயை பாடல்
பதிகம் - தாங்குவல் - பந்தைக்கும்பால்
சாக்கராந்திகள் பார்க்கச் செய்து
நித்தாண்டு பந்தைக்கும் பந்தை பந்தைக்கும்பால் கிளிக்கும்

The Azhwar points to the grace of the Lord as the underlying cause of the entire spiritual process.

ஆண்டு கிளிக் கிளிக் ஆண்டைக்கும் கொண்டு
சாக்கராந்திகள் பார்க்கச் செய்து - பந்தைக்கும்பால்
கிளிக்கும்பால் கிளிக் கிளிக் கிளிக் (59)
While emphasizing the easy accessibility of the Lord, he points out that no one can fully comprehend this aspect of the Lord.

The Azhwar’s devotion to the Lord is a complete offering of “Self” with total involvement.

and in his own word the love he has for the Lord is too overflowing for him to bear,

The Azhwar practices and recommends immensely Naamasankeerthana namely reciting the glorious names of the Lord including the “Sahasranama”,

In several verses (2,6,14,20,38,39,44,51,57,64,66,72,73,77,92), he makes reference to the Lord’s name. Similar to Sri Thirumazhisai Piran, he also concludes that the Lord’s name is the ultimate meaning of all the Vedas and the Upanishads.
Sri Bheeshma recommends recitation of the Sahasranaama of the Lord as the best Dharma to Yudhistira. Sri Bhudat Azhwar considers this as a penance.

Sri “Poodattazhwar”, or Bhuta Yogi as he was known, was born in Thirukkadai Mallai near modern Mahabalipuram. It was a great harbour city at the time of the great Pallava kings. They had left a rich legacy behind them in the form of the most beautiful sculptures, the relics of which stand even today on the sea shores in Mahabalipuram. Many of the kings in their dynasty were great bhaktas themselves, and it would seem entirely possible that the exemplary Azhwar’s bhakti might have been the stimulus for this.

In order to fully appreciate Azhwars’ works, one will have to read them with the aid of one of the authoritative commentary of the great Acharyas. However, these original commentaries are in the old “manipravaala” style with Tamil admixed with Sanskrit. In addition, the words used will often be unfamiliar even to the ardent modern day students. Sri Bhutat Azhwar’s Irandaam Thiruvandadhi is actually set in beautiful and rich literary Tamil (“Pukaarpam”). Thus it will be quite hard for most of us who are not proficient in literary Tamil. Therefore, there is a need for free translations which are based on the authoritative interpretations of the commentators like Sri Periya Vaachaan Pillai. The current free translation of the Irandaam Thiruvandadhi by Sri Rajagopalan is therefore a very welcome addition which will be greatly appreciated by everyone interested in the Azhwars’ works. The
translation is clear and succinct with a fine style of presentation. This follows splendidly his previous elegant book in which he had rendered a similar translation of Mudhal Thiruvandadhi.

May the grace of the Azhwars and the Lord Sri Ranganatha ("நேர்த்தாமாரதீ நேர்த்தாமாரதீ" as lovingly referred to by Sri Bhuta Piran) always shine on my brother Sri Rajagopalan and encourage him to continue in similar endeavours.

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PREFACE

Bhutat Azhwar’s Irandam Thiruvandhadhi forms part of the ‘Iyarpā’ portion of the ‘Na‘la‘yira Īvyya Prabandham’, the collective works of the Azhwars of South India. The Azhwars probably lived between the fifth and eighth century A.D. in and around the regions served by rivers like Palar, Cauveri, Vaigai, and Tamrabarani. Drawn from different social backgrounds, they were mystic saints who through their inspired songs first propounded the Sri Vaishnava faith and Visishta‘dvaita‘ philosophy. The Divya Prabandham numbering in all four thousand hymns in Tamil has been termed the Tamil Veda, due to their rich philosophic content and thought harmony with Vedas and Upanishads. By their ecstatic poetry, these saints laid the foundations for the spread of the bhakthi movement in the South, and the enunciation of the Visishta‘dvaita‘ philosophy by Sri Ramanuja who came later. Affirming the status of Narayana as the Supreme Being, (Parama-purusha) as authenticated in the Sruti declarations, they sang of Narayana both as immanent in the universe and transcendent and beyond it. They sang of Him in His diverse ‘praka‘ra’s’ or modes, as ‘Parava‘sudeva’ in Vaikuntam, in ‘Vyuha’ form in ‘Kshira’bdhi’, in His various ‘Vibhava’ta‘ra’s as Rama, Krishna etc., as ‘Antarya’mi’ in the hearts of all beings, and in ‘Arca’ form in the temples erected for Him. To them, God was as real and transcendent in the ‘arca’ form as He is real and immanent in Vaikuntam. Thus all the five forms represent the one and only Supreme Being. In short, they experienced and articulated their experiences of the Lord in all His glory, both in ‘nitya vibhuti’ in the transcendent form, and in ‘lila’ vibhuti’ in the material universe. To them, God was not a mere abstraction or intellectual perception, but a living presence. He lived in them, and they lived in Him, or as one of the Azhwars beautifully phrased it, ‘நேற்று கிண்ணு கூம்பு கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம் கூம்’.

Poigai Azhwar, Bhutat Azhwar and Pei Azhwar were the earliest of the Azhwar galaxy numbering in all twelve, and are referred to as
‘Mudhal Azhvars’. They were born on successive days in the same year and month, Poigai Piran the eldest of the three at Kancheepuram, Bhutat Azhwar the middle one at ‘Thirukkadalmallai’ now known as Mahabalipuram, and Pei Azhwar the last at Mylapore in Madras. They came together for the first time in a place called Thirukkkovalur, in the front passage of a house commonly known in Tamil homes as ‘காதல்’ one stormy night, while taking shelter from the pelting rain. As they were standing in the narrow passage, there being only that much room for them to stand, sharing their experiences of the deities in various temples they had visited, they felt a strange pressure in the darkness, as if there was a fourth person beside them. There indeed was a fourth person amidst them in that damp, dark passage eager to share the company of the three exalted souls, and listen to their conversation. By virtue of their superconscious vision, the Azhvars intuitively understood the true identity of the fourth person as Sri Man Narayana. In the ecstasy of their discovery, and being realised beings, each of them described the effect of that electrifying experience uniquely as he felt it. Poigai Azhwar conjured up a grand mental vision of the divine as the Supreme Master of the phenomenal universe by virtue of His ‘ubhaya-vibhuti’ in his ‘nidhi-dya’sana’ or ‘para-bhakthi’ state. Expressing this in poetic diction, he portrayed the world of matter as a lamp, the seven seas as the ghee, and the bright sun as the flame, all this being the manifest form of the Lord sporting the sparkling Sudarsana’. The second sage Bhutat Azhwar looked within his heart true to the Upanishadic script that the heart is to be understood as the principal shrine of the Supreme Being in the whole universe (‘hrudayam tatvija‘neeya’t visvasya‘yatanam mahat’ - Narayana-Suktham). His ‘parajna‘na’ or spiritual arclight beaming on the effulgent divine presence within, moved him to visualise love as the lamp, his deep yearning as the butteroil, and the mind pining away in divine bliss as the flame. The youngest of them Pei Azhwar actualised that experience, (ma‘nasa sa’ksha’tka‘ra’) and exulted in the direct vision of Sri Man Narayana in the company of His Divine Consort Sri, climbing the very summit of bhakthi,(parama-bhakthi). The Brahman of the Upanishads
had revealed Itself to them, and by their hymns, they restated the truths of the Sruti in the language of the land, viz. Tamil. The Divya Prabandham, which is generally believed to be an exposition of the three Vaishnava mantras–ashta ‘kshari, dvaya’, and carama sloka was thus born. After describing the cosmic form of the Parama-purusha the Sruti also explores the supersubtle Antarya‘mi state and speaks of its seat as the lotus blossom of the heart situated like a citadel in the centre of a city, tiny, crystal pure, with a canopy even tinier, which is free from any kind of sorrow. The reality within that shrine is the object of all spiritual quest. (Mahanarayana Upanishad- Daharavidya’). Hence it is that the Azhwar who followed the Mudhal Azhwar’s viz. Thirumazhisai Piran glorified that Paramapurusha as ‘அத்திருவித்தான் அன்னுநிமுனர் ஆன்மையை மன்னித்து பிறந்தால் கிளைக்கல் தொல்ளிகள்’ – (திருச்சிராமையர்-65).

Sri Bhutat Azhwar’s Iranda‘m Thiruvandhadhi is a garland of mellifluous pasurams surcharged with great spiritual fervour, and soaked in bliss divine, affirming the ‘parathvam’ of Sriman Narayana, and extolling the concept of ‘Antarya‘mi Brahman’ as an avata‘ra also. In Azhwar’s perception, the heart of a devotee of Narayana is an abode as much as Vaikunta is, and in fact so dear to the Lord that it becomes the His most favourite abode relegating the ‘divya-desa’s’ to the secondary rung in His preference scale. Hence the supplication of the Azhwar to the Lord, not to abandon the divys-desa’s.” அல்லானால் ஆந்தேஷோன் நெய்மாரோமயிலை பண்டிகைப்போனே” (54). As in the case of the rest of the Azhwars, the ‘vibhavavata’ra’s’ figure prominently in Bhutat Azhwar’s prabandham, and among them Sri Vamanavata’ra’ for the evident reason of the ‘rakshkatva’ or protective instinct so conspicuously displayed, and Sri Krishnavata’ra’ for the quality of ‘soulabhya”. Among ‘divya-desa’s’ Tirumalai and the Lord that abides there, are mentioned in eleven pasurams. The Azhwar calls it the gift of the Lord to celestial beings like Brahma, Siva etc. who hasten there everyday vying with one another for the Lord’s worship. The Azhwar scales the very heights of graphic imagery in portraying the ecology and ambience of the hills
at Tiruvnetkatam, such as the one depicted by him in one pasuram, where the primates living in the hill rise at dawn, dip in cool flower-laden ponds, and gather freshly blossomed flowers to offer to Lord Srinivasa, the Jewel of Tiruvnetkatam, in worshipful prayer, driving home the point that even animals which inhabit the hills of Tirumalai, are endowed with intelligence and spiritual fervour to set out to worship the Lord there. Other divya-desa’s like Thiruvarangam, Thirumal-irunjolai, Tirukkottiyur etc. are also addressed with great feeling by the Azhwar. The Azhwar affirms the profound truth that the Lord Who is the quintessence of the Vedas, and our only sure-fire passport to liberation from the bondage of samsa ‘ra’ is forever with us in the inner shrine of our hearts, and exhorts us to look within, and hold steadfast to the practice of meditating on His names and glory. Azhwar advises us to take to the sacred Feet of the Lord even when all our faculties are in tact, (பொங் முன் அருள்முன் சுகமரசல் … முன் மிண் வாசனை குருமை-91), and meditate on His names, assuring us that the Lord’s names are a safety-net and insurance of protection even in this life, (தன் விஞ்ஞானத்வ காணும் கால்வக குதுகை-92). He recalls in deep gratitude how he had awakened to the drawing powers of the Lord’s sacred Feet, when he was a mere foetus and folded his hands in prayer in the mother’s womb—(தலைப்பிலும் பூச்சியிலும் காலிங்கத்காலத்தில் காலை-87). Deeply immersed in a state of ‘sa ‘dhya bhakthi’ thus, Bhutat Azhwar’s whole being is engulfed in the effulgence of that beatific state, where only the substratum of love remains, love for the Supreme Being that overflows like the current of a river in spate which has breached its banks.

This book just like the earlier one on ‘Sri Poigai Azhwar’s Mudhal Thiruvandhadhi’ is a humble attempt of the author to reach out the message of the Azhwars to a larger section of the reading public, especially those not sufficiently well-versed in Tamil language, but keen on gaining a knowledge of the philosophical poetry of the Azhwars. The pages that follow contain a free translation of ‘Iranda‘m Thiruvandha‘dhi’, and explanatory and anecdotal notes based on the
salient aspects of the commentary of Sri Peravacha’n Pillai the famous ‘vyā'kya’nakarta’ who lived between 1167 and 1262 A.D.,(the one and only one of his kind who has the distinction of writing a commentary in maniprava ‘la’ on all the four thousand pasurams) as recapitulated by Sri Krishnaswami Aiangar, Editor ‘Vaishnava Sudarsanam’.

I wish to dedicate this work to the memory of my eldest brother Sri N.Gopalakrishnan, (Formerly Chief Financial Controller, Neyveli Lignite Corporation) who was the guiding light of our family, and exemplified in his life, like a true Sri Vaishnava that he was, immense faith in the Lord, a palpable simplicity and humility of spirit, compassionate nature, and deep attachment to, and veneration for, our spiritual tradition and guru parampara. What little I have accomplished in life has been entirely due to Sriman Narayana’s grace acting through his doting care and guidance.

I am grateful to my younger brother Dr. N.Ranganathan Toronto, Canada, for his kind Foreword. I also place on record my gratitude to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams for their generous financial assistance enabling the publication of this work. Finally, I am deeply grateful to Sarvasri B.G.Kukillaya, P.S. Vasu and their dedicated band of staff at Universal Print Systems for all their help in the design of the cover and complexion of the book and preparation of the inputs.

Besantnagar, Chennai-600090.
I worshipped the glorious and hallowed feet of Bhutat Azhwar who produced, for our sake, the sweet nectar of mellifluous poetry, beginning 'Anbe thagali', and was born in the famous 'Thirukkadal Mallai' blessed with a profusion of pearls – so my cycle of birth and rebirth may cease.

This 'thanian' was composed by Sri Thirukkurugai Piran Pillai, a disciple of Sri Ramanuja. The greatness of the Azhwar's beautiful feet is that seeking refuge in them will surely cut through the vicious circle of 'samsa'ra'.

The 'thanian' then describes the benevolence bestowed on us by this Azhwar, in gifting us the precious and priceless garland of verses beginning 'Anbe thagali'. The Azhwar himself refers to his work as 'நூறுகோல்' (1)and 'நூறுநாள்' (74). In the end, the invocation speaks about the hoary fame of the Azhwar's birth place 'நியோ
The place is also referred to as 'தூரமாயிற்குரி'. It is richly endowed with fame, first because of the presence of the presiding deity of the shrine there, who bears the appellation 'கோவில்கல்கூரை சூர்யன்', the Lord Who is reclining on the ground, and second the Azhwar's association with the place. It is also 'ஞுத்தியன் கோவிளுக்கு வாய்மு அலகமைவை' that is a cornucopia of cool pearls and other precious gems, washed ashore by the waves of the ocean. As another Azhwar Sri Thirumangai Mannan describes it, it is 'சால்கு குன்று குன்று கல்கு கல்குமையாளா கல்குகள் அலகமைவை', (கோவில் கோவில்கூரை -- 3.5.8.). The pearls also refer to the galaxy of devotees of the Lord who are of inestimable value like pearls and diamonds. Refer to Swami Nammazhwar's phrase 'சிறுகோவில் நிறைத்த கல்குமாழையில்' ராம ராமகௌதாம் (கோவில் கோவில்கூரை - 5.8.9). Later in the work, Bhutat Azhwar takes great pride in calling it 'தூரமாயிற்குரி அலகமைவை', (70). Swami Nammazhwar hails the greatness of such devotees as Bhuta Piran in his work. 'தூரமாயிற்குரி பிரார்த்தனைகள் களர் குண்டுப்புகை', (கோவில் கோவில்கூரை 5-2-4). Again, 'நான் மந்திரை விளக்கிய நந்தியின் கோவில்கூரைக்கு இருந்து நந்தியின் கோவில்கூரை கி ரீயை', (கோவில் கோவில்கூரை – 79).

Such devotees are even more exalted than 'nithyasuris'.

It has been averred by scholars that the Mudhal Azhwar's represented, in the mystic experiences they articulated in their works, different states of their love of the Divine or 'bhakthi.' Thus Sri Poigai Piran conjured up a mental vision of the Divine as the Supreme Master of the phenomenal universe by virtue of His 'Ubhaya Vibhuthi' in his 'nidadhya'sana' or 'parabhakthi' state. This is perfected bhakthi attained after constant upa'sana or meditation enabling intuitive actualisation or 'ma'nasa- sa'ksha'tka'ra.' Sri Bhutat Azhwar, in his Thiruvandha'dhi, internalises that frame and conceptualises his experience in the form of the soul's instinctive yearning for a vision of the Divine as expressed in its various states of love, longing, and anguish. This is the 'parajna'na' marked by glimpses of the divine vision followed with joy during communion with God and anguish during separation from Him. The continued
longing to perpetuate that experience leads to the climax of the spiritual quest which is the state of 'parama-bhakthi', the actualisation in the form of a direct, comprehensive, and eternal communion with the Divine presence. The youngest of the Mudhal Azhvars, Sri Pei Azhwar exemplifies this last state in his experience. Sri Ramanuja has employed these terms for the first time in his Sarana'gathi-gadyam, on the basis of the mystic experiences of the Azhvars, with this prayer, 'Parabhakti, Parajna'na, Paramabhadheka-Svabha'vam Ma'm Kurushva'. 'Please make me eternally of the very nature of these three stages of 'bhakthi'. Even in the Land of perpetual Bliss,' parajna'na' and 'paramabhadheke' have to be prayed for. The experience there is, such that though it may go on for ever, the aspects experienced are but an infinitesimal part of the unexperienced, the Vedantic 'Paripu'rna-Brahma'nbhava'. Hence it is, that Shastra's describe 'para- bhakthi etc. as aids to self-realisation. Sri Krishna says, 'Bhakthya'tu Ananyaya' Sakyo Aham Evamvidha'rruna' I 'Gya'thum,Drashtum, ca' Tathvena Praveshtum ca' Paranthapa' II, (Bhagavad Gita 11-54). 'Ananyabhakthi' is bhakthi that is totally fixed on the Lord, or as Sri Poigai Piran puts it, 'தேவீன் தேவலோகச்சரணர் தொன்றோ விழாக்கீழ் வத்தோகீ-பிரேஸ்தோ' (65-87). As Vishnu Puranam declares,'பெருவேணுக்கு, கோவைகளான மூன்றோ பேர் பிரேஸ்தோ வத்தோகீ, நாயக்குண்டோ வாண்டோ மூன்றோ பேர் பிரேஸ்தோ வத்தோகீ.' (6-5-87). 'That by which the 'param' which is flawless, pure, unparalleled, is grasped, perceived and attained is wisdom. Everything else is ignorance.'

In dwelling on 'ஏனம் குற்றம்' ........' கோவைகள்', Poigai Piran establishes the truth that Sriman Narayana is the Master non-pareil of the whole universe, the Supreme Intelligence and Power behind its myriad worlds, beings and things. Immersed in his 'parajna'na', Sri Bhutat Azhwar starts his Thiruvandhadhi, with the words, 'ஏனம் குற்றம்', and ends it on the note 'பாற்றுமல் அளிந்', his heart and thoughts soaked in bliss divine, his mind absorbed in yogic vision of the Lord. Sri Pei Azhwar, opening his Thiruvandhadhi
exultingly, with the words, 'நூற்றாண்டுகள் நூற்றாண்டுகள்', reaches the very acme of actualisation of the 'நான்காண்டுகள்' state.

Sri Desika's Invocation
Swami Desikan, in his Tamil Work 'Prabhandha Sa'ram', has dedicated the following verse to Sri Bhutat Azhwar.

தாம் யாரறையலர்மும் புருய்சும்!
நாற்று பிறந்து பிறந்தை குறைந்து!
திருக்கோவலு கோவலை விளக்கி குதித்து
தம்பீச்சையும் பெருமையும் விளக்கித்து!
தாம் தான் நாயக் கரையாது கோவலை போன்றது
நாயக் கரையாது கோவலை போன்றது.

Thou Sentinel of Kadalmallai, thou Royal Highness Bhuta, descended into this world under the star Avittam in Aippasi, Who congenially took shelter, as one of the incomparable trinity, in a corridor on a blustery night in Thirukkkovalur, when unobtrusively Lord Narayana wedged in amidst thee and thou lighted the ever-shining lamp in a hundred verses starting 'Anbe' thagali'. I pray to thee to bless me with that.

Sri Bhutat Azhwar who was second in line in the Mudhal Azhwar trinity, the others being Sri Poigai Piran who preceded him by a day, and Sri Pei Azhwar who followed him after a day, all born in the same Tamil month of 'Aippasi', is believed to have been an incarnation of Sríman Narayana's mace. In this verse, Swami Desikan refers to the episode of the three Azhvars coming together for the first time in a dark, damp corridor of a house on a stormy night in the town of Thirukkkovalur. As they stood there sharing their experiences on their peregrinations to various divya desa's, Sríman Narayana eager to savour their sagely company and experiences, materialised in their midst literally crowding in on them in the confined space. Then the Azhvars curious to find the reason behind
the sudden feeling of pressure amidst them in the narrow passage, realised that the fourth person was none other than Narayana in the company of His Divine Consort Maha\'lakshmi. Each of them then spontaneously broke out in song describing their individual experiences. Sri Bhutat Azhvar lit the inner spiritual lamp, visualising his love for the Lord as the flame. In the resultant light of self-awakening, the self melted and dissolved in the Lord. Swami Desikan prays for the Azhwar's blessing in the form of his garland of verses. Swami Desikan has composed a hymn 'Sri Deheleesa Stuthi' ('dehali' in Samskrit means a narrow corridor), in praise of the presiding Deity of this divya-desa, Lord Trivikrama. The Lord Who, in an earlier age had blessed sage Mrigandu here appearing for him, with His 'Sankha' and 'Chakra' transposed in His right hand and left hand respectively, appears here in this 'dehali' which is the sanctum, among others, in the company of the sage and the three Azhwar\'s. In this hymn, Swami Desikan calls the Mudhal Azhwar\'s,' தேவரை வேர்பெருமை முக்கியம் மிகுந்த மூத்தியை செய்தேன் : ' the insuperable masters of poetry endowed with pure thoughts who have for their two eyes Vedic learning and yogic vision', and their poetry, 'உலகவை பண்டை வாத்திய விற்பெருமை தூரை மூத்தியை செய்தேன் ' light lit with the ghee of pure love and wick of impeccably perfect 'sa\'thvik' state.

With love as the lamp, deep yearning as the butter oil, and thoughts soaked in bliss divine as the wick, I lit a sparkling spiritual light --where the self melted and dissolved—for Narayana, and composed this inspired Tamil poem illumined by that light.
Sri Bhutat Azhwar begins his prayer by affirming in this pasuram that the spiritual light that he has ignited is the outcome of his love for the Lord, (the lamp in his imagery) his deep inner yearning for Him, (the butter oil used to light lamps in Tamil homes and temples) and thoughts filled with Him (the wick). Azhwar's metaphor is a beautiful imagery of how the substratum of bhakthi, (the lamp) has evolved in him to a state of 'para-bhakthi', (butter oil) - the 'upa'dha'na' cause of the spiritual chemistry in making. That yearning lubricates the spiritual experience, (the wick) that is suffused with the joy and glory of 'bhagavad vishayam'. The crowning point of the experience is the effulgence of light that engulfs the spirit in a state of 'parajna'nam'. The 'jiva'thma swarupa lakshanam' is the 'jna'nanandhaikagunam'. 'இயாத்மகம் மன்னர் கொல்லும் வெளியில் நமருட்' declare the Upabrahmanas. As Brahmastra states, (2-3-29) கிளங்கார்வத் தூதர், the 'jiva'thma' is referred to synonymously as 'jna'na', consciousness, since the essence of 'jiva'thma' is that. Azhwar describes this spiritual experience as 'வசனத்தில்' to mean that the 'jiva'thma' melted but the inner consciousness remained, (the state of parajna'nam') in the bliss of 'bhagavad anubhavam'. It is a state beyond sense perception described by Swami Nammazhwar, as' சுகாதாரம் நிகர்த்தநிகர் கலந்துவிழா' (பாபு - பி. 34). It is a state where the soul described by Sri Krishna as 'நாடத்ராசாம் பன்றுகளினியும்', (Gita 2-24) –that cannot be burnt or wetted '– melted for the Azhwar. That verily is the extra-ordinary effect of 'bhagavad guna's'. Sri Bhutat Azhwar proudly proclaims his poem as 'காந்திகம்'. Not only is it set in mellifluous Tamil, it also imparts true knowledge of Sriman Narayana. The light that the Azhwar ignites in the process dispels the darkness surrounding the self in the shape of 'ajna'nam'.

6
In a striking parallel, Swami Nammazhwar echoes the same experience in his line, 'அமைத்தும் கற்றுகருவண்டு காகுதிக் அமா
அபித்து உருண்டு வந்து நறிவு காட்சிக்கு' (காவ்வைசீலம்-2).’ The
yearning to adorn the head with the lotus Feet of the Lord melted
my soul into a state of overpowering love'. Sri Nammazhwar also
uses the word 'வருத்தி' to depict the meltdown of his inner self,
signifying the concomitant presence of 'parabhakthi, parajna'nam, and
para-ma-bhakthi' anubhava.

If only we recite Narayana's names in a state of pure love born
out of inner realisation of His 'svarupa'and 'vibhuti', and our
relationship to Him, that will surely elevate us to the level of
our spiritual kinfolk, the celestial beings of Sri Vaikunta
eternally blessed to serve the Lord.

Names that uniquely refer to Narayana such as Vishnu,
Hari, Rama, Krishna etc. Apart from these, there are names that refer
to His manifestations like Brahma, Rudhra, Indra etc. Azhwar says
ஹாரைவண்டு, which is the high ground of abiding love for the Lord.
'அதுந்தாம் மாயிருக்கும் தாமைக்கு காவும் மாசும்: '. There is
no shastra' nor order for a person with boundless love for the Lord
. பார்மா காவ்வைசீலம் refers to the 'nithyasuris'. 'இருந்து பதிக்கின்ற
சீலை: நின்ன விழா காவும் : '. 'Always paying obeisance to
Narayana, in a state of bliss and repeating namah.' Azhwar says that
they are our real kinfolk, not Indra or the devas.
They who are devoted to the sacred Feet of the Lord of Milk Ocean with offerings of fragrant flowers will reach His abode of Vaikunta of replendent beauty that is beyond the reach of even the denizens of high heaven.

The devotion (sa'dhya bhakthi) of a 'prapanna'. As the Azhwar has, in the previous pasuram mentioned 'நூற்றாண்டுகளுக்கு' to mean 'svarupajna'na', the devotion implied by his term 'பின்' here, is that which has for its goal the Lord's feet. Azhwar calls the Lord's abode as 'நிகுலணணுக்கே தூரான் தூரன்', that is 'parama pada' which is only heard of by the celestials, not seen.

'பாகன எத்தன தேசிப்பான காணமா கூறும் பாகன்: இத்தான்தோ வரிமண்டலத்தை நிலவுத்து: பாகன் பாகன் பாகன் (பீ.I.9.55).’ That which the devas, sages, I (Brahma) or Sankara, do not know of, is the abode of Vishnu, the Lord of all beings.' Hence they are not 'sa'dhya devas' for us. The 'sa'dhya devas are 'nithya suris'. 'மாதிரி பிறந்த போது: மாதிரி பிறந்த போது’, says Purusha Suktham. It is a great wonder that the 'parama- pada' which is difficult to reach even for those beings in high heaven who have done 'sa'dha'na' for the same for a long time, is within the easy grasp of a simple 'prapanna' who looks on the Lord as 'The way'. That is because the celestial beings like the devas lack the knowledge of the 'prapanna' of our ties to the Lord.
Carving out my heart as a citadel, setting thereon my pearl-like love like a fresh bouquet of flowers, embellished with desire for closeness and togetherness like diamond and sapphire, I offered my devotion as a lotus to the Lord Who carries on His chest Goddess Lakshmi, prostrating to His Feet.

Sri Bhuthat Azhwar visualises his heart as a citadel he has erected for Narayana. Swami Nammazhwar uses the same imagery in his phrase 'நூற்றூர் ஹைவத்கள்'. The heart is the well-spring of love which is pure like pearl. In an evolved state, love matures to the tone and timber of an experience of our binding association with the Lord and His countless 'kalya'na guna's', which fill the heart with overflowing desire for His proximity and union. This is like precious stones embedded on a bouquet of fresh flowers. In a further evolution, this love blossoms further and attains the state of 'parajna'nam', which is like an incomparable lotus flower. In that state, shedding all ego and ego-centric desires, our inner self prostrates to the Lord with the Divine Mother in the forefront as the mediatrix, 'purushakara'. This is in keeping with the spirit of the first part of the 'dvaya' mantra, 'Sriman Narayana Charanau Saranam Prapadhye'.

Oh Lord with complexion of the blue ocean, aeons ago, You manifested to ask Mahabali for three paces of land. But You scarcely needed those three steps to traverse this universe. Who can comprehend the secret of Your Feet or presume to speak of Them?
In this pasuram, Azhwar hints that there was a deeper significance to the Lord as Sri Vanama asking for three paces of land from king Mahabali, though he poses the question to the Lord if He really needed those three paces, when in actuality he had covered the length and breadth of the whole universe in just two paces. Azhwar knows that the third step of the Lord was intended to plant on Mahabali's head and push him down to the nether world where he belonged, in the grand design of the Lord.

 reflers to the compassion of the Lord underlying His manifestation as Sri Vanama in order to protect this world from Mahabali's misrule. ' Oh Vishnu, Exalted as Thou art, Thou grew in unbelievable proportions. Then no one was there who could gauge or experience Thy greatness. We only know about the two steps that Thou took on the land and in space above. Beyond this the third step, only Thou knowest. Even the Vedha-Purusha remained silent on that mighty third step.'

They indeed are eminently blessed and will find their niche in the sacred Feet of the Lord with complexion matching the dark blue ocean, who channelising their sense organs inward with true insight about their relationship to Him, constantly recite and meditate on His names with overflowing devotion and thoughtfully gathered floral offerings.
In the previous pasuram, Azhwar posed the question who could comprehend the secret of the Lord's Feet. He knows that the answer to this question cannot be an unqualified negative, for that would render 'bhagavadvishayam', a nonstarter. So in this pasuram, the Azhwar reassures us that they who with overflowing devotion constantly meditate on the Lord's names are blessed and bound to reach Him. This they are able to achieve because they have the discerning wisdom to channelise the pull of their sensory organs inwards where they can delve into 'bhagavadvishayam' having found their identity with the Lord. 'Bhagavadvishayam' is spoken of as 'antha'ra vishayam', (internal) in contrast to the external objects of sense experience which are 'ba'hyavishayam'. Hence Swami Nammazhwar exhorts us with the advisory 'ஏகப்பாருளன் பூங்காக்கு வாலசு பூனையானும் அமைதல் காந்திதம்பாக்கியா' (கோவர்மண்டலராண 8-2-8.).

அமைதல் அதிகாரம் - The knowledge illumined by 'sesh-a-seshi bha'vam'.

அண்மையற்றவள் - eminently blessed because they have the wisdom to pursue the path of 'sarana'gathi' "நூறுளொய்மேற்பந்து துச்சாமை அந்துக்குவா".

கதிரியார் பாலமண்டது எளிகாரம் வாய்வு அதிர்சது கிளைப்பார் பால் -- கதிரியார் பாலமண்டது எளிகாரம் வாய்வு முதல் பால்.

Oh my heart deep as the fathomless ocean, Seek with fervour the beautiful flower-like Feet of the Supreme Lord Who sports the fire-spitting battle-eager Sudarsana', the Lord who as Trivikrama strode the worlds on His upraised feet, striking abject fear in the hearts of His adversaries, with His curled up lips and rolling eyes.
This pasuram refers to the episode where Narayana as Trivikrama shook the worlds in two giant strides with lips trembling and eyes rolling in anger driving terror into the minds and hearts of adversaries like Namusi. Refer to Sri Thirumazhisai Piran's lines in his Thiruchanda Virutham.

'நாராயணன் அந்தையுடைய நாராயணன் கொல்ல நாராயணன் நந்தே என்று வெவ்வேறு குறிப்பிட்டதான் புராணத்தில்.' – (32).

Feigning motherly love, she cradled You in her arms, and snugly entreated You to feed on her surging, radiant breasts. Then, You putting on the child's natural innocence and joy outwardly, but with seething anger inside, pretended to drink milk but sucked her life out.

Azhwar relates demoness Putana's story in this pasuram to illustrate how one would come to grief if he were to approach the Lord with fake devotion. Swami Nammazhwar's note of warning is germane to recall here.

'நைமப்படுத்தும் நிர்மலாவாய் நூற்றாண்டு கொள்ளலாடை
நைமப்படுத்து புரேஷ்மநாய்க் காவலிலை.' (கி-நாவ். 9-10.)
Seeing her drop dead thus, and with overflowing concern, the fearless cow-herd queen Yashoda then and there breast-fed You. In comparison to her melting compassion, is the vast expanse of this universe surrounded by oceans that You once scaled, any bigger?

Azhwar mentions this episode again to underscore mother Yashoda’s overpowering concern in behalf of her child Krishna, and how she hastened to breast-feed him as an antidote to the poison ingested by the child from Putana's breast. Narayana scaled the worlds as Sri Vamana out of his overwhelming protective concern for Indra. This was an extra-ordinary act of ‘a'sritha va'tsalaya' and 'nirhetuka krupa' of the Lord for all the beings of the worlds. As the Supreme Master, He did not have to ask anything of Mahabali, but still He did because Bali was His devotee too, though an errant one. Even so, in Azhwar’s estimation, all this redemptive grace of the Lord, great as it is, falls just short of Yashoda's love which is afterall human.

Oh Protector of everything, as a child You with a mere kick smashed the leviathan rolling cart into smithereens. Accepting the gift of this earth, You, with caressing touch, brought to life this withering universe. Because my thoughts are centred on You, I constantly recite Your name, and my hands gather flowers for You. You must remove the residue of my past impressions.

Azhwar refers to the episode of Sakata'sura' who came to kill child Krishna disguised as a big cart. With a mere push of his leg, the child Krishna smashed the cart into smithereens. Dwelling on his continuing fascination for Va'manavathara’, Azhwar reverts to how the Lord desirous of protecting His devotee Indra who had lost his kingdom
to Mahabali, went to Mahabali and asked him for the gift of three paces of land. This He did, because Mahabali was also His devotee, and deserved a milder form of punishment like a reprimand, while being taught a lesson for the breach of trust he had committed in arrogating to himself all that truly and totally belonged to Narayana. The main purpose was 'a'sritha rakshanam'. In saying 'अनन्त ', 'घुन्दुरुप', 'पूजानमय', ('contemplating', 'reciting His name', 'offering flowers', Azhwar underlines the total involvement of his body, mind, and spirit.

They receive mediocre rewards who stand at the portals of lesser gods, day in and day out, falling at their feet for favours. Oh Lord with complexion resembling the far-reaching blue ocean, how many are indeed wise enough to seek Your Feet instead?

Azhwar expresses his anguish and amazement at the irony of the way of the world where the countless many hasten after demigods for evanescent rewards, instead of seeking the lotus feet of Sriman Narayana, as the only worthwhile goal and redeeming grace in the end result, 'the parama- purusha'rtham', the eternal bliss of Sri Vaikunta. They are sadly ignorant of the Sruti declaration, 'Nabrahma Ne'sana'h' merely because the latter are also referred to as 'अग्नि' in a generic sense. And what do these lesser gods do? They exact a heavy price for lowly favours. Even out of the minority who look upto Sriman Narayana, only a select few are wise enough to understand Him correctly as the 'Upa'ya'and 'Upeya', ( the Goal and the Means ). Has not the Lord, deliberated this human paradox and predicament, in the Gita? (7.19) 'Va'sudevassavramiti sa maha'thma' sudurlabah'. He who understands that Vasudeva is everything is
a mahathma' very difficult to find ', the great soul to whom even the most mundane existential chore is a godly experience. As Swami Nammazhwar puts it, ' வருவையும் உறவு, பாதுகால், கீழ் முழு நிலையிலிருந்து புனிதரால் ', ( கிருட்பம் - வாய் 7-1.)

There is no dividing line among the devotees of the Lord, for the high and low alike worship and prayerfully address the Feet of Him Who rests on A'disesha'. Does not that illustrious list include the many-splendoured Surya', the lotus-seated Brahma and the third-eyed Rudhra, all of whom seek His presence for their daily worship?

Sri Bhutat Azhwar points out in this pasuram that there is no distinction of rank or pecking order in the list of devotees of Narayana. They range from the most exalted of gods from Surya, Brahma, and Siva to the humblest of the humble. These deities are themselves the subject of prayer and worship. They follow Him assiduously and constantly to pay their obeisance. Ithihasa- pura'na's are replete with illustrations of this.

Is it not because once long ago, the care-free tusker supremo, entering the sprawling lake for gathering the blossomed lotus to lay at the Feet of the Lord, came to grief at the jaws of the crocodile, and in dismay thought of those Feet of the Lord, Who sports the Sudarsana', in prayerful surrender, that he attained the exalted position in the Lord's abode?
Azhwar describes the elephant king Gajendra as 'அகந்தர்குருங்கு மாரியை' - the tusker who is capable of breaking free of any kind of iron leash put on him to rein him in, to indicate his licentious conduct, arising from his 'mast'. But even in his wildly wayward fun and frolic being an ardent Narayana devotee in his previous birth, his 'samskar' led him, in his lucid moments, to gather flowers from a lotus pond everyday for offering to Narayana in a nearby shrine. What ensued in one of those moments was a life and death battle of attrition between him and a vicious crocodile that was living in that pond, with Gajendra trying to extricate himself from the jaws of the crocodile, and the latter drawing the elephant deeper into the vortex, 'Gaja a'karshate teere',gra'ha a'karshate jale', (Vishnu Dharma 69-49). The elephant was dismayed not so much for his life, but that the flowers would wither away before he could offer them to the Lord.

'காஞ்ச குசவகர்கரசு கருகலேகுன்று முக்கணை I
குலகு கூர்கரசு மைருவருகுவுன்று முகை 'II

'Oh Madhusudhana, I do not cry out to save this body of mine, but to offer these lotuses at Thy Feet.'

Oh the ignorant ones, rather than wasting time on flattery of the worldly ones, who just live to eat stuffing their bellies like a tinsel town, and committing all kinds of follies, with or without intent, go round reciting the names of Narayana Who as Trivikrama filled the eight directions with His four lofty shoulders, and by your presence sanctify the land.
Azhwar refers to all seekers of gross sensual pleasures, who typically gorge on food as if their stomachs were a township by itself to be filled with all kinds of things.

In saying 'நூற்', Azhwar enjoins recitation of the Lord's name for its own sake instead of as a means.

"நூற்படிவு நூற்படிவின் சிதாரி நூற்புடன்: 'நூற்' - one who purifies others by his presence.

\[\text{"Even if a grave sinner, by meditating on Achuta', one becomes a saint, and by his touch purifies a whole line of sinners."}\]

\[\text{"நூற்புடன்பொருள்வு வர்ப்பு மருந்தேன் நூற்புடன் நூற்புடன் வர்ப்பு மருந்தே உயிர்நூற்பு உயிர்நூற்பு வர்ப்பு மருந்தே உயிர்நூற்பு உயிர்நூற்பு வர்ப்பு மருந்தே. \} \]

Reciting the name of Va'sudeva knowingly or otherwise, one's whole load of sins melts away like salt in water."

He drove the chariot for Arjuna in the fierce battle-field. In an earlier age, He ran after the make-believe deer, only to lose His consort Sita, and lay down on the bare ground. Were these acts becoming of the Exalted One Who rests on the cool, cosy Anantha'?
Azhwar expresses his wonder at how the Lord of all creation wandered on this earth subjecting himself to tasks befitting lesser mortals caught in the web of 'samska'ra', but not the Absolute Master of all creation that He is.

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“அதுவான் பிரின்மித் நிலகி வலியும் நுடிவு என்று ரீதியானது இருக்கின்றே, பராவ்மார் ஐ இருக்கின்றே

நாவ்ராமரும் பெருமானும் நிலகி வலியும் நுடிவு என்று கேடத்தே”

(Kat. Up. 1-3-34)
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“Know the a'tman as the rider, the body as the chariot, the intellect as the charioteer, mind as the reins; the sense organs as the horses and the sensory objects as the path of the chariot.” He is the Lord Who conducts the whole universe, and yet in the Kurukshetra battlefield as Sri Krishna, He allowed Himself to be a compliant charioteer for the warrior Arjuna. Did He atleast have an easier life in His earlier incarnation as Sri Rama? No. As He Himself admitted what privations He did not suffer like,

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“பாறையின் பெருமாடை தவறு உண்டு: என்கா நெற்று பராமர் கேடு: இருக்கின்றே மாந்த்திரியாக மற்றும் பராமர்”

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“Losing the kingdom, life in the forest, loss of Sita, losing Jatayu, such misfortunes as have befallen me will burn even fire”. As if it was not all enough already, where did He choose to retire to work off the weariness of all His exertions? On the bare grass in the wild forest under the wide open canopy of the sky. Azhwar is beside himself with sheer astonishment and disbelief at the Lord's style of 'jagad-rakshanam.'
Even if the conscious self may not be able to realise its characteristic of dependence, it is but proper to hold on to the thought of His presence in the heart. Just as one can only prepare the ground for a lake to hold rain water falling on a bush-ridden high land, but cannot make it rain.

'It is jiva'tma's nature to belong, and Parama'tma's nature to own.' Parama'tma' is the 'seshi ', and the jiva' is the 'sesha'. Azhwar says that it is seldom that one is, in thought and action, alive to this fundamental characteristic. The Lord, on the contrary, is forever eager and keen to hold on to His dear possession because of His ' a'sritha rakshanam'. One can prepare the ground and dig a lake there for storing rain water, but will it serve any purpose except as Varuna and his 'antar ya'mi ' Sriman Narayana grant that it serve the purpose for which it was designed by making rain to come down so as to enable it to fill.Likewise, a devotee has the characteristic of being an appropriate storehouse for the Lord, which, by itself, does not constitute the ' upa'ya" for reaching the Lord. So a learned one intuits that the Lord is the 'upa'ya". Then the Lord's grace descends on the devotee when he is thus evolved. In a manner of speaking, even creating the ground by removing the mental block of 'avidya",and 'karmava'sana's' is itself the Lord's handiwork. For as Sri Thirumazhisai Piran asks,

'அன்னை இலாந்துக்குவிட்டு கென்று விளங்கும்படி
பூது புத்தாக்க புருஷே பொருத்தி ', (புத்தாக்குக்கு - சி(மாக்கல்)- 23)

'The Lord ( Who as Sri Krishna quelled the bulls set as wager for the hand of Nappinnai ), is the farmer who on his own sows the seed, and nurtures the plant of devotion in the devotee. Do we need to sow the seed by our exertion, in this field of 'samsa'ra"? Swami Nammazhwar also expresses the same thought in the following lines.
'This universe is a field which the Lord has been ploughing from time immemorial, sowing the seed, irrigating, adding manure to, and making it yield a rich harvest by His extra-ordinary love towards us.'

He is the many-splendored Supreme Controller around Whose proximity the lord of heavenly beings and the lotus-seated Brahma congregate to offer their prayers, and approaching Whom Rudra wearing the crescent on his matted locks, prayed to, for the redressal of his sin. Is there anyone worthy of such supplication other than that Lord?

Sri Bhutat Azhwar says, 'அருங்கு மான்றங்கு விரித்துசாரஞ்சா', to drive home the point that the lord of all devas Indra, and Brahma who originated in the lotus flower sprung from the navel of Sriman Narayana assemble round the periphery of Sriman Narayana to offer their worship. As Sri Poigai Piran says,'காலங்கற்றுக்குரைந்து தாயார் கல்லீனாங்க கற்றுக்குறதாங்கான,' 'ஆம் காலிக்கு தாண்டின்ப் பாண்டி.' (ம. வ. 56).

Even he who is seated on the lotus sprung from the navel of Sriman Narayana can hardly comprehend the true measure of the Lotus Feet of the Lord.'
As Sri Vamana' You resumed overlordship of all the worlds. As Nrsimha of insuperable prowess, You planted Your nails and tore the chest of the formidable foe Hiranya. Yet another day, You took all the seven worlds scaled by Thee, for safe-keeping inside Your stomach. These were then the legitimate deeds of the lofty lotus-eyed Lord, loftier than the high heavens.

Azhwar refers to three episodes in this pasuram to underline Narayana's 'nirhethuka-krupa'. First, the Lord took the form of the diminutive Vamana', a form not quite becoming of the Lord of all creation, to seek the gift of three paces of land of Mahabali. Earlier, when He could have destroyed the insufferably iniquitous Hiranya, without lifting a finger, He took the form of the fierce Nrsimha Bhagavan to kill him with His bare Hands honouring the letter and spirit of Brahma's boon. Yet again, when the seven worlds were on the verge of extinction due to 'pralaya', He took them all into His
own stomach for safe-keeping regardless of their short-comings. Behind all these acts, is the lotus eye of the Lord, that radiates His overwhelming compassion and protective instinct, on the one hand, and overlordship over all the worlds on the other. Azhwar concludes that it may be possible to visualise the splendor of the high heavens, but not that of the Lord. Describing these acts of the Lord, Azhwar characterizes them as 'அம்பத்து' or 'appropriate'. Though they constitute acts designed for protection of the beings, the Lord considers them His own legitimate and proper act because after all it redounds to the credit of the owner of a property to protect his ownership rights.

Sri Valmiki Bhagavan says in Srimad Ramayananam, 'அரிந்திரவம் தமிழ் காம்போவதியன் பெருவைல்நிறா தீர்த்தத்தையும் கும்பியா விநாயகன்: நீரியல்: பாரம்பிரக ஜன்' (Chapter 1-85).

After anointing Vibhishana as the king of rakshasas of Lanka, Rama now free from concern exulted in the thought of having accomplished what was to be accomplished.

You kicked the demon disguised as a hurtling juggernaut to his death. That was not what could be considered proper for Your age. So You should not take it that way. Then, Your even more daring act of hurling the demon that came in the garb of a calf at another who lay hidden in a wood-apple tree, killing them both at once, is like trying to hide a beacon light under the bushel.

Sri Bhutat Azhwar takes the thought of the previous pasuram a step further, and reminisces on the two episodes of the Lord's incarnation as Sri Krishna. He recounts how as a small toddler, Krishna kicked the demon Sakata'sura, cartwheeling to his death, belying His age and size. So Azhwar implores the Lord not to look upon this as in
order – வாக்கைகல் கேவலம். or as part of His normal ownership guarding function, (Jagad-rakshanam). Azhwar's plea stems out of his natural human feeling of concern. Even more daring than this act was the ploy Krishna adopted at a later date but still as very much of a fledgling kid, to eliminate the twin cunning demons, Vatsa'sura who mixed in Krishna's cattle herd as an ostensibly innocent calf, and Kapitha'sura who took the form of a wood-apple. Taking the calf by its feet, Krishna hurled it up at the tree killing both the demons instantly. What if both of them had fallen on Krishna. The Azhwar expresses his amazement at this daring act, and poses the same question to the Lord as to how.

He could consider this as just another routine aspect of His role of 'jagad-rakshanam', when all this daring was fraught with such potential danger to His 'safety'- வேதகைகல் திருத்திகைவிவேதம்.

Sri Thirumangai Azhwar also expresses a similar thought on the unequalness of the 'act' and the 'actor', in referring to the earlier Sakata'sura episode in his line' மகன் ராஜகிருடன்ம் போரும் பிள்ளை, கார்த்திகவாருழிப்பின்ம் குறு விளைய சத்து சிம்மா' ( ஒட் - கி, 10-7-9 ). 'Barely seven years old this diminutive boy on Whose bosom Mother Lakshmi resides, kicked with His sacred Foot the cart hurtling like a mountain'. Quite appropriately, Sri Andal sings benediction to the Lord recalling both these events in her lines from Thiruppavai.

'அன்றத்து குளம்குடும்பன் பத்து பிள்ளை, கார்த்திகவாருழிப்பின்ம் குறு விளைய சத்து சிம்மா' .....( 24 ).

புிருபின்ம ககம்புநிறம் ராகமை கிளைஞ்சு பாஞ்சிருண்டுவின் அவன் ஏரான் சரியா? — பாஞ்சிருண்டு பாருவின் நடுவே குடிகும் சிக்கும் காலாம் கூறாள என்றோடு.
They lead a life of joy and fulfilment who constantly worship
You Narayana, in the prescribed way, steering clear of foisted
charges and sins of commission, even as they who are set on
the course with all favourable factors, in worshipful prayer and
with a sense of deep involvement.

Azhwar says in this pasuram that like those who are already blessed
with the actualisation of Lord's experience, by leading a life devoid
of pitfalls of unsought calumnies and sins wilfully committed, as
prescribed in Scriptural texts, and with a sense of joy and fulfilment,
are those others blessed who are endowed with all the predisposing
factors, but have not started on that path. The first category is,-

"பொன்னருடன் திண்மிட்டு புரேந்தியுன்னு" - those who find fulfilment by
constant pursuit of the ways of ' gna'na' - bhakthi yoga's '. Sri Krishna
says in the Gita ( 9.2.), ' பொன்னரின் புரேந்தி திண்மிட்டு குறைந்த கொலமப்பட்டாம் ' of the bhakthi yoga, that 'it is supremely purificatory,
blissful to practise, and assures a lasting outcome'. Swami
Nammazhwar observes in a similar vein, ' யாவை வங்காவாழின்
நிகழ்த்தி போராடிய மரக்கத்தின் ' . 'They will find bliss here in this life
and ever after'. Bhagavadvishayam is an exception to the normal rule
of ' குறைந்த பராமரிப்பு சாரம் ' - ' it is not always true that joy begets
joy '. So Sri Bhutat Azhwar puts an exclamation mark after the word,
' பொன்னருடன் ', to indicate that this worldly hypothesis does not hold good
here. The second category Azhwar speaks of, in this pasuram,
comprises people who have all the predisposing factors going in their
favour, viz. love born out of bhakthi, deep involvement in reciting
Lord's names, the underlying impress in the shape of ' purva janma
suhrudam ', and above all the Lord's ' krupa'-kata'ksham', his
benevolent look of compassion.' They also lead a life of joy and
fulfilment. Does not Sri Krishna say in the Gita? ( 2-40 ), ' குறைந்த
பொன்னரின் வென்றுவேத் குறைந்து விஎந்தே வில் ' - ' there is no loss to a good beginning in
bhagavadvishayam'.
The humans are endowed with a mind that can contemplate the divine. Time is at hand for us to engage the mind in worshipful prayer, and lotuses fit for worship abound in tanks. Sri Vamana’s beautiful Feet are ready and to bless our bowed heads. With so much going in our favour, will hell ever haunt

This pasuram is evocative of Sri Poigai Piran's pasuram in Mudhal Thiruvandhadhi (95),

'Thulamalaril deivam athiye daivam thuraiyil
Iyappukkal kaadu sevakal - nirthak
parakrithikadu karungam vavadupadu
Aarathi kettum
Kuramkooduru vilvam thirumurar.'

'Sayantana kanda maram malum madhurakulikai samayile
Nagarikai dinaatamkudurum dinaatamkudu II Nagarikai dinaatam- 6.

'This unique wealth called human organism endowed with limbs like the hands and feet, has been created since the beginning of time as an instrument of service to the Master of the universe.'

போத்தான் புலை - lotus flowers fit for worship. Sri Krishna mentions 'போத்தான் புலை' in the Gita, (9.26). Any flower is acceptable to the Lord when offered with true devotion. The Shastra's only preclude, 'கொல்லானியன் புலையான்', wild flower with thorn. Bhattar says that even that is precluded out of consideration to the devotee lest it should hurt his fingers.

முனிலை கைதார் - Lord's Feet beautifully soft to the touch.'
'Feet that are gently caressed by the Divine Mother Sri and Bhu Devi.' The word 'Thiru' indicates that the 'purushakara' agency the Mother is also near at hand. It can also be taken to mean the 'ubhayavibhuti' wealth of the Paramapurusha. Swami Alavandar, describes the Feet of Trivikrama thus, 'ஏனும் ருத்துக்கு கலுவசெறியுள்ள வடக்குத் தோற்ற நூறுக்கு வருந்துவி ரிமூகை சமனாக்கத்துக்கு தூண்டுவியும்' - (Stotra-Ratnam - 31). "Oh Trivikrama, Your Lotus Feet which have the tell-tale identifying marks of sankha, chakra, kalpaka-creeper, lotus, ankusha and vajra.'

'பழக்கப்பட்டு வைஞ்சன்னி வாசனை வீரந்து இது குரு வியா பாரையின் புறக்குறியும்' II 'The sound Narayana is there, the faculty of recitation is in us. Notwithstanding this, it is astonishing that people should fall into the clutches of hell.'

The path to liberation is blessed with the grace of the Lord Who is forever ready to remove whatever hurdles beset the path. Was not the dark-skinned Gajendra with pearly-white tusks, blessed with His grace in overcoming the onslaught of his adversary, for his devout service of offering a lotus from the cool pond to the Lord?

Azhwar makes the point that those who have steadfast faith in the Lord and entrust their burden to Him, looking upto Him as their only recourse, will have their way cleared of any stumbling blocks, however formidable or daunting, by His grace and prowess. The biggest impediment to spiritual progress is the mindset that one can achieve it by dint of one's own effort. That is removed by entrusting oneself into the Lord's hands.' பாலும் போற்றுத்தி லீங்கத்தில்
Extrication from one's own effort which goes against the grain of Lord's will, is "prapatti" or total surrender. 'Prapatti nishtai' slips away the moment one thinks that his self-effort can, by itself, take him to his goal. Azhwar says in this pasuram that ridding oneself of that self-delusion is not only essential, but what is more important, must also be accomplished for us by the Lord's will and grace. Has not Sri Krishna confirmed this in His Charamasloka in the Gita, "स्वाधीनः स्वाधीनः" bidding us only that we put ourselves at His Feet, and assuring us that He will make the effort for us? Our task is rendered easy, and even the difficult-to-attain liberation becomes easy enough to achieve. This is illustrated in the episode related by the Azhwar in this pasuram, of Gajendra who was a devotee of Sríman Narayana and who used to take a lotus from the pond which he used to frequent for bath for his daily offering to the Lord. Was he not blessed with the Lord's grace in his hour of desperation and distress call to the Lord, from the deathly clutches of the vicious crocodile?, queries the Azhwar.

"प्रपत्तकामसदिधि महान आराम अधिकार I
dश कृष्णानां: सरस्वती नागानां: II (कृपा - 68)

In the face of a grave danger, and looking up to Sríman Narayana as the supreme recourse, Gajendra thought of Hari.' Sri Poigai Piran also recounts this episode in his Mudhal Thiruvandhadhi pasuram, "பௌதை கரித்தீது விருத்யா இன்றை அகர்ந்து குறையுங்காலான", (97). 'Oh Lord of great compassion, was not Gajendra engrossed in sensual pursuit in the company of his mate, blessed by Thy grace, by worship at Thy Feet?'

23
The Lord Who hurled the demon-calf at the fruit-laden wood apple tree scattering away its fruits, and Who, in an earlier incarnation, had taken another form to encompass this earth under His Foot, blesses all beings who bow at His feet in keeping with their goals.

Bhutat Azhwar makes the point that those who turn to Him for His grace by adopting whatever means they choose to adopt consistent with their capacity like bhakthi, prapatti etc. as envisaged in the Scriptures, get their wishes fulfilled by His grace as appropriate to their means and merit in the form of aishvarya', kaivalya', moksha' etc. for He is the Dispenser of rewards. Has He not said so Himself in the Bhagavad Gita (9.24), 'अध्ययने तु महाभारताय दीर्घवर्षाः परस्यकर्मणि जीवित ' - 'I am the Enjoyer of all the offerings at sacrifices and the Dispenser of fruits of action'.

Oh my good heart, don't you see that He is the Dispenser of the ultimate grace of liberation as also the binding cycle of 'samsa'ra'? Don't you see that He is the inner Controller of the sense organs and the five elements of air, fire, water, ether, and earth? He is also the manifest universe, the rising mountains, and at the time of dissolution the unleasher of blazing fires capable of turning the dark oceans dry. Don't you see?

Azhwar addresses his heart as the good heart since it exults at the recounting of the Lord's names in a world replete with sinners who cannot bear to hear of His name. By 'अध्ययने तु महाभारताय दीर्घवर्षाः परस्यकर्मणि जीवित ', Azhwar means that the fruits of one's actions are dispensed by Sriman Narayana. As Sri Krishna says in the Gita, (7.14), 'अध्ययने तु महाभारताय दीर्घवर्षाः परस्यकर्मणि जीवित '.
Those that surrender unto Me traverse the deceptive samsara. Not only that, He is also the Controller of the sense organs. 'The mind is the cause of the human condition leading to the bondage of samsara and liberation therefrom.' The sense organs are under the influence of the mind. The Lord thus is the inner Controller of the mind and the sense organs.

"The indriya's are referred to as 'hrushikangal'. As the Lord of them, Thou only, Who art known as Kesava and Vishnu among deva's, are famed as Hrushikesa." When that Lord is the cause of the whole manifest universe of the elements that make up the universe, and its dissolution at the time of 'pralaya', it is no wonder that He protects and fulfils the desires of those that look upto Him.

The Lord Who rose in anger against Lanka, and put an end to Ravana, is also the One of abiding and exalted qualities worshipped by the heavenly beings. In a manner of speaking, He is the same One Who has come to abide in Venkatam of cool ranges where bamboos rise high.

The Lord could have, if He had so desired, destroyed Ravana by His mere will. But He chose to descend from His exalted abode of Sri Vaikunta, to launch His onslaught on Lanka and Ravana as a human being under the sway of human anger.

"(G. P. 59.136.) 'The Lord destroyed the wickedness of Lanka and Ravana.' (C. S. S. S. - 56)."
Thiruvenkatam where 'Srivaishnava's' reside, and to which the denizens of heaven have vied with one another for the worship of the Lord, is the gift of the Lord Who rests on the Milk ocean, to the celestial beings of Sri Vaikuntam, who have controlled the body made up of the five elements and the five senses which are a stumbling block to spiritual progress.

Having referred to Thiruvenkatam in the previous pasuram, Sri Bhutat Azhwar is drawn by its unique greatness and proceeds to describe it.

Azhwar says that devas from Brahma downwards jostle with one another to be in the forefront to get to Thiruvenkatam to offer their prayers to the Lord there.

gifted to the 'nithyasuris'. 'where (the paramapadha), the nithyasuris or eternal beings like Visvekesan', PeriaThiruvadi etc reside. Since in paramapadha there is no scope for them to experience 'soulabhya, sowseelya, va'tsalya, ka'runya'dhi' 'kalya'na guna's' of Sriman Narayana, they embark on a daily pilgrimage to Thiruvenkatam where they can enjoy the display of these qualities to the hilt. The Lord had, in His great compassion, ceded this abode to them so that they could come down here from their celestial world to savour this unique experience, not available there. The same thought is expressed by other Azhwar's.
Having rested on Thirumalai, my racing, seeking mind, impelled by an upsurge of desire, rushed past the moon exploring the high heavens in search of the Lord in Sri Vaikuntam, like a creeper seeking a support staff to hug and spread around.

Sri Bhutat Azhwar savoured the sight of the Lord in a standing posture in Thirumalai in the previous pasuram. But that experience only seems to have whetted his appetite for more. So in this pasuram, Azhwar craves for the experience of the Lord in 'paramapadha' itself. The craving of his mind, seems to the Azhwar like the natural propensity of a creeper to seek the support of a staff to spread around in order to grow. 'நாம் சமணத்தின் காலவரைத் தேர்த்த முறை சென்றுவரை ஓவியம் அவர்கோயிலில் உடையவருள் அவர்கவி.' - (கிளும்பம் - என் 9.3.7.).
Hailed as the 'Deva' among deva's by countless beings, resting on the Milk Ocean, my Lord Who once had, as tiny Krishna, torn asunder the face of the demon Kesi, now abides in Thiruvenkatam and in the ineffably beautiful shrine at Srirangam, and also with me in my mind.

Azhwar describes all the five 'praka'ra's' or modes of Sriman Narayana in this pasuram. He is the Lord of all beings and is resplendently present at 'paramapadha' for the 'nithyasuris', or celestial beings. 'பேரிக்கையும் அவர்களும், பேரிக்கையும் பிள்ளானைது: ( Purusha- Suktham ) Who is glorious among the deva's who bask in His glory, and Who is their Patron-guide.' 'நின்று வச்சைக்குரியவர்: ( Vishnu-Suktham ) 'Nithyasuris behold constantly.' 'அய்யமொமு அவர்களும் அவள்கிலோவர்கள்', (கிருஷ்ணப- வை 1.1.1.), 'பேரிக்கையும் கிளையும் பிள்ளானைது: ( Purusha-Suktham ).' 'Paramapurusha of three-fold Vyuha form is far above and beyond. Only a part of Him appears again and again in this universe.' 'ஆயர்புருஷர், பக்திகிளையும் கிளையும் பிள்ளானைது ', 'நின்று வச்சைக்குரியவர்: ( Thaittriya Narayananavalli ).' 'He that rests on the ocean for the perpetuation of this universe.' Then Azhwar refers to the Kesi episode from Krishnavatha'ra to illustrate the Vibhava'tha'ra which the Lord took for the sake of all living beings. 'ஏனைய கிளையும் கிளையும் கிளையும் பிள்ளானைது வளித்து பூட்டியது:' ( Purusha-Suktham ). Not stopping with this.

He is forever with us in stationary archa' form in divya-desa's like Venkatam, Srirangam etc. 'மகம் கிளையும் கிளையும் கிளையும் கிளையும் பிள்ளானைது', ( அபை -3 ).' காலமும் கையாளப் பூஜையாளர் கையாளப் ' – (தாவர் - கிருஷ்ண -47). As the Lord is in a standing state in the shrine at Thiruvenkatam, lest that should project any hurry on the part of the Lord, Azhwar refers to His relaxed state at Srirangam by the phrase 'ஏனைய கிளையும் கிளையும் வளித்து', 'charming beyond what thought can convey'. It is charming because it is situated in a setting of lush, picturesque gardens, 'வளித்து வச்சைக்குரியவர் கிளையும், மாரியாளர் வளித்து
"ஏனெனில் பாஜேயின் குருவே பாலேயின் வின் விளக்கத்தில் அவ்வினைகள் வாழ்வு தருகி பெருநூற்றாண்டு அடையவிட இரண்டு அண்மை வாய்ந்தது படைத்து உயிர்த்தே பாஜேயின் பாண்டிக்கையுடன் தேசிக்கத்தில் உள்ள பெயரைக் குறிப்பிடுகின்ற, பெருநூற்றாண்டு பெருநூற்றாண்டு விளக்கம் செய்யும் வழியாக் ...".

"ஏனெனில் மண்டக்குழும் செல்வேக்குழும், இணையான குருவின் ஆசார் ஆசார் உரவல் விளக்கம் " (நேரிலை சுவாமியா 5.4.8, 5.4.9.5.4.10.).

"ஏனெனில் மண்டக்குழும் மண்டக்குழும்
பாண்டிக்கையுடன் நிலவு நிலவு - நூற்றாணர்
நிலவுகள் நிலவு குருவின் உரவலை உரவலை அவ்வினை உரவலை வாய்ந்தது அவ்வினை உரவலை வாய்ந்தது " (நேரிலை - சுவாமியா 68).

ஏனெனில் காக்கும் குருவின் விளக்கம் காக்கும்
அவ்வினை குருவின் விளக்கம் காக்கும் - என்பது
நிலவுகளை நிலவு குருவின் உரவலை உரவலை
நிலவுகளை உரவலை வாய்ந்தது வாய்ந்தது - என்பது.

29

You - Who, in an earlier age, had reduced the beautiful Lanka to ashes with your arrows - let demoness Putana take you up in her arms, telling yourself, 'let me drink from her beautiful bosom to the brim of my stomach', sucking her life out along with the milk. In so doing, you made your mother unsure of what to make of you.
Touching on Krishnavat'ra' in the previous pasuram, sets the Azhwar's thoughts wander further along the same trail.

**Putana** came as if she was dying to suckle the child Krishna. As if warming up to her motherly warmth and entreaty in equal measure, Krishna appeared to be eager to drink to the brim from her bosom. **Stomach.**

Since killing of Putana by Krishna was an act beyond his age and size, it made mother Yashoda unsure of Krishna.

Oh, Lord of Sri, with body resembling the big blue ocean, once upon a time You as Trivikrama' measured the world. Another time you brought forth the submerged world from the depths of the ocean floor. Yet another time you churned the ocean, and in a yet different age, built a bridge across it. So say the sages of yore.

Azhwar speaks about Sri Vamanavat'ra' in which the Lord of Mahalakshmi of indescribably immense wealth and greatness, displayed His extra-ordinary simplicity and 'soulbhya" by assuming the dimuitive brahmin mendicant role for the sake of Indra, and asked for and accepted the gift of three paces of land from the asura' king Maha'bali.

Similarly, when the world got submerged in the ocean floor, you assumed the form of the grime-laden boar and retrieved this earth forking it up from the depths of the ocean floor with your front tooth, and placed it in its proper position.


It is they who hail the Lord as the great Benefactor each passing day saying, 'Today dawned well', and worship the Feet of Sri Varaha' with fragrant flowers from the Kura' tree, that will experience the joy of His beautiful Form.

Azhwar hails the Lord as The Great Benefactor. 

'The day dawned well'. Every day that is spent in Lord's memory and worship is a day well spent. So says the Azhwar.

- flowers of the wild kura' tree. This is cited to illustrate that the Lord accepts any kind of flowers offered lovingly.

They who prostrate to the Feet of Sri Varaha' Peruma'n Who is beauty personified, will verily experience the joy of beholding His beautiful Form. As Sri Krishna says in the Gita, 'it is imperishable and exceedingly easy to accomplish. Both the means and fruit thereof are equally felicitous.
Oh Lord of Sri, My mind steadfast in thoughts focused on You, was ecstatic. Next my tongue forever praising your sacred feet rejoiced. My whole frame engaged in the act of singing and swaying to the glory of your blazing disc, conch and other armament, rejoiced in that experience.

Sri Bhutat Azhwar extols the union of Mahalakshmi and Sríman Narayana, and as such addresses Him as 'நாதாலன்'. Hence ensues the joy of contemplating that union.

As per the Vedic statement, 'తూ: ప్రియము పాండితాం', the mind orchestrates the tongue and other sense organs.

33

My thoughts have settled dwelling constantly on the sacred names of the Lord wearing the cool 'tulasī' garland. My body always bows in reverence toward the Lord abiding in the bamboo-laden Venkata hill. My tongue too engages itself in the constant refrain of reciting His great qualities.

34

I have become Your eternal servant through the special grace showered on me at all times, worshiping, with fragrant flowers and incense, and in a spirit of overflowing love, Your sacred feet that once upon a time scaled this universe under a ruse as a gift of three footsteps of land.
Though Mahabali was a fit subject for destruction like Hiranya and Ravana, Narayana spared his life since he also had the saving grace of a generous heart, and devotion to the Lord, unlike the others. At the same time, he had to be taught a lesson for his arrogance and overweening ambition. So the Lord of Sri decided to ask of Mahabali three steps of land since Mahabali in his vanity presumed that all the the worlds belonged to him, and in so doing, had dared to dispossess even Indra who was a friend of the Lord.

Azhwar acknowledges in this pasuram that the 'nirhetukakrupa' of the Lord towards him has made him the Lord's devotee for ever desirous of service at His Feet.

Oh, Master, the ignorant look upon sensual pleasures as sustaining. Some would say that water is life - sustaining rather than sensory perception. Instead of being preoccupied with either, if only men would crave for even a little bit of your experience, that would indeed redound to their well-being under all conditions.

This pasuram contains some essential truths worth pondering. Azhwar dissociates himself from the common worldly perception of sensual enjoyment as life-sustaining. Even those who are capable of a sense of detachment from such sensory preoccupation, do not, however, seem to be free from other mundane concerns of existence, valid as they may seem, prima facie. This is echoed in the Vedic statement, 'अमर तृप्ति संसाराय:'. Azhwar dissociates himself from both world views. To him, the Lord's thought is the real sustaining force in life; to paraphrase Swami Nammazhwar, 'ஏற்றவை மான வாத்து நூற்ற

37
There is no intrinsic merit or life-sustaining quality in sensual pursuit. "தேங்கு பரிதை வெளிப்படுத்து தா், கமா வருந்து' I தேங்கு வளித்து பெருந்தா், கீழ் வருந்து II தேங்குக்குறுக்குள்ளா், ராமலிவசிர் பார்வி செய்யவேண்டும் II" The same subject matter may at first be a source of pleasure, but later could cause pain. The same thing may first be a source of displeasure, and at some point later, be gratifying. Therefore, in nature there is nothing inherently painful or pleasurable. So say the Sha'stra's.'ஏற்றுமன்குள் கமா வருந்து பிள்ளா பார்வியம்', (Brih. Upanishad 6.5.6.). By divine design, everything seems desirable immensely. In essence, its nature is transient, and unstable. The real reason for the delusion of a being in this is his predisposition stemming from the impressions of his past karma'. So Sri Bhutat Azhwar underlines the wisdom of devoting even a tiny fraction of one's inexhaustible capacity for desire in thoughts about the Lord. 'பா பரிதைகுறுக்குள்ளா், விளையாட்டு பார்வியங் I கூறுக்குறுக்குள்ளா், கமா வருந்து பார்வியங் II' (நி.ப. 1.20.19.).'In the same measure of the ignorant for sensual pleasures, my heart should be filled with desire for thoughts about You, Oh Lord. '.Thus prays Prahlada' to Sriman Nara'yan'. Azhwar says that even if we cannot all be like Prahlada', a little effort and interest in that direction would be richly rewarding in assuring us of the bliss of the Lord's experience.Hasn't the Lord Himself assured this as Sri Rama, in His declaration, உலகே வெளி வெளிக்குறுக்குள் நுழைவதுஷ்கு, (ப.ப 18-3 ).'I will not give up any one even if he approaches me in the ostensible guise of a friend.' That is the true measure of the Lord's 'nirhetuka krupa' for all his creation.
The vainglory of the gross worldly beings, tends to push them deeper into the morass of worldliness. They that are deluded wallow in ignorance. Oh, my heart, rest meditating on the wondrous Lord Who took this earth from Mahabali unobtrusively, swallowed it for safe-keeping at the time of dissolution, and brought it forth again at the dawn of creation.

Azhwar exhorts his heart to leave others who are after gross worldly pleasures to their fate, and instead engage in joyful contemplation of the Lord's wondrous 'lila'vibhuti'. The vainglorious worldly beings are destined, in the perception of the Azhwar, to sink deeper into degrading depths of desolation deluded by their own sense of self-importance on the lines of Sri Krishna's characterization of their psyche. 'புந்தன்னானாலா காச்க நிலகித்தியானாலா பரவளன்கீ லிலாவிள்பன்னால், கல்கங்கான்கீ கருஞ்சித்மான் மான்கீ' (Gita 16-14-15). I am the monarch of all I see. I am the enjoyer, achiever, strong, prosperous, wealthy, descended from a patrician background. Who is equal to me ?' This conceited sense of self-importance is self-destructive, and is what makes one caught up in the vicious cycle of 'samsara'. They who pursue other gods are ignorant and continue in their ignorance. Instead of joining their ranks, Sri Bhutat Azhwar entreats his heart, and through that, addresses a larger message to us all, to join the exalted group of people who seek the substance of 'bhagavadvishayam', and meditate on the supreme Lord. 'மெல்லோ விளக்கன்ல பெல்லோலீலோ பெல்லோமுறிக்கு வல அலோ'. Those exalted souls are 'மெல்லோ விளக்கன்ல விளக்கு வலிபிளீகன்' (பாறைதீப்பு 7.4.4.), as Sri Thirumangai Azhwar, deferentially designates them.
Oh Lord, Who gave to the world the wise Brahma from the big, cool lotus sprung from your gracious navel. Our many recurring lives are all futile, if we fail to praise, and our heads do not bow in homage to your sacred Feet.

Azhwar implicitly stresses that it is the Creator of Brahma, that is worthy of surrendering to. “இயைய்க் பொய்஫ுவ்வைல் விகிதம் பெறுவோம் ... மூவையும் செய் வருக்கோலையும் பயரிலோம்”, (Svetas. Upanishad 6-18). Since the purpose of life is to find its niche at the sacred Feet of Sriman Narayana, when our life is not geared in that direction, our repeated births are useless, observes the Azhwar. Does n't the good Lord give us these repeated lives in the fond hope that we will at some point make an effort to seek His grace?

Instead of gloating over material possessions as ours, understand what is our true wealth with a mind that is forever focused on Madavan as everything to us and recite His name as the gospel of the Vedas, appropriate for the tongue to recite.

Sri Bhutat Azhwar underlines in this pasuram what is ephemeral and as such is to be spurned and discarded, and what is of lasting value and as such is to be cultivated in life.
Material riches are not something to be courted and looked upon as our security. As many wise men have not been tired of stressing again and again, what did we bring with us when we came into this world, to take with us when we depart from here. Yet, during the fleeting hyphenated period that separates these two points, that constitutes our life span in this world of karma, we get so illogically and inextricably attached to material possessions and gloat over them as 'mine, mine' guarding over it like a jealous genii. Swami Nammazhwar rightly calls it a raging fire. 'கிளக்கரிக் கீழ் திருப்பழும் கும்ப திருப்பழும்.' (கோளையம் - பாட 4-9-4). Azhwar advises us to get over this delusion and points out to us what constitutes our only true and eternal security and protection. That is Ma'dhavan, the Lord Who is always in the company of divine Mother, Sri. Reciting His many names, like 'Madhava', Sridhara' is the only scripture fit for recitation.

The worship of the Supreme Being in the form of recitation of His names is the quintessence of the scriptures. If you know the Vedas, you will understand this truth. To those who are bereft of this Vedic knowledge, Let me tell you, the substance of the Vedas is reciting Madhavan's names. It will suffice to understand this.

The essence of the Vedas is the recognition that Sriman Narayana is the 'antarya'mi' of all gods like Brahma, Rudhra, Indra etc. and indeed of the whole universe. 'பொம்மான்மங்லாச்சு பச்சை பெரும் குற்றியில் : I பச்சை எம்பாட்சு குற்றியில் இ சம்பவ : II '. 'There is no doubt that whatever Vedic utterances are recited by the brahmans, are tantamount to singing the praise of Sri Hari 's names.' It is to drive home this truth that Brahmans start and end their Vedic recitation with the invocation "என் : என் " As Sri Krishna has
declared in the Gita, (15-15) “’நவகோனிச்ச நாரக்காவரிச்சிதம்

By means of all the Vedas, I alone am to be known. “Azhwar exhorts all those who lack such Vedic knowledge, to lead themselves in the light of the words of the knowledgeable ones and realise that recitation of His names is the quintessence of the Vedas.

In another interpretation rendered by Sri Appillai, the underlying meaning of the phrase, 'நாரக்காவரிச்சிதம்' in the previous pasuram, refers to the method of 'sa'dhana' bhakthi' described in the Vedanta encapsulated by the 'Thirumantra' and the 'prapathi ma'rga' encapsulated by the 'Dvaya' mantra meant for those not capable of the 'sa'dhana' margã'. Sri Pillai Lokachariar in his 'Sri Vachana Bhushanam', has also echoed this interpretation, about the bhakthiyoga embodied by 'Ashtakshara japa' as the ultimate essence of Vedanta sa'ra. (நாரக்காவரிச்சிதம்) The phrase 'நாரக்காவரிச்சிதம், has been interpreted to mean the 'prapathi margã' embodied by the 'Dvaya mantra'. 'Sutra's 41-50 of the same work may be referred to in this context. 'ஹா' - 'ஹா சூதி', 'நாரக்காவரிச்சிதம்' - 'சூதியாயிருந்தால்'. 'ஹா' has been taken to refer to 'Sriman Narayana' at the beginning of the 'Dvaya mantra'.

Before phlegmatic and other fluids begin to rack and waste away the body, think of the Feet of the Lord adorned by Sri on His chest. Sensual pleasures which delude even cultured minds conversant with the greatness of His Feet, are without any substance whatever.
Paradise cannot be reached by worldly riches. It is the compassionate Lord's grace that can make it happen. Oh my heart, do not forget to meditate on the sacred Feet of the blue-complexioned Lord Who has given Himself to the realised souls.

Azhwar states the well-known, but seldom realised truth, that all our wealth cannot help us in any way beyond the portals of this world and life. In the previous pasuram the Azhwar declared 'ippleshiyai Eppadi nalaippilai', that is sensual desire, or 'ka'ma' is without any substance. In this pasuram, Azhwar observes that even the 'purushartham' of 'artha', viz., material wealth does not fare much better in that respect.

- Though in general parlance, this term might be taken to mean heaven, Azhwar obviously does not mean this, but the bliss
of Sri Vaikunta in the august company of nithya suris. What will render this within our reach? Azhwar replies, 'அஸ்தராய அருங்காளனே அந்தையே அருளே'. It is the Lord's grace, that will bless us with the fruit of our dharma'. Azhwar's concluding advice to us is, 'அற்றுறையால் சமுயாமித்தாங்குள் மனிது வெளியில்லாமே பாதிப்பு இல்லையே குண்டே ' - ' சமுயாங்குள்- realised souls who yearn only for the bliss of proximity to the sacred Feet of the Lord, like Sri Suka', Va'madeva, Ma'rkandeya', etc.

May my thoughts dwell on the Lord of Sri, with a desire to behold His stately shoulders. They who cherish such a thought will not suffer the travail of repeated births. They who worship His shoulders, will view the lesser pleasures of worldly life with disdain.

'தையாரன் சுரியான் காட்டா' - The word 'தையாரான்', indicates that we should seek the Lord through the mediatrix of grace, the divine Mother.

'அஸ்தராயே சுரியான் காட்டா' - The stately shoulders of the Lord are the subject of repeated adoration. Thus, ‘அஸ்தராயே சுரியான் காட்டா தையாரான் காட்டா’, (கரு. ஏர். ). ‘Thou, (Bhu Devi) were lifted by Sri Varaha Bhagava'n, the repository of eternal bliss of one hundred arms.” ‘தனிப்பாடு உள்ளான் தையாரான் காட்டா தரங்கார் மாடுமை வாண்யா வாண்யா வாண்யா ....”, (தையாரன்-சித- 2-8-7.). 'Lord Who embraces Bhu Devi with big shoulders tingling in sheer joy. 'பாரர்பாடும் பாரர்பாடு பாரர்பாடு ' – (Stotra–Ratnam – 44 ). 'He Who hugs the delighted divine Mother with His broad shoulders'.
The pleasures of those who are born in this world.' Though Azhwar refers to these pleasures as 'பச்சிற்று', it is obviously meant in a sardonic vein, as such pleasures are evanescent - 'சுருக்கு'. They who are blessed with the vision of the beauty of Lord’s shoulders, will view the worldly joys, however much commended as 'அடுக்கு இழக்கு எதளம்', with scorn, because they fade in comparison to the beauty of His shoulders. ‘சமஸ்ரா பாராத்கிய வாக்கானா சென்றாள வாடித்தால்’ - (கி.சூறியல்- 14 ). The idea is that 'vairagya', the bent of mind that turns away from attachment to worldly pleasures is integral to realisation of the divine. As Swami Nammaszhwar describes it, “காலத்து பாசுக்கா நிலகில் வேங்கா அவளவுக காணா நகராதைநா “, (சிருக்குமெலம்பகம்- 8-2-8).

The greatest good that my blessed shoulders can do me is to bow in reverence to the feet of the devotees who worship the sacred Feet of the Lord, He Who struck with arrows to chop down the twenty shoulders, and all ten heads and two legs of Ravana.

Azhwar says in this pasuram, that even if one does not directly prostrate to the shoulders of the Lord, if he bows down in reverence to the feet of the devotees of Narayana, he is assured of His blessing. 'Bha'gavatha niṣṭā' is emphasized in this pasuram. “ உதுது துள்ளா நூற்று மாணவியாகும் காலித்து இல்லாமல்லாவு சலிவந்து இல தினமல்லார்வாகு நூற்று மாணவியாகும்தா”. 'It is doubtful if devotees of Achyutha' will always attain liberation. But there is no shred of doubt in this as far as the servants of His devotees are concerned.' The same thought is echoed by Sri Thirumazhisai Piran,
I will not look upon those human beings as deserving their birth as such, who have forgotten the name of the Lord with eyes resembling the red lotus, the sure passport to liberation of His savants. With a mind, that is forever fixed on Ma'dhavan, the embodiment of compassion, always think of reciting His names as the purpose of life.

- the beacon light that guides us to our ultimate liberation. ' ( ) The Lord assures us in this, 'I will myself lead you on to the higher path'. What is the reason behind this protective concern? Azhwar suggests that this springs from overwhelming love for us, like the love of the mother cow towards her calf. This is reflected in His eyes, the lotus-red eyes, - Lord of all beings, as also embodiment of overwhelming love and concern.

- I will not consider those who have forgotten His name as human beings'. Similar thought is expressed by Sri Thirumangai Azhwar. "Lord of Lakshmi, - indicates the mother's connection.

- Azhwar addresses his mind to internalise the constant 'na'ma japa'. '
here refers to the 'dvaya mantra" incorporating the Lord's name in association with divine Mother.

They who are wedded to the sacred Feet of the Lord at Venkatam, the subject and substance of the unfathomable Vedas, in Whose sacred Feet the denizens of heaven rest their heads, are not inflated by the vanity of worldly riches, nor are they like others who lose their heart over losing what they had yesterday.

- It is the general worldly trait to become possessive and vain about material riches. But the devotees of the Lord are an exception to this general rule.

- Azhwar underscores the transience of material wealth by the phrase, 'உன்னு மிதின் ', and the misery it causes when it is lost. But the devotees of the Lord are nowhere near such run-of-the mill worldly beings. On the contrary, with minds firmly focused on the Lord's Feet, they are for ever immersed in thoughts about their devotion to the Lord. As Swami Nammazhwar says, 'நூற்றாண்டு மாத்திரம் இறக்கசெய்ய அத்துறை அத்தின் கொல் பெரிது மீண்டும் ' - (நூற்றாண்டு- ஆண்ட. 6-4-7 ). They only lose their heart when they experience separation from association with the divine. It is that experience that Swami Nammazhwar depicts beautifully in his 'உள்ளூற்றாண்டுசின்னை' decad, (உன்னு-ஆண்ட. 6-7.), and 'குருப்பின் மன்னர் ' (குருப்பின்-ஆண்ட. 6-5. ). In pasuram 6-5-7 of the latter, Sri Nammazhwar wonders about that experience thus, 'உன்னு மிதின் நூற்றாண்டு தென்கு கொண்டு வீடு உள்ளூற்றாண்டு மானப்பிக்கும் ... '. Is it the fruit of my past karma', or the design of the Lord '?' ( by virtue of His 'nirhetuka krupa" ).

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The Supreme Lord with long, magnificent arms, and resembling the resplendent blue ocean, abides from time immemorial in Thiruvarangam and Thirukkottiyur. He also resides for long at Venkatam, and in beautiful Thiruneermalai set amidst lovely gardens.

In the previous pasuram, Sri Bhutat Azhwar described the blessed state of Sriman Narayana's devotees untainted by the temptations and frustrations of material life. In this pasuram, Azhwar describes the unremitting striving that the Lord undertakes for achieving this by His constant presence in all divyadesa's beckoning His devotees, and assuring them of His grace.

Unlike the shortlived 'Vibhava'vata'ra's', the Lord is forever present in these divyadesa's in archa' state for conferring His grace on us. Thiruvarangam hailed as Bhulokavaikunta is the shrine where the Lord is in a reclining state, and in Whose praise all Azhwars have sung except Sri Madhurakavi who sang only about his own Master Swami Nammazhwar. Swami Desikan has extolled the undiminishing grace of this abode of Sri Ranganatha, in the words 'அருள் அனுமானத்தில் அமிர்தத் விதரவை தோன்றியே ...' In Thirukkottiyur, the Lord can be seen in all three states, viz., in a recumbent, seated, and standing state. Sri Thirumangai Azhwar, in his own ornate style
addresses the Lord here thus, 'கோளாந்து குற்றாகமிகள் வாகசமாக குறுப்பு வகுத்துக் காண்டேங்கு, திருநூற்றாண்டு தங்குசேமிகள் திருக்காண்பவர்' – (பு-திக. 9-10-7.). In Thiruneermalai the Lord appears in rare four states, viz., reclining, seated, standing, and strident. 'திருநூற்றாண்டு திருச்சக தேவலின் தேவருணம் பெரும் பெருமான் பார்த்தே' – (பு-திக. 2-4-1.). In Thiruvenkatam, the Lord appears in a standing posture, exuding beneficial grace, at Whose Feet Swami Nammazhwar exhorts us to seek sarana'gathi, with the assurance of 'moksha prada'na' in the 'phala'sruti' pasuram of” அகமல்கள பெருமான் 'with the words, 'அகமல்கள பெருமான் அரசி வாழ்ப்பொருள் தலாககிரம் பார்த்தவரேயே பார்த்தவரேயே', the Lord Who is of unequalled, incomparable glory, (திஞ்சம்ப-திக. 6-10).

Arise to worship my Master at dawn, with folded hands and with flowers placed at His Feet, and heart overflowing with fervour for His presence, He Who protected this universe, variously, by scaling, lifting, ingesting and recreating every aeon, and Who in one such incarnation, materialised as Lord Nrsimha.

Azhwar exhorts us to show our gratitude to the Lord for His visible presence and eagerness to confer His grace on us, by worshipping His sacred Feet.

காலா வாகசமாக குறுப்பு - Arise, (and seek your liberation), and worship Him at dawn with folded hands.
கண்டே வாகசமாக – refers to the act of measuring the worlds, in Trivikamavata'ra'.
தேவருணம் – lifting up of the earth from under the ocean in Sri Varaha'vata'ra'.

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safe-keeping of the world inside the stomach at pralaya' and regurgitating it after it.

Master of the universe, as repeatedly authenticated by these astonishing episodes. As Swami Nammazhwar observes,'

Azhwar beseeches us to worship the Lord with all the feeling and fervour that our hearts are capable of, in grateful thought about His melting concern for His devotees as demonstrated by Him in Sri Nrsimha'va'ta'ra'.

Oh the Compassionate One, You bring the Vedas to light. You set the order and explicate the truths contained in them. You remain in the constant company of the lotus-born Mother. You reside in the enchanting Thirumalirunjolai covered by vast corridors of bamboo, and circumambulated by denizens of this land.

Azhwar says that the Lord uncovers the eternal Vedas, and brings them to light at every dawn of life on this planet, thus recognising the fact that vedas have no authorship as such, and that even Narayana did not author them but only rediscovered them for our benefit.

'mithri' refers to the ' upabrahmana's', the smrithi, itiha'sa pura'na's which throw light on the substance and philosophy of the Vedas. These have been authored by sages like Sri Va'ilmiki, Veda Vya'sa', Para'sara, Suka etc., with the Lord as their 'antarya'mi'.
'உற்பூர்விக்கு உன்னு கேட்கி' - The spirit and substance of the Vedas is enlightened by the truths contained in these works.

**Azhwar**'s phrase visualises the shoulders of the lotus-born Sri resting on the chest of Narayana in Srivaikunta. "அழ்வார் குறிப்பிட்டு சொல்லிக்கொள்ள, தொன்மை தன்னுள் வந்ததாக தவறு செய்வது: இலையில் விளக்காய்கிறது மாந்தார் கூறுகிறார். "

"The Lord of the universe Narayana presides over the exalted sphere of Srivaikunta along with Divine Mother surrounded by devotees."

**Inhabitants of this earth circumambulate Thirumalirunjolai** surrounded by vast verdant gardens, and groves of bamboo. 'உண்மையான இவ்வுலகம் வரல் விளக்காய்கிறது உண்மையான இவ்வுலகம் மறுவில் விளக்காய்கிறது', (திருவாலோன் - விதம் 2-10-8.). Sri Nammazhwar commends the beauty of the hills of this divya desa' dotted by gardens, in a similar vein.

Oh my heart, nestle upto Him without fear, the sweet-tongued Lord, Who shook the seven big mountains, the seven continents and the seven seas, by sucking the life out of Putana' of poison-smeared breasts, lisping appreciatively while drinking.

- refers to the appreciative lisping sounds made by a child in the act of drinking mother's milk. 'நேர்மைக் கொண்டு (முப்பாலில் வள்ளியில் நேர்மை) ' (திருச்செடி - விதம் 1-9-5).’ 'பெருந்து நேர்மை பொல்லாயிடம் வேள், தோல்கினி தன்னாலாயிடம்', (து. - திரு. 1-3-1). Azhwar reassures us in this pasuram that if we remember Putana' story, we donot have any cause for fear.
'Oh the Scion of Yadukula', the difficult-to-imagine child of the shepherd clan, the dazzling Performer of unbelievable deeds,' - with aforesaid thoughts resonating in me, I will call the Lord of Sri before everyone by the names that the blessed Gopis addressed Him in Gokulam, the very exalted names that cut asunder the gordion knot of samsa’ra'.

Azhwar yearns to call the Lord not by the common names that connote His transcendence or 'parathvam', such as Narayana, but the exalted names that denote the 'soulabhya' and 'sousheelya', the accessibility and condescension of the Lord. What are these names? Azhwar recounts, 'அடுப்பை அவுண்டு'.

அடுப்பை - difficult to comprehend by one's own effort. 'அவுண்டு' - member of the cattle-grazing clan. Swami Nammazhwar describes in a similar vein, 'பாண்டை பிறந்த மயங்கத்தாட அசா முருகாவு ஆசாமையன்' — (யியியாயம்-திரு. 1-3-4.).

Son of Vasudeva of Yadukula'.

-in front of everyone. Lest one should wonder if it is appropriate to utter the names of Lord that denote only His simplicity and condescending grace, Azhwar adds another name to the list, 'அப்பரசை ஏடா மகின் அவுண்டு', the wonder kid of incredible deeds. 'Thus, I will respectfully address Him', says the Azhwar.
Oh my heart, meditate on the sacred Feet of the Lord with the complexion of the blue ocean. Meditate on His exalted names. Meditate also on the blue complexion of Him Who once left His abode on the milk ocean to churn the oceans.

Sri Bhutat Azhwar lingers here to pause and ponder over the Lord, in slow unhurried steps, as if undecided as to how best it might be accomplished to gratify his inner craving. First, he addressed his heart to dwell on the sacred Feet of the Lord. Then he shifted the focal point of his 'dhya'na' to the great many names of the Lord. In this pasuram, he is drawn by the beauty of the Lord's complexion, and addresses his heart to meditate on that.

My Lord resembling the rain-bearing black cloud, with chest adorned by the Divine Mother, Whose abode is the big lotus flower, is a tower of grace. How can anyone fathom the magnanimity of Him Who merely condemned the culpable Mahabali, no less a demon than Ravana, to exile in the nether world for his errant ways, eventually rewarding him with Indra lokha'.

- of black complexion. " ( )" ( ) . ' ( ) . ' ( ) . ' Compassion is the greatest
dharma.' Sita Devi reports having heard this from Sri Rama Himself. The Lord is the fountainhead of grace because of His constant association with Divine Mother.

**வரைவாக்கன்** - refers to Ravana who wields the sword given him by Rudra'. Why did the Lord let Mahabali get away with a milder punishment of exile to the nether world, when he deserved, like Ravana, to be killed. It was because Ravana had no redeeming quality whatever, whereas Mahabali had one great quality of a charitable disposition, despite his numerous other faults. As Sri Parasara Bhagava'n observes in Vishnu Puranam, (5-17-30), 'புதுக்கல் விகாசம் போக் என்றுக்கொள்ளு அவா குஞ்சல் வகுன்வல்லது: I காலத்துக்கு விழிப்பு போக் என்று குஞ்சல் வகுன்வல்லது வைதா 'II By offering water on That sacred Hand, Mahabali attained all joys in this world itself, and further achieved without any adversaries for a whole aeon the coveted sovereignty as the ruler of all the three worlds.' Who can fathom the greatness of the Lord Who made all this possible?, queries the Azhwar, in this pasuram.

**திருவேன்கடம்** - It is Thiruvenkatam of rustling streams in full flow,- where along the winding paths, ascetics sit rooted in 'sama'dhi ', with profuse locks knotted and dangling on the back of their heads, like small mounds of earth around which creepers spread all the year round, - that is our coveted destination.

**ஏழ்ரவ்** – In Azhwar's imagery, the pious devotees sitting in silent meditation on the Lord along the winding path to Thirumalai, appear transfixed to terra firma as if enmeshed with the trodden path. Refer to Sri Kulasekhera Peruman's thought on similar lines echoing the greatness of this place. "ஏழ்ரவ் குலாசேக்ரா ஏழ்ரவ்"
To the Azhwar's fertile imagination, the profuse locks of hair knotted at the back of the 'sa'dhus' heads, are mistakenly overrun by the spreading creepers on the hillside to become a part of the surrounding landscape of boulders, since the 'sa'dhus' sit motionless in the intensity of their meditation.

Thiruvenkatam is our coveted mountain. Refer to Sri Thirumazhisai Piran's 'வேலுவவால் முன்னம் மலை ', (துவர் - இலகு. 40).

Even as You graciously descended upon the sacred hills of Thirumalirunjolai and Thiruvenkatam, making them Your favourite abodes, You now regard Your shrine in my heart as a favoured residence. On that score, do not ever forsake Your abode of the surging milk ocean. This is my humble prayer.

Although there are several hills, only Thirumalirunjolai and Thirumalai are looked upon as most sacred because of their association with the Lord, Who had made them His favoured abodes in order to attract devotees. But after the Azhwar started describing these hills in endearing terms, the Lord finding Azhwar's heart so very inviting, has made that His favourite shrine. Azhwar pleads with the Lord not to give up His other shrines on that score. "நீலாளரியின் தூ்தை கொண்டிருந்திருந்த தான் குறுகும்பி கொண்ட திசையில் மலை உள்ளது, அதன் மார்ட்டரின் நமது
The 'vyuhasthala's of 'Paramapada', 'Kshirabdi', and 'arcasthala's like Thirumalai are designed to enlist devotees, but after the devotees are gained, the Lord finds the fulfilment of the former shrines in the heart of the devotee, thereby making the latter the more favoured abode to the Lord. This is the implicit derivative in the usage by Azhwar of the phrase, 'திருநிலையாலே ஆனேயோ வரன்கையாலே'.' Do not give up the 'bhalalayam'. 'Bhalalayam', in contemporary parlance, refers to a provisional sanctum where the 'utsava' deities are kept when the main sanctum is under renovation etc.

'நராயன நுட்டம்' - the shrine of the devotee's heart. "நராயண நுட்டம் விளையாடும் விளையாட்டைப் பெரிது என்ன என்", (நடு வர). Nara'yana Suktham speaks of the devotee's heart, as the big shrine. Azhwar's plea with the Lord stems from his concern that the Lord should not give up on the other shrines, after finding the niche of the devotee's heart more appealing than divya desa's. His concern is rooted in his sense of profound gratitude to these shrines for making this happen. His mention of the milk ocean is more illustrative. It applies to other abodes of the Lord also.
Oh my Omniscient Master, holding the chakra' that is ever triumphant in battles. I had never forgotten You through the cycle of repeated births in view of Your steadfast and ever thoughtful compassion. Grant me that I may now immerse in the ocean of everlasting bliss.

Sri Bhutat Azhwar expresses his gratitude to the Lord, for blessing him with the thought of the Lord through the successive births, and prays to Him to bless him further with the fruit of his 'sa’dhana' in the shape of everlasting bliss. Azhwar, in a typically egoless spirit, attributes his own practice of constant remembrance, ('குறியநூற்றன்கு') to Sriman Narayana Who caused the Azhwar to remember Him always, by abiding with him in his thought.

ஏற்றால் ஏற்றப்பயிலே கிருட்டம் - 'grace of constant remembrance'. Similar thought is expressed by Sri Thrumazhisai Piran, 'பறு துளியதிகாத இயப்பாளியின் கிருட்டம் நேரத்தை பயம் பெற்றுத் தந்து கருதி கருத்தாக கிருட்டவள் பெர்ப்பட்டும்.' – (திருக்கோவில் - 101). Refer also to Swami Nammazhwar 's lines, 'திருவநாமதீ ராமரும் அதிம் குரவ்பந்தகாண்டு விளக்கமுப்பு ஆராத்திக்குந்தான் இவள் ......', (திருப்பாஸ் தயார் - 2-7-6).

Azhwar adds that the Lord himself must further remove the obstacles in the way of realising the fruit of his bhakthi, and grant him everlasting bliss, for is He not holding the mighty Sudarsana' assuring unfailing success in the obliteration of obstacles, however formidnable?

அண்முகசையால் - ocean of everlasting bliss. அண்முகசையால் முன்னில்காண்ட - "தார முமகமாக நூற்றானே", (காடு-புல்வாசன் - 7-1.) ' This Paramapurusha causes the jiva' to attain bliss.'
When the passion for His vision grows out of hand, how shall one exercise self-restraint, in order not to appear impatient? Do not despair. Even before the Lord chooses to bless us with the vision of His golden form, the Divine Mother is ever eager to hasten that process.

करङ्कारकी कालिन - Desire can be assuaged only by (His) vision. 'करङ्कारकी कालिन रामायणीया कालिन' - (राम-रायण. 97).
करङ्कारकी कालिन - If it begins to to grow out of hand.
कालिन अरुणाष्ट्री - Is it possible to rein in that desire in order not to appear overly restless? The implication is that the jiva'(beloved) in conformity with 'paratantra'svarupa'must wait for the Master('Paramapurusha') to take her in His fold, and not run wild in despair; in the spirit of Sita's calm and dignified self-restraint. "कालिन अरुणाष्ट्री बीतिन ",(राम-रायण. 39-30).” "My protection is His role.”

अध्ययन धर्मकारी - Azhwar's phrase underscores Divine Mother's 'purushaka'ra" role in representing our case before the Lord, with words such as, “अध्ययन धर्मकारी “,(राम-रायण. 116-44).” There is none who is free from faults.”
Hear ye in all four directions, hold steadfast to the practice of singing the praise of the gracious Lord blessed by Divine Mother, abiding with Him for ever. Let us rightly sing the praise of the sacred Feet of our Master endowed with beautiful long hands.

The Divine Mother confers all graces on the Lord by virtue of Her association.

Sri “எங்கிருந்தார் ஒருநீர் தொழி பற்றி போறே: காம் கின்ன பலம்” (Sri Alavanda'r's Chthusloki). 'Sri is Your name. How shall we speak of You'? As the various Vedic declarations such as Purusha Suktham etc., speak of the 'Param' as the Lord of Sri, it is the blessing of Her constant presence that establishes the 'Param'. “அம்மான் புமணிகள் புருமில்லா ராசி படா கின்னக்” – “The principle on which fell the Mother's many graces turned into 'Param'. “As Sri Parasara Bhattar says, “எங்கிருந்தார் ஒருநீர் சிறியுடம் பெரியுடன் பாண்டிரித்துக்கிறன் காண்டெம்”. “Whose footprints rest in Sri Murari's chest after taking cognizance of which the Vedanta's round up their philosophical inquiry.” Swami Nammazhwar describes the association in the following terms, 'அலந்தினியே அல்லாஹ்வரே அனந்தா மார்தா அளை மார்தா'. (தேவாலயம்-ைசு. 6-10-10.).

Sri Thirumazhisai Piran addresses the Lord as 'நூற்றும் மார்தா கீதி பிக்பா ‘ (தேவாலயம் – தேவ அநுபாத விளக்கம் - 62). Azhwar drives home the truth, that it is the Lord of Sri Who is the Supreme Being, not other gods. 'நூற்றுண்டு நூற்றும் பிக்பா பிக்பா ' (தேவாலயம் – தேவ அநுபாத விளக்கம் - 53). 'Do not consider as Lord those who have no connection whatever to Sri.'
Though singing the Lord's praise may be akin to the taste of neem, the goddess of learning Sarasvati has favoured us by residing in our heart, urging us to sing about the Lord with the golden chakra', and endowing us with this ability. This poetic inspiration is due to the grace of the compassionate Lord.

The goddess Sarasvati, hailed as 'நாம்கர்த்தை', in the Veda's. Azhwar observes in this pasuram, that his poetic skill was the gift of Sarasvati having chosen the Azhwar's good heart, as the appropriate instrument to sing the praise of the Lord. How did the goddess of learning choose Azhwar's heart for conferring this favour? It was because the Azhwar enjoyed the special grace of SriRamanarayana, since the time he was in the womb of his mother, as gratefully acknowledged by the Azhwar later on in the work. 'நேராயின் நடனத் தீர்த்த உவாசத்தில் கர்த்தை நீதிக்கவும் கிருஷ்ண கிருஷ்ணே ' (87). 'I worshipped Him as a foetus in the womb, seeing for myself the grace of the presiding deity of Thirukkotiyur.'

Why does the Azhwar compare singing the praise of the Lord to the taste of something as unpalatable as neem?; although the Lord's name is usually described as something indescribably sweet, as for instance in the words of Swami Nammazhwar, 'நேராய் நடனம் உவாசத்தில் கர்த்தை நீதிக்க ' – (தியாரத்து – பகு. – 2-3-1). It is to demonstrate that this contrary reaction is the result of the cumulative residue of tendencies built up over timeless births, or, in other words, our samska'ra's which are not easy to shed.

உண்மையில் நான் புனிதச்சிற்றூர் முறுக்கி, நானூற்றிலி சாகுத் தமிழ் பேச்சு – மின் திருநூற்றில் வாழ்க்கை சாகுத் தமிழ் பேச்சு நெறியாள்பால் இல்லாமல்மே இல்லை. 59
When the Lord cast His benevolent glance at us, His devotees, showering on us the grace of constant remembrance, making some substance out of mere straw, my ignorance dispelled, I looked closely at the reality of God and Self, and meditated on His Feet resembling the lotus flower. I then offered my soul to those feet without a thought of any other recourse.

When the Lord cast His compassionate glance. 'அந்தந்தத் வெள்ளையானவன் அன்றானது ஆலா மனன் காண்பது ' .

- The soul has the quality of being owned. Brahman has the quality of being the owner.

The prayerful mind steeped in His thought as ' The Way ' is in a state of total surrender.

Oh Lord, Yours is not just the face of the Supreme Deity, your essential nature is the effulgent expression of being the constant support of your devotees. The beings of this great earth visualise You as the transcendental reality. It is however, those who understand You as the incomparable repository of redeeming grace, who will truly and for long help conserve this world.
Azhwar explains in this pasuram the common perception of the Creator, as a Being distinct from all other sentient beings, in accord with the Upanishadic statement, 'सुरभिर्हितोत्कृष्णम् सद्गुरूविश्वसेवकम् यदा प्रजासु राम भीकूदति अनन्तः, ( श्रीमदभागवतम् 2-5-13.). 'The immortal Being among other immortals, the Conscious Self, Who is the Dispenser of desired fruits.' "Neither countenance, nor figure, nor arms, nor abode exists for You. Even so as the goal and support of devotees, You shine in the brilliance of all the above.'

'Will live long and safeguard this world.'

A long time ago, as a small dark brahmin boy, when You deceptive contriver, asked for the gift of three steps of land, one Foot that supposedly stood on the land filled this earth in a trice, and your towering shoulders traversed in all directions, so say the learned ones. That was a big grace that the faithful ones received from You, Oh Lord.
Sri Bhutat Azhwar illustrates the 'a'srithapa'rathantriyam' described by him in the previous pasuram, by citing Sri Vamanavataram in this pasuram.

ஏட்பு – The day a long time ago, when Indra came wailing the loss of his kingdom to Mahabali.

மிள்கால்கள் பகவ விளை பலகம் – At the very instant that the designing Lord asked for the gift of three steps of land of Mahabali, one Foot of the Lord had already filled out the entire expanse of this earth. 'கடா மேலியேல் செவ்வவ வந்த புனைநா பண்ணம்'. The moment the symbolic offering of water in token of the granting of the gift by Mahabali, fell on the outstretched hand of the diminutive Brahmin, He metamorphosed into Trivikrama filling all directions.

திருதல்பாகத்தின் திருதோல்வியல் நடுவு அணுத்திரிஸ்பாம் – 'பலப்பால் குந்திதுகழிக்காமல் அழிந்திருள்வி பூப்பாள் விளையாட்' – (Vishnusuktham), 'in Whose three giant strides, all the worlds were encompassed'.

சுருக்கா பிரிவிளையின் காணு விளை – This deed was not only to favour Indra but an act of grace to all those who live by their faith in the Lord.

பிரித்து அமசுப்பிச்ச்சித்து பார்த்திருமங்கு பொழுதுடன் முன்னாம் நாடாளைக்காற்றா தொண்டால் பார்த்துதிக்கும் இந்தாக்கியம் குமாரவேல்வின் பிறந்தவா தொண்டு நேன்ற விளை. 62

I bowed in prayer to Krishna the Supreme Leader of the Ya'dava' clan, Who drawn by love towards Nila Devi, performed the feat of breaking the horns of the bulls set as wager for her hand. In my ignorance, I had been oblivious of this bliss divine and the sad loser for this.
Azhwar drives home the point that it is the Lord, Who is the dispeller of the veil of ignorance that makes us lose sight of, and miss, the lasting bliss of 'bhagavadhanubhavam', since this is rooted in the fruits of our action, and the underlying cause of chronic and inseparable association with 'prakriti', (nature).

'ஓடுந்து தோன்று : அனுமடிப்பு தவறுமா : ' - 'moksha is attained by wisdom, worldly bondage is caused by ignorance.'

As Sri Krishna declares in the Gita, "குருவம் மை மெய் குற்றமா இ பெருமாள் புரட்சியிலும் தயாரிக்கும் கோதிலிருத்த " II (Gita 7-14). 'This delusive power of Mine which is of three-fold guna's, is difficult to cross. Those who surrender themselves exclusively unto Me cross over this 'ma'ya'. For this, His compassion and blessing is essential. Hence Azhwar exhorts us to surrender ourselves at His lotus Feet as he himself has done in saying 'மாதவாரேந்தரம்'.

This does not signify lust towards women, but the inseparable love between 'jiva'thma' - 'parama'thma'.

The story of how my Master Who had subdued and eliminated the seven bulls, filled blood from His own hand, into the raw skeletal head – swarmed by scavenger vultures, - stuck in the hand of fire-like red-complexioned, bull – riding Siva, to liberate him from his curse, is a long one to relate.

The Lord Who as Krishna had subdued and killed the seven bulls set as wager for winning the hand of 'Nappinnai Pira'tti'.

Siva who is red-complexioned like fire. 'செட்டிப் மால்தேவாள் - (புரி-சித். 6-1-2.). 'செட்டிப் ஆரி' - (சுத்தம்-சித். -5).
Oh my Master Krishna, if one prays to You in the light of the substance and spirit of the epics, such prayers address only your name. Lord of Sri, the very embodiment of the eternal scriptures, bless me that I may experience You in the resounding Vedic notes.

Since in the previous pasuram, Sri Bhutat Azhwar spoke of the epic stories, in this pasuram Azhwar affirms that the substance and spirit of the epics is to glorify the Lord's names.

The itiha'sa pura'na's only speak of the Lord's name and glory, (bhagavad-vaibhava and na'ma-sankirtana') in the form of stories.
Even in these stories, it is not those that speak of His 'parthvam', or 'vyuha' or other avata'res that constitute the core substance of the epics, but those relating to the felicitous simplicity and all-round accessibility of the Lord.

Lord of Sri Who is the substance of the resounding Vedic notes. 'Gita 15-15.' By means of all the Veda's, I only am to be known. 'Mother Sri Devi, since You have the greatness of attesting to the identity and attributes of the Lord, and abide with Him, none of the Veda' declarations speaks of You as apart and different from Him.'

The nityasuris ever behold that exalted seat of Vishnu.'

Oh Lord of Mother Lakshmi, I bowed to your beautiful Form, and lovingly decorated your pink feet with pretty lotus flowers. Desirous of worshipping You, and with vision fixed on your supreme abode, I made bold to seek my repose there to offer my prayers to You for ever.
Azhwar speaks of worshipping the Lord as a fulfilment in itself, as he is immersed in 'seshatva rasa' 'seshatva rasa' அச்சுெட்பால் அரசுதல் ஆச்சுெட்பால் - Following the dictum, "அச்சுெட்பால் அரசுதல் ஆச்சுெட்பால்" - "Without service, 'seshatvam ' is not achieved." Azhwar possessed of overwhelming love, decorated the Lord's Feet with pretty lotus flowers.

'determined to lead a life offering eternal 'mangala'sa'sanam' to the Lord ', like nithyasuris in Srivaikuntam, 'திருவேண்டுமர நிஃபுருமையாகத்தேயன்: நிறைவுத் ', ( VishnuSuktham ), - in that paramapadha where the eternal beings who are at once realised, pious, and for ever watchful, sparkle.'

Oh my good heart, you have seen how insidious is this worldly life, and the suffering unleashed by it. It is the gateway to inferno and is to be devoutly avoided, by reciting the names of Narayana. If you will, think about the degradation of this existence.

Azhwar underlines the perils of ' samsa'ric existence in this pasuram. Azhwar addresses his heart, for a good and congenial heart is an important prerequisite for any kind of worthwhile pursuit of ' bhagavadvishayam '. 'ஒமை வை முஸ்லிசுவால் கரவல் புது விசுவால்: இ புது விசுவால் கரவல் புது விசுவால் கரவல் ' II ( Vishnupura'nam, 6-7-28. ). "Mind alone is the cause of a man's bondage and liberation, the mind obsessed with sensual pleasure being the cause of bondage, and mind devoid of sensual desire being the cause of liberation."
I was blessed with the vision of His beautiful Form in my dream. In that I beheld in His hand the dazzle of the fire-spitting Sudarsana'. In that vision again, I experienced His spontaneous grace capable of cutting asunder the binding ka'rmik affliction, and the underlying residue of past impressions.

In the previous pasuram, the Azhwar issued an advisory to his heart, warning of the degrading potential of 'samsa'ric' existence. As if not prepared to wait that long, the 'nirhetuka krupa' of the Lord, reaches upto the Azhwar in a beatific vision of dream-like actualisation in this pasuram. Manusmrithi describes the divine personalty as 'सन्तुक्षकृपाः', (12-122), that is 'dream-like mental actualisation' which is the unique gift of Yogis and Azhwaras.

- Azhwar has the visual experience of the beautiful and auspicious form of Sriman Narayana, complete with the fire-spitting dazzling Sudarsana' in His hand.
Azhwar feel rid of the shackles of 'samsa'ra' in the shape of both papa' and punya'. Not only that, the Lord 's nirhetuka krupa' is such that it cuts at the root of the inherent 'va' sana's' and 'samska'ra's' capable of resurrecting the binding affliction.

As Sri Krishna warns in the Gita, “..." (Gita II 60-61), the impellent and impetuous senses as the focal point of our 'va'sana's', forcibly drive the mind astray. Hence, controlling them all, one should integrate the mind with the divine, looking on Sri Va'sudeva' as Supreme.

The Lord churned the ocean with the sparkling mandara mountain as churning stick, and the shiny serpent Vasuki as rope, in order to quell the asura' race equipped with a fierce fighting force armed to the teeth – He Who snapped the tusks of the rogue elephant in another age.

In this pasuram, Azhwar describes the unbelievable feat of the Lord. Who single-handedly made the supreme exertion of churning the ocean to fulfil the desire of the emasculated deva's for 'amrit' to be able to prevail over their asura' adversaries who had repeatedly outfought and subjugated them. Azhwar has used the word 'माण' in a manifold sense.

माण - refers to rapier-like foreteeth of the asura's.'माण - refers to the asura' army wielding sword as their battle-weapon.

माण - stands for the sheen of the mandara mountain.'माण - describes the shiny skin of Va'suki.
They who have become royal highnesses and rule over this earth, riding their high horses before our eyes, are what they are, because they were devotees in their several preceding births who placed cool lotuses at the exalted Feet of the Lord Who has a navel adorned by a red lotus flower.

Azhwar observes in this pasuram that the kings who rule this earth, forever extending their domain ensconced in the saddle of the horses they ride, owe their present prosperity to the fact that in their several preceding births in this world, they had been ardent devotees wedded to the sacred Feet of Narayana.
As Swami Nammazhwar has sung in the above pasuram, the lotus flower adorning the navel of Sriman Narayana distinguishes Him as the primordial fountainhead of all creation, among the Trinity, comprising Him, Brahma, who sprang from the lotus on Narayana's navel, and Rudra who was created by Brahma.

The heart of a true devotee is verily like a shrine, be it Tanjai, or hallowed first among 'divya desa's' Srirangam, or Thiruthanga', or the ever cool Thiruvenkatam the cherished treasure house of devotees, the milk ocean, Kadanmallai always in the thought of devotees, Thirukkovalur, or the high-walled Thirukkudandhai, the abode of my Lord Sri Rama.

Azhwar likens the heart of the devotee to a shrine, since the Lord is seated therein with great love. He is in His favoured abodes, the divya – desa's. Hence Azhwar mentions very appropriately, the heart of the true devotee first, true to the dictum, 'அண்ணாகுறிக் பொல் ' – that which is preeminent is to be ranked high in the order of things. For it is said in the Upanishad (अष्टक – ३१ ), 'अष्टकम् तथा ब्रह्ममातम ब्रह्मसमानस्य भवेन ', ' The devotee's heart is to be understood as the Lord's great shrine, meaning that all other shrines are to be interpreted as 'bha'la'laya's only. In an earlier pasuram (५४), Azhwar had himself proclaimed other shrines as 'நாமதேவாம் ', Sri Nammazhwar refers to the devotee's heart as the big shrine, 'நெல்லூர் சேவுகள் ', (சேவுகள். 3-8-1.). Azhwar then lists some of the shrines. 'நெல்லூர்' also known as 'நெல்லூர் பூங்காவின்', 'நெல்லூர் பூங்காவின் ', - Srirangam, considered the crown jewel among divyadesa's and referred to in our tradition
only as 'திருமலை'. Sri Thirumangai Mannan describes it as 'அனுமம் குடில் அம்மன்' (திருமலை சிலையம்), 'Srirangam that is surrounded by other divyadesa's which are like gardens round it'.

திருதங்கல் - Thiruthangal. By mentioning Tanjai and Thirutangal in the same company as Srirangam and Thiruvengadam, Azhwar drives home the point that no invidious distinction is to be drawn among the divyadesa's.

திருமலை வாசனை வெள்ளையன் - Cool Thirumalai which is looked upon as a treasure-house by all SriVaishnava devotees.

தமிழ் - Milk ocean.

தமிழ் அல்லாஹ்வுடை மதில்லியல் – Mahabalipuram the abode of the Lord lying on the bare earth, where the sage Pundarika was blessed, and hence so dear to the devotee's heart.

திருக்கோவலுர் - Thirukkovalur where the Lord manifested Himself along with His consort to shower His grace on the first three Azhwar's, Poigai, Bhutam, and Pei, in a narrow corridor of a house, where they had taken shelter from rain and storm. Hence called 'இரங்ககுரி சான்மான்'.

மக்கான் குறுகீட் - high -walled Thirukkudandhai where the presiding Deity was most beloved to Sri Thirumazhisai Piran, and of Whom this Azhwar inquired with such solicitous concern. 'திருத்தர் குருகீட திருத்திருச்சிவாசம்', (திருத்தர் குறை வித. 61).

தங்கம் வன்மரியின் திருமலை நாகர் தங்கம் -- வர்த்தத்திய விதம் பெருவிகளின் திருப்பாரின் விக்கிருபாநார் பூம் பெருவிகள் நாகர்.
When the Supreme Lord of the universe bestirred himself from his bed of the serpent Anantha’ puffing out venomous fumes from the mouth, to lift his flower-like foot in order to measure the worlds in all directions, the Sankha' on his left Hand, blew loud, and the fiery Sudarsana' rendered all adversaries nervous by its sparkle.

This pasuram relates the episode of Trivikrama avata'ra', in which the loud thunder of the Lord's Sankha', and the fiery brilliance of Sudarsana' was enough to throw all adversaries into nervous helplessness.

The Pedrovaayam Pasurum – Hearing the thunderous roar of Sankha', lauded lavishly by Sri Andal as 'பூமிகதை விருத்தகள் மாற்றம் மீம் காட்டிய', gladdened the hearts of all devotees to exult, 'நீதியும் பாதுகாக்க மாற்றம்'. and broke the hearts of adversaries, like it did again, in the Kurukshestra' war.'வெற்றியும் நம்பும் காட்டியது விளக்கும் குச்சும் குண்டுக்கும்.' ( Gita – 1-19 ).
Sri Periazhwar echoes the same thought in the line, 'வளர்சியும் எழும்?' அந்த ஆய்மாய் அந்தங்களிடம் மார்தியா வழிந்திருந்த ஆய்மாய் ' ( பெய்யநோயன் – திரு. 1-8. ).

தெரியலாம் ஆக்கணா விளக்குக்கும் அழை – As if this was not enough, Lord's Sudarsana' by its shower of fiery sparkle all-round, stunned all adversaries freezing them on their tracks.

நீதிகாலம் வருமா அய்யியை – Lord's couch Anantha emitting venomous fumes from its awesome mouths, - is intended to highlight the cold terror of the moment for all adversaries. Sri Thirumazhisai Piran describes it on similar lines, 'அதற்கு ஆரம்பத்தால் அதன் வேலன் அழும் அய்யியது வருமா அய்யியை,' – ( மார்தியா மார்தியா – திரு. 10. ).
அய்யியைக்கும் விளக்கும் - What is the reason for this preemptive action from the Lord 's functionaries ? The reason is their overwhelming eagerness to ensure the undisturbed rest of the Lord,
on the milk ocean, jestfully underplayed by Sri Periazhwar as, 
'ஏனையோர் ஏனையோர்க் கூறுவதற்காக நினைவாக பாவையுடன் விருப்பாக அகிலமயமான காரணாக நிறைக்கிறது கோரவைக்கு விளிப்பைக்' 
(விஷ்ணுசுக்தம் – விஷ்ணுசுக்தம் 5-1-7.). Lest no harm should come to that 
beautiful body in apparent slumber on the serpent couch, 
even the nithyasuris are always watchfully alert. 'தாய் மரியாவை: 
மரளும் பூம் சுற்றும் மன்னனத்தின் கருள்: .... கொழுத்தையே நீப்புருக்கு சென்றுகையும்: முதிக்கிறே' (Vishnusuktham).

பெரியார் ஆடு - Lord's foot is like flower in bloom. பெரியார் ஆடு: 
(Vishnu Sahasranamam - 952.)

Rising at dawn, the primates would dip in the flower-laden 
ponds, and gather the freshly blossomed flowers to offer in 
worshipful prayer. Oh my heart, you also hasten to recite the 
names of my Lord, and offer flowers at the lotus Feet of Him 
Who is the Jewel of Thiruvenkatam.

While in the previous pasuram, Sri Bhutat Azhwar described the 
exalted status of the Lord, with only 'nithyasuris' surrounding him in 
constant attendance and alert, in this pasuram Azhwar reassures his 
heart of the Lord's 'soulabhya"- accessibility, to even primates and 
people like us.

மாரு அம்மை வாசனைக்காட்டிருந்தாங்க – தாய் - the early hours of dawn 
considered very propitious for prayer and meditation. “புத்தாண்டு 
மரளும் பூம் சுற்றும் மன்னன் ககருமித்துக்கையும் கொழுத் I செய்தியின் 
குரையில் பாவையுடன் விளிப்பைக்:புத்தாண்டு II “At the stroke of 
dawn (bra'hma- muhurtha’), a Srivaishnava should rise and recite 
Hari's name several times.” Sri Andal underlines this in Thiruppa'vai,
'மாரு அம்மை வாசனை கையுடன் கூறுவதாகும் கோரவை விளிப்பாக அகிலமயமானது,
The primates of Venkatam hill, possess intuitively the virtue of rising at dawn and setting out for the worship of the Lord. Lest anyone should wonder if it is possible, this pasuram sets at rest such scepticism, by reminding us that it is possible due to their habitation in a divya-desa' like Thiruvenkatam. Azhwar is not alone in this, as it will be seen that other Azhwars have also used similar imagery. For instance, Sri Thirumazhisai Piran also acknowledges existence of similar virtue in the elephants of Thruvenkata forests, in his lines, ' சோமபால் மாரியின்மையான நாளிலகள் எங்குள்ள அன்னன அசிரவு வரலை மரியக்கு எழுத்து எழுத்து மரியக்கு எழுத்து மரியக்கு எழுத்து மரியக்கு எழுத்து எழுத்து. - ( தலையடை - சிற்ப - 46 ).

அக்கிக்க அருள்மிகை துள்ளு - Just then freshly blossomed flowers.
நூற்று - The primates pray raising some sounds appropriate to their character. ' தந்திரியர் நல்லூரின்சோதர் தவிரமானியார் குண்டு விளம்ப நிலைவிதன். ' – ( ஆதாரத்தாள் . ). The Lord of Thiruvenkatam accepts with love equally the chatter of the monkeys, and the Vedic hymns sung by nithyasuris.

அல்ல சவுன்றன சுர்ய ஆர்யா - ' reciting the sacred names of the Jewel of Thiruvenkatam.' Azhwar underlines the importance of prayerful recitation. ( மாதிக்க சவுன்றம் ).

சோமபால் மாரியின்மையான நாளில்கள் தாயார் அல்ல - 'Offer flowers at the lotus Feet of the Lord of Venkatam. ' Azhwar emphasises thus, another aspect of devotional service,viz. ' மாதிக்க சவுன்றம் '.Thus,Azhwar underlines the importance of all three-fold service.
Firm in resolve to serve my Lord Narayana, the Supreme Protector, —Who saved the red-eyed Gajendra with crescent - like tusk, — I will recite his thousand names, at all times of day, morning, noon, or evening, sprinkling whatever flowers I can gather.

Azhwar affirms his resolve to put into practice, worship of the Lord with all his senses, mind, tongue, and body at all times of the day. The parallel of this sentiment is to be found in Swami Nammazhwar's affirmation, 'நம்மகிர்த்தனின் வாழ்த்து மன்னர் முனிவராய்மாளோய்வர்பம் சம்பவார்த்தா அதீஸ் வாலும் வாசிக்கும் பதை வாழ்த்து ஭ாஷை நம்புவர் அருளுக்கு குறுக்கு சென்றாலே. ' (நம்மகிர்த்தன்- தனை- 3-3-1.). 'At all times without ceasing, we shall pledge ourselves, with body and soul, to the unfailing service of my Father, the Primogenitor of all our forefathers, and the leading Light of beautiful Thiruvenkatam dotted with springs.'

ஞாயிற் வர்ணங்கள் — The thousand sacred names of the Lord ('Sahasrana'mam'), are to be meditated upon, and not to be just recited mindlessly. The 'Sahasrana'mam' of the Lord referred to by the Azhwar in this pasuram, is illustrative, and not exhaustive, for as Swami Nammazhwar observes, Narayana is, 'நாகர்குறள்பகுதியில் பிறங் மஞ்சள் அபிரம்மான் ', (நம்மகிர்த்தன்-தனை. 1-3-9.). 'The Lord has a thousand names, and even more.'

அதில் கல் ஆயிரக் குறளியும் — At all times of day and night irrespective of the hour. To yogis and sages there is no night or day, for the sphere of the ascetic who has mastered his senses, is Supreme Truth. 'As Sri Krishna says, the single-minded yogi is in perpetual communion and constant remembrance. அவர்கள் தொழில்: ஆட்டீயதற்கு
(Gita – 8-14.). It is only those who recite the names with a benefit in mind, that consider where, when, and how, of this pursuit. The yogi is not in this category. He is always awake, and 'bhagavadanubhavam' is his life breath. As Swami Nammazhwar asks, 'அம்பாயிற்றாய் காற்றுற்று நிகழ்த்த பொறுகையிலே அவாயத்து இளைக்கிறதால்', -(அம்பாயிற். - 97 ). Another parallel of the Azhwar's resolve is to be found in Sri Thirumazhisai Piran's statement on how he spent his time, 'நராயணத்திலேயே தம்மனத்தையே குறிக்கும் பால்விகியள பாடல்', (மாரி – ராம. - 63 ). Place, state, or time has no relevance to meditating on Narayana. 'அரியங்கள் யார் பல்காரா என தென் தென் பார்க்க என்று மலர் தேவ பெருமாளிநாட்டிணி முதல்நாள் போரும் பால்நூறி II ' Wherever we are, while at rest, or standing, let us hold close to 'Ashta'kshara' mantra'.

அப்புல் வேறு விளை - Sprinkling whatever flowers are gathered, not necessarily choice ones. 'ஆத்மான் பெருமாளநாயகனும் வாழ்க்கையிலே என்னமே கருவி : '. ' To the true devotee, there is no limiting line of sa'stra' or method.'As Sri Krishna, says, 'சுருக்கு புகையில் காவல் செய்துவிடாதாம்'

அஹ்வா் பிள்ளைகளே இருந்த காதிரி - Gajendra with crescent-like tusk and red eyes. 'காதிரி' denotes fury or being in heat. 'பிள்ளைகள் காதிரி' – (பிள்ளை – காதிரி - 97 ). 'காதிரி' literally elephant to highlight the fact that the Lord's compassion transcends a being's status in life, conduct or intelligence.

காதிரி காண்டு நலமான் – The Lord Who delivered the elephant Gajendra from the jaws of the crocodile, when the former called loud 'நராயன்', without letting the elephant drop even one of the lotuses gathered by him for offering to the Lord. When all other gods forsook him, saying, ' not I ', 'not I ', it is Narayana Who rushed to his rescue responding to the 'நராயன்' call, testifying to the truth that He is the primordial Supreme Being.
My Master, in life after life, and in all states, I dedicated myself to your service. I have been blessed with the fruit of my penance now, and the opportunity to adorn your sacred Feet with this garland of mellifluous Tamil verses. It is your grace that I excel in the Tamil arts.

Azhwar acknowledges his debt to the Lord for his boundless grace through successive births, culminating in the poetical outpouring about his being blessed with the Lord's thought and service at his Feet.

' பாணை கலனாலையால் ருஷ்யான்பும் அன்றாலும் - ' I did penance in all births and states.' What penance does the Azhwar allude to? It is the blessing of ' bhagavad- kainkarya' through countless births. ' சிவப்புருவின் ராஜசேத்தால் குருவிகளும் காண்டுகொள்ள உங்களுக்கு : கைத்திருப்பு இரு ' After thousands of births, one evolves to a state of penance and realisation. Devotion to Sri Krishna is born in men whose sinful karma has withered away.

' பாணை கலனாலையால் - ' I have realised the fruit of my penance.' The fruit is ' bhagavad anubhava' and ' bhagavad kainkarya'.

' பாணைக்குழும் ஒரு வருணத்தும் பாணை - ' I composed this beautiful garland of great Tamil poetry. Azhwar mentions this as an instance of ' bhagavad – kainkarya'. ' தான் மதிகள் துங்கசேரு காண்டு காண்டு காண்டு த்யாங்கூரை' – ( திலகட்டம் – நூற்றாண்டு. 4-5-7. ). If it was in Sanskrit, it would have been within the grasp of only afew people. By composing this in sweet Tamil language, Azhwar's verses come within the comprehension of many. As lauded by Swami Nammazhwar, ' கைத்திருப்பு இருந்து பெரும்பாட்டில் மருந்திலிரும் வெளியில் பாணையேல், ( திலகட்டம்
Such melodious poetry is music to the ears of the celestials and 'nithyasuris'. Such poetry is like 'worship performed according to formulated order which is accepted in toto by the Lord by a nod of his head, as it were.' 

'Thengai adharam samudrakshayam' - (Tamil - Thiruvalluvar 4-5-1).

'Azhwar is proud to call himself a Tamil literate. But he adds that he is just not a technical language expert, but one who is immersed in the experience of the Lord, (bhagavadvishayam'). Lest any one should be tempted to question the appropriateness of Azhwar's apparent self-accreditation. it may be said that in the matter of 'bhagavadanubhava', no taint of vanity attaches in speaking out about one's own internal perception of that experience. Swami Nammazhwar strikes a similar note in his 'mudanai deivam adugavasashasam'. (Tamil - Thiruvalluvar 4-5-8.).

Behold Thiruvenkatam the exalted mountain of the Lord resembling the hue of the blue sky, where the tusker driven by 'mast' could be seen mesmerised in front of its favourite mate, and offering to it a succulent bamboo plant of just two rings plucked by it, and dipped in honey oozing from a honey comb nearby.
This pasuram is set as testimony to the Azhwar's self-description as a gifted Tamil literate. The splendor and beauty of the literary flavour permeating these lines makes one feel as if the Azhwar breaks out in this poetic flurry in response to a possible poser from the Lord to prove his claim to being a Tamil literate. Among the AzhwarS, Sri Thirumangai Mannan has the reputation of having been a versatile poet; hence one of the several feathers in his cap sets him out as a 'திருமண்டலம் மனன்'. He has, by way of tribute to the artistic excellence of the aforesaid pasuram, borrowed the imagery of this, in one of his pasurams, in the following lines, 'மாறும் என்றும் தனியுரின் பிற்பார்க்கவேணும் ஆயிரக்கணித இயற்கைக் கொரையடைவால் இயற்கைக் கொரையடைவால்' (மையில் - நீல் - 1-2-5.).

திருக்குட்ட நதிக்காணம் - The tusker looks like a hill on the Thiruvenkata mountain. 'மாறும் என்றும்' - (மையில் - நீல் - 1-2-5.). The elephant oozes the juices natural to it when it is in heat.

மாறும் மண்டிதாழும் - mesmerisedly facing its favourite female partner with whom it is in love, biding a congenial moment to please the mate. 'மாறும் மண்டிதாழும்' - (மை - தூன். 1-2-5). The tusker seems to be looking into the eye of its mate waiting for its signal or command, "நம்பிக்கை பாட்சுக்கு பாட்சு கைஞ்சி":

லுண்டுவாய் என் கீழ்க்கடி போக்கும்படி கைமு நீர்வெளிய கைமு சூரியன்: I II பாசனம் வின்வெளிய போக்கும்படி பாசனம் வின்வெளியான பிரத்திக்கோள் (Sri Sthavam 1). When creating, in sustaining and dissolving the worlds, and when conferring the fruits of heaven, hell and moksha' on the worldly beings, Bhagava'n Hari looks into the face of the divine Mother, and carries out those functions in the light of her signals '. The tusker's behaviour is evocative of the Lord's action.

சிற்றுன்ன கீர்த்தனை - A succulent bamboo just grown two rings in size. 'சிற்றுன்னை', in Sri Paraka'lan's phrase. The tusker is alive to
the sensitivity of its young partner, and chooses a soft, succulent bamboo shoot. Sri Kaliyan adds, ' வெண்ணல் வழங்கி தசாய்ளம் ', to indicate though a young plant, the bamboo is rich and succulent, due to the richness of the soil of Thirumalai.

வெண்ணல் வழங்கி - bamboo plucked with due care having regard to its delicate texture. Though the tusker in 'mast' is usually devoid of clear thinking due to a state of passionate intoxication, here since the act is in behalf of its mate, it is extra-vigilant.

அத்காலான வழங்கி - honey dripping from a honey comb nearby. In Sri Parakalan's phrase, ' அத்காலான வழங்கி '.

சாதுக்கு வழங்கி - offering the bamboo mixed with honey in supplication, entreating the mate to accept it. In Kaliyan's phrase, 'சாதுக்கு வழங்கி '.

Let us now savour the beauty of a pasuram on identical lines from Sri Bhutat Azhwar's younger contemporary, Sri Pei Azhwar, in the following lines, ' பெய்ந்த உடல்வரானானாள் பெய்ந்த உடல்வரானாள் வைத்துக்கொண்டு வைத்துக்கொண்டு சாதுக்கு வழங்கி - கிருஷ்ணாவிருந்து அருள்வாணாள் கைத்தாங்கம் கைத்தாங்கம் ' - ( உத்தரம் - 45 ). Sri Pey Azhwar in this pasuram, evokes a parallel imagery of a male and female elephant wandering in separation owing to the common misunderstanding, ( உத்தரம் ) typical between the spouses. Sri Bhutat Azhwar describes the coming together of the tusker and its mate after this separation.

' குட்டி வெண்ணலில் கூறு அதன் வழங்கம் ' - Kaliyan completes the imagery on a consummate note of grace on the part of the young female in demurely accepting the treat offered, in a felicitous reconciliation and rebonding, not unlike the divine Mother accepts the garland of her Lord graciously, at Her doorstep on the ' Pankuni Uttaram ' day and invites in the Lord signifying the happy ending of
the 'viraha'. In his own ornate way, Paraka'llan uses the phrase, 'அழக் கல்லூர்', implying that the tusker is aware that if he gives the bamboo with the honey, it might choke the young partner, and so instead he chooses to wring the honey in the bamboo into the mouth of the mate.

Famed for this kind of happening, Thiruvenkatam is the resting place of the Lord, whose complexion blends so beautifully with the colour of the sky.

What is the underlying 'ta'tparya" of the illustration handled in this pasuram ? It is to the effect that the Lord resides in that mountain where the tusker protects its mate by giving her the desired thing. As mentioned in Swami Nammazhwar 's pasuram, 'சான்றிராமர் அக்கயில் குடியம்பள் நிலையிலுள்ளன்', (கிருட்பம் - அக்கயில் - 1-8-3.), it is proof that just as Sriman Narayana confers His grace on, and protects, the celestials, and people of this earth standing at Thirumalai, even the animals like the monkeys and elephants are an integral part of His 'rakshana' scheme.,

Gathering plenty of mountain sandal paste, exquisite jewellery and silks, as also fragrant jasmines, worship prayerfully, with bowed head, as befitting a true devotee, the sacred Feet of the all-knowing primordial Cause of all creation.

The sandal referred to as suitable for the lovely texture of Lord's body, is that gathered from mountain Chandanagiri which is known for its special quality sandal tree. It should be like the sandal paste prayed for from the 'Kubja', (the hunch-back woman), on the streets of Muthura' by Sri Krishna, with
the plea, 'நாம் நம்மாகைகள் வாழ்ந்து நீள்விகரித்து 'II' ஐவும் நம் காரும் இயக்கும் புத்ர மேய்க்கம்' This sandal is highly fragrant as fit for kings, and has texture, Oh Lady of beautiful face, give us some sandal paste suitable for our bodies.'A-ñwar's mention of high quality sandal to offer to the Lord, does not mean that the Lord accepts only that. He will no doubt graciously accept whatever is offered with love. It only means that the best of things befits the beauty and loveliness of His 'svarupa'. In a figurative sense, it means the devotee's yearning heart is ever overflowing with love for him, looking upon him as the 'upā'yo-upyam', (the formula and the fruit), or in the words of Swamy Nammazhwar "புத்ரம் நிற்பா காட்டு பொட்டியிட் பாண்டிக்கின்று பொட்டிய நிற்பா காட்டு பொட்டியிட் பாண்டிக்கின்று - கார் நிற்பாதியே " - (திருவாய் - தீ. 4-3-1.).

நாணாகைப்பொருள் - exquisite jewels as can adorn the Master of all worlds. In Sri Nammazhwar's reckoning, it is the act of folding of both the hands in fervent prayer. "சத்தவர் அன்னியைந்து கர்த்தர் குழுப்பும் இவ்வாகியம் -- (திருவாய் - தீ. 4-3-2.).

முப்பு - Silks. "முப்புதியைக்குள்ளார்வா மந்தவாம் வேல்வாதம் மன்னர் காண்டியிருக்கும் குழுக்குத்து " - (திருவாய் - தீ. 3-1-1).

நீர்ப்புறப்புற்றுக் கூறுவரிசைக்கும் - fragrant and fascinatingly white jasmine garlands. This could also be taken to mean garlands of hymns. "பேர்மாய் கண்டியிருக்காம் கார்கை நீர்ப்புறப்புற்று கூறுவரிசையை மன்னர் பாடுகளத்தில் அடையும். (திருவாய் - தீ. 4-3-2.) 'கண்டியிருக்காம் கார்கை நீர்ப்புறப்புற்று கூறுவரிசையை மன்னர் பாடுகளத்தில் அடையும் குழுக்குத்து " - (திருவாய் - தீ. 4-3-5.). In a metaphorical sense, the flower garlands, the jewels, and silks translate in Swami Nammazhwar's equation, to life breath, love, and fervent prayers.

பாரித்துக்குறுந்து - gathering in plenty.
அந்தாரா
- The Primordial Being, "இரு பாரித்து குறுந்து :
When there were no Brahma, Rudhra, nor any sentient beings, worlds, or stars. '‘ நூற்றாண்டு தான் நாகப்பெறு அடைத் ‘’, (Mahopanishad). Only Narayana was. '‘ இந்த பார்வாரா பொய்க்காணி போர்க்கிய “, (Swetasvatara Upanishad). ' He Who at the beginning of creation projected Brahma and others…. seeking liberation I seek refuge at his Feet,' Thus the 'parathvam' of this eternal effulgent Being, the original Source of everything is well-nigh impossible to visualise, let alone comprehend.

அனிவியம் - The all-Knowing. “ சூட்டூர்பணம்: “, (Vishnu Sahasranamam). He that has the knowledge and understanding capable of gratefully equating one small good deed to a hundred thousand fold, and commensurate love. The knowledge spoken of here is just illustrative of the Lord's omniscience.

அப்பிரதாம் துளி - fervently praying, reciting hymns in praise of Him or His names, or addressed to His lotus Feet.

பாடியங்கு - bowing in reverence.

அதும் – befitting the self.

அய்யல்க்கானம் சுத்தாஞ்சிக் புதுவியம் நூங்காம் க்குக்கானம் சுமாந்த குள்ளன் - அய்யல்க்கானம் சுத்தில் பாடியங்கூட் பிரித்து காரத்துப்பெறுவது குதிரை புதல்குள் குள்ளம். 77

See my good heart, it is but proper for us to worship the exalted Feet of the Supreme Lord of all beings. It is fitting to adorn his Feet with pretty lotus flowers. Adorning them thus, and bowing in reverential homage, and worshipful prayer, it behoves us to engage in penance of constant recitation of his Sahasrana’ma'.
-- See my good heart, it is but proper. ' ஆத்மா இழையிசை ' - ( ஓகல் - கிருஷ்ணாசால் - 1 ). ' அவளை நீட்டியது கிலி கொண்டது அவளுக்கு பூச்சியம் குஜல் நீட்டிச்சை தானும் கிலி நீட்டிச்சை ' - ( கிருஷ்ணம் - பாடல். - 1-7-8 ) . Though ostensibly the Azhwar addresses his heart, the hearts of Azhwars are always engaged in constant pursuit of ' bhagavadvishayam'. As such the underlying message is like a wakeup call to ordinary people like us, with wayward hearts which are after lesser pursuits, to arise, awake and approach the redeeming Feet of the Master, and meditate on That. Such a construction would be in line with the interpretation of Swami Periavacha'n Pillai.

- - The exalted Feet of the Purushothama'.
(The Greatest of all Beings).His Feet are, in a sense, like his nama', larger than He, since they have the magic quality of redeeming and liberating without drawing any distinction between worthiness and worthlessness, as was the case in conferring 'moksha' on the reprobate Sisupala in his moment of departure. In Sri Periazhwar's elegant phrase, ' அவளையன் கிலி நீட்டியது அவளும் ', ( கிருஷ்ணம்- பாடல் 4-3-5 ), His grace is boundless taking within the fold of his Feet even such a hardened sinner. As Swami Nammazhwar puts it, ' கிலி நீட்டித்து அவளும் ', ( கிருஷ்ணம்- பாடல் 7 -5-3 ). Hence it is, that the Lord's sacred Feet have been the object of adoration and adulation of Azhwars and Acha'ryas' alike. " வெள்ளாடன் கிலி நீட்டியது வேள்ளாடன் கிலி " , ( கிருஷ்ணம்- பாடல். 1-2-10. ). Swami Pillai Loka'cha'rya, in his Mumukshupadi – 146, reinforces this thought in the words, ' பிராம்மால் அவளை நீட்டியது கிலி வழக்கம் கிளம்பு கிலியாம் பிராம்மால் கிலியாம் ', meaning 'even if forsaken by divine Mother, or the Lord Himself, his sacred Feet do not ever forsake. They remain the unfailingly safe haven to all.' Also, " கிலி நீட்டியது கிலி " , ( Sanga-Tamil Paripa'dal – 3 ).

85
Adorning the Feet with pretty lotus flowers, and prostrating to them.

- worshipfully praying with lips.

- His one thousand names, (Vishnu Sahasrana'ma').

Recitation, (of His names) is penance enough. Whether called by accident, or design, for a purpose or mechanically, or jestfully, his name has redeeming quality, and in Lord's reckoning bears fruit. That is the gist of this pasuram.

It was only the four-faced Brahma that reaped the fruit of his devout penance, when he, reciting the many names of the Lord, washed with sacred Ganges water the towering golden Feet of Him when He set out to measure the worlds.

It was only the four-faced Brahma that reaped the fruit of 'divya-na'ma sankirtana' by being blessed with the opportunity to wash with his own hands, the Lord's Feet in His Trivikrama'vata'ra'.

Lord's golden feet that are not only the instrument of all 'purusha'ra'ta's, but also the self-fulfilling object of all spiritual search, striving and sa'dhana'.

The raised golden Feet of the Lord in their giant stride to measure the worlds. Lord 's Trivikrama'vata'ra' is referred to here, which He took in order to restore to Indra the rightful sovereignty over the celestial world. While Indra got his kingdom back, it was Brahma who got something of
far greater value, the blessed state of touching and washing the golden Feet of the Lord with water of river Ganga. “இதயம் விழும் சமஸ்கரம் சிவா தீர்ப்பு சாக சீமா கரையா வைந்து ஆர்க்கனோம் கேஞ்சு அஸ்தித்வத்தில் தீர்க் கூர்ந்தாங்க.” (முகலி சிவா சாஸ்கர் - 56). Even though, he was born in the lotus flower sprung from the navel of the Lord, Brahma had never ever had as much as a glimpse of the lotus Feet of Narayana. For the first time, he had that blessing now in Trivikrama'vata'ra'. No one before or after had that kind of up close and personal benediction of the Lord's Feet.

- sprinkling the Ganges water. Ishvara Samhita narrates how when Narayana set out to measure the worlds as Trivikrama', the devotion of Brahma and other celestials transformed into sacred water which filled Brahma's 'kamandal'. Taking that water in his hands, Brahma washed the Feet of Trivikrama' with great love and respect. Siva who saw the overflowing 'thinumanjana' water took that water and sprinkled it over his head, saying to himself, 'I can purify myself with this sacred water', and did not release that water from his matted locks for thousands of years, till Bhagiratha' did penance and prayed to him to release it for the liberation of his forefathers condemned to damnation by Kapila Muni. This water then descended to this earth as river Ganga.

- reciting all the names of the Lord. சிற்றிச்சுக்க என அல்லி கையேற்றீர்க்கடுத்தாங்க - - washed to the ecstatic relief of his pretty hands.

— 79
In matching comparison to the Feet of the Lord in measuring this vast universe, the greatness of the unparalleled courage and valour of the hero of the epic Ramayana, stands out – the Lord who, ever true to his word, would not be dissuaded from his purpose by the mother's plea, nor that of his Consort of slender shoulders, the incarnation of the lotus-born Lakshmi.

Azhwar cites the rectitude and courage of Sri Rama as something which matches the greatness of Sri Vamanavatara, in measuring all the worlds with His Feet.

"Following Sri Rama, and pleading with him, mother Kausalya implored.....' Her plea was, ‘‘ஏன் கேட்க படா பிறகு செய்தோம் தான்: சூழ்கோவில் ஸ்ரீஜீனத்தை போய் அடிக்கவே வேண்டும் தெரிவு பார்க்கும் நன்மை காண்கயை நோக்கல் கற்று அங்கு வருகையலாயல் குமாரனே’’ (Srimad Ramayanam – Ayodhya 21-52). ‘My Son, even as your father is venerated by you, so am I venerable by you. From what I consider righteous, and with my overwhelming love towards you, I will not allow you to go to the forest, nor is it proper for you to leave me in my state of grief.’ Sri Rama did not consent to her plea, citing the overarching 'dharma' applicable to both of them - of his implicitly following his father's dictat, and his mother as the wife of his father falling in line with her husband's wish. ‘ஏன் கேட்க படா பிறகு செய்தோம் தான்: சூழ்கோவில் ஸ்ரீஜீனத்தை போய் அடிக்கவே வேண்டும் தெரிவு பார்க்கும் நன்மை காண்கயை நோக்கல் கற்று அங்கு வருகையலாயல் குமாரனே’’ (Srimad Ramayanam, Ayodhya 21-59-60.).

'Whatever a person who is, a teacher, king, father, and an elder, lays down whether in anger, joy, or desire, how could a right-thinking son who considers that righteous and proper conduct, not comply with that? I, being that son, cannot refrain from carrying out that wish, since he is the father who can legislate our action, and who is husband, guardian, and the law to mother Kausalya'."
Then Sita of slender shoulders like bamboo, and incarnation of lotus-born Maha'lakshmi, eager to hasten to the forest, a step ahead of her husband, pleaded with him in the following words. 'நீது நூறு பதினைந்தா என்றும் குறுக்கு புருநோக்கி தானொரு அருட்கு கொண்டு நோக்கி என்றும் நோக்கி என்றும் குறுக்கு அருட்கு கொண்டு நோக்கி. ' (Srimad Ramayanam, Ayodhya – 27-6). 'Oh Raghava', if you should be on your way to the impenetrable forest, let me be your pilot and walk ahead of you, setting the path free from weed and thorns.' Sri Rama would not however listen to her plea, until she cited his own words in reference to mother Kausalya, as equally pertinent to her.

ஏனைய கிளைய குரோணைய – the hero of the epic Ramayana. கடவு குரோணைய பூராடைய குரோணைய – non pareil in the power and valour of his shoulders, and fortitude of character.

ஆமலைத் தனியும் மற்றும் குரோணைய குரோணைய – The only thing that matches all this, is the expanse of space that He strode (in Trivikrama'vata'ra'). What Azhwar implies in this analogy is that Sri Rama's valour in destroying Ravana and his army, matches that of Sri Va'mana' in subjugating Namusi and others, in the same way as Sri Rama's steadfast adherence to 'dharmarakshana', compares to Sri Vamana's adherence to 'a'sritharakshana'.

Being blessed to be your devoted servant, and constantly meditating on your lotus Feet, I have found fulfilment in overflowing love towards your pink sacred Feet. To those blessed with the vision of the bare Feet of the Lord as He scaled the worlds, would the sight of his bejeweled Form hold any greater allurement?
Blessed with the opportunity of service at the Lord's Feet, due to his overwhelming 'nirhetuka krupa'. As Swami Nammazhwar echoes the thought in his lines, 'நீரே கோயில் சாண்டு மாரு செல்வார்தான் நீரே கோயில் சாண்டு மாரு செல்வார்தான் ' - (நீரே கோயில் 8-9-11).

My thoughts centred round the lotus Feet.

I found fulfilment in overflowing love towards your pink sacred Feet.'

Two alternative interpretations have been presented. 1. To those blessed with the eye-full vision of the Lord's Feet, how much inadequately equipped would the eyes be, given the vision of the Lord's complete Form? 2. To those blessed with the vision of the bare Feet of the Lord, as He ascended the skies to scale the worlds, would the sight of His bejeweled Form hold any greater attraction? The second construction has been adopted in the translation, on the consideration that the beauty of the Lord's Form lends charm to the adornments that cover Him, and not vice versa, because He is, 'அப்பெருமையார்வாயானம் ', 'சம்பந்தத்தந்த புத்தாண்டாக : '.

In a vision of eternal daylight, I saw Sriman Narayana, in a clearer light than a passing dream. In that vision, I witnessed clearly his resplendent Form as in his celestial abode, with his Chakra' shedding its dazzle on his Body, and his crimson Feet.
In the previous pasuram, Sri Bhutat Azhwar described the ecstasy of those who were blessed with his vision in time long gone by. In this pasuram, Azhwar describes his own overwhelming experience of the Lord's vision here and now.

**The Dawn of Realisation** - the dawn of realisation, or awakening of 'bhagavad vishaya jna'na" dispelling the cloud of 'samsa'r ic 'existence, underlying the Vishnu Pura'nam phrase, 'तथापतिः कैलास विनाशिताम्' (V.P. 5-17-2).

**In that brilliant light** - In that brilliant light, Srimal Narayana shines like an eternal sun. 'तथापतिः कैलास विनाशिताम्' - The sun rises impelled by fear of the Supreme Being, Who inures in everything and is the Controller of all beings; 'तथापतिः कैलास विनाशिताम्' (Thattriyam, Aranyam 3-11).

**This vision springs from inner realisation** - This vision springs from inner realisation, and is forever, unlike a passing dream or visual perception.

**The vision is real** - The vision is real. In pasuram 67, Azhwar had sung, 'कैलास विनाशिताम्' in reference to his mental visualisation. Here, he says, 'कैलास विनाशिताम्'. This vision is real and describable in specific terms.

**Chakra' shedding its dazzle** - Chakra' shedding its dazzle on Lord's body. "कैलास विनाशिताम्" - (K.4-17-2).

**The Lord with lustrous crimson Feet** - The Lord with lustrous crimson Feet. "कैलास विनाशिताम्" - I saw Him in his resplendent abode of Sri Vaikunta. 'कैलास विनाशिताम्'.

91
The lotus –born divine Mother of perfectly chiselled beauty with sparkling eyes having set her sight on the eternal endowed youthfulness of the Lord, is ever in his company. So is Mother Bhu Devi always at his Feet with overflowing love. Does this beauty become ever less because so many drink from it?

Azhwar extending the thought of his vision of the Lord, observes in this pasuram, that what he envisioned was not celibate Narayana, but SrIman Narayana.

মূলঃকৃতং – chiselled beauty.
ধারণা চিস্তিকল্পেন – In that overall chiselled form, her eyes sparkle.
মালভূঃ – born in the pretty lotus blossom.
লিংগানাআ মূলঃকৃতাত্মৈ অধমতা বিনিশ্চিতা – Setting her sight on Lord's beautiful countenance, and unable to tear herself away from that. ’যুগে যুগকর’, (Rigveda). The Paramapurusha is described as in the beginning stage of youth and the completed stage of adolescence. ’অস্তিত্঵াদি অবস্থা’, (महिषा- सिद्धि, 7-10-1). The divine Mother is ever present in His company true to Swami Nammazhwar's depiction, ’दशमे मद्यमिन्ते’,(दीक्षासं - धर. 6-10-10.). 'Never parting from Him even for a fraction of a second.

ধানিকার্ত – Bhu Devi, the very embodiment of patience.
আত্মায় তথ্যে প্রতিজ্ঞ অসংক্রান্ত – in constant touch with Lord's Feet, with overwhelming love.

রামধামে রামী শ্রীবর্তি করণ– Lord's beauty does not diminish because Sridevi and Bhudevi drink deep from the same. “সুরূপ সন্তুং সীতারামের সুশ্রীরামের রামের গিরীনন্দনে গিরীনন্দনে করণম। অস্তিত্বাদির ফসল, ধরন্ত দ্রুত দ্রুত করণম : নিরুর্দ্ধ : নিরুর্দ্ধ নিরুর্দ্ধ করণম : II”, (Srimad Ramayanam – Balakandam – 77-36. “In the company of the beautiful daughter of Janaka of the exalted royal family line of Mithila, Sri Rama the son of Rajarishi Dasaratha shone resplendent
like the leader of all the celestials Vishnu in the company of Goddess Sri.” Other parallels from Divyaprabhandam are: 'திலுவற்சு திருப்பாம்பாக்டி திருப்பாம்பாக்டி திருப்பாம்பாக்டி திருப்பாம்பாக்டி.' (திருப்பாம்பாக்டி 10-6-9). 'பாம்பாக்டி பாம்பாக்டி பாம்பாக்டி பாம்பாக்டி பாம்பாக்டி.' (- Thiruppandalu ). The union of Sridevi and Bhudevi with Narayana is not a competitive game as in the case of worldly unions with co-wives competing for the same piece of enjoyment. The Lord is like a big perennial river in which the jivathma's can immerse in whatever number, without detracting from the infinite bliss-potential. Echoing this thought is the following verse of Bhattar. “ஏகதைதை விளக்குமணிகளின் வருந்துமூன்று சத்தியாடும்போன்றே புன் வெளியும் பாலியே காட்டுவான்: ‘- (Rangaraja-stavam – 1-63).’” Divine Mother and her shadow-like Bhudevi, forever desirous of frolicking, (in the pond of Sri Rangana'tha'), like two queen swans.”

I spoke of the Lord in inadequate terms in a presumptuous vein, the Master of whom even the Vedas whisper in a venerable tone as 'That'. Having spoken thus, I still looked upto Him, all this while hoping for some tiny part of his infinite storehouse of grace.

In pasuram 74, Azhwar had, in a momentary burst of enthusiasm, referred to himself as a great Tamil literateur. Having envisioned the Lord in the indescribably exalted company of His divine Consorts, Azhwar is overtaken by a twinge of conscience as it were, wondering in a self-introspective mood, if he had not sounded somewhat self-flatteringly presumptuous about his literary merit, and thereby committed a 'bhagavad – apacha'ra" in sounding so daring before
the Lord, of Whom, even the Vedas dread to speak any louder than in a reverential whisper.

"Spoke daring words that detracted from any merit thereof.' It must be noted that the Azhwar's remorse is keeping in mind the sheer indescribable greatness of the Lord, and does not have any bearing on his poetic acumen, for he has been extolled by no less than Swami Nammazhwar, and that multi-dimensional master of Tamil language and literature, Sri Thirumangai Azhwar, in the following terms. 'புராண செய்திகள் பிரகாசம் பெற்றார்', (திருத்துவம்-கோல. 1-5-11 ). 'இன்னன் பாது பக்தவரிலே', (திருத்துவம்-கோல. – 7-9-6 ). 'ஈருவரிடம் கைத்தியம் காற்று இலட்ச கூறு அம்மார்', (கோலம் – கோலை. 2-10-4. ).

Ma'l of whom the Vedas speak as 'That'. The Vedas which began to describe Him as 'புராண போக்காம்', proceeded to equate the blissful state in all possible worlds in multiples of hundred years, finally describing the sumnum bonum of the final state of bliss as 'தன யுடன் புராணம் அடுக்கை: ', ('That One is the bliss of the Brahman '). They fall short of describing Him in nearer terms such as 'This', and admitted 'போக்கன் என்ன பெண்ணற்றோம் ', - 'from where words return without reaching', meaning that He cannot be described in words. Also refer to, 'தேர்வதனிதம்: பெரும் பழும்', 'Vishnu's supreme abode is That.' 'போக்கன் கண்டோம்', 'He that is comprehended by one who does not comprehend'. Azhwar ruminates on these Upanishadic declarations, and is struck by a regretful thought, 'What kind of deceitful poetry was this?.Whom was I trying to hoodwink ?'

'I looked upto the great One hoping for a tiny bit of the infinite reservoir of His grace all this while.' Azhwar observes self-disparagingly. 'Not only did I compose these verses, but hopefully looked upto Him to bestow on me a tiny bit of his infinite
grace as a recompense for my labours.' Actually Azhwar was not one to expect any kind of reward for his poetic labours. The term 'ஆக்ப்பிர', however indicates gracious consent, so at best, the Azhwar might have implied his wistful looking up to catching the Lord's glance in gracious acknowledgement of his musical versification as a rich reward in itself.

The Feet of my beautiful Lord are the quintessential nectar of this beautiful spacious land, the Lord Who in half-leonine, half-human form tore up the wilful Hiranya inebriated by his brawn and the boons obtained from gods, and unremitting in his enmity to the Lord.

ஆக்ப்பிர – regarding highly his boons.

கல்வியை மறுத்த மன்னனைத்தும் உண்டியை குறிப்பிட்டேன்'. ( Srimad Ramayanam, Yuddha Kandam, 36-11 ). Ravana's boast, ' would rather be broken in two than bow to anyone.'

ஆக்ப்பிர மன்னனைத்தும் உண்டியை குறிப்பிட்டேன் - obstinately obsessed with his prodigious muscle power, and the boon obtained from Brahma granting him near immortality.

'As half-lion half-man, tore to bits' – As Hiranya's boon granted him immunity, among other things, from being killed by man or animal, the Lord assumed this hybrid form to kill him.
The Vedas hail the Lord who wields the sparkling Chakra' as nectar and honey, He who exulted in churning and distributing nectar to celestial beings. I hail my Supreme Lord, and praise and worship him with this nectar-like garland of verses.

The beautiful Nrsimhavata'ra' has been hailed as, 'முது நி போம்', in Rig Veda, and as 'பறுப்பியல்லம்சு துல்லம்', in Vishnu Sahasrana'mam. Also refer to Sri Thirumazhisai Piran's 'அம்மியச்சல் காவனா அசுரங்கள் தேரோட்டி', (ஸ்ரீ மகாநாயகர் - சிம்ப. 22).

'அருள்சிந்தக்கிய நீரோட்டிய ஆர்க்கா' - Nectar of this expansive universe.

Sri Alavandar says, 'One drop of the nectar ocean of love springing from Thy two lotus Feet, extinguishes in a trice, the forest fire of samsara' and reaches to the devotee the greatest happiness that he can ever find.'

The Lord is the nectar of all living beings, unlike the nectar of the milk ocean which was available only to the celestial beings.

Upanishads hail the Lord as 'சுரணவன்'. Honey is a compound of all six tastes that cover the whole spectrum of what we call taste.

Wielding the Sudarsana'.
recognise even those who look up to him for favours as elevated beings. 'அத்தாரை விளக்கு கண்டாள்', (Gita 7-18). All the three categories of devotees, viz., they who see Him for worldly or celestial joys and the realised beings who love Him for his own sake. (அறிவைச் சரணாமுனாரியாக மன்னன்). are elevated beings.

அம்மா கோவிலைது - Here, 'அம்மா'. could be construed to mean divine Mother Sri who materialised from the milk ocean. 'யூராதொத் ஆப்பு தொன்நம்பித்து புலவர்களுக்கு கையேறிவு பெற்றார்கள்', (சிபோம் - சிபோ. 6-1-2).

அல்லாது நெடுநோக்கு - nectar like garland of poetry. Only in the previous pasuram, Azhwar had spoken deprecatingly of his verses as, 'கட்டுப்பாடு நெடுநோக்குவழங்க கருண்பிள்ளை'. But since the subject matter of his verses is the unsatiating nectar of' baghavad vishayam'. Azhwar changes tack having tasted the sweetness of the subject and refers to his verses as nectar-like garland.

நீராய்ப் பெருந்தைது – The great Lord spoken of so endearingly by the Vedas which are replete with such statements. 'நீராய் பெருந்தை', (Thaithriya Upanishad, Brahma'nandavalli - 7-1. ) The Paramapurusha is the essence of essences. 'என்றார் மகன்', (Chandogya Up. 3-14-2). 'He is of all tastes.' வாசிரேயார்: பால்கார் பாய்வு குருதிய தோர்', (Vishnu-Suktham ). 'Honey flows from Vishnu's exalted Feet.'

துடி தேவையுறாக சோஞ்சுள்ள நான்கு நாடகள் நோக்கச் சுடைது, பூதல் நான்கு சௌது சுற்றுக் குறுந்து, கையேறிவு சமாந்தல் குண்டுவிறை ஏன் பெரும் அல்லாது காண்பவை கையேறிவு பெரும்.
What fruit have the learned ones reaped by their prayer to the Supreme Lord, with freshly gathered flowers, and constant remembrance and utterance of His sacred names! This is not achieved by tortuous body-beating penance, but by His grace. How else have I been blessed by His vision except by the grace of my Lord with complexion like a blue jewel and the sky?

Azhwar makes the point that at the root of any spiritual sa'dhana' which culminates in God-experience is his grace, for no penance, however rigorous and marked by self-punishing practice can lead to Him, unless it is blessed by his 'nirhetuka krupa'.

The learned ones naturally endowed with spiritual proclivities who seek their progress, by constant japa' and meditation.

gathering just blossomed fresh flowers.
literally, what is the fruit of their worshipful prayer to Him? The implication is that God-experience is not the outcome of any mechanical input-output equation, for Narayana is the fruit as well as the dispenser of the fruit, 'the dispenser of dispenser: dispenser of dispenser of dispenser:'.

difficult to envision by the pursuit of 'karma yoga' practices.(of those well-versed in such practices).
Lord Who resembles the blue sky and a blue diamond.

'With what ascetic powers do I see Him now?' The implication is that it is the 'nirhetuka krupa' that enables the Azhwar to experience the Lord in his day to day thoughts and pursuits. Swami Appillai 's commentary has it that the Azhwar refers to himself as 'I', in utter humility, that is meaning, ' humble as I am'.
Swami Periava'chān Pillai's interpretation, however is that Azhwar refers to himself as 'நந்தி', in an exulting and euphoric sense, blessed as he is with direct experience of the Lord, even as Swami Nammazhwar does under similar circumstances. 'நந்தி நன்றா ஆய வாழ்களி', (பிள்ளையார் - இலக. 4-5-8.), 'சைந்தகவனின் குறியாம்பு என்றால் குச்சூருவது விளை வந்தவேளே', (பிள்ளையார் - இலக. 4-5-1.).

A long time ago, lying in foetal state, I witnessed the powers of my Lord of Thirukkottiyur. Drawn by this, I folded my hands in prayer. It is not that only today I have awakened to the drawing power of my Lord's sacred Feet which scaled the heavens and earth aeons ago.

Azhwar recounts in this pasuram, how as a formative child in his mother's womb, he was blessed by Lord's vision, and experienced to his utter amazement, the greatness of His 'svaruparupa guna vibhutis'.

'அம்மா பாரிசிப்பருமையையா்' - It is not as if I have become aware of Him, (bhagavad-vishayam), only today'. As if anticipating a question as to if it is possible to have that experience as a mere foetus, Azhwar refers to the Trivikramavata'ra.

'சைந்தகவனின் குறியா ஆய வாழ்களி விளையாகும்' - His sacred Feet which scaled the heaven and earth.'Did the Lord make this exertion at anybody's behest? It was like the instinctive reaching out of the mother to the baby in sleep. It is all the 'nirhetuka krupa' of the Lord, Who showers His grace without any apparent reason.
Even as Swami Nammazhwar eulogises, 'கௌரவ வரித்து குருவைகள் பன்னி குருவைகள் இருந்து கேட்டது, அனை நிலச் சென்று பரதி செய்வேற்று தம் குவுருவைகள் பன்னு நிலச் செய்வேற்று நிலச் செய்வேற்று வெளிப்பு.' – (திருத்தலப் பெஞ்சு. 1-10-5).

கல்விக்கையில் குருவை - lying in foetal state. 'சுண்டாங்குதலை குருவை', (Vishnu Puranam – 6-5-10.). Starting with this phrase, Vishnu Puranam describes, in six slokas, painful states confronting the foetus. So the Lord is cognizant of all this. Did he not move quickly to understand the helpless state of Parikshit in Uttara's womb, and act to protect him from the 'brahma'stra' launched by Asvatta'ama'? Sri Bhutat Azhwar's pasuram is on similar lines as Sri Poigai Azhwar's line, 'குருவைகளில் கிருட்டில் கரத்து நிகழ்கிறது கல்விக்கை கிருட்டில் குருவியைக்கிறது', (பேசு – கிரு. 6). 'மேம்பாடால் குரு பாட்டு சம்பந்து முன்னரேத்தா; இறுதியில் குரு பாட்டு நிற்பியில்: II, (Maha'bha'raham Santhi Parva, 358-73 ). “He that is still in the mother's womb, who is blessed by Madhusudhana's grace, is a sa'thvika' by nature, and is attuned to ultimate liberation.”

கிருட்டில் குருவை - The qualities (of svarupa, rupa, guna, vibhutis, and actions), of the presiding Deity of Thirukk-ottiyur, which is famous for its bountifully fertile soil texture.

கார்நாட்டில் - (As evidence of this experience) I folded my hands'. 

திரும்புதல் விளிப்புறுத்துக்கிறது விரைவாம்பு விரைவன் கைவிடும் -- திரும்புதல் விளிப்புறுத்து கைவிடும் பால் பாலிகள் ஆழ்க வாழ்வு கையும். 88
Except for those who walk the unfailing path of my Lord of Thiruvarangam, the portals of the bastion of celestials and the abode of my Lord, Sri Vaikuntam, would shut before others who tread their own fallible path, ever reach them, enmeshed as they are, in the tangled web of hellish existence. This I know now.

Here again, Azhwar underscores the point that the Lord's grace and guidance is an integral part of our spiritual pursuit, seeking oneness with Him, and that they who are daft enough to think that they can find liberation by dint of their own effort, will never be able to cut the gordion knot of samsa'ric existence.

Lord of Thiruvarangam, the same Lord who, on Kurukshetra battle-field, rounded up his gospel with the ultimate enunciation that He is the Upa'ya', and told his disciple Arjuna to seek recourse to Him. " உடன் நாம் வந்தூம் நடுந்தே". (Gita – 18-66).

The Supreme Lord who is ever the unfailing path. The Upanishads drive home this truth, ' வரதேயை வந்தூம் நடுந்தே', (Subhalopanishad). ' வரதேயை வந்தூம் நடுந்தே '. (Narayana – Suktham). Since His is the only infallible royal path, (' நூற்றாண்டு நார்தா காரும் ' – Saint Sri Thiagaraja) other paths are fraught with risks of failure.

cutting through the impenetrable undergrowth of samsa'ra'. Before one is able to find the root of this undergrowth, and remove this by his own 'sa'dhana'nushtana", the doors of Sri Vaikuntam will have closed down. இன்று குண்டு வந்தூம் விசாரேயை – விசாரேயை – closed down. அவ்வுணு – bastion. இன்று லாகை – city of the nityhasuris. ' வேறு செயல் கைமை ', ( Purusha – Suktham ). Instead of meandering aimlessly, one would be advised to seek recourse to the Lord's Feet as the Upa'ya'. இன்று ஆசைகையை – ' This I got to understand after much reflection.'
You finished off the vengeful Kamsa in a burst of anger, and vanquished the battle-tested elephant by breaking off its tusk. In an earlier age, melting with compassion, You as the diminutive Brahmin, accepted the symbolic offering of water from Mahabali and took away this earth from him.

As if conjecturing the Lord's mind as to how the Azhwar could be so sure of the Lord carrying out the devotee's wish underlying his act of surrender, Azhwar enumerates three illustrative episodes, as if telling the Lord, 'This is how You are.

The Paramapurusha took birth here to punish Kamsa for his evil of 'bha'gavadapachara", of which the Lord takes an irrevocable view. As Swami Nanjiyar has commented, 'Pappadum pappadum appattai appattai appattai appattai kathalam drone poppam'. Next the Azhwar refers to the Kuvalaya'peeda episode.

- battle-thirsty elephant. 'Vallabhamiya appadumdrum "mudumkum", (கிருட்டுக்- தல. 9-4-11).
- breaking the tusk like a matchstick. 'Yela'ndumvali "mudumkum", (கிருட்டுக்-தல. 4-3-1.)
Lord's Hand is described as generously long to make the favour-seeker put up both his hands, to say 'enough, enough'.

Mahabali – Mahabali who was determined to give anything to anyone in his sacrificial altar.

After approaching and submitting in self-surrender to the Lord of Sri, of pink-lotus eyes, the Supreme Being and our Master, would I not rule over this world, and even walk the corridors of paradise, as a celestial among celestials?

As if anticipating another poser from the Lord, suggesting 'leave aside what I did for other devotees; tell me what it is that you want'. Azhwar proceeds to reassure the Lord that he got everything he wanted when he surrendered at His Feet. That, by itself, to Azhwar is like ruling over this wide earth, and walking the regions of Sri Vaikuntha, with complete freedom.

'would I not rule over this earth.' 'is only illustrative. It refers to the whole 'lilavibhuti'.

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Would I not mesh with Vaikunta as a celestial among celestials? 'தூண் அகங்கு' implies freely roaming the inner corridors, even the private chambers of the Lord and divine Mother.

நிருந்தார்வத்துத் தீர்ச்சித்தானா - Lord of Sri.

நஞ்சிக்கார் நிருந்தார்வத்து - The Paramapurusha' with eyes like pink lotus flowers. “தூண் முட்டா கோபாலம் புன்னணம் பிரதிதொளியசெய்தியுடைய கோபால் அகங்கிய ஹ்ஹ்”, (Chadogya Upanishad).’ He has two eyes resembling the lotus flowers opened up in the sun's rays. His name is, 'The Exalted One'. நஞ்சிகை also indicates eyes reddened by melting concern towards the devotees. “நஞ்சிகைகளை பத்மாவதுகை நஞ்சிகையானோ நஞ்சிகையும் இருக்கின்றது அன்ன நஞ்சிகையானோ நஞ்சி "II, (Mahabharatham. Uttaraparva – 47-33 ). Sri Krishna says, 'The distant cry of 'Govinda' by Draupathi weighs heavily on my heart like a compounded debt.'

நஞ்சிகை வாளவர்த்தியை - 'our Lord'.” ஆய்ந்துகையமைகி ",(Saranagagitgamyam).

நஞ்சிகை நஞ்சிகை - approaching and worshipping Him in self-surrender and with folded hands. Azhwar says that all that he did was one act of worship. That, by itself, had melted the heart of the great Lord. As Swami Alavandar says, “தூண் முட்டா கோபாலம் புன்னணம் பிரதிதொளியசெய்தியுடைய கோபால் அகங்கிய ஹ்ஹ், பானச்சு வானி பானச்சு அகங்கிய சுவீர்களும் : பானச்சு பானச்சு வானி வானி வானி சுவீர்களின் லாப்பு வானியும் : "II”, (Stotra Ratnam – 28). 'One act of surrender at Thy sacred Feet, by anyone anytime, in whatever manner, wipes out all sins then and there and makes all the good to multiply. It never suffers any reduction.'As Swami Nammazhwar sings,' அமர்நாள் வந்தது, அமர்நாள் வந்தது அமர்நாள் அமர்நாள் அமர்நாள் அமர்நாள் அமர்நாள் அமர்நாள் அமர்நாள் (தாச்சும்-சத.1-2-7)
As Hanuman exulted at the sight of the victorious Rama after decimating His enemies,'அந்தார்த்திக்காரையாடும் மண்டபாடற் நூற்றாண்டு கொண்டு : I.' I have reaped a bonanza similar to heavenly kingdom.'

Oh confused men, who worry over how best to avoid entering the terrible hell after you have shuffled off your mortal coils. Try to pray to His sacred Feet beforehand, He who scaled the worlds surrounded by dark oceans and has been objectified in various Scriptures.

In this and the next three pasurams, the Azhwar in his overflowing compassion for the 'samsa'ris', of the world, gives out his message of faith and prayer. In this pasuram, he cautions against the all-too-common notion that prayer and meditation can wait till after the evening of one's life. If one follows the proclivities of one's nature, to the logical end, then the gates of hell will be wide open to receive him at the end of life's journey. So Azhwar rightly advises us to shake off our inertia, and go to the Lord beforehand. How can one be sure that He is the One to seek? We have Azhwar's assurance on this. He is the One who has been objectified in Sruthi,Smrithi, lithiha'sa Pura'na's.They all speak eloquently about the Parathvam of Narayana. To a possible question whether it is appropriate to say of Him, 'அந்தார்த்திக்காரையாடும்', or literally 'Who has been measured or determined',when the Srutis whisper, 'மாழே மாழே சிவாளித்துநாய்கள்', - 'from whose quarters the words turn back', it can be submitted that to say that He is difficult to spell out specifically is also some measure of objectivisation, to be guided by. That is why, Sruti in recognizing "மாழே மாழே", ( to whom It is not comprehensible ), quickly adds, '
Chant His names and glorify Him, He that has a long memory and a flag that sports Garuda the eagle king and is ever glorified by celestials, Who killed Kamsa before he could even stir, by a mere kick. If you glorify His names thus, it will usher in the desired blessings for you.
Purusha'rtha's or goals of human life can be classified into two general categories, viz. 'anishtanivrithi' - removal of suffering and pain which everyone is averse to, and 'ishtapra'pthi' – attaining desired ends. In the previous pasuram, Azhwar spoke about the former goal. In this pasuram, he says that even for getting what one wants in life, one should have the Lord's grace.

**அம்பாந் பர் குழுப்புர் என்று –** Kamsa 'vadham' is an instance of the Lord conferring both the purusha'rtha's on celestials. This He did with just one kick by His Foot. "புருஷராத மிகுத்தே வஞ்சித்து பாதுகாப்பு உண்ணிகதேசியில்", (பிரமல் –பக்தை 9-2-2.). This the Lord did, before Kamsa could even dare to lift his little finger against Him.

**அன்னா குற்றுமன்றனா –** ever glorified by celestials for the Lord's countless acts of kindness.

**கலாக் விளை பார் நோக்கேயார் –** He Who sports mighty Garuda, hailed as 'செம்புந்து விழுந்தேராவை' : 'on His flag., symbolic of Lord's supreme quality as the Protector of everything. Even the ancient Tamils in their various poetic works, had repeatedly glorified the flag sporting Garuda as attesting to the Lord, as 'Parama'. 'சாதும் ஆம் கிக்கு விவாஜம் ', (பிரமல் –1), 'குருவும் அருளாண முச்சு கிக்காத்பாவனே ', (பிரமல் –2), 'புராணா திருச்சிரு பெருந்து மகா கிக்கரிதேசியினே ', (பிரமல் –3), 'அம்மனின் வேறு கிக்குக்கோளிக்கே பார் மீனாள் கிக்கரிதேசியே', (பிரமல் –8).

**நராயனா –** He who has a long memory. The Lord never forgets the devotee who chants his names in prayer.

**கலன் குற்றுமன்றனா கார் –** glorify His names. 'சூரீஸ்வர அம்மன் குற்றுமன்றனா கார் : - 'They who chant His names achieve long-lasting fruits'.

**காவை –** desired results. "மூர்த்தியேஸ்வரின் குற்றுமன்றன் பாக்கமானியே I குற்றுமன்றன் பாக்கமானே குற்றுமன்றன் பாக்கமானே II 'This mantra' will reach to us worldly prosperity,
celestial bliss and otherworldly joys, everlasting happiness and the Lord's proximity itself. Lest one should doubt if a 'prapanna', like Azhwar should propagate the message of 'na'ma japa', etc. It may be clarified, that since that is an integral part of 'prapatti marga', and the world is composed of a diverse range of people with varying levels of predisposition, most of whom can at best evolve in slow step-by-step stages. Even the 'Shastra's' advocate different goals and ways of achieving them, while stressing the truth of the Lord being the 'Way' and the supreme 'Goal'. So Azhwar says, 'தனை வேலையேன் அந்தை கருணை அருடை', - It (Lord's name), will facilitate quick realisation of all our desires.

Hell is a vast cauldron of horrors wrought by the emissaries of death too terrible to bear. Wake up and try to ward off this deathly desolation, by seeking and worshipping the Lord, with the beautiful Sankha' Who tore apart the maned horse-demon, and drank off the poisoned bosom of the ogress. 

hell is first and foremost too horrible to visualise.

over and beyond this, the persecutions heaped on the sufferers too terrible to bear. As Swami Periazhwar's line has it, 'நாயக் தங்க நெய்வம் ஹிதந்தர்க் கிழக்குகள் பெருந்துக்கு ரிஸிசோரே விசயவுரு கல்லு குனித்து பிலை பருக்கு விளையாடப்படுத்து வாசனை', (பாபிலோனியா -திரு. 4-5-7.). இக் அகற்றுவர் – 'Those that carry out the act of mutilation on a bull '. 'குமார் கையும் நெய்வம் உடுள்ளாகது விடைத்து கும்பைத்து ',( பாபிலோ-திரு.1-6-3.), 'பாபிலோனியாக்கு முடியும் கைத்து பிட்டு குமார் தாம்பராயிலும் திீசு தோண் குமார் கையும் புரிது அரியாரே கு ஆர்சியாரே தோண் குமார் கையும் புரிது அரியாரே கு ஆர்சியாரே தோண் குமார் கையும் புரிது அரியாரே கு ஆர்சியாரே
Azhwar warns us that regardless of our belief-system in regard to questions like hell and experiences of hellish existence, since 'Sha'stra's and learned people make reference to these things, we may at least sit up and ponder this matter and turn to Him for protection from such terrors.

அது குடையானம் – before it happens to you and me.
மாம் மாம் நள்ளாநாயிரா – He who holds the beautiful 'Sankha' in his hand.


கிருமந்தை ருதவ் உரையாரியா – He who drank the life out of the poison-smeared bosom of the ogress Putana'.

நின்குகிறிய உயிர் – Take to Him and pray to Him, (leaving aside your doubts and disbeliefs), as the only certain remover of all such fears and adversaries.

My heart sings the glory of the Lord with complexion of the sky, Who once swallowed the worlds for safe-keeping, and dug into the heart of the sworn irredeemable enemy, and now resides in beautiful Pa'takam. You also take to Him and sing His glory in fervent prayer.
— seek and bow to His Feet and pray to Him. Let us not entertain the thought how we, being so lowly, can ever deserve to reach the vicinity of the supreme Being of all. He does not look at our station in life. He is forever eager for identity and communion with our spiritual entity, ( 'a'thmavastu' ) even as Sri Krishna. He was so eager to taste all the butter in Gokulam offered with such ingenuous and innocent devotion and love, by the cattle-raising ya'dava's who did not know the difference between their right and left hands.

— Who swallowed all the worlds in whole for safe-keeping. “ அல்லது பெரும்பாட்டும் அஞ்சியம் இது பார்க்கும் தோற்றும் பித்தையும் அன்பைக்கு குறிப்பி விளக்கம், (அம்மாவின் பிள்ளை- 9).

— Hiranya who was evil beyond redemption. பருஞ்செய்தி — digging into the heart as if exploring if it contained atleast an iota of saving grace.'இந்திகயது '-( பற்றி-குறி. -1-6.9).

— residing in the beautiful divya-desa' Pa'takam revealing the Form that hastened for the protection of the devotee Prahlada.

— 'my heart will sing the glory of '.

The great Lord, resplendent like a blue diamond, and resting on the milk ocean, Who in time immemorial absorbed the universe in Himself, and brought it forth for creation of life, and tore the hard-heart of the demon Hiranya, abides in Athiyur, radiating His grace as always. How gracious of Him that He inheres in my heart and head.
The previous four pasurams contained the message of the Azhwar to the world at large. From this pasuram till the end, the Azhwar immerses in self-experience. In this pasuram, he is beside himself with sheer wonder about Lord's 'soulabha'. The pasurams of all the Azhwars usually harmonise in terms of diction and meaning. But sometimes, for greater felicity of expression, the order could get transposed, as for example, in this pasuram where the Azhwar begins the pasuram by saying, "ஏன் நாட்டுமையானே நான் தேவாமையானே ",'resides in my heart and head '.Later only, Azhwar talks about Who resides there.

தமிழ் லக்கன் அறிமுகத்து - In time immemorial, the whole cosmos was in 'Brahman' state. "செங்குதல் கோயாப் விளக்கம் அருளு " (Chandogya- 6-2-1). 'In the very beginning, this universe remained as 'sath' in Brahman state. 'உருவான உயிரியான அருளிய இரு பாலானில் என்று ', (Mahopanishad). 'Only Narayana was there in the inception, neither Brahma nor Siva. That Brahman willed 'பால்பார்ம ', 'let me become manifold '.

அருவிய நாதராஜன் - at that time, the Lord created the worlds and life. மல்லியை பூஜ்பெரும் - reclining on the Milk ocean, and cherished by all beings.

'பூர்வத்த உறும் அருளிய புது ;, பால்பார்மவெளித்தும் புது : '. (Purusha-Suktam). Purusha willed to assume three forms. Aniruddha, Sankarshana, and Pradhyumna, in the 'Paramapadha'. One form viz. Aniruddha transformed into 'kshira'bdhinadh', reclining on the Milk ocean. 'குராம் விழாக் கொழுங்கு அம்மனச்சாருக்கு அருள் ', (Purusha-Suktham). After that Purusha pervaded everywhere to protect all lives, those that take food, and those that do not.

கடிகாரி மன்னர் நேர்ந்து கல்லி - tearing the hard heart of the demon, Hiranya.

எல்லா பொலித்தெருக்கு - with complexion like a blue diamond.
Our Lord Who has the eagle king Garuda as His vehicle, and the serpent king with hood embedded in jewels, and patterned in colours, for His bed, is the substance of the Veda's which speak of three-fold fires, and is the Master of Rudhra'. He abides as the presiding deity at Athiyur.
He who has the eagle king as his vehicle, and presides at Athiyur as our Lord. "अक्षरमयीलेखनः प्रकटिका गुरुः प्रभुः ज्ञातिः सबौर्ध्यम् शंकराय " ( Varadara'jasthavam 25 ). " Lord, Thy crown by itself attests to the fact that Thou art the Emperor of all the worlds." Similarly, the fact that the Lord at Kancheepuram has Garuda as his vehicle testifies to that. This is borne out on the strength of Azhwar's 'mangala'sa'sanam' to this Deity in this and the previous pasuram.

'Azhwar's Tamil phrase 'தக்கங்கை தம்திரை உண்ண விநாயகர்' – ' He who rests in sleep on Thiruvanantha' embedded in jewels, and patterned in colours. 'ஏசிச்சாதூர் : பர்மான் : காச்சிகே பர்மான் அசோதிக் ' - ( Kaushidhaki ). ' The bed Anantha' is of immeasurable strength. On that rests the Brahman.' In citing Garuda, the head of the 'nithyasuris', and Anantha, Azhwar pays tribute to the 'nithyavibhuti' of the Lord.

'பெரும் அந்தன்' – He who is worshipped with three-fold 'agnis' as proclaimed by the Veda's. These three-fold fires are 'ga'rhaspathyam', 'a'vahaniyam', and 'dakshina'gni'.

उपनिषद् युक्ते त्वां वेदोऽनित्वनां वेद सुखवेदज्ञानम् – Upanishads that constitute the crown of the Veda's. He is the One who is the substance of the Veda's, and proclaimed by them as the 'Para-purusha'. Even the ancient Tamils recognised this as evident from the phrase, 'நையிர்திகுறியோர்'( பாலீண் 3.66).

'कृष्ण रुद्र रुद्र' – Even Rudra' who considers himself Isvara' by virtue of having swallowed the poison that emanated while churning the Milk ocean. looks upon Narayana as his Master. 'कृष्ण रुद्रासार्वहनः सत्त्विनः नामिनीया रुद्रासार्वहनः अर्जुन भद्रान्', ( Rukh Mandalam 10 –136.7 ). ' Kesava Who has beautiful locks, drank the poison with Rudra' as the symbolic instrument which contained the venom.' The idea is that Rudra' was just the apparent instrument for drinking the poison,Narayana being the 'Antarya'mi', who absorbed it. In referring to Rudra' who is considered the head of the 'samsa'ris', the lila'vibhuti' of the Sriman Narayana is implied. By referring to Him as 'நெய்கந்தபார்த்தை', Azhwar drives home the point, that the Veda's which are 'apaurusheya', themselves proclaim Him as the embodiment of both 'nithyavibhuti'
and 'lilavibhuti', and by his benediction, 'ఏడక్క ప్రతియోగాన్న అయినవిన్నులు', he further adds that such a great Master of all life and creation, has for all our benefit, and in all his love and simplicity, come to abide in Hasthisailam. By the choice of the the pronoun 'తీర్థకురి', the Azhwar has been most generously inclusive of all of us, and not merely him, and a few chosen ones, even as Swami Nammazhwar does in his line, 'రామకురాం కురాం అయిన తీర్థాయిన్ను కురాం తీర్థాయిన్ను', (తినిమాసవ-స్వ. 2-7-1.)

సత్యం ప్రేమ సహాయాణం ప్రేమ ప్రతియోగాన్న తీర్థుప్రాయం - మాత్రం
పాలక సంప్రదాయ పాలనాభావం పరిసరానికం కృతం కృతం
ఐశ్వర్యులు కృతిమానాలు సిద్ధం.

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My Lord, with divine Mother lovingly seated on your chest, You are the supreme Being with beautiful red eyes, the Head of all celestials, and our Master. You laid down on Anantha' with a thousand hoods and mouths at the shrine at Kudandhai, wishing to abide there.

చిదమ్బరం - He who has Sridevi adorning his chest. In addressing the Lord as 'చిదమ్బరం', Azhwar underscores the 'Purusha'ka'ra" (mediatrix) role of divine Mother following the meaning of the dvaya' mantra. Again, in calling the Lord as,'చిదమ్బరం సారాశరం', Azhwar continues to dwell on the 'soulabhyaa' of the Lord, as in the previous pasuram. 'ప్రమాద దేవుని ప్రమాద దేవుని', (Purusha-Suktham).

చిదమ్బరం సంతానం - Chief of all celestials. The parathvam of the Lord is addressed. 'అనుభవయుమా అన్నాదం అందిస్తి', (తినిమాసవ-స్వ. 1-1-1). 'తన తిరిగగా మానం మానం మానం మానం మానం మానం', (Vishnu –Suktham).

చిదమ్బరం ప్రతియోగాన్న - 'తన నామం ప్రతియోగాన్న ప్రతియోగాన్న తన నామం అయిన కొండ', (Chandogya. U. 1-6-7). That Paramapurusha has two eyes like a pair of lotuses, opened up by sun's rays.

ప్రతియోగాన్న - Great One.
The Lord who has ensconced himself in my heart, came down to this earth, to be raised lovingly in the cowherd family to grow up prancing around with milk pots. As a tiny baby lying on a banyan leaf, He swallowed the seven worlds to be tucked away in a corner of his stomach. What marvel was that!

As a cowherd. The Lord of all the worlds chose in all his simplicity the lowly cowherd clan for his incarnation as Sri Krishna. 'I am not a deva, neither gandharva nor yaksha. I am yours and you ought not to look upon me in any other way', reassured Krishna.

prancing around with pots. The dance of cowherd girls and boys with milk pots on their heads is a typical cultural trait.

entering my heart and perching Himself there as his abode.

Azhwar's reference to seven worlds is only illustrative. It means the whole universe. Azhwar marvels at the protective instinct of the Lord in that tiny state, even
With the celestials beseeching prayerfully for His grace, respectfully looking up to Him, and strewing fresh flowers, the Lord our Master, the Greatest of all, with rosy jingling anklet-laden Feet, and bewitching red eyes, and ever gentle and loving towards devotees, assumed the form of the dwarf, and strode the worlds to strip Mahabali of his kingdom.

Lord, our Master, Kindly bless us. ' Adopt the dwelling of the inseparable, the Supreme, the Supreme.' (Sarana'gathy gadyam).

Brahma, Siva, and other celestials.

with beautiful, rosy, jingling anklet-laden feet. ' He who is the supreme Lord of the ruling deities and the Deva of deva's.

Greater than all the rest.

fountainhead of love and compassion.

- as diminutive Vamana'.
My resplendent, glorious Lord, immeasurably great, Master of all celestials wearing the cool tulasi garland, Oh Sri Krishna. Who, in time gone by, hurled a demon disguised as calf, at another disguised as a wood-apple, and struck both down. My love for You is like an overflowing river, bursting the limits of my being.

Azhwar rounds up his work with the thought that his love for the Lord is like a river current that overflows the banks, and prays to Him to help him keep it contained within himself. He cites six different attributes of the Lord for this overflowing emotion. They are 1. மித்திரு - glorious in 'svarupa'-rupa' guna's and vibhutis. 2. முக்கியமானார் - immeasurably Great. 3. தெளிவானார் - guiding all beings, like the eye. 'கரையால் மணங்கள் வனவாசவால் மேல்தோன்றிய கொல்லலாம் கொல்லலாம்' (மும்பாயம்- 1-8-3). 4. குரல் குரல்களேவான் - Master of all celestial beings. 5. கீர்த்தனாள் கோஞ்ஞ்ஞ்ஞ்ஞ்ஞ் - always decorated by cool tulasi garland. 6 கோலைட் கீர்த்தனாள் கோலைட் கோலைட் - Once upon a time, You slayed the two asura's who came to kill you disguised as a calf and a woodapple hidden in the branches. This also redounds to your greatness.
Benedictory Verse on Sri Bhutat Azhwar
Long live the One who showered the grace of 'Anbe Thagali' of hundred verses. Long live the One born on 'Aippasi Avittam', in a 'kurukathi' flower. Long live The One who brought fame to Thirukkadanmallai. Long live the One who laid the wick of melting love And lighted the beautiful lamp of 'Gnanachudar'. Long live the One who sang the praise of the Lord Of Srirangam, Long live the sacred Feet of Bhuta Muni.

I seek refuge at the sacred Feet of Sri Bhuta Muni.
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