The Splendor of Sri Nava Narasimha
of Ahobila Kshetram
(Divyā Tirupati No. 97)

by
Acharya Ranga Komanduri
Stillwater, OK, U.S.A
2000
ABOUT THE BOOK

"The Splendor of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobila Kshetram," presents a brief overview of the various divinities in this holy place. It is believed that Lord Narasimha Swamy, the fourth incarnation of Sri Maha Vishnu, emerged from a pillar (to prove his premier devotee’s words) here to destroy the demon, Hiranyakasipa, and rescue His devotee, Sri Prahlada. Ahobila Kshetram is one of the two (the other being the famous Srinivasa of Tirumala-Tirupati) Divya Tirupaties (of the 108 in the universe) in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Both are located on the same mountainous range, namely, Nallamalai Hills or Sri Parvatha. The famous Ahobila Mutt was originated in Ahobilam. Sri. Satakopa Yati, was the first Jeevar and founder of the Ahobila Mutt some six hundred years ago. The Jeevar of Ahobilam is the spiritual head of countless Hindus of Srivaishnava faith.

Ahobila Kshetram is a group of temples located on the beautiful Ahobilam Hills (also known as Garudachala and Vedachala), the presiding Deity being Ahobila Narasimha Swamy or Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy. Ahobilam is unique in that all the nine Narasimha forms are worshipped at one location. Hence is is called the Nava (9) Narasimha Kshetram.

Lord Ahobila Narasimha Swamy has been worshipped and praised by devoted devotees down the ages. Lord Brahma, Garuda, Bhargava Rama (or Parasurama), Sri Rama, Sri Venkateswara all are believed to have worshipped Lord Narasimha of Ahobilam. Chief among the Alwars and Acharyas who visited and worshipped this holy place are Sri Adi Sankara, Sri Tirumangai Alwar, Sri Ramanuja, Sri Manavalamamuni, Sri Nigamantha Desika, Sri. Chaitanya Prabhu, and St. Tallapaka Annamacharya, to name a few. Many famous kings including Kakatiya King Prataparudra, Vijayanagara King Sri Krishnadevaraya, Kalinga King Mukundadeva, Gajapathy Rahas of Orissa, and the Rajas of Gadwal Samasthanam visited Ahobilam and worshipped the Nava Narasimhas numerous times.
The Splendor of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobila Kshetram

(Divya Tirupati No.97)

Sri Malola Narasimha Swamy

Acharya Ranga Komanduri
Stillwater, OK, U.S.A
2000
The Splendor of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobila Kshetram
by Acharya Ranga Komanduri

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Your generous contributions are welcome and will be gratefully acknowledged.
It is intended that all proceeds from the sale of this book would go towards
the renovation of Sri Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam.

Please issue all cheques in the name of the Jeear of Ahobila Mutt
(towards the renovation of Sri Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam) and mail it to .

Ranga Komanduri
4020 Timberline Drive
Stillwater, OK 74074
U. S. A.
This book is dedicated to my parents.
Sri. K. Mangachary and Srimati K. Kanakavalli
PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

LEGEND

T = TOP            B = BOTTOM            L = LEFT            R = RIGHT

COVER PAGE: Sanctum sanctorum of Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy with Mulavar and Usthavar in the Upper Ahobilam. Also seen are the consecrated idol of the H. H. the 6th Jeear Swamy of Ahobila Mutt and Chakrath Alwar.

Bottom: Ariel view of Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy Temple in Upper Ahobilam

Plate 1
Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobila Kshetram

Plate 2
TL - Rajagopuram of Ahobila Narasimha Swamy Temple
TR - Details of the Rajagopuram
BR - Kroda Narasimha Swamy shrine

Plate 3
TL - Ranga Mandapam
TR - TTD Devasthanam Choultry
TL - Yogananda Narasimha Swamy
TR - Malola Narasimha Swamy shrine

Plate 4
TL - Pavana Narasimha Swamy shrine
TR - Yoga Narasimha Swamy shrine
BL - Chatravata Narasimha Swamy shrine
BR- Jwala Narasimha Swamy shrine
Plate 5
TL - Narasimha destroying the demon near Ahobila Narasimha Swamy shrine
TR - Goddess Chenchu Lakshmi Ammavaru
BL - Siva Linga near Ahobila Narasimha Swamy shrine
BR - Prahlada in anjali-hasta in Ahobila Narasimha Swamy shrine

Plate 6
TL - Tirumangai Alwar
TR - Sri Narasimha Swamy with Goddess Chenchu Lakshmi
BL - Swarna Narasimha

Plate 7
TL - Consecrated idol of Adivan Setakopa Jeear (1st Jeear) holding the Utsavamurthy of Malola Narasimha Swamy
TR - The H. H. the 44th Jeear of Ahobila Mutt
BL - Mondigopuram of Srirangam Temple
BR - Completed temple tower of Srirangam Temple

Plate 8
TL - The H.H. the 45th Jeear worshipping Nammalwar in Alwar Tirunagari
TR - H.H. the 45th Jeear
BL - Malola Narasimha Swamy Uthsavamurthy
BR - Malola Narasimha Swamy Uthsavamurthy (fully decorated)

Plate 9
TL - Ahobila Narasimha Swamy
TR - Kroda Narasimha Swamy
BL - Malola Narasimha Swamy
BR - Yoga Narasimha Swamy

Plate 10
TL - Karanja Narasimha Swamy
TR - Chathravada Narasimha Swamy
BL - Pavana Narasimha Swamy
BR - Bhargava Narasimha Swamy
Plate 16
TL - Varaha-Lakshmi Narasimha Murthy
TR - Yogananda Narasimha Murthy
BL - Lord Narasimha Murthy destroying Hiranyakasipa

Arieal View of Ahobila Narasimha Swamy Temple in Upper Ahobilam
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Srimukham from H. H. the 45th Jeear Swamy of the Ahobila Mutt...........  i  
Preface .......................................................................................................................... i i  
A Challenge for the Millennium ! ! ! ....................................................................... i v  
1. Divya Mantrams ..................................................................................................... 1  
2. Introduction .......................................................................................................... 4  
3. Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobilam ........................................................................... 8  
4. Sri Prahladavarada of the Lower Ahobilam ......................................................... 1 5  
5. Worship of the Deity.............................................................................................. 1 7  
6. The Jeears and the Ahobila Mutt ......................................................................... 2 9  
7. The Sixth Centennial Celebrations of the Ahoila Mutt................................. 3 6  
References ............................................................................................................... 3 9  

Appendix A: Srivaishnava 108 Divya Thirupaties ................................................. 4 0
10th September, 1998

From:
Sri Karyam
Sri Ahobila Mutt
Camp : Triplicane
Chennai.

To:
Sri Ranga Komanduri
Professor & MOST Chair
in Intelligent Manufacturing
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma, USA

Srimathe Sri Lakshminarasimha Parabrahmane Namah!
Srimathe Sri Lakshminarasimha Divya Padukasevaka Srivan Sathakopa
Sri Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikaya Namah!

SRIMUKHAM

Among the ten incarnations of Maha Vishnu, the Avatara of Narasimha is unique in many respects. Unlike Rama or Krishna, this one manifestation alone took place in an instant and lasted the shortest while. Lord Narasimha appeared at a most critical time not only to come to the rescue of Prahlada but also to prove true the premier devotee's words that God is omnipresent. Not only was there a lion-man combination, there was also a fury-love demonstration at one and the same time. The same face that struck terror into the heart of Hiranya simultaneously showered ambrosian love on that young devotee. Such a graceful Lord has manifested as Nava Narasimha in Ahobila Kshetra. Not content with this, as Malola, He condescends to go from village to village in the company of the Jeers of Sri Ahobila Muth pouring out His grace on all who worship Him.

It is, therefore, necessary for everyone to know more about this premier God's glory and it is good that Sriman Ranga Komanduri, a professor of engineering, Oklahoma, U. S. A., is bringing out a booklet on "The Splendor of Nava Nrusimha of Ahobila Kshtram" coinciding with the Sixth Centenary Celebrations of Sri Ahobila Muth. His Holiness Sri Lakshminarasimha Divya Paduka Sevaka Shriyan Satagopa Sri Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikan, the 45th Jeer of Sri Ahobila Muth prays to Sri Malola Narasimha to lavish His benevolence on Sriman Ranga Komanduri and his family. The Jeer also conveys his blessings to him for the successful publication of this booklet that should be useful to all devotees.

By Order of H. H. the 45th Jeer of Sri Ahobila Muth

Sd/-

Secretary
The H. H. The Jeer of Sri Ahobila Mutt
PREFACE

Srimathe Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Parabrahmane Namah!

The Ahobila Kshetram of Sri Nava Narasimha is one of the two Divya Tirupaties in the State of Andhra Pradesh. It may be noted that there are 108 Divya Tirupaties in the universe dedicated to Lord Sriman Narayana and glorified by the Akwar Saints. Incidentally, the two Divya Tirupaties in Andhra Pradesh are located on the same mountainous range, namely, Nallamalai Hills. The famous Ahobila Mutt was originated in Ahobilam some 600 years ago. The Jeevar of the Ahobila Mutt is the spiritual head of countless Hindus of Srivaisnava faith.

Ahobila Kshetram is a group of temples located on the beautiful Ahobilam Hills (also known as Garudachala and Vedachala), the presiding Deity of which is Sri Ahobilam Narasimha Swamy or Sri Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy. It is located in the Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh and is about 210 miles from Hyderabad, the state capital of Andhra Pradesh. Ahobilam is unique in that all the nine Narasimha forms are worshipped at one location, namely, on the Ahobilam Hills. Hence, it is called Sri Nava (9) Narasimha Kshetram. Lord Narasimha is also the Presiding Deity (Ela Velpu) of countless households in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala as well as in major cities of India. Hence, He has considerable following in the South India as well as in many major cities of India.

The upper Ahobilam temple is about 2800 ft above sea level and is located in a beautiful valley between two hills, Garudadi and Vedadri, near the sacred river Panapasini. These two hills are conceptualized as the separation of the pillar from where the ferocious Lord Narasimha Swamy emerged to destroy the demon, Hiranyakasipu. There are three caverns in the Southern side, the central one is the main one containing Ugra Narasimha or Ahobila Narasimha depicted as though ripping open the abdomen of Hiranyakasipu. On the Eastern side, at a distance of about half a mile, there is a shrine dedicated to Sri Kooda (or Sri Varaha) Narasimha. About half a mile from there, on a steep incline there is a shrine dedicated to Lord Prahlada Narasimha. Inside the cave, the lord is depicted in a "soumya" or graceful form, Malolola (or Ramalola) Narasimha with Lakshmi on His lap. The Utsava Murthy is believed to have appeared in the dream of Sri Satagopa Yati, the first Jeevar and founder of the Ahobila Mutt some six hundred years ago and since then this idol has been in the custody of the Jeevar's of Ahobila Mutt who carry it with them to various places they travel and worships it regularly. Also, Prataparudra of Kakatiya dynasty presented to this Jeevar Swami, a golden idol (Swarna Narasimha) of Lord Narasimha which is also in the custody of the Jeevars and receiving similar daily worship. Close by, there is a shrine dedicated to Yogananda Narasimha, where Lord Narasimha is in Yogasana pose. Close to this Deity is a stone slab called prahlada Banda where prahlada is said to have sat for his yoga lessons from Lord Yogananda Narasimha himself. Higher up, about 2 miles from there is the Ukku Stambha (steel pillar) where Lord Ugra Narasimha has emerged to destroy the evil demon, Hiranyakasipu. A mile and a half from there is the Jwala Narasimha shrine. This
place is said to be the actual spot where the fierce anger of the Lord reached its culmination when He tore open Hiranyakasipa. The Lord with ten hands is seated on the Garuda Peetam. Prahlada is in Anjali Hasta pose to the right of the Lord. A shrine to the right shows Lord Narasimha chasing the Chenchu maiden, namely, Goddess Chenchu Lakshmi, who is carrying a sword and a shield. To the left is seen the shrine of Lord Narasimha emerging from the pillar ready to kill the demon, Hiranyakasipa. These three shrines comprise the main sanctum in the Jwaali Narasimha Swamy Temple.

Lord Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy has been worshipped and praised by countless devotees [numerous Gods, celestials, Rishies (sages), Alwars, Acharyas, Kings, and all the way down to the common people-at-large] down the ages. Lord Brahma, Garuda, Bhargava Rama (or Parasurama), Sri Rama, Sri Venkateswara all are believed to have worshipped Lord Narasimha of Ahobilam. Lord Sri Rama, when he was passing through this forest towards Sri Lanka, prayed and glorified Lord Narasimha with Panchamrita Stothra. Lord Venkateswara prior to His wedding with Sri Padmavathi, was believed to have worshipped Lord Narasimha first. Chief among the Alwars and Acharyas who visited this holy place and worshipped the presiding deity, Lord Narasimha, are Sri Adi Sankara, Sri Tirumangai Alwar, Sri Ramanuja, Sri Manavalar-mamuni, Sri Nigamantha Desika, Sri Chaitanya Prabhu, and St. allapaka Annamacharya, to name a few. Many famous kings including Kakatiya King Prataparudra, Vijayanagara King Sri Krishnadevaraya, Kalinga King Mukundadeva, Gajapathies of Orissa, the Rajas of Gadwal Samasthanam visited Ahobilam and worshipped Sri Nava Narasimhas numerous times.

The author of this book is fortunate to have visited and worshipped the divinity is nearly 75 Divya Tirupaties in India. Even though, Ahobilam is not far from his hometown, Hyderabad, he had the blessing of the Lord only recently. The hoary antiquity of the temple, the pristine glory of its divinity, and the peaceful surroundings of the Sri Parvatha immediately focused the attention of the author to prepare a small informative booklet on the Glory of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobilam Kshetram. Within a few months and countless hours of preparation, the manuscript of the booklet was ready. In a visit to India in early 1998, the author was pleasantly surprised to know that a grand celebration was underway to mark the 600th Anniversary of the Ahobila Mutt under the divine leadership of the H. H. the 45th Jeear of the Ahobila Mutt, Sriman Satagopa Sri Narayana Yateendra Mahadesika Jeear Swami. This includes some renovation of the Nava Narasimha shrines on the Ahobilam Hills and worship of the divinity, apart from other important activities, such as Vidvat Sadas, Veda Parayana, and lectures and seminars by scholars. With the anxiety to participate in this auspicious celebration in a small way, the author sought the blessings of the Jeear Swamy. A copy of the manuscript was sent for his consideration and kept at his lotus feet for his blessings. Sri Jeear Swami was gracious to respond in a short time with a Srinukham and his blessings. Even though the author could not be present physically at this grand occasion, his soul was present to receive the grace of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobilam Kshetram and that of the Jeear Swamy. Subsequently in the late 1998, the author visited Sri Jeear Swamy to seek his blessings.

Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy Tiruvadigale Saranam!

Sri Acharya Tiruvadigale Saranam!

Stillwater, OK

Yugadi, Vikrama

Ranga Komanduri
A GREAT CHALLENGE FOR THE MILLENNIUM !!!

Renovation and Beautification of Ahobila Kshetram of Nava Narasimha -
What can we do as a milestone for this millennium?

It may humbly be pointed out that the 108 Divya Tirupaties of Sri Maha Vishnu in the universe are a great treasure and it is up to us to preserve them. Many of our ancient temples were built and maintained by rulers of the former princely states of India. The grandeur temples with tall gopuras (temple towers), mandapas, and exquisite stone architecture are living examples of the seminal contributions of Pandyas, Cholas, Cheras, Sri Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagaram, Prataparudra of Kakatiya dynasty, Gajapati Rajas of Orissa, Reddi Rajas of Andhra to mention a few. Many temples lost their fortunes when the rulers of the former princely states of India lost their privileges. A few temples, such as the Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Tiruvananthapuram still enjoys some support from the royalties of the erstwhile State of Travancore (now Kerala) and mostly from the devotees. However, barring a few, many of the 108 Divya Tirupaties need significant financial support to maintain them, let alone take them to their grandeur period. Sri Venkateswara Temple in Tirumala is one exception which not only receives significant contributions from the public-at-large but also utilizes it towards the maintenance of other temples as well as for the many humanitarian causes, such as running of schools, hospitals, universities not to mention the maintenance of the Tirumala temple as well as other temples in its jurisdiction, and the towns of Tirumala and Tirupati. However, more help is urgently needed for the maintenance of many of these glorious temples and to provide additional financial support to the priests who serve the Lord on our behalf but whose wages are far below any standards of decency and definitely much less than their scholarliness rightfully deserves.

In order to construct magnificent temples, the princely rulers have promoted many arts including sculpturing, painting, music, dance, drama, literature, etc. Unfortunately, with the abolition of the princely States, many of these activities have taken a back seat. One even wonders if we still possess this talent, let alone the commitment and the finance, to do it again, i.e. whether this divine art vanished from Bharata Khandha altogether where once these very art forms were originated. The answer is while it is not widely practiced, it is still well and alive.

Recently (i.e. some 30 years ago), the Temple of Sri Rama in Bhadrachalam in Andhra Pradesh was totally renovated including the construction of the main sanctum and a marvelous Kalyana Mandapa by Ganapati Sthapathi and his associates. It is built not with concrete but with black granite stone and built in the traditional style reaffirming that this wonderful art is still alive and well, though still rare. Now that the princely rulers are no longer in power, it
requires our support to promote these fine arts. Also there is a dire need to rebuild or reconstruct some of the ancient temples which currently are exposed to nature or meagerly covered with a shelter. The case in point is the famous Nava Narasimha Kshetram in Ahobilam in Andhra Pradesh.

Apart from Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy Temple on the Eguva Ahobilam and Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy Temple in the Lower Ahobilam, all the remaining Nava Narasimha Swamy shrines are open to nature or barely protected. As the Nava Narasimhas are our living and eternal treasures, it is up to us to protect them and preserve them for the generations to come. Also, it is our duty to take this Nava Narasimha Kshetram to the glory it richly deserves. When this temple complex is renovated and beautified, it could come close to Sri Venkateswara Temple in Tirumala-Tirupati as the surroundings are very similar and both deities are very ancient and powerful.

Can a task of this magnitude be accomplished by us? The answer in the author's opinion is a resounding Yes, Yes, Yes. Not long ago Sri Azhagiyasinger, the 44th Jeear Swami of the Ahobila Mutt who in his 84th year undertook the onerous responsibility of completing the unfinished Rajagopuram (also called "Mondi Gopuram" or partially built tower by the Nayak rulers) in the great Sri Ranganadha Swamy temple in Srirangam. It seems that Lord Sri Ranganadha Himself appeared in a dream to the Jeear Swami and commanded him to undertake the work of completing this tower which remained unfinished for nearly four centuries. Initially no body considered this idea seriously. But the strong will and determination of this Jeear Swami changed everything. Today, the completed tower, stands as the tallest temple tower in the world, thanks to his untiring work or Bhagavath Kainkaryam. TTD, the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, and industry support poured to accomplish this divine task. The Maha Samproshshanam of this monumental, 236 ft. tall majestic Rajagopuram was performed on March 25, 1987. Just as this was done, there is nothing we cannot accomplish with the grace of God.

A divine task like this requires considerable commitment by one and all. We need to develop a master plan and build authentic temples for the remaining eight Nava Narasimha's. Under the auspices of the Ahobila Mutt and the spiritual leadership of the H. H. the 45th Jeear of Ahobilam, it is possible to accomplish this auspicious task. Won't you join us by pledging for this divine cause? Your support can be augmented with similar support from the four Southern States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala where there is considerable following of Lord Narasimha. The Central Government can also be approached for a similar support. Also, many industries can be approached which will be more than willing to contribute their share to this noble cause. Your generous contributions are earnestly requested and will be gratefully acknowledged. All proceeds will go towards the renovation of the Sri Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam.

Please send your cheques addressed to the H. H. the 45th Jeear of the Ahobila Mutt (towards the renovation of Sri Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam) and mail it to:

Ranga Komanduri
4020 Timberline Drive
Stillwater, OK 74074
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Chapter 1

DIVYA MANTRAMS

There are four Divya Mantrams of utmost importance believed to have been rendered by Sri Maha Vishnu (the Moolacharya) Himself and handed down to us through a lineage of Great Acharyas. The four Divya Mantrams are the Ashtakshara Mantram, the Dwadasakshara Mantram, the Mantra Ratnam (Dhwayam), and the Charama Slokam. In addition, Lord Brahma took the essence of the three Vedas and formed triliteral monosyllables, the letters A, U, and M (to form the divine letter Om) together with three other words Bhur, Bhuva, and Suvah representing the earth, the sky, and the heaven and formed the holy Gayatri Mantram (Manu-smriti II, 76-77).

Ashtakshara Mantram

"Om Namo Narayanaya !"
(Salutations to Sriman Narayana whose qualities are Om)

Dwadasakshara Mantram

"Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya !"
(Salutations to Srimath Bhagavan Vasudeva !)
Mantra Ratnam (Dhwayam)

"Sriman Narayana Charanou Sharanam Prapadyae
Srimathe Narayanaya Namah !"
(I take refuge at the holy feet of Sriman Narayana.
Salutations to Sriman Narayana!)

Charama Slokam

[Rendered by Bhagawan Sri Krishna (Narayana) to Sri Arjuna
(Nara) in the Bhagavath Geetha]

"Sarva Dharma Parityajya Mam Ekam Saranam Vraja
Aham Thwa Sarva Papebhyo Mokshayshyami Ma Suchaha"
(Abandoning all rituals, take refuge in Me alone; I will eradicate
all your sins and give you the moksha or salvation!)

Gayatri Mantram

"Om Bhur Bhuvah Svah
Tat Savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi
Dhiyo yo nah pracodayat!"
(Let us meditate on Almighty God, Iswara, and His glory, who has created
this Universe; who is qualified to be worshipped by one and all; and who is
the remover of all the sins and ignorance. May He enlighten our intellect.)

The above Gayatri Mantram (hymns) has 24 letters in Sanskrit, which is
interpreted as representing the 24 forms of Sri Maha Vishnu, namely,
Kesava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda, Vishnu, Madhusudana, Trivikrama,
Vamana, Sridhara, Hrshikesa, Padmanabha, Damodara, Samkarshna,
Vasudeva, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Adhokshaja, Purushothama, Achyuta,
Upendra, Janardana, Hari, and Krishna.

As this Mantram became very popular, the great seers composed similar
prayers with the same Gayatri meter on the other important aspects of
God's manifestations. Some twenty such prayers (or meditations) were
written of the various Gods and demigods, including Ganesh, Narasimha,
Narayana, Maha Lakshmi, Kali, Brahma, Surya, Durga, Rudra, Garuda, Nandi,
Hamsa, Aditya, Surya, Agni, Prthvi, Hayagriva. In the following, Narayana-Gayatri, Mahalakshmi-Gayatri, and Narasimha-Gayatri are given.

**Narayana Gayatri**

"Om! Narayanaya vidmahe,
Vasudevaya dhimahi,
Tanno Vishnuh pracodayat!"

May we realize Lord Narayana, the divine heavenly father. Let us meditate on His Vasudeva aspect (indwelling spirit of all). May Lord Narayana illuminate us.

**Mahalakshmi-Gayatri**

"Om! Mahalakshmi ca vidmahe,
Vishnupatni ca dhimahi,
Tanno Lakshmi pracodayat!"

May we realize Sri Maha Lakshmi, the divine heavenly mother. Let us meditate on that spouse of Sri Maha Vishnu and may Goddess Sri Maha Lakshmi illuminate us.

**Narasimha Gayatri**

"Om! Vajranakhaya vidmahe,
Tiksnadamstraya dhimahi,
Tanno Narasimhah pracodayat!"

May we realize Lord Narasimha, the man-lion god, with his diamond nails that pierce the veil of ignorance. Let us meditate on that sharp-toothed one that destroys the demon of darkness. May Lord Narasimha illuminate us.
Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION

ANUSTANA SLOKAM
(Narasimha Mantram)

"Ugram Veeram Mahavishnum,
Jwalaantham Sarvatho Mukham,
Narasimham Bhishanam Bhadram,
Mruthyu Mruthyur Namamyaham!"

The State of Andhra Pradesh is fortunate to have been endowed with some of the ancient and most famous temples dedicated to Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy in the universe. As a matter of fact, it can boast to have more ancient temples dedicated to Lord Narasimha Swamy than any other part of India. From the epigraphic sources, there were some 79 ancient temples dedicated exclusively to Lord Narasimha Swamy in Andhra Pradesh of which 27 temples have been receiving continuous temple worship from ancient times. Chief amongst them are the Ahobila Kshetram (also called Ahobilam or Ahobalam) (in Kurnool district), followed not in any particular order by Simhachalam (in Visakhapatnam district), Mangalagiri (in Guntur district), Yadagiri or Yadavadri (in Nalgonda district), Anthervedi (in E. Godavari district), Vedadri (in Krishna district), Kadiri and Gutti (in Anantapur District), Nagari (in Chittoor district), Guntur (in Guntur district) and the list goes on and on. It,
SITE PLAN OF
NAVA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLES
AT AHOBILAM

REFERENCE
1. JWARNARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
2. AHOBILAHARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
3. MAHALAHARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
4. CRODAHARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
5. KAREJAHARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
6. BHARGAVAHARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
7. YOGAARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
8. CHATRAPATIHARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE
9. PAVAHARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE

DRAWN BY
D. Shankar
30-1-1969
however, does not include temples dedicated primarily to other forms of Lord Sri Maha Vishnu where Lord Narasimha Swamy sanctum is one amongst them in the complex and there are numerous temples under this category. In the olden days Ahobilam is colloquially called "Aubalam" or "Aubilam."

It may be interesting to note that out of the 108 Divya Tirupaties (sacred places of worship of Sri Maha Vishnu) in this universe which were glorified by the Alwars, there are exclusively two in the State of Andhra Pradesh. They are Sri Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam and the famous Sri Venkateswara Temple in Tirumala-Tirupati. Incidentally, both are located on the same mountainous range. In addition, Tirumala-Tirupati is the choice of residence on earth of Lord Srinivasa (or Lord Venkateswara) to rest and sport in this Kaliyuga and bless His devotees.

Ahobilam Kshetram is a group of temples located on the Ahobilam Hills (also known as Garudadri or Garudachala and Vedachala), the presiding Deity being Ahobila Narasimha Swamy or Prahladavarada. Lord Narasimha Swamy in Swayambhu (or self manifested form) is located generally in a rock cavern (Bilam) as He is personified as half lion (a source of infinite energy as paramathma) and half man (limited energy of a soul). Nallamalai hills or Sri Parvatha (hill), whose range extends from Tirupati at one end via Ahobilam in the middle to Srisailam at the other end, is conceptualized as Adisesha (the divine serpent which forms the resting place for Sriman Narayana and His divine consort, Sri Maha Lakshmi) with Tirupati representing the head, Ahobilam the body, and Srisailam the tail. It is thus called Seshachala, Sthesa for Adisesha and Achala for mountain.

Ahobilam is located in the Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh and is about 210 miles from Hyderabad. Diguva (in Telugu means Lower) Ahobilam can be reached from Allagadda (which is about 16 miles) to which regular bus services are available. Eguva (in Telugu means Upper) Ahobilam is about 5 miles from Diguva Ahobilam and regular hourly bus service is available between them. Sometimes Eguva Ahobilam is called Pedda (in Telugu meaning big) Ahobilam and Diguva Ahobilam as Chinna (in Telugu meaning small) Ahobilam, to indicate the importance associated with Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy in Eguva Ahobilam. The Tirumala-Tirupati
Devasthanams (TTD) has built a choultry (Rest House) in Diguva Ahobilam and there are also couple of other smaller choultries nearby. There is a small choultry in the Upper Ahobilam and another one is under construction.

Ahobilam is unique in that all the nine Narasimha forms are worshipped at one location, namely, on the Ahobilam Hills. That is why it is called Nava (9) Narasimha Kshetram. Next to this in the number of Narasimha forms worshipped at any one location perhaps is Vedadri, near Jaggayapeta in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, which is a Pancha (5) Narasimha Kshetram. Lord Narasimha is also the Presiding Deity (Ela Velpu) of many of the households in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala. Hence, the Lord has considerable following in the South India as well as in many major cities of India.

The upper Ahobilam temple is about 2800 ft above sea level and is located in a valley between two hills, Garudadri and Vedadri near the sacred river Papanasini. These two hills are conceptualized as the separation of the pillar from where the ferocious Lord Narasimha Swamy emerged to destroy the demon, Hiranyakasipa. There are three caves in the Southern side, the central one is the main one containing Ugra Narasimha or Ahobila Narasimha depicted as though ripping open the abdomen of Hiranyakasipa. On the Eastern side at a distance of about 1/2 mile there is a shrine dedicated to Varaha Narasimha. About 1/2 mile from there, on a steep incline, there is a shrine dedicated to Lord Prahlada Narasimha. Inside the cave, the lord is depicted in a "soumya" or graceful form with Lakshmi on His lap (Malola Narasimha). The Utsavamurthy is believed to have appeared in the dream of the Satagopa Yati, the first Jeear and founder of the Ahobila Mutt and since then this Murthy has been in the custody of the Jeears of Ahobila Mutt who carry the Murthy with them to various places they travel for the propagation of Srimaishnava philosophy and worships It regularly. Close by, there is a shrine dedicated to Yogananda Narasimha, where Lord Narasimha is in a Yogasana posture. Close to the Deity is a stone slab known as Prahlada Banda where Bhakta Prahlada is said to have sat for his Yoga lessons taken from Lord Yogananda Narasimha Swamy Himself. Higher up, about 2 miles from there,
is the Ukkustambha (steel pillar) where Lord Ugra Narasimha has emerged to destroy the evil demon, Hiranyakasipa. A mile and a half from there is the Jwala Narasimha shrine. This place is said to be the actual spot where the fierce anger of the Lord reached its culmination when He tore open Hiranyakasipa. The Lord is seated over Garuda peetam. Prahlada is in Anjali hasta pose to the right of the Lord. A shrine to the right shows Lord Narasimha with Goddess Chenchu Lakshmi. To the left is seen the shrine of Lord Narasimha emerging out of the pillar ready to kill the demon, Hiranyakasipa. These three shrines comprise the main sanctum in the Jwala Narasimha Swamy temple.
NAVA NARASIMHA KSHETRAM,
AHOBILAM

PLATE 1
H.H. the 45th Jeer performing Special Worship to Moola Virat of MALOLA together with Malola Vigraha of Sri Sannidhi – a rare event of great religious significance.

H.H. the 45th Jeer performing Special Worship to Moola Virat of AHOBILA NARASIMHA together with Malola Vigraha of Sri Sannidhi

UPPER AHOBILAM, 26.11.1992

श्री मदुर्यां शंभारी संप्रभुरत्व लघुभाषयंज्ञ श्रीमद्वर रघुराष्ट्र शालिलेन विद्वानश्रमाय।
श्रीमद्वर वर्णं देशिकपति काश्यप चौक्षयं ददाय रघुपुर्यां शास्त्रवर्ष नारायण योगिनम्॥

PLATE 12
Chapter 3

SRI NAVA NARASIMHA OF AHOBILAM

The Nava Narasimha, or the nine forms of Narasimha, are combined in the following dhyana slokam:

"Jwala, Ahobila, Malola, Kroda, Kaaranja, Bhargavaha
Yogaananda, Chatravataha, Paavana Nava Murthayaha!"

Thus, the nine forms are Jwala ( Emitting fire), Ahobila (Ugra or ferocious), Malola (graceful) (with the divine goddess, Lakshmi by His side), Kroda (vicious) (Varaha-Narasimha), Kaaranja, Bhargava, Yogananda (in meditation), Chatravata, and Paavana (adorable or gracious). The photographs of the dhruva beras (the fixed or the main deities, generally made of black granite stone) of the Nava Narasimha of Ahobilam are shown in the book. Also shown is the site plan of the Nava (nine) Narasimha Swamy temples located on the hill (Upper Ahobilam) as well as some protective shelters for some of the deities. In the following, the Nava Narasimha Swamy shrines will be briefly described.

1. Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy or Sri Ugra Narasimha Swamy

According to sthlapurana (spiritual antiquity of the holy place), Garuda, the celestial carrier of Lord Sriman Narayana and Sri Maha Lakshmi, performed penance for a number of years on a hill (which later came to be known as Garudachala) to obtain the divine grace of Lord
Narasimha who destroyed Hiranyakasipa. The Lord in His infinite grace, manifested Himself in a rock cavern (Bilam) on the hill. Garuda then worshipped Lord Narasimha and praised Him as "Ahobilam, Mahabalam" (Ahobilam is the great sustainer of the Lord that possessed great strength). The Narasimha form here is Ugra Narasimha and the deity is known as Ahobila Narasimha. It is believed that it is this Lord Narasimha who is worshipped regularly by Lord Brahma and other celestials that killed Hiranyakasipa and appeared together with Sri Maha Lakshmi to grace His devotee, Sri Prahlada. In the cover picture of this book we can see the Utsava Murthy as well as the Mula Virat of Ahobila Narasimha and Sri Sudarsana (Chakrath Alwar). In addition, we can see the idol of the 6th Jeer of Ahobilam, who was believed to have entered one of the caves in the hill at God's command and united with Him. This cave remained permanently closed since then. It may be pointed out that this Temple is the only full fledged temple in the Eguva (or Upper) Ahobilam with Prakaras, Galigopuram, Dwajasthambham, the Lord's consort (Sri Chenchulakshmi Ammavaru), Alwars and Acharyas, etc. that is well maintained with regular worship while the remaining Narasimha Murthies on the Ahobilam Hills are more or less exposed to nature or meagerly covered with a shelter. Worship in those temples is done by the devotees who visit those shrines.

It has been a common belief that in the ancient times people were afraid to face the fierce Ugra Narasimha in the Sanctum. It appears that where a stack of green grass was left in front of the deity, it would soon result in fire and one could witness the smoke even from a distance. This was attributed to the intensity of heat emanating from Lord Ugra Narasimha Swamy.

2. Sri Kroda Narasimha or Sri Varaha Narasimha Swamy

There is a small temple cavern, not far from the Ahobila Narasimha Swamy temple, on the banks of the Bhavanasini river, dedicated to Kroda Narasimha or Varaha Narasimha Swamy facing South. There are two shrines in this temple, one a Sthanaka (standing) form of Sri Varaha Narasimha Swamy with Goddess Bhudevi on His left shoulder and the other Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy with Goddess Lakshmi on his side. It is
interesting to note that while Varaha and Narasimha avatars are considered as separate avatars in Dasavatara (or the ten incarnations of Lord Maha Vishnu), we sometimes encounter the combined form, namely, Sri Varaha Narasimha Swamy. The popular shrine of Sri Varaha Narasimha Swamy is located at Simhachalam in the Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. One plausible interpretation for this combination is that since the two avatars happened in the same Yuga, one in the form of Bhu Varaha to protect the earth from the menace of Hiranyaksha and the other in the form of Lord Narasimha to kill his brother Hiranyakasipa, the combined form may have been evolved as Varaha Narasimha. However, since only Lakshmi kala could calm down Lord Narasimha, His avatar was complete only with His divine consort, Sri Maha Lakshmi, by His side (hence Lakshmi Narasimha). Another interpretation is that since Sri Maha Vishnu is always with His divine consorts Sri Devi (Lakshmi) and Bhu Devi (Visva Dhathri), by combining Varaha and Narasimha Swamy, we get Bhu Devi from the Varahavatara and Sri Devi (Lakshmi) from the Narasimhavatara that would result in Sri Varaha Narasimha Swamy. Whether or not these interpretations are right, or not, are left to the discretion of the learned scholars.

3. Sri Malola (Lakshmi) Narasimha Swamy

Not far from Kroda Narasimha Swamy temple is a small cave temple dedicated to Malola Narasimha Swamy (also known as Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy) on the banks of the great river, Kanakabghaya. The deity, here, appears in "soumya" or graceful form. As the Lord is seen with His consort, Sri Maha Lakshmi, He is known as Malola Narasimha Swamy. The word Malola is actually "Ramalola" which means the one beloved to Maha Lakshmi (in Malola, 'Ma' is short for Rama, the Mother Goddess or Lakshmi and 'lola' means beloved). It may be noted that the Vedadri hill in Upper Ahobilam area was specifically designated as Lakshmi Kshetram by Lord Sri Maha Vishnu Himself as He gave great prominence to Sri Maha Lakshmi in this place. The photos in the book show Malola Narasimha Swamy temple and the idol of Chaturbhuja Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy. The Lord is seated here in the Sukhasana pose with his left leg folded while his right leg at ease. The Lord's two upper hands - right and left, hold the Chakra
and Sankha, respectively while the two lower hands display, one in the Abhaya Hasta mudra and the other arm around His Consort. Sri Maha Lakshmi, with her hands one in Kataka Hasta and the other in Prasarita Vama Hasta mudras, is shown seated on His lap.

It seems when the question of which Usthavamurthy (idols taken in ceremonial processions) among the Nava Narasimhas should accompany the Jeear during his regular sojourns, it is believed that the Usthavamurthy of Malola Narasimha Swamy appeared in the dream of Srimath Adivan Satagopa Yatindra Mahadesika Jeear, the first Jeear and founder of Ahobila Mutt, as if, as an answer. Since then this idol has been with the Jeears and is carried by them to all places on their religious sojourns and is worshipped regularly. In the Diguva Ahobilam Temple, the consecrated idol of Srimath Adivan Satagopa Yatindra Mahadesika Jeear holding the Utsava Vigraha of Malola Narasimha Swamy can be seen. The 45th Jeear, soon after his initiation as Sri Narayana Yathindra Maha Desika Swamy, visited the Temples of Ahobilam and brought together the Uthsava Murthy of Malola Narasimha Swamy with the Mula Vigraha by performing puja in the Malola Narasimha Swamy sanctum, a rare occurrence to the heart content of the devotees. He also performed a similar puja in the Ahobila Narasimha Sanctum with Utsava Vigraha of Malola Narasimha as well as the other deities he carries with him for regular worship. The photographs in the booklet, taken by Sri N. T. Srinivasan, show these two rare events. A similar event was conducted by the Jeear Swamy in commemoration of the 600th Anniversary of the Ahobila Mutt.

4. Sri Yogananda Narasimha Swamy

On the Western side of the Vedadri hill, near the Lakshmi Kshetram, facing South is Sri Yogananda Narasimha Swamy. It is believed that at this place Prahlada had Yogabhyasa (Yoga lessons) from Lord Narasimha. Hence, He is called Yogananda Narasimha Swamy. The Lord is shown with His two upper hands holding Chakra and Sankha while the two lower hands are seen resting on the Yoga-Patta.
5. Sri Karanja Narasimha Swamy

On the Western side of Garudadri hill under the shade of the great Karanja Vriksha (tree) is located the temple of Sri Karanja Narasimha Swamy. The Lord is seen here seated in meditation under the canopy of Adisesha. He is holding a Sarnaga or bow. Next to this temple is located the shrine of Sri Anjaneya.

6. Sri Chathravata Narasimha Swamy

Near Karanja Narasimha Swamy shrine, under the shade of the great Chathravata (peepal) tree, is located the temple of Sri Chathravata Narasimha Swamy. It has a six-pillared Mukha Mandapa in front of the sanctum. The pillars have square adhistanas and bear bas-reliefs of Sri Narasimha Swamy, Anjaneya, etc. The deity carved out of black basaltic stone is very beautiful. The Lord is seen seated in Padmasana pose. The two upper right and left hands hold Chakra and Sankha, respectively, while the two lower right and left hands hold abhaya hasta and kati hasta poses, placed on the waist and the left thigh, respectively. Various decorations on the Lord as well as Yagnopavitam (sacred thread) are clearly seen. This is perhaps the most beautiful and well preserved idol of Lord Sri Narasimha in Ahobilam.

7. Sri Pavana Narasimha Swamy

On the Southern side of Garudadri, situated on the banks of the river Pavana, is the shrine dedicated to Sri Pavana Narasimha Swamy under the canopy of the seven-hooded Adisesha. Lord Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy is seen with his two upper hands, right and left, holding Chakra and Sankha, respectively while the lower right hand is in Abhaya hasta mudra and the lower left hand holding Sri Maha Lakshmi seated on His lap. The Lord is shown in the Sukhasana pose with his left leg folded while the right leg is shown bent at the knee and at ease.

8. Sri Bhargava Narasimha Swamy

This place is located on the hill near the sacred pond “Bhargava Thirtham" at a distance of about a mile and a quarter from the Lower
Ahobilam where Sri Bhargava Rama or Sri Parasurama performed penance. Sri Parasurama visited and worshipped Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy during his Theertha Yathra (religious tour of holy temples). Hence, the shrine here is known as Sri Bhargava Narasimha Swamy. The Lord is shown with the two upper hands, right and left, holding Chakra and Sankha, respectively while the lower two hands depicting destruction of Hiranyakasipa by opening his stomach and tearing out the intestines. Hiranyakasipa is shown with his right hand holding a sword. Sri Prahlada is shown on the right side of the Lord in sthanaka, anjali hasta pose. Note the crown on Lord Narasimha as well as the Dasavatara bas-relief on the thorana which forms an integral part of the sculpture. There is an Akshaya theertham close by, which provides water at all times. Hence, Vyasa Bhagavan, who visited this place, called it "Akshayam Rakshakam Bhuvanascha" (the water from Akshayam will safeguard the needs of the Universe). It is believed that visiting this place and the Akshaya Theertham is equivalent to visiting the sacred river, Ganges, and one can be assured of salvation after life.

9. Sri Jwala Narasimha Swamy

The shrine of Jwala Narasimha Swamy lies higher up between the two hills, Garudachala and Vedachala and in a small natural mountain cave known traditionally as Achalachala Meru Parvata. This place is said to be the actual spot where the fierce anger of the Lord reached its culmination when He tore open Hiranyakasipa. The Lord is seated on Garuda peetam. The Lord has ten hands. The two upper hands, right and left, hold Chakra and Sankha, respectively. Two hands hold the demon Hiranyakasipa on the lap of the Lord who is seated in the sukhasana pose with his left leg folded and the right leg at ease. His other hands carry various weapons of destruction and show tearing out the intestines of the demon, Hiranyakasipa, to destroy him. Prahlada is in Anjali hasta pose to the right of the Lord. A shrine to the right shows Lord Narasimha chasing the Chenchu maiden, i.e., Goddess Chenchu Lakshmi, who is carrying a sword and a shied. To the left is seen the shrine of Lord Narasimha emerging out of the pillar ready to pounce and kill the demon, Hiranyakasipa. These
three shrines comprise the main sanctum in the Jwala Narasimha Swamy Temple.

The worship of the Lord here appears to have been initiated by the Chenchu tribes who even now visit the shrine in large numbers especially during important festivals. It is not an uncommon sight to see them offering animal sacrifices and more particularly fowls. However, it is widely claimed that the offerings are consumed and the place is perfectly clean the following day.
Chapter 4

SRI PRAHLADA VARADA OF LOWER AHOBILAM

In addition to the Nava Narasimha shrines described above in the Ahoila Kshetram, there is an additional grandeur temple in the Lower Ahoobilam dedicated to Sri Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy or Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy. During the 6th Centennial Celebrations of the Ahoibila Mutt in October of 1998, the Utsava Vigrahas of Sri Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy, Sridevi, and Bhudevi were adorned with Swarna Kavacham (Golden attire), specially made for this occasion. The temple is a classic representation of the Vijayanagar school of architecture and sculpture. The main shrine of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy may have been consecrated around 1532 AD or during Sri Krishnadevaraya period. The temple comprises of Garbhagudi (or Sanctum Sanctorum) of Sri Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy, Antaralaya Mandapam, Mukhamandapam, the shrine for the consorts of the Lord, namely, Sri Amrutavalli and Sri Andal, the Ranga Mandapam, Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple and Kalyana Mandapam (where Lord's wedding is performed), a shrine for Satagopayati (the first Jee of Ahoilal Mutt), Ramalaya, the main gopura of the temple, Dwajastambha, Bali Pitha, Mondigopuram, Pushkarini, Pitadhipathi's shrine, Vijaya
Sthambham (or victory pillar) to commemorate the liberation of the temple from the Muslim occupation during Sri Rangadevaraya's time.

The Ranga Mandapam in this temple is a work of fine art and a treasure house of outstanding sculptures and bas reliefs. The pristine beauty and perfection on the pillars in the Ranga Mandapa is typical of the dedication and outstanding work of the sculptors during Sri Krishnadevaraya period. They have carved unique sculptures of dancing figurines, musicians, deities. Various forms of Lord Narasimha are beautifully carved as bas reliefs on adjacent pillars that cover a square area. They include Lord Narasimha emerging from the pillar, Lord Narasimha wooing Chenchulakshmi, Lord Narasimha pursuing Hiranyakasipu, Lakshmi Narasimha Murthy, Varaha Narasimha Murthy, Yoga Narasimha Murthy with Lakshmi, Yoga Narasimha Murthy, Sri Narasimha Murthy as a teacher (presumably to Satagopa Yati, the first Jeevar and founder of Ahobila Mutt), the photographs of which are given in this book.

Sri Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy is in sukhasana pose with the left leg folded while the right leg is at ease. Sri Maha Lakshmi is seated on His left lap. His two upper right and left hands hold Chakra and Sankha, respectively. The lower right hand is in abhaya hasta mudra while the lower left arm is around Sri Maha Lakshmi. There is a Simha Toranam around the Lord. Actually, the utsavamurthy with Sridevi and Bhudevi is identified as Sri Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy while the Mulavirat (Druva Murthy or the main idol) as Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy.
Chapter 5

WORSHIP OF THE DEITY

Lord Sri Ahobilam Narasimha Swamy has been worshipped and praised by countless devotees (Gods, Celestials, Rishies (sages), Alwars, Acharyas, Kings, as well as common people) down the ages. Lord Brahma, Garuda, Sri Bhargava Rama (or Parasurama), Sri Rama, Sri Venkateswara all believed to have visited and worshipped Lord Narasimha of Ahobalam. Lord Sri Rama while He was in this forest on his way to Sri Lanka to capture Ravana and liberate His wife, Sita, prayed and glorified Lord Narasimha with Panchamruta Stotram given in the following:

SRI NARASIMHA PANCHAMRUTA STOTRAM
(Sri Ramena Virachitam)

1
Ahobilam Narasimham,
Gatwa Ramah Pratapavan;
Namaskruthva Sree Narasimham,
Astoushit kamalapatim !!

2
Govinda ! Kesava ! Janardana ! Vasudeva !
Visvesa ! Visva ! Madhusudana ! Visvarupa !
Sree Padmanabha ! Purushothama ! Pushkaraksha !
Narayanachutha ! Narasimha ! Namo Namaste !!

3
Devassamasthah khalu yogimukhyah
gandharva vidyadhara kinnarascha !
Yatpadamulam satatam namanti,
tam Narasimham saranam gatosmi !!

4
Vedan samasthan khalu sastra garbhan,
vidyabale keerthimateem cha Lakshmim !
Yasya prasadat satatam (Purusha) labhanthe,
atham Narasimham saranam gatosmi !!

5
Brahma Sivastvam Purushottamas cha,
Naraayano soumarutham pathischa !
Chandarka vayvagni marudganascha,
twameva tam twam satathm natosmi !!

6
Swapnepi nityam jagataam trayanam.
srasta cha hantha vibhiraprameyaha !
Treta thwamekah trividho vibhinnam
tam twam Narasimham sathatham nathosmi !!

Iti sutwa Raghushrestah Pujayamasa tam vibhum !
Pushpa vrustim papat asu tasya devasya murdhani !!
Sas duh sadhwiti tam prochuh devaaah rushiganaissaha !

Deva Vuchuhu :
Raghavena krutham stotram panchaamruthamanatham
Patanti ye dwijavarah 'tesham swargasthu sasvathah
Sree Narasimha Panchamruta Strotram Sampurnam !!

Lord Sri Venkateswara prior to His wedding with Sri Padmavathi, was believed to have worshipped Lord Narasimha here first. On seeing the ferocious form of Lord Narasimha, Lord Brahma, various celestials, and rishies (sages) worshipped Him and acclaimed Him thus:
It is most certain that the word "Ahobalam" for the town and the temple was derived from this acclamation.

AHOBILA NARASIMHA STOTRAM

Lakshmi Kataaksha Sarasiruha Raajahamsa !
Pakshindrasaila Bhuvanam Bhavanaasameesam
Gokshira Haari Ghanasara Patira Varam
Vande Krupaanidhim Aahobila Narasimham ! !

Bhakta Prahlad composed Narasimha Stuthi - a 55 hymn in the glory of Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy.

Alwars and Acharyas also visited this holy place and worshipped the presiding deity, Lord Narasimha. It may be noted that alwars are the mystic saints, 12 in number, who ecstatically glorified Lord Sriman Narayana and His divine consort, Sri Maha Lakshmi and composed soul-stirring extempore compositions in Tamil, collectively known as Nalayara (four thousand) Divya Prabhandham or Dravida Veda. It is believed as the quintessence of the Vedas and Upanishads. Chief among the visitors to Sri Narasimha Swamy of Ahobalam are Sri Tirumangai Alwar, Sri Adi Sankara, Sri Ramanuja, Sri Manavalamamuni, Sri Nigamantha Desika, Sri. Chaitanya Swamy, and Sri Tallapaka Annamacharya, to name a few. It is widely believed that the sanctity of a temple is highly enriched by the visits and worship of the divinity by its devotees in general. This is especially so when Acharyas of great reputation visit the temple and offer worship to the divinity. Similarly, it is also believed that the greatness of the presiding deity is greatly enhanced by the outpouring of devotional hymns in the glory of the Lord by the great spiritual men of high distinction. In the following some of their contributions will be briefly presented.
Sri Adi Sankaracharya visited Ahobilam and worshipped Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy. He glorified the Lord of Ahobilam as Ahobileswara (the Almighty God of Ahobilam). He also composed the most melodious, spiritual slokas, 25 in number, in the glory of Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy known popularly as the "Lakshmi Narasimha Karavalamba Stotram." A few of the slokas (in Sanskrit) (1, 16, 17, 21, 22, and 23) are given in the following for an appreciation of the scholarliness and dedication of Sri Adi Sankaracharya towards Lord Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy:

**LAKSHMI NARASIMHA KARIVALAMBA STOTRAM**

1

Srimat payonidhi nisetana Chakrapane
Bhogindra bhogamaniraajita punyamurte
Yogisa saaswata saranya bhavabdhipota
Lakshmi Narasimha ! Mama Dehi Karavalambam !

6

Lakshmipathe ! Kamalanabha ! Suresha ! Vishno
Yajnesa ! Yajna ! Madhusudana ! Viswarupa !
Brahmanya ! Kesava ! Janardana ! Vasudeva !
Lakshmi Narasimha ! Mama Dehi Karavalambam !

17

Prahlada Narada Parasara Pundarika
Vyasambarisha Suka Saunaka Hrunnivasa !
Bhaktanuraktha paripalana parijata
Lakshmi Narasimha ! Mama Dehi Karavalambam !

21

Mata Narasimhascha Pita Narasimhah
Bratha Narasimhascha Sakha Narasimhah
Vidya Nrusimho Dravinam Narasimhah
Swami Narasimhas Sakalam Narasimhah !

22

Prahlada manasa saroha vihara bhringa
Sri Adi Sankaracharya also installed a Siva Linga adjacent to the sanctum of Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy. It may be noted that the installation of a Siva Linga in a Vishnu temple is rather unusual and rare.

Nammalvar, the greatest and one of the Dwadasa Alwars, in his Tiruvaymozhi also composed 11 hymns in the glory of Lord Sri Narasimha and one of it is given in the following for an appreciation of his immense contribution to the Nalayara Divya Prabhāndha literature and the propagation of the bhakti-cult in general.

TIRUVAYMOZHI 2-4 -- ADI ADI

Aadi aadi aham karindu isai
Paadi paadi kanneer malgi yengum
Naadi naadi Narsingavenrum
Vaadi vaadum ivanudale

----- Nammalwar's Tiruvaymozhi 2-4-1

Tirumangai Alwar, one of the Dwadasa Alwars and a prolific writer in the glory of Sriman Narayana and His consorts, also visited Ahobilam (or Singavelkundram in Tamil) and worshipped Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy. It may be noted that Sri Tirumangai Alwar visited over 75 Divya Thirupaties and worshipped the Lord. In the glory of Lord Sriman Narayana and His divine consorts Sri Devi and Bhu Devi, Tirumangai Alwar composed extempore, over 1000 pasuras (hymns) which form the Peria Tirumożhi of the Nalayara Divya Prabhandham or Dravida Vedam. He specifically
composed 10 pasuras (in Tamil) in the glory of Lord Ahobila Narasimha which is part of Peria Tirumozhi and are given in the following:

PERIA TIRUMOZHI 1-7: ANGKANNYAALAM

angkaNNYaalamaNYYcha angkOraaLariyaay avuNaN
pongkavaagamvaLLugiraal pOzhnNdhapunidhanidam,
paingkNaanaikkombukoNdu patthimaiyaal, adikkeezhch
chengkNaalLiyittiRaiNYchum singkavELkunRamE.

alaithhapEzhvaay vaaLeyiRROrkOLariyaay, avuNaN
kolaikkaiyaalLannNeNYchidanNdha koorugiraalLanidam,
malaitthaselsaattheRinNdhapoosal vanthudivaaykaduppa,
silaiikkaivEdarthezhippaRaadha singkavELkunRamE.

EynNdhapEzhvaay vaaLeyiRROrkOLariyaay, avuNaN
vaayNdhavaagamvaLLugiraal vagirnNdhavammaanadhanidam,
OynNdhamaavumudainNdhakunRum anRiyum nNinRazhalaal,
thEynNdhavEyumadhillach chingkavELkunRamE.

avvamvevElponpeyarOn Edhalininnuyirai
vavvi, aagamvaLLugiraal vagirnNdhavammaanadhidam,
kaavunNaayumkazhugum ucchipOdhodukaalsuzhanRu,
dheyvamallaalselavoNNaach chingkavELkunRamE.

menRapEzhvaay vaaLeyiRROrkOLariyaay, avuNaN
ponRavaagamvaLLugiraal pOzhnNdhapunidhanidam,
nNinRasenNdheemoNdusoorRai nNeeLvisumboodiriya,
serRukaaNdaRkriyakOil singkavELkunRamE.

erinNdhapaiengkaNilangkupEzhvaay eyiRRodidhevvuruvenRu,
irinNdhuvaanOr kalingkiyOda irunNdhavammaanadhidam,
nNerinNdhavEyn muzhaiyuLnNinRu nNeeNeRivaayuzhuvai,
thirinNdhavaanaicchuvadupaarkkum singkavELkunRamE.

munaitthaseeRRamviNsudappOy moovylagumpiRavum,
anaitthumaNYchavaaLariyaay irunNdhavammaanNdhidam,
kanaitthateeyumkallumallaa villudaivEdarumaay,
Sri Vedanta Desika (1290-1369) composed in Sanskrit "Narasimhastaka" (8 hymns) in the glory of Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy. Sri Manavalamamuni (1370-1456) visited Ahobilam and worshipped Lord Sri Narasimha Murthy. He also composed "Narasimhastakam" in Sanskrit in praise of Lord Narasimha and installed Sri Rama and Sita shrines in the same general area where Sri Adi Sankaracharya installed the Siva Linga. It may be noted that it is customary for great acharyas to bring and present idols of their choice but specific to the divinity of that temple, generally, Ustava Vigrahahas, to some of these ancient temples on their visit and consecrate them. For example, Sri Ramanuja brought Utsava Vigrahahas of Sri Govindaraja Swamy together with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi while Madvacharya brought Rama Parivara to Sri Kurmanadha Swami temple in Srikurman in the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. Sri Ramanuja also brought and presented the Utsava Vigrahahas of Sri Govindaraja Swamy together with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi to the Simhachalem temple.

Even though Saint Sri Tallapaka Annamacharya (1408-1503) spent most of his time in serving Lord Sri Venkateswara and His divine consort, Sri Padmavathi Devi in Tirumala-Tirupati and Tiruchanur, he visited
several Nrishimha Kshetrams occasionally, chief amongst them was Ahobilam. He composed some 32,000 Sankeerthanas (verses) in praise of and in the glory of Sri Maha Vishnu and in particular, Sri Venkateswara of Tirumala and his divine consort, Sri Padmavathi Devi of Tiruchanur. It is interpreted that the 32 in 32,000 Sankeerthanas represent the 32 Sanskrit letters in Narasimha Mantram (Ugram Veeram Mahavishnum, Jwalaantham Sarvatho Mukham, Narasimham Bhishanam Bhadram, Mrithyu Mruthyur Namamyaham). It appears that Sri Annamayya wrote some 300 sankeerthanas in praise of Lord Ahobaliswara. Unfortunately, many of the copper plates on which these were written were melted away for making utensils by an illiterate blacksmith around 1945 with the result that only some 37 are available. Some of the references to the Lord Narasimha of Ahobilam in various sankeerthanas (in Telugu) by Annamacharya (and his family) are given in the following:

Nava Naarasimha Namo Namo
Bhava naasiteera Ahobala Naarasimhaa (5-278)

Allavadeh gaddiameeda Naubalapu guhalona
Yellavari karunatho yelukonnadu (11-210)

Anisamu talacharo Ahobalam
Anantha phaladambu Ahobalam (9-232)

Anadi jagamuna Koubhalamu
Anekaadhubutam Boubhalamu (10-29)

Peda Aoubhalapu Konda Perigeenade
Vadalaka kolichite Varamu Lichiini (11-13)

Ounayya’janadavu Prahlavarada
Aanalu pettakumu Prahladavarada (11-202)

Inde kalige eeku ennibhogalu
Andamuga chthaginchu Aubaleswara (2-237)

Nagu mogamu thodi Oh, Nara Kesari
Naga rupa Garudadri Nara Kesari
Saint Annamacharya, or Annamayya as he is affectionately called, was anxious to learn the intricacies of Sri Visistadhvaita Vedanta philosophy. So, he traveled from Tirumala-Tirupati to Ahobilam and approached Sriman Adivan Satagopa Yathi (the first Jeer and founder of the Ahobila Mutt) who initiated him with the Narasimha Mantram and taught him the essence of Sri Visistadhvaita Vedanta philosophy.

Errapragada (1280-1345), one of the Kavithraya (Poet Trio, the others being Nannaya and Thikkana) who undertook the onerous task of writing Aranya Parva Sesha of Maha Bharata (the remaining part of Aranya Parva which was not completed by Nannaya and was not taken up by Thikkana) in Telugu) also wrote Narasimha Puranam in the glory of the Lord of Ahobilam and dedicated it to Him. Some of the invocational slokas (or Hymns) (in Telugu) at the beginning of each chapter from this book are given in the following as an example of Errapragada's (or Errana's) scholarliness and his devotion to Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy of Ahobilam:

NARASIMHA PURANAM

Srimath Ahobala Theertha
Swamiki Saranaagatha Prasannunaku
Krupadhamunakun Pranamat-jana
Kaamitha Phaladunaku Parama Kalyanunakun !!

Srimath Ahobala Theertha
Graamani, Suthikaaminee, Sikhaamani, Karunaa
Dhaama, Jagadavanavihitha
Sthema Duritha karati simha Sri Narasimha !!

Srimath Garudaachala
Ddhamama, Sudhadhamama, Theevradhamama, Sahasro-
Dhama, Dyuti Tejonidhi
Seema, Srimahita Deha, Sri Narasimha !!

Srikaantaa Parirabhyaa
Lokaatikrama Vivekalolupalabhyaa
Srikara naama Smaranotseka
Dalitha Vinamadamha I Sri Narasimha !!
Srikara Kataksha Nigama  
Slokitha Vividhaavadhana Sura Serana Bhuja  
Praakaara Krupaanithya  
Swikaara yahobalesa, Sri Narasimha !!

Bommera Pothana (1400-1470) (a 15th century poet of outstanding fame) wrote the magnum opus, Srimath Bhagavatam (in Telugu) based on Sri Veda Vyasa Bhagavan's original Bhagavatha Purana in Sanskrit. In the Sapthama Skandha (Seventh Chapter) of it, Pothana marvelously describes the story of Sri Prahlada, the origin of the fourth incarnation of Sri Maha Vishnu as Prahladavarada Narasimha, and the destruction of the Demon Hiranyakasipa. Here, from Srimath Bhagavatam a poem each (in Telugu) dealing with Hiranyakasipa, Prahlada, and Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy are given for an appreciation of the scholarliness and command of language of Pothana. Pothana dedicated his Srimath Bhagavatam to Lord Sri Rama. Based on his great contributions to the bakthi culture and dedication to the Lord Sri Rama, he can be acclaimed as one of the Telugu Alvars along with Sri Annamacharya, Bhakta Ramadas, and Sri Tyagaraja Swamy.

Prahlada first describes the characteristics of a real human being (divine soul), thus

SRIMATH BHAGAVATAM

Kamalakshu narchinchu karamulu, karamulu  
Srinadhu varninchu jihva, jihva  
Surarakshakuni juchu chudkulu, chudkulu  
Seshasayiki mroku siramu, siramu  
Vishnunakarninchu veenulu, veenulu  
Madhuvairi davilina manamu, manamu  
Bhagavantu valagonu padamulu, padamulu  
Purushothamuni meedi buddhi, buddhi !!

The hands that pray Lord Narayana (Kamalakshu) are the real hands, the voice that glorifies Lord Narayan (Srinadha) is the real voice, the eyes that see Lord Narayana who protects the celestials (Surarakshaka) are the real eyes, the neck that bows to Seshasayi (Lord Narayana) is the real
neck, the eyes that are attracted to Sri Maha Vishnu are the real eyes, the heart that thinks of Sriman Narayan (Madhuvairi) is the real real heart, the hymns that are recited on Lord Vishnu (Bhagavantu) are the real hymns, the mind that concentrated on Lord Narayan (Purushotham) is the real mind.

When Hiranyakasipa inquired the whereabouts of Sri Maha Vishnu, Prahlada replied thus:

\[
\text{Indugala dandu ledani} \\
\text{Sandehamu valadu Chakri sarvopagathun} \\
\text{Dendendu vedaki chuchina} \\
\text{Andande kaladu danavaagran! vinte !!}
\]

(There is no need to doubt if Sri Hari is here or there, i.e., the existence of the Almighty God, Sriman Narayana, for He is omnipresent; wherever you search for Him, He is there).

To this Hiranyakasipa reacted thus

\[
\text{Dimbhaka ! Sarva Sthalamula} \\
\text{Ambhoruhanethrudu undunanchu migula} \\
\text{Samrambhambuna palikedavu} \\
\text{Sthambhambuna Chupagalave ? Chakrin, Gikrin !}
\]

(Oh smart lad, you seem to be certain that Sri Hari is everywhere; if so, can you show Him to me in this pillar!). Prahlada replied by stating that if you look carefully, you will find. To this Hiranyakasipa broke open the pillar and the Lord responded by appearing in the pillar in the form of Lord Narasimha. When He emerged from the pillar, the Lord was described thus

\[
\text{Naramurthigadu kevalam} \\
\text{Harimurthiyu kadu,} \\
\text{Manavakaramu kesariyakaramu unnadi} \\
\text{Hari mayarachitamagu yadharthamu chudan !}
\]

(He is not in the form of an ordinary human being. He is also not in the familiar form a lion. He has the features of a man as well as a lion. If one
dwell s deep into the mysterious aspects of Sri Maha Vishnu, He appears overall more like a human.)

Srivan Satagopa Yatindra Mahadesika, the seventh Jeear of the Ahobila Mutt wrote a beautiful dance drama entitled "Vasantika Parinayam." The theme of it is the culmination of the marriage of Garudachala Narisimha with Vasantika (or Goddess Chenchu Lakshmi), a Chenchu woman of the Nallamalai forest. The shrine dedicated next to Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy in a separate sanctum is that of Goddess Chenchu Lakshmi.

Many famous kings including Kakatiya King Prataparudra, Vijayanagara King Sri Krishnadevaraya, Kalinga King Mukundadeva, Gajapathies of Orissa visited Ahobilam and worshipped Sri Nava Narasimha Swamies several times. They also offered many valuable gifts, including very expensive and exquisite jewelry, lands, and cash. For example, the Utsava Vigraha of Ahobilaswamy was cast and got made for by King Prataparudra. He was also responsible for building some of the mandapas of Ahobilam. Similarly, the Vijayanagara Kings and Gadwal Samsthanadhipaties are responsible for some of the mandapas in Ahobilam.
Chapter 6

THE JEEARS AND THE AHOBILA MUTT

No article on Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobila Kshetram would be complete without discussing the origin of the Ahobila Mutt and the seminal contributions of its Jeears. Ahobila Mutt is considered as the nerve center or spiritual center of the Vadagalai sect of Srivaishnava community. Sri Vedanta Desika (1290-1369), one of the greatest promulgators of Srivaishnava philosophy enriched the Srivaishnava world with his scholarly works in Sanskrit in the glory of the various Archa forms of Sriman Narayana and His divine consorts, Sri Devi and Bhu Devi or Visva Dhatri in various temples in Bharata Kanda. His son, Varadacharya, carried the mantle after him. Unfortunately, there was no pontiff to succeed him resulting in a somewhat deep vacuum. As a result, the Srivaishnavas of the Vadagalai sect were desperately seeking for an Acharya or pontiff to lead them spiritually. At the crucial juncture, a celebrated saint, who later became known as Srimath Adivan Satagopa Yatindra Mahadesika, the first Jeear and the founder of Ahobila Mutt, appeared. Since he filled the void created after Sri Vedanta Desika, the Jeear took the name of Mahadesika.

In the purvashrama (i.e. before he was ordained as a monk), Srimath Adivan Satagopa Yatindra Mahadesika was known by the name of Srinivasacharya. He was born on the 18th day of August 1379 AD., the son
of Kilambi Kesavacharya of Tirunarayanapuram (Melkote) in the Karnataka State. He studied Vedanta philosophy under Gatikasatam Ammal of Kanchi up to the age of 20. It is believed that after the completion of his studies, Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy of Ahobilam Himself appeared in his dream and commanded him to proceed to Ahobilam which was then ruled by a Chieftain named Mukundaraya who received him cordially on his arrival. It is also believed that Lord Sri Narasimha Swamy of Ahobilam appeared as a Yogi and assumed the role of a teacher and taught him the Narasimha Mantram. The year 1998 marked the 600 Anniversary of this auspicious event. The Sixth Centennial Celebrations were conducted in a grand manner from October 21-25, 1998 in Ahobilam under the spiritual leadership of the 45th Jeerar, Sriman Narayana Yathindra Maha Desika Swamy and the divine grace of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobila Kshetram to mark this event. The Lord Himself taught the young Srinivasacharya the "Presa Mantram" and ordained him in the Sanyasa Ashramam (Monk of the highest religious order or Pontiff) by giving him the Tridandam as well as Sankha and Chakra, thus becoming his spiritual guru (or teacher) according to Vedantic tradition. He called him Satagopa Yathi. This is commemorated in the following sloka:

Ahobale Sri Narasimha
Presa mantram svayam dadau
Yogi rupena yasyasmai
Sathakopaya mangalam

Annamayya introduced his guru in a hymn (in Telugu), Satagopa Yathi, thus

Karunaanidhi Rangapatiki, Kanchi
Varadunaku, Venkatagiripatiki
Nerati Ahobala Nrukesariki
Thatparudagu Satagopamuni Ethadu

(Translated, it means that Satagopayathi Muni is so pious that he is blessed by none other than Sri Ranganadha of Srirangam, Sri Varadaraja Swami of Kanchi, Sri Venkateswara of Tirumala, and ultimately by Sri Narasimha of Ahobilam).
Sriman Satagopa Yathindra Mahadesika, the first Jeear and founder of the Ahobila Mutt, was Jeear for some 60 years. During his spiritual leadership, he propagated Srivaishnava philosophy along the lines of Sri Ramanuja and Sri Vedanta Desika and this practice has been continuing since then by the succeeding Jeears. During one of his sojourns to various Divya Tirupathies, the Adivan Jeear went on a visit to the Adinadha Perumal in Alvar Thirunagari. This is the birth place of Sri Nammalvar, one of the 12 and most revered of the Dwadasa Alvars. The Jeear found to his surprise that the idol of Sri Nammalvar in Alvar Thirunagari was removed and instead a Sivalinga was installed as it was the faith of practice of the ruling king. In fact, altogether 11 Sivalingas were installed in the temple and the town's name was changed to Ekadasarudra Kshetram. It appears that Sri Adivan Jeear Swamy stayed in the town for sometime preaching the doctrine of Prapatti or self-surrender. Soon his fame spread far and wide as a mystic saint of great powers and efficacy. The Jeear, however, was distressed at the loss of Nammalvar Shrine. He constantly recited Madhurakavi Alwar's pasuras (hymns) in praise of Nammalvar. One day in a dream, Nammalvar appeared and instructed the Jeear to go to a location in the nearby river, Tamraparni, where the idol of Nammalvar would be found.

When the Jeear, accompanied by the Pandyan King, went to the location, they found to their pleasant surprise, the Utsava Vignaha of Sri Nammalvar. The king was very surprised and since then developed a high regard for the greatness of the Jeear. He, therefore, requested the Jeear to reinstall the idol of Sri Nammalvar and consecrate it in the original temple. Since then, the temple was converted back into a Srivaishnava temple. The King also took to the Srivaishnava religion and became a sishya (disciple) of the Jeear. It is believed that Sri Nammalvar appeared before the Jeear and called him "Van" meaning "all powerful." Also, the title of Setagopa (Nammalvar's other name) was added to the Jeear's name. It is also believed that he gave a gold ring with the emblem of Lord Hanuman and a swan (Hamsa Mudra) which is worn continuously by all the Jeears from the first Jeear to the current Jeear. To day, one can see the consecrated statue of the Jeear in the Adikesava Perumal Temple in Alwar Tirunagari. Also, the Jeear installed the idol of Sri Vedanta Desika in this
temple. Since then it has become a common practice for the Jeears of Ahobila Mutt to visit Alwar Tirunagari soon after they assume this high office as Peetadhipathi and worship the Lord as well as Sri Nammalvar. The photograph in the book shows the commemoration of the visit of the 45th Jeear to Alvar Thirunagari paying obeisance to Sri Nammalvar.

Another interesting incident deals with King Prataparudra of Kakatiya dynasty. It was the practice of the King to arrange a cast of swarna (gold) Siva Linga image, and present it to the seers when he visited them, as he was a staunch Shivite. In one of his visits, the King visited Sriman Satagopa Yathindra Mahadesika. It appears that he wanted to make a Swarna Siva Linga and present it to the Jeear. It appears that even after repeated castings, only a swarna (gold) Vigraha of Narasimha came out instead. He was astonished at this and realized the greatness of Lord Sri Narasimha Murthy of Ahobilam. He presented the Swama Narasimha to Sri Satagopa Yathindra Mahadesika, the first Jeear of the Ahobila Mutt. He also granted several villages to the Temple to take care of the daily worship and contributed significantly towards the construction of the Diguva Ahobilam Temple as well as some of the Mandapas in the Eguva Ahobilam. This idol is in the possession of the Ahobila Mutt and the current Jeear Swami carries it with him and worships it regularly wherever he is. They are also the custodians of the temples in Ahobila Kshetram. Since then, this line of Jeear Swamies is being continued, the present Jeear swamy being the 45th Jeear, Sri Narayana Yathindra Maha Desika Swamy. They have established many Ahobila Mutts in important religious centers in the country, such as Tirupati, Srirangam, Kanchi as well as in many important cities in South India, such as Madras (now Chennai), Hyderabad, and Bangalore.

On the initiative of the H.H. the 7th Jeear Swamy of the Ahobila Mutt (1513-1522), King Rangadevaraya of Vijayanagara recovered the temples of Ahobilam which were captured by the Muslims and drove them away. To commemorate the occasion a Vijaya Sthambham (Victory Pillar) was erected in front of Sri Prahladavarada Narasimha Swamy Temple. The Jeear Swami was also a great Sanskrit scholar, and as already pointed out, composed a melodious dance-drama entitled "Vasantika
Parinayam" wherein the Lord marries Chenchu Lakshmi, Sri Maha Lakshmi Herself in the form of a local tribal lady. In the following, five hymns of invocation from "Vasantika Parinayam" by this Jeear Swamy to H. H. the First Jeear Swamy of the Ahobilam Mutt, Sri Adivan Satagopa Jeear Swami are given:

Vasantika Parinayam

1
Namo Ramanujaryaya Tasmai Nissima Tejase
Visvatranaya Yasyaaseed Avataro Maheetale !!

2
Purvam Yastu Mukundadeva Vibhuna Skandhe Dhru tandolikah Prapthah Sree Purushothamam
Rachitavan Bhakta Pratisthapanam
Labdhva danti turanga ratna sibikat chara davyee chamara
Dwrandadeeni yayou punascha vijaye kamatasimhasanam !!

3
Aseed Vyasaasya Veepsa Sukamuni Yamakam Pundareekat Dvirkthi
Prahladasya Anuvadah Pradhitatara tapah Pragraneeh Vansathareh
Prajnanam Yastu Rajnam Padavinat krutam Astavornopadesat
Astaiswaryasti bhogan Adita Samadhikam Asta Dikkhyatatam cha !!

4
Sree Ramanuja Sampradayam Padavee bhajam chatus saptati
Sreemad Vaishnava Bhubhurtem Vilasatam Simhasana sthayanam
Adhyakshatva mupejivamsamatulam Sreeman Narasimhajnaya
Prancham Van Sathagopa Samyamidhara dhowreyam eedimahi !!

5
Bhattanam Attahasam Phanipathi Bhaniteh Bhagadheyam Kanada
Vyaharaa Prananadee Kapilamatphalam Narma dhamagamanam
Yogeey Sree van Satharagathi vijayhate kim cha Vedantayugma
Charyo Vedoktamarga sthitiJananaguruh Sarva tantra svatanthra !!

Because of the proximity of Gadwal Samsthanam to Ahobilam, Gadwal occupied an important place in the history of the Mutt. The Samsthanadhipaties of Gadwal greatly patronized the spiritual and cultural activities of the Mutt. The Jeears were the spiritual and religious heads of the Samsthanam. Raja Somabhupala became a disciple of the
24th Jeer, Srivan Satagopa Sri Parankusa Yateendra Mahadesika (1764-1776). This is the first reference to the Gadwal connection. The Raja presented several villages, silver palanquins etc. to the Mutt. The mutual contacts grew so strongly that when the 27th Jeer reached Brundavan (the lotus feet of Lord Sriman Narayana in Sri Vaikuntam) he designated the Gadwal Raja in-charge of the Mutt and authorized him to seek a worthy successor to him. The 40th Jeer consecrated an idol of Adikesava Perumal with Sridevi and Bhudevi, obtained from Srimushnam, in a temple in Gadwal Palace. To day, the temple needs urgent renovation and resources to maintain daily rituals of the Lord.

In 1979, Sri Azhagiyasinger Jeer Swami (Srivan Satagopa Sri Vedanta Desika Yateendra Maha Desikan), the 44th Jeer of the Ahobila Mutt in his 84th year undertook the onerous task of completing the unfinished Rajagopuram (also called Mundi Gopuram as it is partially built) by the Nayak rulers in the great Srirangam temple. It is believed that Lord Ranganadha Himself appeared in a dream to the Jeer Swami and commanded him to undertake the work of completing this Raja Gopuram which remained unfinished for nearly four centuries. Today, it stands as the tallest temple tower in the world, thanks to his untiring work of the Lord or Bhagavath Kainkaryam. The Maha Samparkshanam of this monumental, 236 ft. tall, majestic Rajagopuram was performed on March 25, 1987.

The Jeer Swamies of Ahobilam on their own accord also take care of the maintenance and renovations of some of the less fortunate ancient temples including payment of remunerations to the priests. They are not only our religious heads but their services to humanity in general and to Sri Maha Vishnu temples, in particular, are laudable and deserve our sincere appreciation and eternal gratitude.

The Jeears of Ahobila Mutt carry with them the Uthsava Vigraha of Malola Narasimha Swamy during their regular sojourns. In addition, they carry the Swarna Narasimha idol presented by King Prataparudra and 16 other idols inherited over time. (see the photograph for details). They are Sri Ranganadha reclining on Adiseshu along with Sri Maha Lakshimi (Sriranganayaki) of Srirangam, Srinivasa Perumal of Tirumala-Tirupati
with Alarnel Manga Thayar resting on his chest, Sri Varadaraja Swamy (Atti Varada) of Kanchi, Tirunarayana (or Sampath Kumar) of Mellai Kotai (Melkote), Sri Bhu Varaha, Sri Lakshmi Varaha, Sri Aravamuda Swamy of Kumbakonam, Sri Rangamannar and Sri Andal of Sri Villiputtur, Sri Sudarsana, Sri Panakala Narasimha Swamy of Mangalagiri, Sri Hayagriva of Thiruvahindrapuram, Kannan (Lord Krishna), Sri Rama Parivar (Sita, Rama, and Lakshmana), Adikesava Perumal with His consorts of Sri Perumbudur, and Parimala Ranga with Sridevi and Bhudevi of Tiruindralur. In addition, several rare salagramas, idols of Vishvaksena, and Nammalwar are also worshipped regularly. Kannan to whom Dolothsavam (divine swing) is performed routinely at the request of the devotees, was believed to have been worshipped by none other than Sri Bhagavath Ramanuja. Hastigiri Varada or Atti Varada was worshipped by the great scholar, Nadathur Ammal and later given to Sri Adivan Satagopa Yati (the First Jeevar Swamy) by the former's grandson Gatikasatam Ammal. What a divine site it is to have a darshan of all these deities at one place.
Chapter 7

THE SIXTH CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE AHOBILA MUTT

This book was originally intended to be released as part of the Sixth Centennial Celebrations of the Ahobila Mutt which took place for five days from 21-25 October, 1998. Although the final version was nearly completed, for reasons beyond control, it could not be published on time for this occasion. Fortunately, this gave an opportunity to summarize the Sixth Centennial Celebrations of the Ahobila Mutt that took place in the Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam as reported in Sri Nrisimha Priya magazine. The Centennial Celebrations was conceived by and initiated under the spiritual leadership of His Holiness Sri AzhagiyaSinger, the 45th Jeear Swamy of the Ahobila Mutt under the divine grace of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobilam. It was a golden chapter in the annals of the Ahobila Mutt and a beacon of light in the religious history of India. It was estimated that some 25,000-40,000 devotees have attended this auspicious occasion to seek the grace of Sri Nava Narasimha of Ahobilam.

His Holiness Sri AzhagiyaSinger, the 45th Jeear of Ahobila Mutt adorned the Utsava Vigrahas of Lord Prahladavarada and his divine consorts - Sridevi and Bhudevi with Swarna Kavachas (golden attire weighing more than 8 kgs) (see photograph for details) Each day the deities were also clothed with expensive colorful clothes. The divine sight
was considered by the devout pilgrims as a once-in-a-life-time phenomenon to be cherished forever. It was a rare spectacle to see Srivaishnavites, Smarthas, and Madhvas hailing from the Southern States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka as well as from major cities of India coming together to celebrate a significant milestone in our religious history.

Homam was performed both in the mornings and in the evenings on all the five days. Twelve Homakundams were installed devoted for each of the Nava Narasimhas, plus Lord Sri Prahладavarada, Sri Mahalakshmi (Amruthavalli Thayar), and Sri Sudarsana. The function was graced, in addition to H. H. Sri Azhagiyasinger, by the His Holiness of the Parakala Mutt, Sri Rangapriya Swamy, and the Matadhipathi of Vyasaraya Mutt. Many dignitaries, scholars, and common folk alike have participated in the grand celebration.

Veda Parayanam, a favorite of Sri Azhagiyasinger, was conducted all the five days. Some 350 pandits recited Rigveda, Krishna Yajurveda, Sukla Yajurveda, Sama Veda, and Atharvana Veda. This was complimented by the chanting of Divya Prabhandam by some 100 Adhyapaka Swamies. Some 50 pandits read Ramayanam, Srimath Bhagavath Geeta, Sree Bhasyam, and Sri Rahasyathrayasaram.

Vidvath Sadhas was also conducted all the five days. Presided over by none other than H. H. Sri Azhagiyasinger. Over 100 Vidwans proficient in Adhvaïta, Vishishtadvaita, and Dwaita philosophies participated in the deliberations. They not only presented their viewpoints but also appreciated each other viewpoints.

An elaborate Thirumanjanam (holy ablution) was performed on October 23, 1998 to Lord Sri Prahладavarada, Sridevi, Bhudevi, and Sri Amruthavalli Thayar. This was followed by Kalyanothsavam of Lord Sri Prahладavarada with Sri Amruthavalli Thayar. Garuda Vahanosthavam was conducted on October 25, 1998. It was a grand site to watch Garuda Vahanam procession of the Lord preceded by a huge Adhyapaka Ghosti chanting Divya Prabhandam and followed by hundreds of Vedaparayana Pandits chanting all the four Vedas.
As a homage to the first and the foremost disciple of the H. H. Srimath Adivan Satagopa Yathindra Maha Desikan, the First Jeear Swamy, the Divya Mangala Vigraha of Sri Thallapaka Annamacharya was specially brought from Tirumala to Ahobilam and was honored by a grand procession and a special prayer on this occasion as a grand finale.

Musical concerts, mainly devoted to Sri Annamacharya Sankeertanas, were conducted in the afternoons and evenings on all the five days. Smt. Mani Krishnaswamy, Smt. R. Vedavalli, Smt. Radha Padmanabhan, Kadiri Sri Gopalmath and party, Thiruchchoor Sri V. Ramachandran and party, Sri Balakrishna Prasad and Sri P. S. Ranganath of Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams, Sri D. Seshachari, Sri. D. Raghavachari, Vanamalika Group, and Kumari S. Ramya were some of the well known singers that participated in the Musical Concerts.

Thus, the Sixth Centennial Celebrations was celebrated in a grand manner for five days from October 21-25, 1998 at Sri Nava Narasimha Kshetram of Ahobilam.

Ahobile Garuda SAILA Madhye
Krupa Vasat Kalpita Sannidhanam
Lakshmya Samaalingitha Vamabhagam
Lakshmi Narasimham Charanam Saranam Prapadye !

(Oh, Lord Narasimha ! You have graced in the middle of Ahobila Garudachala hill with the beloved Sri Maha Lakshmi on Your left side. I prostrate before you for mercy and salvation.)

Sri LakshmiNarasimha Parabrahmane namaha !
Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy Tiruvadigale Saranam !

(I prostrate at the holy feet of Sri Ahobila Narasimha Swamy)

Serve Janaah, Sukhino Bhavantu ! ! !

(May the humanity live in peace and prosperity)
REFERENCES


----, "Azhagiyasinger of Ahobilam," Special Issue, Sri Nrisimha Priya, June 1992

----, Special Commemorative Volume on the Visit of the H. H. the 45th Jeer of Ahobila Mutt, Narasimha Priya, April 1993

----, Five Glorious Days at Ahobilam, Sri Nrisimha Priya, November 1998
## APPENDIX A

### SRIVAISHNAVAVA 108 DIVYA TIRUPATIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ranganathar</td>
<td>Srirangam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Azhagia Manavalan</td>
<td>Uraiyr (near Srirangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Neela Mega Perumal</td>
<td>Thanjai Mamani Kovil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Vadivazhagiya Nambi</td>
<td>Anbil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Purushothaman</td>
<td>Thirukarambanur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pundarikan</td>
<td>Thiruvellarai (near Srirangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Valvil Raman</td>
<td>Pullam Poothangudi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Appakudathan</td>
<td>Thirupannagar (Koil-adi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(near Srirangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Andu Alukkum Aian</td>
<td>Adhanur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Amarauvippan</td>
<td>Therazhundur (Theralundur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Arulmakadal</td>
<td>Sirupuliyyur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Saranathan</td>
<td>Thirucherai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Nanmathian</td>
<td>Talai Sanga Nan Mathiyam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Aravamudhan</td>
<td>Kumbakonam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Sarngapani)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Harasepaharan</td>
<td>Kandiyur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Uppillyappan</td>
<td>Thirukvinagar (Kumbakonam)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Neela Megha Perumal</td>
<td>Thirukannapuram (Tanjore Dist.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sowri Rajan</td>
<td>(Nagapattanam and Nannilam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Vayalali Manavalan</td>
<td>Thiruvali - Thirunagari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Lakshminarasimha &amp;</td>
<td>(7 km Sirkazhi) (Sri Nagari)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vedarajan)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Soundara Rajan</td>
<td>Nagapattinam</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Nambi,Nanchiyar Koil</td>
<td>Thirunaraiyyur</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Jagannathan</td>
<td>Nandipura, Vinnagaram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Nathan Koil)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Parimala Ranganathan</td>
<td>Thiru Indalur</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(near Mayavaram, Tanjore Dist.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Govindarajan</td>
<td>Chidambaram</td>
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40
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Thadalan</td>
<td>Sirkazi</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Jagathrakshakan</td>
<td>Kudalur</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Lokanadha Perumal</td>
<td>Thirukkannangudi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Syamala Meni Perumal</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Bhakthavatsalan</td>
<td>Thiru Kannamangai</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Gajedra Varadan</td>
<td>Kapisthalam</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Kolavilli Raman</td>
<td>Thiruvelliyangudi</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Nanda Vilakku Perumal</td>
<td>Thiru Mani Mada Koil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Narayanan) (Badri)</td>
<td>(Nangoor) (6 miles S.E. Sirkazhi)</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Vaikunda Nadhan</td>
<td>Vaikunta Vinnagaram</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(e.q.Vikuntam)</td>
<td>(Nangoor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Kudamadu Koothan</td>
<td>Thiru Arimeya Vinnagaram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(e.q. Goverdhan)</td>
<td>(Nangoor)</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Deivanayaga Perumal</td>
<td>Thiru Thovanar Thogai</td>
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<td>(e.q. Thiru Vidanthai)</td>
<td>(Nangoor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Purushothaman</td>
<td>Thiru Vanpurushothaman</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(e.q. Ayodhya)</td>
<td>(Nangoor)</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Perarulalan</td>
<td>Thiru Sem Pon Sei Koil</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Nangoor) (eq. Melkote)</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Senganmal</td>
<td>Thiru Thetriyambalan</td>
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<td>(Ranganather)</td>
<td>(Nangoor) (eq. Srirangam)</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>Mani Kuda Nayakan</td>
<td>Thirumani Koodam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Varadaraja Perumal)</td>
<td>(Nangoor) (eq. Kanchi)</td>
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<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Gopalakrishnan</td>
<td>Thiru Kavalampadi</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Rajagopalan)</td>
<td>(Nangoor) (eq. Dwaraka)</td>
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<td>39.</td>
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<td>(Srinivasan)</td>
<td>(Nangoor) (eq. Tirupathi)</td>
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<td>Thamariyal Kelvan</td>
<td>Thiru Parthan Palli</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Kannan)</td>
<td>(Nangoor) (eq. KuruKshetramm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Azhagar, Azhagarkoil</td>
<td>Madurai</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Somya Narayanan</td>
<td>Thirukottiyur</td>
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<td>43.</td>
<td>Sathagirinathan</td>
<td>Thirumaiyyam</td>
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<td>44.</td>
<td>Jagganaathan</td>
<td>Thirupullani</td>
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<td>45.</td>
<td>Thangaiappan</td>
<td>Thiruthankal</td>
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<td>46.</td>
<td>Kalamegha Perumal</td>
<td>Thirumogur</td>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>Koodalazhagar</td>
<td>Then Madurai</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

41
| 48. | Rangamannar | Srivilliputtur |
| 49. | Adi Nadha Perumal | Alwar Thirunagari |
| 50. | Devapriyan Aravinda | Irattai Thirupathi |
| 51. | Devanayagan | Vanamamali (Nanguneri) |
| 52. | Kaisinavendhan | Thirupulingudi |
| 53. | Makara Nedunguzhai | Then Thiruperi |
| 54. | Kallapiran | Srivaikuntam |
| 55. | Vijaya Sannar | Varaguna Mangai |
| 56. | Meyakoothan | Thirukudanthai, |
|  | (Sarnagapani) | Kumbakonam |
| 57. | Vainavanambi | Thirukuramgudi |
| 58. | Vaithamanidi | Thirukkolor |
| 59. | Anantapadmanabhan | Thiruananthapuram |
| 60. | Thiruvazhmarvhan | Thiruvan Parisaram |
| 61. | Katkaraiyappan | Thirukkatkarai |
| 62. | Thirumoozhi Kalathan | Thirumoozhi Kalam |
| 63. | Mayappiran | Thirupuliyur |
| 64. | Imayavarapan | Thiruchankanrur |
| 65. | Narayanar | Thirunavai |
| 66. | Kallappiran | Thiruvavallavazh |
| 67. | Pambanaiyappan | Thiruvanvandur |
| 68. | Adikesava Perumal | Thiruvattaru |
| 69. | Abhayapradhan | Thiruvirdhvakodu |
| 70. | Amrutha Narayanar | Thiru Kadhithanan |
| 71. | Thirukuralappan | Thiruvanar Vilai |
| 72. | Devanathan | Thiruvaheenthipuram |
| 73. | Thiruvikraman | Thirukovalur |
| 74. | Atti Varadarajan | Thirukkachi (Kanchi) |
| 75. | Astabhuja Karathan | Kanchi |
| 76. | Deepaprapakasan | Vilakkoli (Kanchi) |
| 77. | Azhagiya Singer | Thiruvelukai (Kanchi) |
| 78. | Pandava Dhoothar | Thirupadagam (Kanchi) |
| 79. | Jagadisaperumal | Neeragam (Kanchi) |
| 80. | Neelathungal | Thundathan (Kanchi) |
81. Ulugalanda Perumal
82. Yadhokthakari
83. Karunakaran
84. Kalvar
85. Adivarahan
86. Pavalavannan
87. Vaikuta Perumal
88. Vijaya Raghava Perumal
89. Bhakthavatsala Perumal
90. Veera Raghava Perumal
91. Neervannan
92. Nityakalyana Perumal
93. Sthala Sayana Perumal
94. Parthasaradhi
95. Yogananrasimhan
96. Srinivasan
97. Sri Nava Narasimha
98. Chkravarthi Thirumagan
99. Devarajan
100. Sri Murthy
101. Badri Narayanan
102. Neelamegan
103. Paramapurushan
104. Kalyana Narayanan
105. Govardhanan
106. Nava Mohana Krishana
107. Ksheerabdi Nathan
108. Paramapada Nathan

Uragam (Kanchi)
Thiruvveda (Kanchi)
Karakam (Kanchi)
Karavanan (Kanchi)
Kalvanur (Kanchi)
Thirupavalavannan (Kanchi)
Parameswara Vinnagaram (Kanchi)
Thiruputkuzhi
Thiruninravur (near Madras)
Thiruvallur (40 km from Madras) (Madras-Arkonam) (maintained by Ahobila Mutt)
Thirunneermalai (near Madras)
Thiruvividaventhai (near Madras) (on the way to Mahabalipuram)
Mahabalipuram
Thiruvallikeni (Triplicane, Madras)
Sola (Chola) simhapuram, Solangur
Tirupati
(Ahobilam (under Ahobila Mutt))
Thiru Ayothi
Naimisaranyam
Salogramam
Badrinath
Kandamennunkadi Nagar
(Devaprayagai)
Thirupirithi (Nanda Prayagai)
Dwaraka
Vadamadurai
Thiru Ayapadi
Thiruparkadal
Paramapadam
**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Ranga Komanduri is Professor and MOST Chair in Intelligent Manufacturing in the Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma, U.S.A. He is married to Srilakshmi and has two children, Sangeetha Padmavathi and Mukund Ranganath. His main research interests are in the areas of advanced manufacturing processes and materials in which fields he published extensively (some 135 papers in international journals and 21 U.S. Patents). His many awards include the F. W. Taylor Medal of CIRP, ASME Blackall Machine Tool and Gage Award, and Pi Tau Sigma’s Charles Russ Richards Memorial Award of ASME, Fellow of ASME, Fellow of SME, and Member of CIRP.

Of late, he developed a keen interest in the ancient temples of South India, in general, and the 108 Divya Tirupaties, in particular. He was fortunate to have visited some 75 or so, Divya Tirupaties (all of them in the S. India) and the opportunity to pray at the lotus feet of the Lord. His informative publications in this area which will soon be published are the Splendor of Sree Padmanabha Swamy of Thiruvananthapuram (co-author with Her Highness Aswathy Tirunal Gouri Lakshmi Bayi), the Splendor of Sri Bala Krishnam of Tirumala-Tirupati, and the Splendor of Sri Jagannath of Puri.
The Splendor of Nava Nrusimha of Ahobila Kshetram
by Acharya Ranga Komanduri (1998)