



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

SAPTHAGIRI

ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

MAY - 2020 Rs.5/-



*Let us listen to the affluent legend of
Lord Vishnu!*



A view of Kalyanotsavam of Lord Srirama and Sita at Kodanda Ramaswami Temple, Vontimitta. The Ceremony was conducted by the priests in seclusion due to the outbreak of Coronavirus.



BHAGAVADGITA

Aparyaptaṁ tad asmākaṁ
balaṁ bhīṣmābhirakṣitaṁ
Paryāptaṁ tv idam eteṣāṁ
balaṁ bhīṣmābhirakṣitaṁ

(Chapter-1, Sloka-10)

This army of ours, which is protected by Bhishma,
while that army of theirs, guarded by Bhima.



Esha ha devah pradisonu sarvah
Purvo ha jatah sa u garbhe antah
Sa eva jatah sa janishyamanah
Pratyangajanastisthati sarvatomukha

The Lord who is all –
pervading and all – knowing
has no beginning or end. He is
eternal. He is omnipresent
and Omniscient. He manifests
Himself in all forms and in all
directions. Oh! He is one
without a second, paramount
Lord of all.

- Yajurveda

GREETINGS TO ALL !!

- Sri N.Muthuselvam

READERS' VIEWS

I am life-time subscriber of the magazine and have been regularly reading it for the past two years. A true devotee of Lord Venkateswara of Tirumala, the magazine becomes part of our family and everyone always is keen to read it every month with a deep interest. The moral stories published in the magazine have great relevance to our day-to-day life and help handle the difficult situations wisely. Highly informative on the events and happenings in all TTD temples. This gives an immense pleasure for the readers to closely follow the Lord Venkatachalapathy's various incarnations and know about history as well. Useful tips are provided for the devotees as to how they should plan their pilgrimage to Tirupati/Tirumala. Articles related to medical benefits and the General Predictions for the month are exceptional. The editorial page sets the right level of intensity to continue reading the entire magazine. Colourful photos about the visit of VIPs and rituals performed to the deities are a feast to the eyes. Puzzles are always special.

Glad to know about the "SAPTHAGIRI GOLDEN JUBILEE SPECIAL". Fifty years of service is a significant milestone to achieve. I would like to thank each and every one who has supported this important achievement. I wish everyone to continue the great service for many years in the future. Thank you for providing the opportunity to write about the Lord. All the glory to the Lord, Supreme Soul, LORD VENKATACHALAPATHY of Tirumala.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH 'SAPTHAGIRI'

- Sri V. Hariharan

I started subscribing for Sapthagiri Magazine, English from June 2018; I have not missed reading a single issue. Every month beginning I eagerly search for *Sapthagiri* in my mailbox.

Sapthagiri is an encyclopedia of Spirituality. It covers various articles on Vaishnavism, Shaivism, crossword puzzles, astrology as well as various Gods throughout the world. Lucid presentation of articles, colorful depiction of photos and drawings, clear presentation of various *poojas* carried out at various temples and exclusively at Tirumala Temple as well as forthcoming *poojas* make it a reader's delight, unlike other magazines. And *Sapthagiri* is giving wide information regarding facilities provided to the pilgrims and many more.

Wishing the new forthcoming Golden Jubilee issue and the brains behind it all the best.

MY BEST WISHES

- Dr.K.V. Raghubathi

On the eve of *Sapthagiri* celebrating the Golden Jubilee year of its publication, I would like to extend my warm greetings to the employees of the past and present who have directly or indirectly associated with it and contributed their might in sustaining it for such a long time. It is one thing to start a magazine and it is easier, but the most difficult part of it is nurturing it for long without interruption. I understand the employees and the officers must have struggled hard to make it alive without losing their confidence and spirit. I can imagine the amount of effort they must have invested in sustaining it. I congratulate them on their hard work and spirit of service. I hope the magazine will last long with the best cooperation, moral support, and encouragement of the officers at the helm as well as the toiling employees. I have no doubt that the staff would continue to render their service dispassionately without losing the spirit of confidence. My best wishes for its survival for many more years, and I shall not hesitate in invoking the blessings of the Lord Venkateswara without whose benign presence and grace the magazine would not have survived for fifty years.



Venkatadri Samamsthanam
Brahmande nastikinchana



Venkatesa Samo Devo na
Bhuto na Bhavishyati



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Front Cover : Let us listen to the affluent legend of Lord Vishnu

Back Cover : Vengamamba in the vicinity of Lord Venkateswara

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On the Auspicious Occasion of Golden Jubilee of *Sapthagiri*...

Spirituality and worldliness in human life should go hand in hand like the twin bullocks tied to a cart. Only then, life goes on with contentment, peace, and happiness. Man needs to earn money, but at the same time, he needs to comprehend spirituality as well. He needs to have virtues like the love of God and fear of sin. He needs to cultivate love, forbearance, and compassion. He should be able to serve others with love. The best way of life emerges when the worldly affairs and spirituality coalesce in equal proportion like the two wheels of a cart and two wings of a bird. We need a driving force to attain this. No wonder, *Sapthagiri* works towards fulfilling this need.

Sapthagiri tops among a few periodicals which realize the maxim that the end of literature is the welfare of the society. It imprints the miraculous deeds of the Lord of Seven Hills in the hearts of devotees. It makes them feel the endless energy of the Lord behind these letters. The Lord Himself proclaims that He is in the first letter of the alphabet. *Sapthagiri* offers alphabetical worship to the Lord's holy feet on each page as if to vouchsafe it. It has been relentlessly offering the Lord's blessings to the devotees through this for the last fifty years.

Undertaking Tirumala the pilgrimage itself is a spiritual experience. It is bliss and ecstasy. What is unique about Tirumala pilgrims is that they first make vows to the Lord at home and once these vows are fulfilled later they undertake the journey to Tirumala as a token of offering in the form of tonsuring and depositing the saved money in the Hundi by chanting the name of Govinda. As the Lord says, chanting yields liberation in the *Kaliyuga* (*KalouSmaranaanmuktih*). Thus, the Lord of Venkatadri makes the pilgrims cross the ocean of worldly ties. But, we are, after all, human beings and we cannot completely escape the worldly ties. Despite our willingness, it is not easy to get rid of the illusion created by God. Hence, the Lord readily takes it on his shoulders whatever be the difficulties and accompanies them in the form of *Sapthagiri* on their way back home. He impels them to hold *Sapthagiri* and chant his name. That is the Lord's magnificence.

The pictures in *Sapthagiri* make the Lord accessible to us. The scholarly articles make us read the magazine from the first page to the last. The magazine has commanded the respect of the readers for the choice articles published befitting the occasion. The members of staff undertake the work not for the sake of employment but as service at the feet of the Lord. They plunge the devotees in the ocean of Lord's compassion. *Sapthagiri* features quite befittingly the experiences of devotees, suggestions, and guidelines of the officers, solutions to the problems of devotees, guidance for Tirumala tour, services, and *utsavas* offered to the Lord, development activities of the TTD, the specialty of the month, etc. They draw us at once into the magazine from beginning to end.

Sapthagiri is an extraordinary magazine. It is a spring of the Lord's miracles and a stream of the ideas of the devotees.

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The main motto of the spiritual monthly magazine **Sapthagiri** is to imbibe good knowledge of tradition, culture, and practice of *dharma* in the public and motivate them towards the path of spirituality. The role of the magazine published by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams is really unique and has its history.

In order to provide information about the facilities to innumerable devotees coming from all corners of the world for *darshan* of Lord Srinivasa, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) initiated an idea of starting a spiritual magazine called **Sapthagiri** in 1949 and it also aimed at inculcating the *Puranic* and the *Vedic* knowledge in the minds of the of people. Consequently, a pamphlet was published in April 1949 and its name was **Bulletin** of the Devasthanams. At that time it was simply a handout for publicity to spread Sri Venkateswara Seva Programmes along with the transmission of information of the Devasthanams. Later, it was developed with the cooperation of the erudite scholars into a unique spiritual literary magazine to spread its fragrance universally till 1961. The services of Sri Venkateswara Oriental Research Centre located at Tirupati must be remembered here. Many scholars contributed their essays and articles which enhanced the prestige of the



Since January 1970 the Devasthanam has released the magazine in several languages. So it became possible that the magazine was circulated in every nook and cranny of the linguistic regions in the country. So the stable policy of publicity was implemented in a phased manner from 1966 to 1970. For a period of nearly twenty years, from 1949 to 1970, what was started as a **Bulletin** has grown into a full-fledged magazine in 1970. Many significant changes were brought in the evolution of the magazine. In April 1972, its 1/8 demi size was brought into 1/4 crown size. English and Sanskrit languages were given equal space. But in 1975, the English language section was separated from the other five languages so that the regional readers might not feel the burden of the English language in the magazine. By this procedure, the **Sapthagiri** had the scope of early release without depending on the second language when compared to the

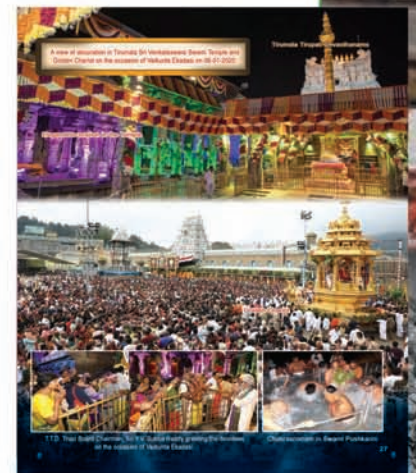


other language magazines. In August 1975, the size of the magazine was changed from 1/4 crown to 1/4 demi.

Day by day, the **Sapthagiri** has gained popularity in many areas with the support and encouragement of its innumerable readers. As a part of it, the Sanskrit version of it was also introduced in April 2014. Since January 2016, the Devasthanams has been publishing it in six languages, namely Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, English, Hindi, and Sanskrit with illustrations in colours. Started with a mere 3,000 copies, it became popular with 2,00,000 copies in circulation. It is gladdening to know that the **Sapthagiri** has become the most popular spiritual magazine by its circulation.

This success cannot be attributed to the efforts of one individual only. There is no doubt that the credit goes to all the successive Executive Officers who worked previously in the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams in their respective periods for the development of the magazine.

Since its inception, the **Sapthagiri** has published innumerable articles related to devotion, religious righteousness, spirituality, pilgrim centers, famous temples, gods and goddesses, philosophies, the devotional ways, the history and finally the *dharmic* and philosophical books for making them available in simple language. Besides, many religious features like the details of *utsavs* performed in Srivari temple and in its affiliated temples, the procedure of rituals and the ways of executing various festivals were given enough space in the magazine. The magazine of the Devasthanam was named **Sapthagiri** symbolizing the seven hills and Lord Sapthagirisa. As one hears the term **Sapthagiri**, one is reminded of *Saptagireesa* and *Sapthagiris*. In the course of time, the society has seen many devotional and spiritual magazines in circulation but the **Sapthagiri** has kept its mark by its richness of the articles and variety. It has given much importance to spirituality from *sista sahitya* to *visista sahitya*. It is regarded as one of the best magazines for providing literary interest and spiritual delight both for children and elders.



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS
SAPTHAGIRI
ILLUSTRATED RELIGIOUS MONTHLY
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AN APPEAL TO DEVOTEES
BWARE OF THIEVES

1. Keep your luggage, valuable things and ornaments carefully.
2. Don't keep your children and old age people to watch the luggage.
3. Don't eat or drink anything like Tea, Coffee, water, cool drinks, biscuits etc offered by the strangers.
4. Your attention may be diverted by throwing Curry, Kugan Nodas in order to steal your valuable things.
5. Don't go away by keeping your cellphones while charging.
6. Don't believe the false words of unknown persons for providing direction, accommodation and provisions saying that you are known person to me.
7. Be careful with your handbags, ornaments etc., while you are travelling in bus at the time of getting in and coming out.
8. Don't take with you the valuable ornaments while going to bath rooms, valuable things must be kept with your relatives or in lockers.
9. Keep your Laddu, Tamsa, Naag, Pottam, Samsara etc., very carefully while in the Q bus at Laddu Courtyard.
10. Be careful with your jewellery by keeping in KTC, Locks.
11. While being bath in Pushkarni, keep your luggage away with women parents.
12. Keep your valuable ornaments carefully while in Sankar Temple, Sankar 'Prasada', in Sankar, in Daran Q bus, at the place of taking Theertham, at much etc. because of heavy influx of pilgrims.
13. The pilgrims are requested to be careful while going to darshan of Lord by keeping your Pottam, Naag, Samsara, Samsara etc.
14. Be alert while in 'Sankar' and other 'Samsara' by keeping your bags and other things safely.
15. Don't keep valuables in cottages, keep the doors closed with the lock, while you are staying in the cottage.
16. Please check the lockers of your bags, before going to the time of departure.

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CHART
ON NARAYANASWAMY

IN FEBRUARY 2020

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati

DO'S AT TIRUMALA

- ✓ Worship your Idola or Kula dajyam before you start for Tirumala
- ✓ Bathe in the Pushkarini and worship Varaha Swami before you go to worship Lord Venkateswara.
- ✓ Observe absolute silence and chant "Om Sri Venkateswara Namah" moustam inside the temple.
- ✓ Respect ancient customs and usages while at Tirumala and promote religious sentiments among co-pilgrims.
- ✓ Deposit your offerings in the Handi only.
- ✓ Keep Tirumala clean, use Bio-degradable plastics.

DON'TS AT TIRUMALA

- ✗ Don't carry much jewelry or cash with you.
- ✗ Don't rush in for darshan but take your chance in the queue.
- ✗ Don't enter the temple, if, according to customs or usage you are prohibited to enter.
- ✗ Don't wear flowers at Tirumala, all flowers are for the Lord only.
- ✗ Don't waste water and electricity.
- ✗ Don't allow strangers into the cottages or hand over keys to them.
- ✗ Don't use non-degradable plastics.
- ✗ Don't wear footwear in the four Mada streets.

HAPPY SANKRANTI to the Readers, Subscribers, Agents.
On this happy and auspicious occasion we invoke the blessings of LORD VENKATESWARA on all and pray for the well-being.

- Chief Editor

PLACES OF INTEREST AT TIRUMALA

SWAMI PUSHKARNI
It is adjacent to the temple and highly sacred. Pilgrims should take bath here before entering the temple. A bath in the holy tank purifies one's body and soul.

AKASA GANGA
This is a waterfall about 3 km. to the north of the temple.

PAPRIVANASAM
This is about 5 km. to the north of the temple.

GEOLOGICAL ARCH (BILATHORANAM)
This rare geological formation is situated 1 km. north of the temple.

T.T.D. GARDENS
The Devasthanams maintain beautiful ornamental gardens with rare species of plants and trees.

It is very delightful to note that the monthly magazine Sapthagiri started in May 2020 is going to complete its Golden Jubilee by the end of this month. In this connection, many remarkable changes have been brought in Sapthagiri from the edition of January, 2020. Today's seeds are tomorrow's trees. The small seed one plants today will become a great tree tomorrow. It is essential that children should grow ethically with humanistic values for the bright future of the country. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has started its stepping activity in this direction to achieve its cherished objective. It has taken a decision to bring out a special supplementary edition with the title 'BALA SAPTHAGIRI' comprising twenty pages for the sake of children every month. The special edition comprises Dasa Sahityam, Alwar Sahityam, Hindu Deities, Balaneethi, Chitra Katha, Quiz, Painting etc., is coming to light in the language suitable for children. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has initiated this supplement to focus on our culture, 'sanatana dharma', 'puranas', the Almighty and on elders and also to inculcate spiritual thoughts and feelings in both boys and girls by providing good understanding in them.

Many poets and writers in their creative writings are playing their vital roles to enrich our spiritual domain in their publications and the impact of these publications on the country is also tremendous. It is beyond doubt that these publications have fulfilled cent percent responsibility in bringing the inner feelings of the writers as they intend to protect the moralistic values like justice and 'dharma' in a great number of people in society. In the present trend of extending modernity also, it is really an achievement that the spiritual publications have won incessant support of the innumerable people to a great extent. It is really a tremendous victory. It is a symbol for the present escalation of our spirituality. It is a known fact that our spiritual publications in our state have come in tens in number and they have transformed our country as a spiritual one. It is beyond doubt that out of all the spiritual publications in the state the highest honour belongs to Sapthagiri published by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams.



ESSENTIAL NATURE OF NARASIMHA AVATHARA

Telugu Original by : Dr. K. Ramakrishna
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Where does God reside? This question has been perturbing the spiritual inquirers for ages on end. Does God stay only in *Vaikuntha*? Then, what about *Kailasa*? If God resides in *Kailasa* or *Brahmaloka*, why is He called omnipresent? If He is all-pervasive, why do we confine him to a few habitations? Such are the doubts that continue to crack our brains.

The emergence of Narasimha is the only answer to all such questions. Where does the trusted God exist? He is there wherever the devotee directs. It does not leave scope for the doubt whether He is here or there. The question of the opportune moment, locale, and time such as morning or evening does not arise. What matters is only one thing. That

is Prahlada's devotion to Narayana filled in each and every atom of his body and mind. Prahlada who visualized the Almighty in each and every particle of Nature alone knows that God is all-pervasive. He has immense trust that God answers his call and comes down. That is why ferocious Narasimha emerged out of the pillar.

Narasimha emerged not merely to kill the demons, but to vindicate the impact of trust in God and meditation upon God as well as the limits to which devotion can reach. This is the aim of Narasimha's incarnation and its essential nature. Narasimha's is distinct from the other incarnations. It demonstrates the omnipresence of God. It establishes Him as the saviour of the distressed devotees. Emerging from the direction pointed out by His devotee, He vindicates the devotee's trust in Him. Thus, He proves that He is subservient to His devotees. Possessed by anger and *tamo guna* like Rudra, Lord Srihari emerges as Narasimha.

Lord Narasimha takes the strange form of half-lion and half-man. Like Lord Shiva, He is also offered evening worship. This is another miracle that establishes the non-duality of Shiva and Vishnu. There are many great souls who meditated upon Him constantly to cross the ocean of worldly life.

It was the generosity of Narasimha that saved Adi Sankara several times. When he was to defeat Ubhaya Bharati in an argument, Sankara transmigrates into the body of a dead king to learn about the worldly life and returns to his half-burnt body. He recites *Narasimha Karaavalamba stotra* on the spot which saves him from the burning injuries. When a *kapaalika* was about to kill him, Padmapadaacharya eulogizes Lord Narasimha who comes down to his rescue by killing the





kapaalika. During his tour to Kashmir when Sankara was poisoned, it was Lord Narasimha who saves him. This is all part of the Lord's miracles. These episodes of Sankara's life establish that the Lord saves his devotees when they just chant His name. There are many such examples.

Annamacharya, *Andhra Pada Kavita Pitamaha*, Tarigonda Vengamamba known for her *madhura bhakti*, Kaivara Tatayya and many others worshipped Narasimha and reached the eternal abode of Lord Venkateswara. A lion's share of Annamacharya *sankirtanas* are on Lord Venkateswara. Narasimha occupies the next place. Annamayya describes beautifully both the furious and the compassionate nature of Narasimha.

The account of *Srinivasa kalyana* testifies to this fact. At the

time of marriage with Padmavathi, Srinivasa takes a loan of the required amount from Kubera, God of Wealth. Brahma and the holy peepal tree act as witnesses to this. The marriage arrangements are made with a lot of fanfare. The marriage feast gets ready. Brahma doubts as to how they can serve food to the guests without offering it to the Lord and considers it a lapse. There is none to clear this doubt. At last, he ventures to pose this question to Srinivasa Himself who replies that there is nothing wrong in offering a feast to the guests as they are invited to the marriage. But, Brahma suspects that saints, as a rule, do not eat the food that is not offered to God. Then Srinivasa declares: "I am in another form as Lord Narasimha in Ahobila. So, you may offer the food to Him first and then serve it to the invitees." Brahma complies with it.

Since then, the practice of worshipping Yoga Narasimha has come into vogue. There are many great sages who worshipped Yoga Narasimha and realized Lord Venkateswara. There is no need for another example to testify to the non-duality of Narayana and Narasimha.

Depiction of Narasimha in Epics:

There are wide references to Lord Narasimha and His incarnation in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the epics. Especially, *Nrisimhataapini Upanishat* describes the essential nature of Narasimha. We come to know through them that the emergence of Narasimha was not merely for the sake of killing Hiranyakashipu. He is the only God who can show both anger and compassion at the same time.

Another unique nature of Narasimha incarnation is that it is a combination of both the aspects of Shiva and Vishnu. The human form of Vishnu, the cause of maintenance, and the lion form of Shiva, the cause of annihilation combined to form Narasimha. This is the indwelling and all-pervasive nature of Narasimha. This is the rarest event of the Lord's emergence in a peculiar form for protecting the world. There is no incarnation like that of Narasimha that pervaded the universe. No other incarnation can compete with it.

The story of Narasimha in *Brahmanda Purana* is different. There is no reference to Prahlada and Hiranya Kashipu's hatred of Vishnu



here. Narasimha emerged accordingly only to relieve the suffering of sages, saints and angels.

Vishnu Purana gives a different account. Though it is closer to the account of Pothana, it ends with Srihari agreeing to Prahlada's request of forgiving his father and Prahlada leading a happy life with his father for some time. Later, Vishnu kills Hiranyakashipu in the guise of Narasimha.

We find the highlights of Narasimha incarnation in the *Puranas* like *Padma*, *Vishnu Dharmottara*, *Skaandha*, *Koorma*, *Linga*, *Matsya*, *Bhagavata*, *Narasimha*, *Harivamsha*. The legend of Narasimha in the *Bhagavata* is popularized through them. Maybe it is due to Potana's scholarship or Goddess Saraswathi's blessings, there is no Telugu man who cannot recite at least a few poems from Prahlada episode. Despite his hostility, Hiranya Kashipu always thinks of and utters the name of Vishnu. Devotee Prahlada may at times get distracted from his Vishnu *bhakti*, but Hiranya Kashipu is always steeped in the hatred of Vishnu and as a result get killed by Narasimha. No wonder Hiranya Kashipu attains heaven after leaving his mortal body. Narasimha grants heaven even to those who hate Him.

The Embodiment of Mantra

Narasimha is not merely an incarnation but an embodiment of *mantra*. The essential nature of Narasimha is described in the *Upanishads* which are at the end of the *Vedas*. The *mantra* of Narasimha's name reveals His essential nature and form as the Supreme Soul. His name is described as "**Ugram, Veeram, Mahavishnum, Jvalantam, Sarvatomukham, Nrusimham, Bheeshanam, Bhadram, Mrutyu mrutyum Namaamyaham.**" It is a *mantra* in the form of His name. Each of His names reveals one of his essential qualities as follows.

Ugram: Narasimha is an embodiment of wrath. This wrath rules all the worlds. It is enough if you listen to the terrible shouts of Narasimha. It results in the destruction of both the internal and external enemies.

Veeram: It is the quality of being the cause of all actions and the actions themselves. As an embodiment of valour, He is to be understood as the form of action and its cause itself.

Mahavishnum: It is a symbol of Narasimha's all-pervasive nature. He dwells in all the creatures of this creation in both manifest and unmanifest forms. It is another significant feature.

Jwalantam: It reveals the Lord's yogic quality. It reveals that Narasimha's splendour shines through all the worlds and all souls. Annamayya also aimed his meditation at Yoga Narasimha Swamy. He courts this *Jwalanta tattva* of the Lord through His *sankirtana*, "*Phaala netraanala prabala vidyullataa Kelee vihara Lakshmi Naarasimha.*"

Sarvatomukham: it is the quality of seeing the entire universe without the aid of any senses. Narasimha faces all around. The Almighty was at the beginning of creation. Later,





He turns into different forms for the maintenance of the world.

Nrusimham: The lion is the best of all creatures. That is why the Almighty has taken the form of the lion in order to uplift the world. The lion lives in the caves of the mountains. Narasimha stays in the caves of the hearts of people.

Bheeshanam: It is the symbol of His ruling power. It is this quality of Narasimha that imparts splendour to the Sun and the Moon and helps the demi-gods to maintain eight directions. It is the most terrible form.

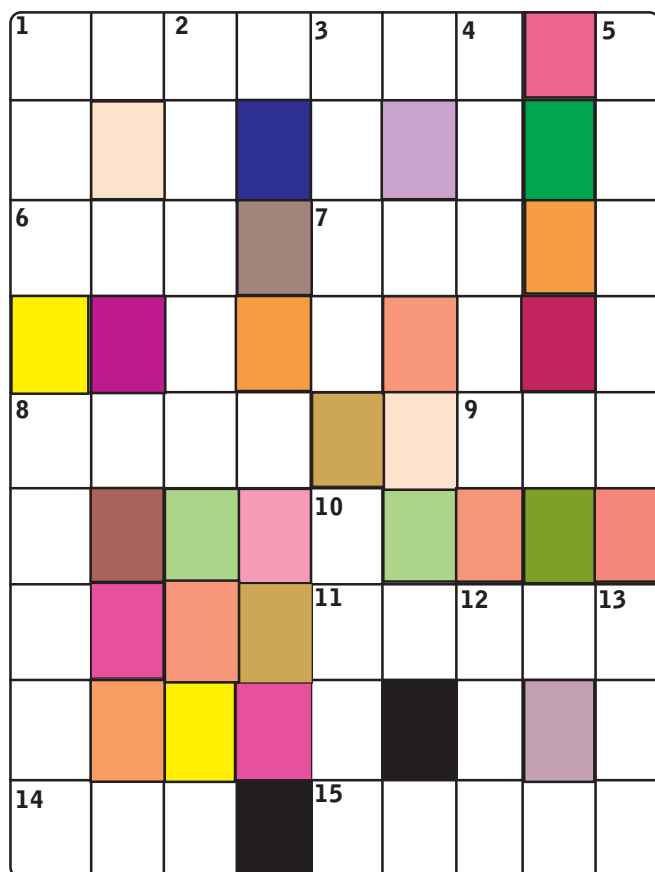
Bhadram: He is the cause of terror as well as fearlessness. It is a different angle of His quality. He assures safety and fearlessness to those who seek His refuge.

Mrutyumrutyum: He drives away untimely death if only you chant His name. He is dead to the God of Death. It is His blessing that causes as well as removes death. It enables self-realization and leads us to immortality.

Though Narasimha is the embodiment of ferociousness, He is full of compassion at heart. His fury is that of a parent for his child. Worship of the peaceful quality of the ferocious God yields all kinds of auspicious results without any let up.



PUZZLE



CLUES FOR PUZZLE

- DOWN**
- 01. Very Stupid (3)
 - 02. Son of Silada (5)
 - 03. Goddess Parvathi (4)
 - 04. Wife of Dhruva (3)
 - 05. Lord Shiva (5)
 - 08. Mother of Bhishma (5)
 - 10. Sister of Yama (4)
 - 12. Help (3)
 - 13. Wheel of Lord Sudarshana (3)

- ACROSS**
- 01. Wife of Bharata (7)
 - 06. A sign of greeting (Right to left) (3)
 - 07. Yes (Informal) (3)
 - 08. Profit (4)
 - 09. Period of time in history (3)
 - 11. Lord Vishnu (5)
 - 14. At once (3)
 - 15. Arjuna (5)

Presented by
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SEVEN HILLS – HANUMAN JAYANTI



On the Occasion of
Hanuman Jayanti
on the sacred
Tirumala Hills.

*Venkatadri Samasthanam Brahmande Nasti Kinchana
Venkatesha Samo Devo Na Bhuto Na Bhavishyati*

It is essential to know the names of the Seven Hills – *Seshadri, Neeladri, Garudadri, Anjanadri, Vrushabadri, Narayanadri, and Venkatadri* – that is the abode of Lord Venkateswara, the famous *Kaliyuga Avatara* of *Sri Mahavishnu* who descended from the *Vaikunta* to protect his devotees. He is the world-famous and richest god and is referred to as *Kaliyuga Prathyaksha Daivam*. This *kshetra* is called *Adivaraha Kshetra*. Here in this Vaishnavite temple, pujas, and worship of God are done according to the *Vaikhanasa Agama Sastras*. The god is also known as *Balaji, Venkatesa, Srinivasa, Govinda*, etc. in the other regions of India.

With regard to the geographical conditions, the hills are at a height of 853 meters (2799 feet from sea level) and the temple has been constructed as per Dravidian Architecture. Here the god is manifested as *Swayambhu Avatara* residing in the sanctum sanctorum.

Goddess Lakshmi stays with him on the left side of his chest, while Padmavathi rests on the right side in a *Vimana Prakaram* called *Ananda Nilayam*. The hills appear to start from the Western Ghats and are spread to the Eastern Ghats in serpent shape, with Srisailam at its head and Tirumala at its tail. The climate is very pleasant with abundant rains during monsoons and cold during winters. There

are rich forests on these hills with a variety of flora and fauna. During summers, due to heat,

the branches of dry trees catch fire easily and so, a lot of wild serpents and different kinds of animals may turn into ashes. Hence, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has taken necessary steps to control the fires when they happen as well as protect the species of animals, whether in the Zoo Parker on the ghat road area by putting fences as much as possible.





According to Hindu Mythology,

*Manojavam Marutatulyavegam
Jitendriyam Buddhimatham Varishtham |
Vatatmajam Vanarayuthamukhyam
Shriramadutham Shirasanamami ||*

Hanuman was born to *Kesari* and *Anjana Devi* with the blessings of Lord Siva. He is also known as the Son of *Vayu (Pavana Puthra)*. People, in large numbers, throng to witness the Hanuman Jayanti festival that happens in this place.

*Om Apadamapa Hataram
Dataram Sarva Sampadam
Loka Bhi Ramam Shri Ramam
Bhuyo Bhuyo Namamayaham*

We find giant and life-size idols of Sri Hanuman at several places, starting from Alipiri footway to the one at the 7th Mile protecting the devotees that walk up the hills to the temple. Several pontiffs belonging to various cults constructed Sri Hanuman temples in various places according to their customs and Dravidian practices, taking into consideration the *Agama Sastras*.

Staunch devotees coming from North India see Hanuman in Sri Venkateswara Swamy and do prayers. Since there is every possibility of a huge crowd coming from all over the world, people belonging to various regions exchange their feelings and cultures, to go back and construct Lord Venkateswara temples in their home towns.

During Mahant's period, *Hathiramji Matham* was constructed opposite to the temple and they worshipped Lord Hanuman in *Bavaji Temple* near *Akasa Ganga* in *Jabali Theertham*. There we can find *Hanuman Chalisa* engraved on a stone in Awadhi language, written by Sri Goswami Tulasi Das.

JaiHanumangyangunsagar
 JaiKapistihunlokujagar || 1 ||
 Ramdootatulitbaldhama
 Anjaani-putraPavansutnama || 2 ||
 MahabirBikramBajrangi
 KumatinivarsumatiKesangi || 3 ||
 Kanchanbaranbirajsubesa
 KananKundaIKunchitKesha || 4 ||
 HathBajraAurDhvajaViraje
 Kaandhemoonjjaneusajai || 5 ||
 SankarsuvankesariNandan
 Tejprataapmahajagbandan || 6 ||
 Bidyavaanguniatichaatur
 Ramkajkaribekoaatur || 7 ||
 Prabhucharitrasunibe-korasiya
 RamLakhanSitamanBasiya || 8 ||
 SukshmaroopdhariSiyahidikhava
 Bikatroopdharilankajarava || 9 ||
 Bhimaroopdhariasursanhare
 Ramachandrakekajsanvare || 10 ||
 LayeSanjivanLakhanJiyaye
 ShriRaghubirHarashiurlaye || 11 ||
 RaghupatiKinhibahutbadai
 TummampriyBharat-hi-sambhai || 12 ||
 Sahasbadantumharojasgaavai
 Asa-kahiShripatikanthlagaavai || 13 ||
 SanakadhikBrahmaadiMuneesa
 Narad-SaradsahitAheesa || 14 ||
 JamaKuberDigpaalJahante
 Kavikovidkahisakekahante || 15 ||
 TumupkarSugreevahinkeenha
 Rammilayerajpaddeenha || 16 ||
 TumharomantraBibheeshanmaana
 LankeshwarBhayeSub jagjana || 17 ||
 JugsahasrajojanparBhanu
 Leelyotahimadhurphaljanu || 18 ||
 Prabhumudrikamelimukhmahee
 Jaladhilanghigayeachrajnahee || 19 ||
 Durgaamkajjagathkejete
 Sugamanugrahatumhretete || 20 ||

Ramduaaretumrakhvare
 Hoatnaagyabinupaisare || 21 ||
 Subsukhlahaetumharisarna
 Tumracchakkahukodarnaa || 22 ||
 Aapantejsamharoapapai
 Teenhonlokhanktekanpai || 23 ||
 BhootpisaachNikatnahinaavai
 Mahavirjabnaamsunavae || 24 ||
 Nasaerogharaesabpeera
 JapatnirantarHanumantbeera || 25 ||
 SankatseHanumanchudavae
 ManKrambachandhyanjolavai || 26 ||
 SabparRamtapasveeraja
 TinkekajsakaITumsaja || 27 ||
 Aurmanorathjokoilavai
 Sohiamitjeevanphalpavai || 28 ||
 Charonjugpartaptumhara
 Haipersidhjagatujiyara || 29 ||
 SadhuSantketumRakhware
 AsurnikandanRamdulhare || 30 ||
 Ashta-sidhinavnidhikedata
 As-baradeenJanakimata || 31 ||
 Ramrasayantumharepasa
 SadarahoRaghupatikedasa || 32 ||
 TumharebhajanRamkopavai
 Janam-janamkedukhbisraavai || 33 ||
 Anth-kaalRaghubarpurjayee
 JahanjanamHari-BakhtKahayee || 34 ||
 AurDevtaChitnadharehi
 Hanumatse hisarvesukhkarehi || 35 ||
 Sankatkate-mitesabpeera
 JosumiraiHanumatBalbeera || 36 ||
 JaiJaiJaiHanumanGosain
 KripaKarahuGurudevkinain || 37 ||
 Josatbarpathkarekahi
 Chutahibandhimahasukhhohi || 38 ||
 JoyahpadhaeHanumanChalisa
 HoyesiddhisaakhiGaureesa || 39 ||
 Tulsidassadharichera
 KeejaiNathHridayemaheindera || 40 ||
 Ends with Doha "Pavanatanayasanakataharana..."





The Rama Bhakta Hanuman gives *darshan* to the devotees coming from Tirupati and Sri Venkateswara Swamy has a liaison deity. He stands opposite to Sri VenkataeswaraSwamy, in *Sannidhi* Street bearing *Sankellu* (iron cuffs). *Anjana Devi*, the mother of Hanuman brought him to this place when he was doing nuisance on *Anjanadri*, and she put *Bedis* to his hands and feet while he was in a standing posture. That is why he is called “*BediAnjaneya Swamy*”. But it is said that during the reign of Mahants, in the year 1841, the *Puri Jagannadha Sampradaya* came to Tirumala “*Bedi AnjaneyaSwamy*”.

This Anjaneya Swamy temple is divided into two parts – “*Mukhamandapam*” and “*Garbhalayam*” and adjacent to the walls the six feet tall *Anjaneya Swamy* idol was consecrated. A single *Kalasa Gopuram* was constructed, and in the four corners of this *gopuram* as *Ananda Nilayam*, lions are carved. Recently a “*Pradakshina Mandapam*” has also been constructed.

Every day, three times after *Naivedyam* to Venkateswara Swamy, the same will be offered to the *Bedi Anjaneya Swamy*. Every Sunday, *Panchamrutha Abhishekam* and *Puja Naivedyam* is offered. Every month on the day of *Punarvasu*, *Sri Sita Rama Lakshmana* deities come in a procession. The *Sesha Arati* that is given to *Sri Sita Rama Lakshmana* will also be given to *Anjaneya Swamy*. A garland worn around the neck is also offered to *Sri Anjaneya Swamy*. On every annual *Brahmotsavam*’s *Garuda Seva* day, the Government of Andhra Pradesh presents silk clothes to *Srivaru* in a procession that starts from this temple.

Jai Sri Ram! Jai Govinda!! Jai Govinda!!!

Telugu Original by :
- Dr. Kota NithyanandaSastry,
- Sri J. Balasubramanyam
English by : Sri D.V.S. Phanindra



LESSON - 3

LET US LEARN SANSKRIT !!

Original in Sanskrit by : -

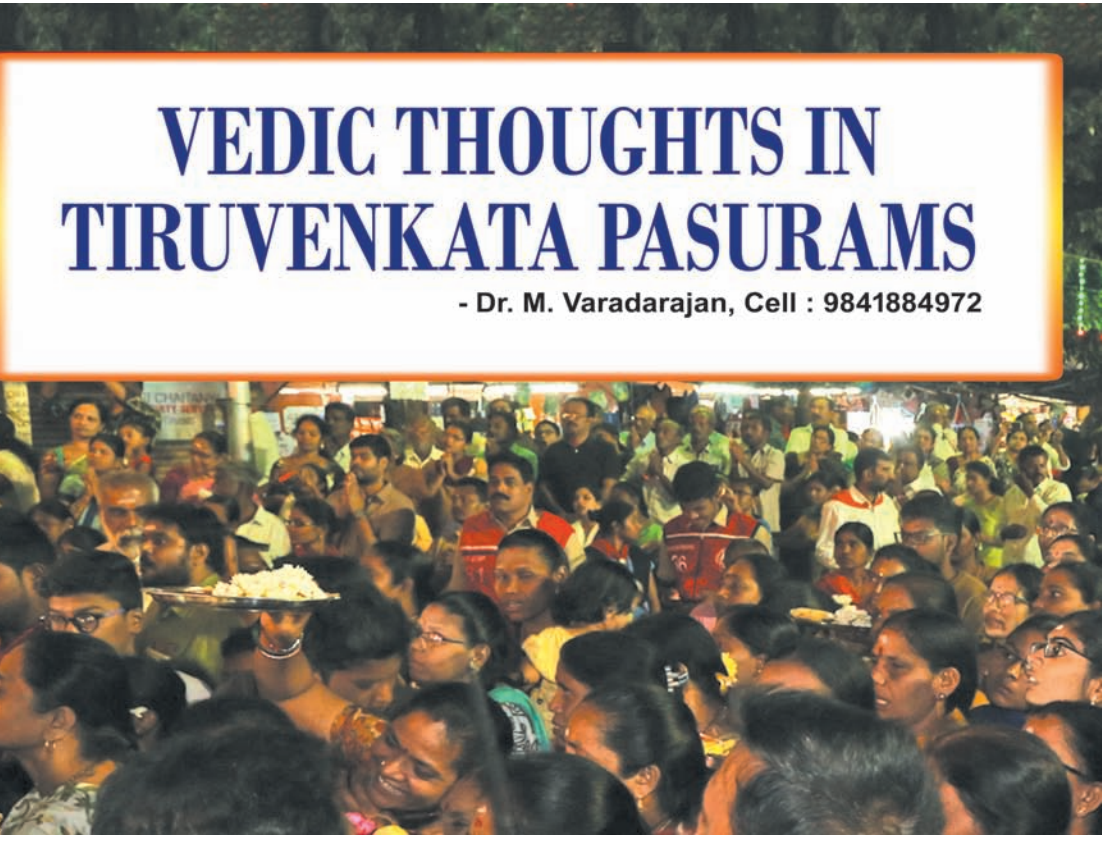
Mahamahopadyaya Samudrala Lakshmanaiah &
Sri Kiran Bhat

Transliterated by : - Dr. K. Sujani, Cell : 9030642050

SANSKRIT	DIACRITICAL SCRIPT
क् + क = क्क	k + ka = kka
क् + ख = क्ख	k + kha = kkha
क् + ट = क्ठ	k + ta = kta
क् + त = क्त	k + ta = kta
क् + थ = क्थ	k + tha = ktha
क् + न = क्न	k + na = kna
क् + प = क्प	k + pa = kpa
क् + म = क्म	k + ma = kma
क् + य = क्य	k + ya = kya
क् + र = क्र	k + ra = kra
क् + ल = क्ल	k + la = kla
क् + व = क्व	k + va = kva
क् + ष = क्श	k + sha = ksha
क् + स = क्स	k + sa = ksa
ख् + थ = ख्थ	kh + tha = khtha
ख् + न = ख्न	kh + na = khna
ख् + प = ख्प	kh + pa = khpa
ख् + य = ख्य	kh + ya = khya
ख् + र = ख्र	kh + ra = khra
ख् + व = ख्व	kh + va = khva
ग् + ग = ग्ग	g + ga = gga
ग् + घ = ग्घ	g + gha = gggha
ग् + द = ग्द	g + da = gda
ग् + ध = ग्ध	g + dha = gdha
ग् + न = ग्न	g + na = gna
ग् + ब = ग्ब	g + ba = gba
ग् + भ = ग्भ	g + bha = gbha
ग् + म = ग्म	g + ma = gma
ग् + य = ग्य	g + ya = gya
ग् + र = ग्र	g + ra = gra
ग् + ल = ग्ल	g + la = gla
ग् + व = ग्व	g + va = gva

VEDIC THOUGHTS IN TIRUVENKATA PASURAMS

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The Vedas, which are divided broadly into *Purva* and *Uttara Kandas*, are mainly concerned with four *Purusharthas* - *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksha*. The *Purva Kanda* deals with the first three *purusharthas* while the *Uttara Kanda* speaks about *Moksha*. The *Uttara Kanda* is the concluding parts of the Vedas, otherwise called *Upanishad* or *Vedanta*.

The contribution of Nammlavar to the development of Vedanta is profound and significant. It was at the beginning of this *Kaliyuga*, Nammalvar revealed the doctrine of Vedanta in his monumental work in chaste Tamil, *Tiruvoymozhi*, also known as *Dravida Veda*. Vedanta Desika rightly points out in his *Sankalpa Suryodaya* that Nammalvar was the propagator of the *Vedanta* doctrines at the beginning of *Kaliyuga*. Alagiyamanavalapperumal Nayanar also established the equal status of *Tiruvoymozhi* with that of the Vedas as it carries the essence of *Vedanta* in his treatise called *Acharya Hridayam*.

Nammalvar's *Tiruvoymozhi* is *magnum opus*. The philosophies of *Vedanta* are concealed as a hidden treasure in *Tiruvoymozhi*. Srīman

Nathamunigal in his opening Sanskrit version for *Tiruvoymozhi* hailed it as the ocean of Tamil Veda in which the Upanishads of the thousand branches flow together.

It was only during the period of Sri Ramanuja, the philosophy of Nammalvar was unearthed through his disciple Tirukkurukaipiran Pillan to write a commentary for *Tiruvoymozhi*. Following him, Nanjeeyar, Vadakkuththiruveedhippillai, Periyavachchan Pillai and Vadikesari Alagiya Manavala Jeeyar wrote commentaries for *Tiruvoymozhi* which brings out the Vedic truths.

When one looks into the commentaries of above *Acharyas* for *Tiruvoymozhi*, there were umpteen Vedic quotations influenced by *Acharyas* in their commentaries either for analyzing the nature of the Supreme Being or for *Archa* form of Lord in *Divya Desas*.

In this text, Tirumala, being the second *Divya Desa* and also Nammalvar did *Saranagathi* at the feet of Lord Srinivasa, there were a number of *Upanishadic* content scattered in the *Pasurams* pertaining to Lord Srinivasa in *Tiruvoymozhi*.



Nammalvar's Unquenched Bhakti on Lord Srinivasa:

In the third century third decade of *Tiruvaymozhi* Introduction, Nammalvar seeks to do timeless unblemished service [*kainkarya*] to Lord Srinivasa without break. Even if one goes to *Srivaikunta*, he has to experience in the attributes of the Supreme Being. This is well stated in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* “*So asnuthe Sarvan Kaman*” which means that the *Mukta* enjoys all desirable things along with the omniscient Brahman when he reaches *Srivaikunta*. Quoting this version, Nampillai says that the enjoyment mentioned in the *Upanishad* above is akin to Lord Srinivasa and even the *Nityasuris* also visit Tirumala to do service. He also said that one who is hungry and has food with him to consume, when he spots a suitable place where water is available with ample shadow, then his hunger is aggravated. Likewise, Alwar also desired to do service in Tirumala.

Nammalvar felt very much to do service for all times, including the days already gone by saying (3-3-1), “*Ozhivil kalamellam vudanay manni vazhuvila adimai seyya vendum nam*”. Here, Nampillai beautifully explains that there is no question of getting back the days already gone and only to forget the earlier days sufferings not knowing to one only by going to *Srivaikunta* as said in the *Chandokya Upanishad* “*Nopajanam smaran*” which means He, who behaves thus all his life through, reaches the world of *Brahman* and does not return i.e. having obtained Him great men do not take rebirth. Hence, Alwar with enthusiasm says *Ozhivil Kalam* which means that to do service at all times. Nampillai, here mentions an incident held in Srirangam. Once Tiruvarankapperumal Areyar, an Acharya for Sri Ramanuja, recited this song *Ozhil*

Kalam before Lord Ranganatha in Srirangam and while reciting the first line of the hymn, he went into a trance and kept on repeating the first line *Ozhivil Kalam Ellam...Ozhivil Kalam Ellam...* Actually, he had got into the frame of mind of Alwar himself, whose *bhakti* is great.

Supremacy of Lord Srinivasa

In the second *Pasuram* “*Entai tantai tantai tantaikkum muntai*” Alwar says that our great forefathers first and foremost inhabited in Tirumala, where the celestial gods visit from *Srivaikunta* to do unfailing service. While narrating the hymn, Nampillai establishes the supremacy of Lord Srinivasa, by quoting the verse from the *Svethasvatara Upanishad* (6-7) “*thamesvaranam paramam maheswaram*” which means the Supreme Being is the highest and greatest Lord of all Lords. Manavala Mamunigal further add the version of this *Upanishad* “*tham devathanam paramamcha daivathaml pathim pathinam paramam parasthadvidama devam bhuvanesameedyam*” which means “He is the highest deity of deities, the master of masters, the highest above the god, the lord of the world, the adorable one”. So, for this hymn, *Acharyas* establish Lord Srinivasa's supremacy.

Attribute of Lord Srinivasa

In the fourth *Pasuram* “*Esan vanavarkkanban endral*”, Alwar says that the Lord in Tirumala has a unique attribute of making Himself accessible to the lowly and downtrodden people, to the rural forest people and the wandering family to which class Nammalvar belong, having no merit with which He has shown a charming love towards Alwar. Here, Nampillai says that Lord Srinivasa has so much of love towards Alwar than *Nitya Suries*, to whom He is like giving priority only for their existence in *Srivaikunta* as said in *Purushasukta* “*Yatra Poorve sadhya santi devaha*”.

Beauty of Lord Srinivasa

In the fifth *Pasuram* “*sodiyagi ella vulakum thozhum...*” Vadikesari Jeeyar in his commentary says that Lord Srinivasa is none other than the Supreme Being, who Himself is bliss in the words “*Aanando Brahma*” and “*Raso vai saha*” as said in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. It means that Lord Srinivasa is the nectarine essence of all Vedas which describe Him as the pleasant (Rasa) in the words of Alwar “*Vediyar Muzhuvedaththu amudam*”. Here, for the word *sodiyagi*, Nampillai narrates that the *Divya Mangala Vighraha* of Lord Srinivasa is bountiful with a bright appearance. Lord Srinivasa is in supreme effulgence, the prime deity of the whole universe. Nampillai refers that His *Divya Mangala Vighraha* as explained in Narayana *anuvakam* (13-2) i.e. *neelathoyada madhyastha* which means that He is abundantly bright. It is shining like a flash of lightning in the middle of the darkish blue rainy season cloud which is dark-hued displaying the gold-colored Consort on His chest and at the same time He is *pithabha* which means a class of sun rays creating snow. This is highlighted by Sri Ramanuja in *Vedantha Sangraha* and to quote - “*seyam daharapundareeka madhyasthakasavarthinee....*” that this flame of fire which is in ether of the small lotus (of the heart), in the middle of it, the form of the Supreme Being shining like a black cloud and resembles, therefore, lightning which has within it a black cloud. Such lightning is enveloped in the *Divya Mangala Vighraha*. In other words, Nampillai says that the *Divya Mangala Vighraha* is enveloped by such a *pitavarna*. Nampillai refers to the verses of Narayana *anuvakam*, which is elaborately discussed by Manavala Mamunigal for this *Pasuram*.

Lord Srinivasa, as a Cause of Universe

Nammalvar says Lord Srinivasa is *Adi Moorthy* (3.3.1) which means that He is cause for all sentient and non-sentient beings. This is being

explained by Nampillai in the following *Taittiriya Upanishad* Bhrguvalli verse ((1.1) - Out of which all these creatures are born, being born by which they live, and again having departed into which they enter, seek to know that, that is Brahman. Lord Srinivasa is a shelter of those surrendered. He further says that such a deity is *yato vacho nivarthanthe – aparpya manasa saha* (*Taittiriya Upanishad* Anandavall 4.1) which means that from which mind and speech turn away unable to reach with its capacity; that is Brahman. Further Nampillai refers to the *Bhagavat Gita* (15-15) verse i.e. *vedaischa ahameva vedyaha* which means that He is the only one that is to be realized by all the Vedas. He possesses the attribute of *Ananda*, as said in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* Bhrguvalli (6) *aanando Brahma* *vyajanath* which means that Bliss is *Brahman*, from the Bliss these creatures are verily born; having been born; they live by bliss and having departed they enter into bliss again.





Lord Srinivasa – An Eradicator of Sins

In the sixth Pasuram “*vem katankal meymel vinai muttravum*”

Alwar says that by pronouncing “*Venkatesaya namah*”, our past sins just get burnt in this act of chanting the mantra and those yet to come will not in any manner clutch to one. Nampillai quoting *Yajur Veda* verse (6.3.1) “*thribir runabha jayathe brahmacharyena rushibyo yajnena devobhyaha prajaya pithrubhya esha va anrunaha*” which means that anyone is born involved in three debts, namely, he owes brahmacharya to sages, sacrifices to gods and progeny to *pitrs*. That is, a person pays his three spiritual debts with which he is born in the following ways — by the study of the ancient lore, by sacrifices and by begetting children. This statement is well explained by Sri Ramanuja in a *Vedantic* way. This is delightfully explained by Nampillai by quoting Sri Ramanuja’s *Sri Bhashya. The Brahma Sutra* (4.1.13) which says on the attainment

of meditation, there results in the non-clinging and the destruction of future and past sins; this being declared in the version “*thadadigama uttarapurvagayoraslesha vinasow tadvyapadesath*”. To establish the Sutra, Sri Ramanuja says in *Sri Bhashya* that on the knowledge of *Brahman* being attained, a man’s future and past sins do not cling to him but just pass away. The *Chandokya Upanishad* (4.4.23) says that as water does not cling to a lotus leaf, so no evil deed clings on to him who knows this and the same *Upanishad* (5.24.3) says that as the fibers of the upper part of the reed (*Isheeka*), when thrown into the fire, are burnt, thus all his sins are burnt. In this way, Lord Srinivasa will wipe out all sins to his devotees when one utters “*Venkatesaya Namaha*”. Such is the greatness of deity.

Tirumala Grants Liberation

In the seventh Pasuram “*sumandu mamalar neer sudar...saman kol veedu tharum.*”, Alwar says that Tirumala, the abode of Lord Srinivasa, where Nitya Suris like Vishvaksena visits daily to pay their obeisance through flowers, fragrant water, *deepa harati*, *fragrant dhoopa* etc., worshipping in the prescribed manner will grant us blissful liberation. Nampillai explaining this hymn quotes *Mundaka Upanishad* verse (3.1.3) “*yada pasyaha pasyathe....paramam samyam upaithi*” which means that when *bhaktha* witnesses the Lord, then resultantly possessing perfect knowledge, he shakes off fruits of his good deeds and his sins, freed from all passions he attains the equality, which means 7 out of 8 attributes of Lord (free from evil, free from old age, free from death, free from grief, free from hunger and thirst, whose wishes and purposes come true) will be acquired by him except the primary “*Satya Sankalpa*” which is the exclusive possession of Lord alone. The *Chandogya* concurs on this where it states the *jeevaathma* shrugs off the dirty chamber [his body] with which he’s born and enjoys the unison with the Lord.

The current context of *Vedic* thoughts confined to the 3rd Centum 3rd decade of *Thiruvaymozhi* is but a drop in the nectarine ocean of numerous *Vedic* thoughts brought our succinctly by the commentators spread across the entire text of *Thiruvaymozhi*.





THE PATH OF SURRENDER: SRI VAISHNAVISM'S GIFT TO HUMANITY

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Chastiser of evil folk, O Narasimha,
One who chases away all our sorrows!"¹
(¹ Translated by Prema Nandakumar)

The early Bhagavatha tradition that seeks such direct contact with the Supreme through surrender has been traced back to Vedic times. A Bhagavata is said to be one who worships the supreme (Bhagavan) who has superb qualities (*bhaga*) that defy description. It may be impossible to enumerate all the qualities of the supreme or represent them in painting or sculpture. The devotee is drawn to any or many of these aspects and immerses himself in their glory. Thus, an unseen bridge is formed between Bhagavan (the Supreme with magnificent qualities) and the Bhagavata (the devotee who adores the form of the Supreme). Hence, the Bhagavata tradition may be described as the origin of Theism in religions and philosophy belonging to the Vedic stream. Since the earliest deity to be worshipped seems to have been Vasudeva-Krishna of the Vrishni clan, the association of Krishna with the cowherd clans of Brindavan may have given a widespread following to the cult.² (² See the famous 'Aychiar Kuravai', the dance of the cowherdresses with Krishna re-enacted in a Madurai suburb in the 2nd century Tamil epic, Silappadhikaram.)

Centuries sped by and the Bhagavata cult grew richer with the addition of other significant names like Narayana and Vishnu; the emergence of the Bhakti Movement of the Alvars made complete devotion and surrender to the Supreme become the life divine for innumerable devotees all over the land. Each one of them has portrayed the act of surrender in various ways. Kulasekara Alvar has a memorable decad on how there is no other way than saranagati to the Divine, even when one finds oneself in a hopeless situation. His brilliant similes to describe the mood of surrender fascinated Sri Aurobindo and he translated them more than a hundred years ago.

The jivatman is like the child which yet looks up to its mother and cries, though chased away by her; like the citizen who hopes for loving guardianship from a tyrant, like the lotus that opens only to the rays of the sun, like the rivers that have only the ocean as their final refuge. Indeed the jivatman is like the bird that had perched upon the mast of a ship anchored at a port. Come daylight, and the port had vanished. The ship was now sailing the

The unique path of surrender advocated by Srivaishnavism has a hoary history. Wherever man believes in the supremacy of a power above that is beyond his understanding, he realises that surrender is the only way to achieve the calm of mind, setting aside all his passions, tribulations, love and hate. The concept of total surrender has been expressed by man in innumerable ways. As little children in Andhra areas, have we not learnt the immortal lines on surrender by Seshappa Kavi in his Narasimha Satakamu? *Kaapaadinanu neeve, kashtabattinanu neeve!*

"O lord of Lakshmi! Forgive me my mad ways.
Whether you guard me or put me through difficulties,
I have firm faith only in your lotus-like feet twain
Kindly grant me immediately unfading devotion
To your feet which rival full-blown lotuses.
Bejewelled Resident of Dharmapuri,



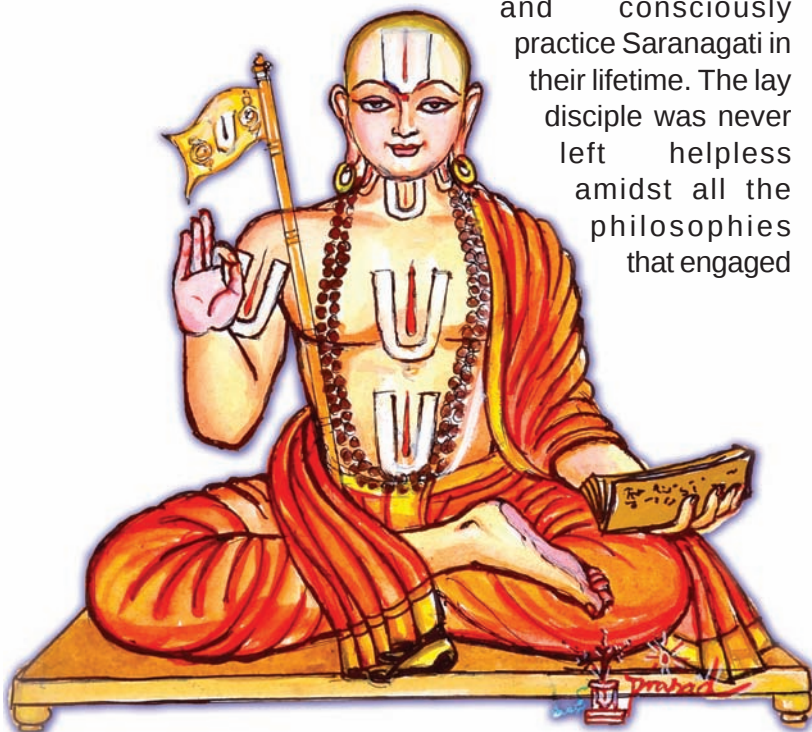
high seas. The bird repeatedly flew around but could see only water all over the place. It had to get back to the masthead for sanctuary, and Sri Aurobindo conveys the image in his simple, literal translation:

“O Lord of the City of the wise, who didst slay the strong and cruel Beast, ah, where shall I fly for refuge if I leave thy feet? On the tossing sea the bird leaves the mast of the ship, he flies to all sides but no shore is visible, and he again returns to the mast. I am like that bird.”³ (3 V, v.)

When Sri Ramanuja (1017-1137) appeared on the scene and strove to give a firm habitation and name to the path of surrender, the Saranagati Sastra was born.

Sri Ramanuja was deeply immersed in Sanskrit scriptures like the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the itihisas, Valmiki's Ramayana and Vyasa's Mahabharata. He was also a master of the works of the Alvars and the Acharyas like Nathamuni and Yamunacharya. He was able to churn the entire sacral literature of his time to give us the concept of Ubhaya Vedanta which gives equal importance to scriptures in Sanskrit and Tamil. Philosophical enquiry was coupled with the poetic images of Tamil hymnology to help the disciples understand, accept

and consciously practice Saranagati in their lifetime. The lay disciple was never left helpless amidst all the philosophies that engaged



themselves with a variety of perceptions about Reality: Advaita, Visishtadvaita, Dvaita, the Aajeevaka vaada, and other approaches to a philosophical understanding of man and his place in this creation. As a rich background to all this, Sri Ramanuja and other teachers, scholars and commentators of the Visishtadvaita philosophy never failed to invoke the rich areas of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Vishnu Purana. In this regard, three verses are cited to describe how surrender is to be done for total guardianship from the Divine. The best known of them occurs towards the end in the Bhagavad Gita:

“Sarva dharmaan parityajya maam ekam saranam vraja

Aham thvaam sarva paapebhyo mokshayishyaami maa suchah.”

“Completely relinquishing all Dharmas, seek Me alone for refuge. I will release you from all sins. Grieve not.”⁴ (4 Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 18, verse 66)

Sri Ramanuja's commentary on the Bhagavad Gita closely follows Yamunacharya's Gitārtha Sangraha. Thus, Yamunacharya in the penultimate chapter of his work says:

“Looking upon all disciplines from performance of duties to the practice of Bhakti as meant only for pleasing the Lord and not with any extraneous motive, one should abandon all dependence on any other means than Him (the Supreme Person), and remain without any fear of inadequacy of such resignation in respect of his salvation.”⁵ (5Translated by Swami Adidevananda)

Sri Ramanuja's commentary takes us further into the sun-belts of saranagati. The very opening is a magnificent paen to the Lord and Lakshmi, for, in effect, we always surrender to them as a Two-in-One vision: “He is the Beloved of Sri, whose eternal and impeccable nature, attributes, glory, sovereignty and virtues, unsurpassed and countless, are all agreeable and worthy of Him”.

Ramanuja makes it obvious that Sri pervades the Lord as the Lord pervades Sri. She

is infinite and Supreme as the Lord. She is (Vibhu, Ishwari). Quickly the Acharya brings us to the subject. Having created the worlds, now the Lord has a maternal anxiety about his creation. That is why He incarnated now and then to put us on the right path of devotion and surrender.

If **Sri Bhashya** places before us the supreme value of bhakti yoga, and the **Gita Bhashya** concludes with prapatti yoga (signified by the charama sloka), the **Saranagati Gadya** describes how we should make a total, integral surrender of our entire being, every plane of our consciousness and every movement in our life and thoughts to Mother Lakshmi and the Lord. What we see here is not a concept but the actual 'anubhava', the experience of calling upon Lakshmi to mediate on behalf of the devotee, and make his surrender perfect:

"May my sincere and faithful saranagati at the lotus like feet of Bhagavan be continuous and unending – saranagati performed with the longing to obtain (the privilege of) eternal service to Him which is of the nature of finding (my) sole joy in rendering all forms of service appropriate to all states and situations and which is stimulated by unlimited and unsurpassed love arising from the boundless and unsurpassed delight in the full, continuous, eternal and extremely pure enjoyment of Bhagavan, than which it seeks no other gain and is the result of para bhakti, para jnana and parama exclusively and eternally displayed towards the two lotus-like feet of Bhagavan which are the supreme goal to be desired."⁶ (Translated by M.R. Rajagopala Iyengar)

If the Lord asks Arjuna to surrender to him for total guardianship, the Sri Vaishnavas are also greatly attached to the 'charama sloka' in the Ramayana. In the Yuddha Kanda, Vibhishana leaves Lanka and comes to Sri Rama and sends word to him that he is surrendering and prays for guardianship. Sugriva is not quite happy. How can one have faith in the family of one's enemy? Sri Rama, however, is not worried whether it is an enemy or friend. A person has come for succour, seeking refuge. Whoever he be, Rama's firm decision is to help him.

Sakrudeva Prapannaya Tavaasmeeti cha Yachate

Abhayam Sarva Bhutebhyo Dadaami Etat Vratam Mama.

"If a person surrenders to me even once, and seeks refuge in me for protection, I will guard him from all others. Such is my vow."⁷ (Yuddha Kanda, chapter 18, verse 33)

Assuring protection to one who surrenders marks a wider presence in this assurance. What if he be one's disciple (like Arjuna) or hails from the enemy's ranks? If a person needs protection, it must be assured immediately and not deny him or even keep him waiting in the wings. One cannot assign degrees in the quality of assurance given by Krishna or Rama. They are all avatars and do

as the situation warrants it. It is an assurance to us that the Divine will never forsake us.



The third great verse hailed as the Varaha Charama Sloka gives an answer to several questions that assail man as he looks around for a never-failing protector, assailed as he is by the turbulence of living on earth. But what happens, if one has failed to surrender to the Lord when he was alive? And when he wants to, he may be sick and speechless and lie like a block of wood, unable to move even his hands in a gesture of Anjali, representing the act of surrender?

If the Gita and Ramayana charama slokas were uttered in





battlefields, the occasion for the Varaha charama sloka was due to Bhu Devi's compassionate words for earth's children. In essence, the compassion of the Supreme is limitless, it is beyond even devotion

or antima smriti (remembering at the very last breath of one's lifetime). She asks the Lord (in his Varaha Avatara) for an even easier way of gaining the Lord's assurance of guardianship. For the maternal heart knows very well the million weaknesses of her child, and yet she is compassion incarnate, a Daya Devi. A child may turn away but never will the mother desert her child. So we have the third charama sloka which tugs at our heart; in fact, this is an interlinked double-couplet:

sthithE manasi susvasthE sarIrE sathi yO nara:
dhAthusAmyE sthithE smarthA visvarUpam cha
maamajam (1)

tathastham mriyamANam thu kAshtA paashaNa
sannibham

aham smarAmi madh bhaktham nayAmi
paramAm gathim (2)

Oh Bhumi Devi! Once my devotees remember me with devotion as the Universal Lord who is always present, I remember them in their last moments, even whether they are conscious or unconscious as a block of wood, and myself lead my devotee to the supreme Abode."

Thus, the oceanic compassion of Mother Bhu Devi made the Lord reveal the karuna in His heart for earth's children.

The Acharyas of Srivaishnavism from Nathamuni onwards have gifted certain concepts almost exclusive to this creed which act variously to enthuse, to discipline and help the aspirant keep on to the right path to gain moksha. The aspirant is called "Mumukshu" since his desire is Moksha. A few of them, directly referring to Saranagati are as follows.

1. Artha-Panchakam

The aspirant should realize the following as experiences:

1. "I am the atma (jeevatma. Individual soul), not the deha (body)".
2. Narayana is the Supreme Lord.

3. Experiencing the Divine is my goal..
4. Bhakti, Prapatti are the way to gain this realization.
5. Ignorance is the impediment that prevents us from reaching this goal. comes

2. The Five ways of Envisioning the Supreme

Srivaishnavism speaks of five forms of the Supreme: Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Antaryami and Archa. In the **Para** form, Narayana is seen in his supreme abode, described by Sri Ramanuja in his Sri Vaikunta Gadya; however, the mortal eye cannot behold this form. In **Vyuha**, his innumerable auspicious qualities like Strength and energy get crystallized as Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. Again, the Lord can only be felt as a presence when we come across such powers. The Lord's incarnations are the **Vibhava** form. Only those who are contemporaneous to an avatar can see him. The citizens of Ayodhya could see Rama avatara; the people of Gokula could move around with the Krishna avatara. The **Antaryami** resides in the lotus of the heart. One has to meditate deeply and realize the Divine within and come face to face with the Lord. This again is no easy task for the human being who is constantly buffeted in the ocean of earthly life. Because of all this, the compassionate Lord has decided to come down and stay in the **Archa** form visualized by the devotee. A consecrated icon becomes a living presence for the devotee. Such iconisation has led to the multi-foliate flowering of temple culture in India.

3. Prapatti

Having chosen the way of prapatti, here are the instructions of Srivaishnavism:

- a. *Aanukulyasankalpam*: Do only what pleases the Lord;
- b. *Praatikulya varjanam* Do not do what is displeasing to the Lord;
- c. *Kaarpanyam*: Feel utterly humble and helpless because he cannot perform the detailed system of bhakti yoga;
- d. *Maha Visvasam* : Absolute faith in the Lord and the scriptures gifted by Him
- e. *Goptrutva varanam*: Pray to the Lord for guardianship.





Srimad Anjaneya Ashtothara Satanamavali

Srimad Anjaneya Ashtothara Satanamavali

Om Anjaneyaya Namah

Om Mahaveeraya Namah
Om Hanumate Namah
Om Marutatmajaya Namah
Om Tatvagnanapradaya Namah
Om Sita Devi Mudhrapradayakaya Namah
Om Ashokavanikaachetre Namah
Om Sarvamayavibhamjanaya Namah
Om Sarvabandavimokthre Namah
Om Rakshovidhvamsakarakaya Namah (10)

Om Paravidhyaparihatre Namah

Om Parashouryavinashanaya Namah
Om Paramamtraniraakaaryai Namah
Om Parayantrapravedakaaya Namah
Om Sarwagrahavinaashakaaya Namah
Om Bhimasenasahayakrute Namah
Om Sarwadukhaharaaya Namah
Om Sarwalokachaarine Namah
Om Manojayaaya Namah
Om Paarijaata drumulasthaaya Namah (20)

Om Sarwamantraswarupavathe Namah

Om Sarwatantraswarupine Namah
Om Sarwayantratmikaaya Namah
Om Kapeeshwaraaya Namah
Om Mahakaayaaya Namah
Om Sarwarogaharaaya Namah
Om Prabhava Namah
Om Balasiddhikaraaya Namah
Om Sarwavidyasampatpradaayakaaya Namah
Om Kapisenaanaayakaaya Namah (30)

Om Bhavishyachaturaananaaya Namah

Om Kumaarabrahmachaarine Namah
Om Ratnakundaladeeptimate Namah
Om Chanchaladwalasannaddwalamba
maana shikhojwalaaya Namah
Om Gandharwavidyatatwagnaya Namah
Om Mahabalaparaakramaaya Namah
Om Kaaraagruhavimokte Namah
Om Shrukhalabandhamochakaaya Namah
Om Saagarothaarakaaya Namah
Om Praagnahaaya Namah (40)

Om Raamadhutaaya Namah

Om Prataapavate Namah
Om Vaanaraaya Namah
Om Kesareesunave Namah
Om Seetaashokanivaaranaaya Namah
Om Anjanaagarbhasambhutaaya Namah
Om Baalaarkasadrushaananaaya Namah
Om Vibhishanapriyakaraaya Namah
Om Dhasagreevakulaamtakaaya Namah
Om Lakshamanapraanadhaathre Namah (50)

Om Vajrakaayaaya Namah

Om Mahadyutaye Namah
Om Chiranjeevine Namah
Om Raamabhaktaaya Namah
Om Daityakaaryavighaatakaaya Namah
Om Akshahamtre Namah
Om Kaanchanaabhaaya Namah
Om Panchavaktaaya Namah
Om Mahatapase Namah
Om Lamkhineebhamjanaaya Namah (60)

Om Srimate Namah

Om Simhikapraanabhamjanaaya Namah
 Om Gandhamaadanasaithyaya Namah
 Om Lankaapuravidaahakaaya Namah
 Om Sugrivasachivaaya Namah
 Om Dheeraaya Namah
 Om Shuraaya Namah
 Om Daityakulaantakaaya Namah
 Om Suraarchitaaya Namah
 Om Mahatejase Namah (70)

Om Ramachudaamanipradaaya Namah

Om Kaamarupine Namah
 Om Pingalaakshaaya Namah
 Om Vardhimainaakapujitaaya Namah
 Om Kabalikrutamaartaandamandalaaya Namah
 Om Vijitendriyaaya Namah
 Om Ramasugrivasamdhaatre Namah
 Om Mahiraavanamardhanaaya Namah
 Om Spatikaabhaaya Namah
 Om Vaagdhishaaya Namah (80)

Om Navavyaakrutipanditaaya Namah

Om Chaturbhahave Namah
 Om Deenabandhave Namah
 Om Mahaatmane Namah
 Om Bhakthavatsalaaya Namah
 Om Sanjeevananagaahartre Namah
 Om Shuchaye Namah
 Om Vaagimane Namah
 Om Drudavrataaya Namah
 Om Kaalanemipramathanaaya Namah (90)

Om Harimarkata markataaya Namah

Om Daantaaya Namah
 Om Shaantaaya Namah
 Om Prasanaatmane Namah
 Om Dhashakantamadaapahaaya Namah
 Om Yogine Namah
 Om Raamakathaalolaaya Namah
 Om Seetaanveshanapanditaaya Namah
 Om Vajradamstraaya Namah
 Om Vajranakhaaya Namah (100)

Om Rudhraveeryasamudbhavaaya Namah

Om Indhrajitprahitaamogha brahmastravi
 nivartakaaya Namah
 Om Paarthadhwaajaagrasamvaasaaya Namah
 Om Sharapanjarahelakaaya Namah
 Om Dasabhaahave Namah
 Om Lokapujaaya Namah
 Om Jaambavatprativardhanaaya Namah
 Om Seetaasameta sreeraamapaadasevaa
 Duramdharmaaya Namah (108)

|| Eti Srimad Anjaneya Ashtothara
 Shatanamavali Samaptham ||





**A view of Sri Srinivasa
Shantyotsava sahita Dhanvantari
Mahayagam and Srinivasa
Vedamantra Arogya Japa Yagnam
conducted by the TTD with the noble
purpose of protecting the humanity
from the Corona pandemic.**



MANAKULAVINAYAGAR TEMPLE – PONDICHERRY

Every temple is a place of great importance and it forms the very crux of almost every pious Hindu's existence. As everything is done with the blessings of the Lord, the Hindus invariably go to temples to offer their prayers.

There was a time when temples played multi-purpose roles in the life of the people. Apart from a place of worship, a temple was also a court of law, a center for distributing medicine, a school where education was given free of cost to the privileged few and also a yoga-practicing hall.

A consolation center for bereaved souls and a saviour of folk arts, the temple also played the role of a provision hub during the time of famine. It was also a museum of architecture and paintings.

Seeking the blessing of the Lord in a temple is a custom in our land. The Lord's blessing can be sought only through prayer. Knock and it shall open. Ask and it will be given. The blessing people receive from the Lord is not only meant for that day but all the days to come.

People pray to God saluting Him all the time with their palms joined together. It symbolically means that they are together; they think alike; their vibrations are in harmony with each other. The action denotes the recognition of soul and soul force.

Dharma Shastras have devised certain codes of conduct in saluting others. The guru or the teacher should be saluted by placing the joined palms against our forehead. The father, responsible for our sojourn on planet earth and the king who cares for our safety deserves to be saluted by placing the joined palms close to our mouth and nose. Wise men, sages and elders should be saluted with both the palms joined together in front of our

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chest. The mother takes the best of places in the human body. She should be saluted with both the hands joined together in front of our navel. Inside the temples, the deities should be saluted with the palms joined together and raised above our heads.

All these parts of our body play significant roles. The belly, the heart, the nose and the mouth, the head and the overhead are symbols for healthy body, happiness, long life, knowledge and prosperity, and enlightenment respectively.

Spiritual science too explains that the force generated by the soul in its field of electricity and magnetism is stored in three important centers of the body and made to radiate from here to different parts.

To raise our palms together above our head is to say that the lord is above everything else. It is good to meet the Lord quite often to receive His blessings. We get the satisfaction of being blessed by the Lord Himself and the blessed being can be sure of the fruits thereof.

The Glorious Manakulavinayagar Temple

: Folklore and History vie with each other to say a lot about a temple for the pot-bellied and elephant-headed God, Lord Ganesh, in Pondicherry. A favourite among the locals and the tourists alike, He is also a much sought after God.

Regarding the name 'Manakula', two different interpretations exist. The word 'Manakula' is a combination of two Tamil words – *Manam* (Mind) + *Kulam* (Pond). In a pond like a mind, a fallen dead leaf too can create a ripple. Vinayagar's blessings, it is believed, will make the mind unperturbed and calm. That may be a symbolic interpretation.

The following down to earth interpretation is more appropriate: *Manal* (Sand) + *Kulam* (Pond).





Old Pondicherry was punctuated with a lot of ponds surrounded by sand dunes. A deity, mostly Vinayagar, was installed on the bank of the pond. That made it conducive to the local people to worship the deity immediately after their bath in the pond. Hence the name Manakula Vinayagar. This temple is the only Hindu temple in the French Quarters of Pondicherry, while the Tamil quarters houses several temples in every street.

To our doubt 'why?' the following folktale typical of Pondicherry clarifies it thus:

Long ago when Europeans ruled Pondicherry there lived an atheist who was a bosom friend of the governor of the colonized territory. No one knows for certain whether the governor and his friend was Dutch, Portuguese, English or French, for these were the four who ruled this historically renowned place at different times.

To come to the story, the atheist behaved like a despot and quite often ill-treated the natives. The governor neither questioned his attitude nor lent his ear to the grievances of the natives. Since none dared to question him, the atheist poked his nose into the worship of Hindu idols. He had often seen the natives going to a temple, very near to the sea. He had nurtured a strong desire to throw away the idol of the temple into the sea and demolish the temple.

One day the atheist went with his henchmen to see what the natives did in the temple. He was taken by surprise when he entered the temple. Some people prostrated themselves before the image; some lit camphor and broke coconuts against the stone slabs; some closed their eyes and recited mantras while some stood silently praying to the Lord. What was more surprising to the atheist was the curiously shaped image that the natives called God.

The image had a big and oval face with a long trunk for a nose. It had a pot like a belly and its colour was pitch black. "What the hell is the name given to the half elephant and half glutton?" the atheist enquired of his men.

"They call it Pillaiyar," replied someone in his gang. The atheist laughed and his villainous laughter brought utter silence in the temple. Everyone shivered. "Go and

lift that stone which they call God and throw it into the sea," he commanded his henchmen. The unruly gang immediately jumped into action. Helpless, the natives stood watching the evil action of the vandals. With great difficulty, they lifted the image and carried it to the seashore. They boarded a catamaran with the image, while the atheist stood on the shore happily watching their movements. Soon his men returned to tell him that the stone image had been thrown into the deep sea.

Happy at heart, the atheist with his followers marched towards the temple to bully and insult the natives. But he was taken aback to see the image of Pillaiyar seated in the very same place in the temple. He saw the natives praying in silence. He knew well that the natives could not have brought in another image within that short time. But at the same time, he wondered at the sudden reappearance of the image. "How did that stone come back?" he shouted at the natives in the temple.

"We do not know. When you left this temple we prayed with our eyes closed. And when we opened our eyes we saw Him seated in the vacant place," said a native.

"Is that so? Does that stone presume to set its wits at me?" the atheist roared. He then commanded, "Carry the statue. Tie it to a bigger stone. Go a long distance into the sea and roll the stones together into the depth of the sea".

His order was obeyed. But when they came back to the temple they were shocked to see the Pillaiyar again. Suspecting some foul play, the atheist stared at the smiling faces of the natives. One mustered courage and said, "This Pillaiyar is a very powerful deity. No force on earth can destroy Him".

The atheist wanted to make a final attempt. He told his men to lift the image and take it to the seashore. When it was done he asked all the natives who had gathered in the temple to quit the place. He then closed the doors of the temple and locked it. Carrying the key with him, he went to the seashore, boarded a boat with his companions and the image. Under his supervision, the image was thrown into the deep sea. With great satisfaction, they returned to the temple. When the atheist unlocked the doors of the temple, he was horrified to note the reappearance of the Pillaiyar.

A large crowd had already gathered there. Many laughed at the foolish action of the atheist. Sneering at

the crowd, the atheist ordered his men to fetch crowbars. When the weapons reached the place, he commanded, to the sorrow of the natives, “Use these crowbars against their Pillaiyar and break the idol into pieces. Let the powerful deity save himself”.

The gangsters began to smash the sharp edges of their crowbars against the image. But they could not make even a dent on it. They repeated their action but to their great disappointment, the crowbars broke up into tiny pieces and fell. A splinter from a broken crowbar flew whizzing towards the atheist and hit his right knee-cap. Crying in pain he fell down before the image.

Later it was reported to the governor that the atheist went to the temple every morning and evening without fail to worship Pillaiyar, the powerful deity. No wonder that the governor realizing the unquestionable powers of the Lord, arranged for a decent construction to house Lord Vinayagar. Hence the name ‘Vellakaran Pillayar’ (Whiteman’s Vinayaga).

The fact that Francois Martin, the Founder of Pondicherry, tried to stop the natives from worshipping the Lord or performing any form of *Pooja* in 1674 proves without an iota of doubt that the temple is nearly five centuries old.

As the story goes, the weavers and others who lived in that area planned an exodus for they believed that it was foolish to live in a place where worship of the deity was banned. And Martin has no other go but to lift his ban for without those weavers his company would have undergone a heavy loss.

It must be mentioned in passing that during the reign of Dupleix, Manakula Vinayagar and His abode remained undisturbed in spite of the fact that Madame Dupleix was bent on transforming the places of Hindu worship into churches. An uxorious Dupleix had no way but to lend deaf ears to the complaints and grumbling of the locals.

Another proof of its existence and survival can be seen through the famous Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai (1709-1761). The most famous Tamil diarist to date, Pillai was Dubash to Monsieur Dupleix, the French Governor-General of French India. The *Diary* he maintained from 1736 till his death immortalized him as it was a record of matters political, social and personal. Being an eyewitness report of the manners of the court and of society, it is an invaluable treasure.

Ranga Pillai’s keen observation, fostered by his status in society, made his *Diary* a sourcebook of history. Very interested in contemporary events, he records in it “the valuable account of things historical, political and social appertaining to the period embracing the rise, the Zenith and the decline of French power in India.”

The *Diary* opens to us vistas of bygone times. We are introduced to the customs and manners of the natives in the 18th century. He describes the religious rites and festivals of Hindus and other sects. Not only do Pongal and Sivarathri other sects find their places in his *Diary* but also the Fire Festival and the hunting festival.

In the entry dated April 7, 1748, Pillai wrote: “...Between half-past eight and nine tonight, Murugu Pillai, the Choultry manager, came to my nut-godown and, standing near the door of the Manakukulam Pillaiyar Temple, called me and asked if I had heard what had been going on in the town for the last two or three days” (Vol.5, p.18).

Another entry dated October 2, 1748 reads: “The shells burst in the air, and twenty or thirty fragments would fly half a mile or a mile. The pieces whistled as they flew, like a kite flying in the air. One shell struck Mir Ghulam Husain’s gate, another struck the Governor’s kitchen house and gardens. Others fell near the tobacco-godown and the stable in the Vellala Street. Another struck a Topasi woman’s house near the Pillaiyar temple beside the Manakulam tank, and broke her legs...The Europeans, I think, are a hundred times more alarmed than the Tamils. All of them fear the shells. Such is the effect of the shells which the English fire daily. Many would have been wounded and killed if such had been God’s will; but by His grace, it has been otherwise, and in spite of all the bombardment, there has been little loss. God’s will is too great for man to comprehend, as all the *Shastras* say. Is it not true? That was why many of the great and wise renounced worldly pleasures for solitary meditation. All know this...” (Vol.5, P. 381) (*The quotes are from H. Dodwell’s English translation of The Private Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai*).

These two entries serve ample testimony to the facts that Ranga Pillai had his tobacco godown quite close to the Pillaiyar temple and his was an unquestionable belief in Pillaiyar’s power.





Perhaps built during the 17th century, it is one of the ancient temples here. Sandwiched between the street that takes us to Sri Aurobindo Ashram and the street to the Governor's House, this temple facing east is only a stone's throw from the promenade.

Mahakavi Subramania Bharati and The Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram shower their highest honour on this Lord Vinayagar, popularly known among the locals as Manakula Vinayagar.

First, listen to Bharati praying to Pillaiyar during his decade of stay (1908-1918) in Pondicherry:

“...ManakulaVinayaga,
Master of the heavenly mystery,
Grant to me, I pray, the strength and skill
Of self-control. For this gift gained,
All other gifts ensure unsought.
Grant me firm courage. Then wishing
For happiness for all living beings,
With the worship of Your Feet my sole vocation,
God Ganapati, I shall live in joy.

Historians and scholars believe that the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo and the temple are nearer to each other not by accident but on purpose. Lord Vinayaga is chief of all Vedas while Sri Aurobindo is an authority on the Vedas. And both bless all their devotees who come seeking their help. No wonder that their abodes are quite close.

The Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram had a special relationship with Pillaiyar. She considered him her friend. On several occasions, she has referred to Ganapathi. In fact, the Mother who never recommended idol worship had a statuette of Pillaiyar on her desk. When asked, it is reported that she replied: ‘He is our friend’. In her letter dated 8th November 1962 (later published in *Sri Aurobindo's Action*, March 1980) addressed to her devotee, Mr. Madanlal Himatsingka, she writes: “... each one must invoke Ganesh according to his own feeling – the traditional way is not necessarily the best” and continues to narrate her own experience with him, “In 1930 we were having regular meditations in the Prosperity hall, on the significance of flowers. At one of

these meditations, quite unexpectedly, Ganesh appeared suddenly to my inner view. He was of golden light and surrounded by a very luminous golden aura. His form was the usual one as on his images. It was the first time I ever saw him and I expressed some surprise over his sudden appearance. Then he told me, “You see I am a living being quite real and concrete – and to give you a concrete proof of my reality I shall send to you henceforth, all the money you will need. And on this promise he disappeared. He has kept his promise for years and the money was coming abundantly”.

In the issue dated November 2004 of *Sri Aurobindo's Action*, its editor Shri Shyam Sunder writes: “...In the 1960s when Sri Aurobindo Memorial Fund Society purchased the huge adjacent property bearing premises No. 64, rue d’Orleans (as the present Manakula Vinayagar Koil Street was then known) out of funds provided by Shri Madan Lal Himatsingka, a devotee of the Mother, she arranged the transfer of a small piece of land on the northern side of the property, by way of a gift, to the Ganesa temple so as to provide the needed suitable space for *parikrama* inside the temple. As the story goes Ganesa had asked her for it. Ganesa, Mother had told us, had helped her in financing the Ashram” (p.12).

Thus a piece of land measuring roughly 12’x120’ went from Sri Aurobindo Memorial Fund Society to Lord Ganesa and today devotees are happy to go round the deities and do *Parikrama*. What a wonderful gift of the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram to Lord Ganesa who kept his word!

No wonder that visitors to the Ashram from different corners of the globe rush to have His blessings as well.

Thousands of Pillaiyar-devotees throng His abode every day and on Fridays, not to speak of *Vinayaga Chaturti* festival, it is always a milling crowd. Two-wheelers, four-wheelers, and heavy vehicles pay their homage to the Lord before they start serving their new masters. Visitors to the Ashram from different corners of the globe rush to have His blessings as well.

A ten-day festival in Manakula Vinayagar Temple is celebrated every year since 1957 and each day's expenditure is met by a particular community in the town.



The story of Pumsavana Vrat is narrated in the sixth canto of *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Kashyapa Prajapati had two wives, namely Aditi and Diti. Demigods were born to Aditi. The eleventh son of Aditi was Indra, who became the king of Heaven. The Supreme Lord Himself became the twelfth son of Aditi as Vamana Deva. He snatched away the entire earth and other planetary systems from King Bali and delivered them to his brother Indra.

Another wife of Kashyapa gave birth to demons. However, great devotees like Prahlad and Bali took birth in the demoniac families. After the death of Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu Diti gave birth to forty-nine Maruths, who were given demigod positions by King Indra. The vow of Pumsavana relates to the same incident.

Lord Vishnu killed both Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu to please King Indra and protect the world. Diti was pained so much by the death of both sons that she developed enmity towards Indra and vowed to give birth to a son who could kill him. She knew well that her husband Kashyapa's blessings were a must to fulfill that desire. She served him very attentively and pleased him. Kashyapa was prepared to give some boon. Then, Diti expressed her desire saying, "I have lost my both sons. If you want to give me a boon, please sanction me a son who can kill Indra. With the help of Lord Vishnu he killed my both sons. Please grant me this boon." Kashyapa was stunned to hear such a request. He felt that he would unnecessarily be affected by the sin of killing Indra.

Divine Stories from Srimad Bhagavatam

THE VOW OF PUMSAVANA

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Then, with all his intelligence, he tricked his wife to follow a vow that was actually meant for Lord Vishnu. He said, "Diti, if you wish to fulfill your desire, you need to take a vow. You have to follow it very strictly. Then, you will be blessed with a son who can kill Indra. But, if there is any lapse in your practice, you will get a son who becomes a follower of Indra." Kashyapa's intention was to make her a faithful servant of Lord Vishnu, thereby forget all enmity. He has used the word "*Indraha devabandhava*" in this context. The word "*Indraha*" indicates a demon, who is eager to kill Indra. But it also implies a meaning as the follower of Indra or a person who executes the orders of Indra. The full meaning of *Indraha devabandhava* gives equivocal messages wherein it says, "Your son kills Indra, but also becomes a close friend of demigods." How could a person very close to demigods kill Indra? Kashyapa used these confusing words while talking to Diti.

He suggested the vow of Pumsavana by saying, "My dear Diti, during this period you shall not indulge in violence, harm anyone, curse anyone, tell lies, cut your hair or nails, touches inauspicious things like bones or skull, enter into a pond for bathing, get angry, talking with all sect of people, and wear dirty clothes, wear garlands that are already used once, eat food remnants, eat remnants of Goddess Kali, eat meat or fish, eat food that was touched by a lady in her menses, go out without braiding hair or without wearing jewelry or without properly covering the body, sleep keeping your head towards the north side or western side, sleep during sunrise or sunset, sleep with wet feet."

He concluded saying, "Always wear clean clothes, decorate with auspicious items like sandalwood paste,



vermillion, and flowers, worship cows, Brahmanas, Goddess of fortune, Lord Achyuta. You shall offer gifts to many ladies to receive their blessings

and always meditate that the husband is in your womb. If you follow these rules and regulations of this vow, you will be blessed with a son who can kill Indra. But if there is any mistake in the vow, you will get a son who will become a friend of Indra."

Diti was ecstatic to follow the vow with all determination. Indra became aware of the vow being practiced by Diti and he came in disguise to serve her. He was looking for the mistakes that Diti might commit inadvertently. One day there was some mistake in the vow and Indra took the opportunity to enter into her womb in the subtle form to kill the embryo with his thunderbolt. He cut the embryo into seven pieces, but all the cut pieces started crying heavily. He asked all those cut pieces not to cry and further cut each piece into seven pieces. Now all the forty-nine pieces prayed to Indra saying "My dear brother, we are your brothers. We are Maruths. Why are you trying to kill us?" Indra understood that they were harmless and friendly. He left them without killing. All the forty-nine became divinely Maruths because of Diti's one year vow of Pumsavana. Due to the one full year vow, Diti became purified in her heart and left her enmity towards Indra. She saw all her forty-nine sons were with Indra in glorious positions and became very happy. Then, Indra bowed down to Diti along with forty nine Maruths and left to his heavenly abode.

The vow of Pumsavana was explained in detail in *Srimad Bhagavatam*.

The person who performs this vow gets all his desires fulfilled within this life. Women who perform this vow will get opulence, long-living nice husband, children, fame and happy homes. Unmarried women will be blessed with a nice husband by this vow and women who do not have a husband or a son will reach the spiritual world by this vow. The women, whose children die immediately after birth, will get blessed with children with long life by this vow. Also, such women become very wealthy. A diseased person can be cured of his illness by the power of this vow. Ancestors become pleased by this vow and fulfill all the desires. Lord Lakshmi Narayana becomes very happy by the performance of this vow."

Thus Suka Maharshi happily narrated the vow of Pumsavana to king Parikshit.



SOLUTION TO PUZZLE

1 M	A	2 N	D	3 A	V	4 I		5 R
A		A		R		L		U
6 D	O	N		7 Y	E	A		D
		D		A				R
8 G	A	I	N			9 E	R	A
A				10 Y				
N				11 A	J	12 A	Y	13 A
G				M		I		R
14 A	D	O		15 I	N	D	R	I

(A brief introduction was given on Annamayya, his birth and about his clan in the April Issue)

Annamayya was blessed with two sons. His first son was Narasacharya and second son was Tirumalacharya. Narasacharya was the son of Annamayya's first wife Tirumalamma where as Tirumalacharya was the son of Annamayya's second wife Akkamma. Tirumalacharya was well known as Pedda Tirumalacharya.

Narasacharya had two wives – Nanchamma and Ananthamma. Her two sons were Narayana Appalarya and Annaarya. Peddatirumalacharya's wife was Tirumalamma. His children were Chinnatirumalayya, Annaya, Pedda Tiruvengalanadhudu, Tiruvengalanadhudu (Chinnanna) Koneiti Tiruvengalanadhudu. Annamayya was also blessed with a daughter along with sons. Her name was Tirumalamba. Her husband was Tirumala Kondaiahayudu. Their children were Revanuuru Venkata Rayudu. Likewise, the whole clan of Annamayya – his sons and their sons had made their life great and led happy life with their splendid verses and service to Sri Venkateswara.



HISTORY OF SRI TALLAPAKA ANNAMACHARYA

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Narayana :

Annamacharya's great grandfather was Vitala. His son was Narayana. Vitala wanted to see his son Narayana get educated in all Vedas. It would not be wonder, if father was the first teacher to a son. It could be satirical to the present generation but it was widely accepted until the previous generation. Vitala tried to be a teacher to his son Narayana. Later, he felt that his son was not concentrating on education in his guidance and so he decided to send Narayana to a teacher at Vutukuru, Keeping Narayana in relatives' house at Rajampeta. His relatives looked after his son carefully. Even then, there was no change in Narayana's response to the teacher's lessons. The teacher of the school kept all his efforts to educate Narayana but there was no use.

Godhukuchu _____

_____ Badi pettupeti (Annamayya's history volume II - 78,79)

Generally, a teacher would mould a new student using various approaches. He waits for some time to understand the new student's mentality by asking him to mingle with other

students in a class. In Vutukuru, the teacher did the same. To create interest in Narayana, the teacher asked him to mingle with other students who are doing well. The teacher used different methods to mould Narayana. In the beginning, the teacher tried to convince Narayana with his words. Once the teacher understood that he could not bring change in Narayana with words, he threatened him and later kicked him with stick. Unfortunately, there was no change in Narayana's behaviour. Instead Narayana felt insulted with all these happenings. He neither could go against to his teacher nor could he endure the punishment. He used to cry silently. One day, Narayana heard about a poisonous snake which was in the anthill inside the temple of Chintamma Goddess in Vutukuru village. He decided to commit suicide by keeping his hand in snake's anthill. With hastiness, he kept his hand in a snake's anthill. The Goddess of



the temple was moved with the Narayana's decision. She came as a human being to persuade him. If the snake had bitten the child, Tallapakka clan would have stopped there; there would not have been 32000 Keerthanas that describes the pooja's of God from morning to night; the five generations of service that Annamayya clan did, would not have been possible. In simple words, Lord Venkateswara would have missed the great felicity that was done to him with verses. Predicting the future of Narayana, the Goddess of temple Chintamma, stopped him from death. She enquired Narayana about the cause of attempting self-death. After knowing the reason, she convinced Narayana saying that the uncle of Saraswathi Goddess, on the name of Kesava resided at the temple of Srihari in Tallapaka . She suggested Narayana to circumbulate the srihari's temple with devotion so that his inherent desire would fulfill.

Adhiyanugaaka

Valambhudaguchu

(Annamayya's History Volume II - 86,87)

The Goddess said to Narayana that the child of the third generation of his clan would be a great devotee of Sri Venkateswara. With these words, the Goddess disappeared.

Receiving blessings from the Goddess Chintamma, Narayana departed to Tallapaka village and circumbulated Srihari temple with devotion. While circumbulating the temple, Narayana requested the God to bless him with education. If the devotees request the God with utmost devotion, God will bless them instantaneously. Pleased with his devotion, God accepted his desire. Due to which, Goddess Saraswathi, daughter-in-law of Kaitabhaditya Mardhana and Hatakagarbhurani, resided on Narayana's gustatory. From then onwards, Narayana had learnt every lesson taught by his teacher. Even the toughest lessons were received easily. His teachers and other students in class were surprised with his intelligence. Eventually, Narayana reached his village with full of happiness and satisfaction.

Narayanasuri:

Narayana reached his village 'Tallapaka' and led a happy life. He received appreciation from his teachers, parents and people in his village. He had a son named Narayanasuri. Like his father, he was also a living

encyclopedia, received high appreciation from people. Narayanasuri married Lakkamamba. She always followed the path of her husband. She was very pious and also great devotee of God. It was said often that her village God 'Madhava Murthy' whose temple was at the outskirts of Tallapaka at Maadupuri would respond to her prayers easily. The virtuous couple stood as an exemplary to many of the newly married couples. The only dissatisfaction that they had in their life was about the children. Even after many years of their married life, the couple was not blessed with a child. They were worried that their clan would end with them and there wouldn't be a son to protect them from the state of suspension after their death. Standing near the sacred pillar (Dwaja Sthambam), the couple prayed Tirumala Venkateswara with devotion to bless them with a child.

'Adigina

Velupu" (Annamayya history Volume II, page 100)

On the very same day, the self-righteous couple saw in their dream Sri Venkatachalapathi who was giving them a son as a gift. There was no boundary to their happiness. It is not possible to receive the blessings of Lord Vishnu even after many years of penance. Only few devotees like Bhakta Prahalada, Druva, Ambari and some others were able to see Lord Vishnu. Such unique being blessed the couple in their dream. It would be accidental, if any one person in the couple saw Lord Vishnu's dream. But both wife and husband saw the magnificent personality in their dream. With contentment, the couple went back to their village.

The Birth of Annamayya:

Just as Parasura was born to Saktimuni with the boon of Rajeevayana, Annamacharya was born to Narayanasuri and Lakkamamba. He is believed to have been the sparkle of Srihari Kadga Nandakam. Tallapaka Annamacharya was born in the month of Vaishakha on auspicious star Visaka when three planets were doing good.

Narayanasuri brought up the boy with utmost care as he had born to them after longtime of their marriage with the blessings of Lord Venkateswara. He named the boy on the command of Lord Vishnu, with the starting letters of the God Brahma's penname, the name that starts as 'Annam'. Narayanasuri and Lakkamamba used to call him lovely with various names like Annamayya, Annappa, Annamacharya, Annaya, Anna.

(to be contd....)

SAPTHAGIRI - AN ENCYCLOPEDIA

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‘Sapthagiri’ stands for Seven Hills and are situated at a sacred place called Tirumala, which name itself denotes a sacred place. For Hindus, it is the destination for many. Lakhs and lakhs of people throng the place to have a glimpse of the presiding deity at the top of the hills, SRI VENKATACHALAPATHI. It is told all our sins would be wiped out by the grace of this Lord and all our genuine wishes are fulfilled at proper time.

In the beginning, the sapthagiri magazine was brought out in a small manner, giving importance to articles by renowned scholars. But the present image has changed considerably. Even school going children can contribute articles which will be easily readable by small children and thus inculcate their habits in religious activities. These children are our future wealth which is to be properly protected.

We find several articles based on vedas, Epics like Srimad Ramayana, Puranas etc, bringing out our heritage to present generation. Most of the articles chosen for publication do relate to current religious festivals, Jayanthies and Vardanthies of great souls and are very interesting. The pictures printed in multicolours are fascinating and are being preserved by many subscribers. Special issues like Annual Brahmotsavams are praise worthy and are presented as a boon to those who are not fortunate to witness them personally.

The Almanac for every month printed are quite useful. The astrology portion is welcomed by those who are interested in them above all the cost of the single issue is so low that it is affordable by even poor people. The editors and their supporting staff do take care that no printing mistakes take place which is an essential item of any magazine. Sapthagiri in six languages is a laudable endeavour of the TTD and I salute them. May Lord Sri VENKATESWARA TAKE SAPTHAGIRI TO GREATER HEIGHTS IN ITS GOLDEN JUBILEE YEAR.

Sri Venkatesaya nama:



SRI PERUNDEVI SAMETHA SRI KARIVARADHARAJA SWAMY TEMPLE SATHRAVADA

Mangalam to that abode of Lakshmi,
Who lives in Sri Venkata,
Who is the consort of Lakshmi
And who is the treasure to those who ask.

On the highway of Tirupathi-Thiruthani approximately 50kms from Tirupathi, there is a small village named “Nagari” at southwards. To the north of village Nagari, around 4kms from there flows a beautiful river named “Kosasthaliyar”. To the north of that river lies the beautiful village named “Sathravada” where beautiful temple for Lord KariVaradaraja Swamy resides in the center of the Village.

Sthala Puranam-

“Munipallai” is a village which is south of Sathravada where lot of Yaga and penance were performed by many Rishis and Sages. There was an Asura named “Kari” who was disturbing the penance and Yagna in this village. It is already known that Lord will not forgive anybody if his

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devotees are tortured. This is what we have learnt in Puranas. For saving the small child Prahaladha, Lord Narasimha (half lion – half man) took Avatara and killed the Asura Hiranyakasypu. Similarly, Lord came here and killed the Asura. Rishis were very happy, and Lord decided to stay in this village. Apart from that, nearby villages like Karimbedu, Nagari and Therani villages got blessings from Lord Kariya Manikka Perumal.

Sri Perundevi Sametha Sri Kari Varadharaja Perumal resides in this village Sathravada. Approximately 1500 years back Vijayanagar Empire King Krishna Deva Raya ruled this place where Venkata Kumara Raja was a sub ruler who ruled Karveti place. Sathravada village region covers this place. This village was one among the prominent and popular place in those times. The temple inscriptions reveal that this place was also known as “Satravadi”.



Many Rishis and Sages lived in this village for long time, took bath in the Kosasthaliyar river and then pray to Lord Kari Varadarajaswamy. They were living a peaceful and happy life. As Lord saved them from the Asura demon Kari, this place became more divine and pious.

Utsava Details –

This temple follows Vaikanasa Agams Sastra. Chitra Pournami is famous and important festival for this temple. Along with Sri Devi, Sri Bhoomi Devi, Lord Kari Varadaraja Swamy comes to Kosasthaliyar river and blesses the devotees. This festival celebration was from 153 years in pomp and glory. Like Kanchi Varadaraja Swamy Temple Brahmotsavam, the same time, here also Garudaseva is celebrated as per Vaikhanasa Agama Sastra. There are Utsav idols for Shri Perundevi, Sri Kari Varadaraja Swamy, Sri Andal, Sri Anjaneyar and Sri Chakrathalwar.

Special Star Celebrations –

Apart from Brahmotsavam, there are special celebrations for Special Stars for Alwars, Bhaktas etc., Every Sunday weekly, special puja for Veera Anjaneyaswamy, every Friday special Puja for Sri Kari Varadaraja Swamy is done specially. Special days – Ekadasi Thithi, Rathasapthami, Purattasai Special puja and Margazhi Special Puja, Veera

Anjaneya Puja, Bhogi Special have lot of special pujas includes special Abhishekham and Alankaram. And daily Archana and Aaradhana to the main deity are also performed.



Other Shrines –

The main deity Sri Kari Varadharaja Swamy is facing Westwards. Sri Perundevi Thayaar, Goda Devi Andal has also got separate Shrine. Garudalwar is facing the Lord. There is special Mandapam dedicated to Alwar and Acharyas which is very next to Lord Kari Vardharaja Swamy shrine. It also includes Vikhasana Muni, Senai Mudaliyaar (Vishwakseena), Nammalwar, Thirumangai Alwar, Sri Ramanujar, Sri Manavala Maamunigal idol were also present.

Sri Veera Anjaneya Sannidhi –

Northwards, from the main shrine, facing south around 8 feet high Veera Anjaneya Swamy is present. He looks very divine. In this temple for small children, to remove the “Balarishta Dosham”, they pour the theertham (holy water) in their face. Above that, they give dollar necklace imprinted Anjaneya swamy to the kids and tie them around the neck.

Around 40 years back, Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam Sri Paramacharya came to this village to get the Darshan of Sri Venugopalaswamy of Karveti. He also stayed there for six months. During that time, he visited Kari Varadaraja Swamy temple and got the Darshan of the Lord. He is the Jagadguru, who has visited this temple, which becomes more pious. On, 17-7-2000, on Friday evening, Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam that time Jeeyar Sri Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swamigal, performed Kudamuzhukku (reformation or renovation) with glory.

Nearby villagers often come here and get the blessings of Sri Kari Varadaraja Swamy and Sri Veera Anjaneya to fulfill their wishes.

Sri Perundevi Sametha Sri Kari Varadharaja Swamy Parabrahmane Namaha!



The Bhagvat Gita for the Youth

THIS IS THE PLACE OF ACTION!

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At present, we are living in a place of action, the earthly planet. The upper planetary system is called the place of enjoyment. The lower planetary system is called the place of punishment or sufferings. We are in between middle and lower planetary systems. We experience both enjoyments and suffering perennially and hence, there is always action on our planet. Thus, performing action shall become the main purpose, motto, and goal of all living entities here. Not only humans but also birds, animals, and reptiles appear to be engaged in some action all the time. They are never seen sitting idle. It's just natural. We never see any bird or animal sitting idle without any work. But, we see many human beings sitting idle without any work. For every human being, actions are prescribed in the Vedas based on their qualities. Based on such actions, all humans are divided into four categories, namely Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. This *varna* system was introduced in the *Bhagavad-Gita* itself. Those who are engaged in the welfare activities of all human beings and other living entities using their finer tissues of the brain are called Brahmanas. Those who protect and rule the citizens based on the guidance given by Brahmanas are called Kshatriyas, the administrators. Those who perform cow protection, farming and business with the blessings of Brahmanas and with the protection given by Kshatriyas are called Vaishyas. Those who serve the above three categories of people and lead a happy and healthy life are called the Shudras. All these four categories of people are supposed to be engaged in various kinds of actions.

But, why should the actions be at all performed? There is only one answer to this intriguing question. We are required to perform work or action to get the things that we don't have. People perform an action to acquire the things that they don't possess. But, God doesn't have this situation. The entire world was created by him, so everything belongs to him. "*Isavasyamidam sarvam yatkinchit jagatyam jagat*- In this world, everything belongs to the God", as ascertained by the *Isa Upanishad*. Even then, whenever God appears in this world, he engages in various types of actions. Very amazing!

"O son of Prutha, there is no work prescribed for Me within all the three planetary systems. Nor am I in want of anything, nor have I need to obtain anything, and yet I am engaged in prescribed duties." (Bg 3.22)

"For if I ever failed to engage in carefully performing prescribed duties, O Partha, certainly all men would follow my path." (Bg. 3.23)

These words are spoken by Lord Sri Krishna, the supreme personality of Godhead in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Lord Krishna said that even though he was not required to obtain anything and not in need of anything, he still gets engaged in various actions. What a wonderful message! So every human being, especially the youth should always be engaged in action without fail. To be engaged in action, one needs to be enthusiastic, agile, determined, strong, intelligent, and introspective and should be with higher goals. One should be totally free from laziness and devoid of procrastination. One should keep undue sense of enjoyment at a distance. This makes one peaceful, healthy, prosperous and long-living. Those who retire from active services feel that all activities are now over and they feel that they don't have to take up any action. When God himself has engaged so actively in actions, what about ourselves? Everyone can plan actions as per age, education, energy, time and place. Where there is a will, there is a way. If one gets situated in a firm faith saying, "throughout my life, I get engaged in actions that give pleasure to me, God and people around me", he will certainly get wonderful opportunities to fulfill the cherished desire. Only such people live longer and lead a happy life. So all intelligent people should be work-oriented as per the guidance of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and under the direction of experienced people, who lived the *Gita* way of life.



SRI VENKATESWARA

Tharigonda Vengamamba

Spiritual attachments are not commonly experienced. It is possible for divinely people alone! Hence family members of Annamacharya might have provided accommodation to Vengamamba when she arrived at Venkatachalam as 'yogini'. She showed her gratitude praising Annamayya in her book *Venkatachala Maahathmyam* and is the only woman writer to do so. The following account is a brief introduction of this book.

Srungararayani———

———*galugu konda*

Amaravarulaku———

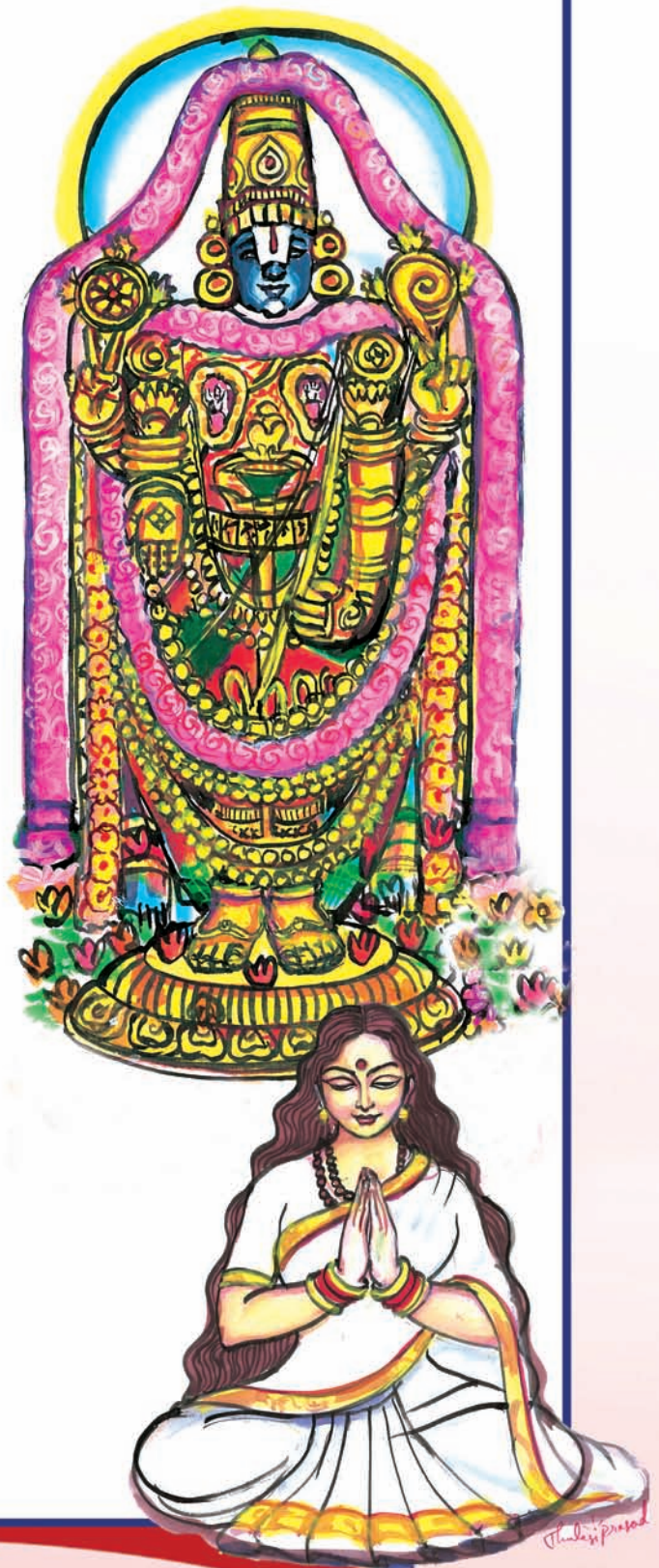
———*sri venkatesu konda.*

These lines were instinctively sung by an ardent devotee when she visited Tirumala for the very first time in 1750 C.E. She was none other than the great poetess 'Mathru Sri' Tharigonda Vengamamba. Tirumala hills are prominent among mountains so is Vengamamba prominent among the devotees of Lord Venkateswara.

Tharigonda is a village located North-West about 65 miles away from Tirupati. This village is famous for Lakshmi Narasimha temple. One of the chief households of the village is Konala Krishnayamathya of Nandavara family and Vasishta gotra. His wife is Mangamamba. The couple visited Tirupati for the sake of children. Later they were blessed with a baby girl. They named the child 'Vengamamba' as she was born with the divine blessings of God Venkateswara.

Vengamamba was a born devotee. Hence she had a spiritual journey of life from the beginning.

The hardships in her life made her visit Tirumala at an early age of hardly twenty years. To divert from the insane devotional thoughts, her father forcefully married her to 'Intheti Venkatachalapathi' who suddenly demised after a few years. She then decided that God Venkateswara was her husband and continued to dress like a married woman, which made the orthodox people of Tharigonda village hold grudge against her. The glory of Vengamamba came into light when the head of 'Pushpagiri peetham' came to the village to teach her and the 'peetham' caught fire. Later she faced resentment from a priest when she was meditating sitting behind Hanuman idol in Lakshmi Narasimha





Swamy temple. These incidents kindled her devotional and spiritual thoughts and felt them as the orders of her family god Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy to leave Tharigonda village. She travelled through dense forests to reach the divine place of Tirumala.

‘Atmaramji’ was the chief of Hathiramji Mutt in Tirumala that time. He learned that a great devotee named ‘Vengamamba’ had arrived at Tirumala to stay there. He accommodated her in a hut situated north-east to the temple beside the rock chariot and sent groceries from Swamy’s kitchen in the name of Vakuladevi.

Tirumala is known for its flower gardens all the time. They not only enhance the beauty of the place but also provide necessary flowers used to decorate Lord Venkateswara. Nature’s beauty mesmerized Vengamamba and inspired her to resume literary writings. In fact, she was blessed with the poetic art in a godly manner when she was in Tharigonda. It happened when she was sitting relaxed after *yoga abhyasa*. Strangely some alphabets fell from the sky in the form of balls and entered her face. From then she got the power of art. She wrote *Tharigonda Nrusimha sathakam*, *Nrusimha vilasam*, *Sivanatakam*, *Rajayogaamrutha saram*, *Balakrishna natakam* etc. when residing in Tharigonda.

Vengamamba was taught *Hayagreeva mantram* when she reached Tirumala. In a short time, she had the *darshan* of Hayagreeva swamy. She prayed for him to remain in her thoughts and bless her with fine writings.

She envisaged God Venkateswara as *Ashritha Parijatha* (wish-fulfilling) staying in Ananda Nilayam amidst the beautiful gardens and blessing devotees. This feeling inspired the poetess to write a *yakshagana* (a popular theatre form) named *Vishnu Parijatha* and dedicate it to God himself. She narrated the famous mythological story *Parijatha apaharanam* (carrying away the Parijatha tree) in this *yakshagana*. This narration involves the attractive gardens of Srikrishna which reflects the beautiful inner thoughts of Vengamamba. This song also showcases the circumstances of Tirumala temple during her time. The following lines of Satyabhama praising Srikrishna exemplify her utmost devotion:

Magadha.....Sri Venkatesam.

The family members of the renowned composer ‘Thallapaka Annamacharya’ provided accommodation to Vengamamba beside their house in the north *Mada Street*. Hence, she got an opportunity to closely observe the literary works of Annamayya. Among those works, she got attracted to a marriage song *Subhadra Kalyanam* written by Thimmamba the wife of Annamacharya. This inspired her to write a *dwpada kavyam* (a poetic form) called *Rama Parinayam*. She narrated the marriage of God Srinivasa with Rama (Goddess Lakshmi), the daughter of Samudra. She mentioned the prominent works of Annamacharya like “*Narayanathe namo namo*”; “*Saranu saranu surendravanditha*”; “*Jaya janakiramana, jaya vibheeshana sarana*” etc. in her *Yakshaganas*. Vengamamba was the only poetess to praise Annamacharya mentioning him in her works.

Akkaram Venkatramayya Deekshith, the temple priest, is the neighbour of Vengamamba. He used to scold and trouble her for no reason. She faced resentment from her neighbour which changed her mind. This moved her to settle in the dense forest of Tumburakona, situated at about ten to twelve miles from Tirumala. She deeply meditated in a cave for five years and attained spiritual powers. She wrote *Chenchunatakam*, another *Yakshagana*, based on the lives of tribes in Tumburakona.

The narration begins when a tribal lady from Tumburakona visits Tirumala temple and requests the temple gate-keepers Jaya and Vijaya to let her in and have *darshan* of Lord Venkateswara. They say that it’s impossible without making offerings to God. The tribal lady tells them that she wants to know if the God Venkateswara visiting Tumburakona and the God here are the same. Then the gate-keepers ask her to describe the looks of Venkateswara visiting her place. She then describes as following:

Vinaranna.....

.....venkateswarudu.

A devotee named Chandrasekhara who visited Tirumala got lost in the forest and reached Tumburakona. He was suffering from leprosy and got disinterested in life. Vengamamba found him wandering in the forest, crying out of hunger and thirsty. She rescued him and then slowly he got relieved of the disease. The news of Vengamamba residing in

Tumburakona spread among the people of Tirumala and they requested her to come back to Tirumala. She considered the plea of people as the orders of God Venkateswara and obliged.

Vengamamba maintained a flower and *Tulasi* garden with a water-well dug in the north of her house. She used to visit the temple daily to offer beautiful flower and *tulasi* leaf garlands of her garden to God. She used to write her books sitting on a rock situated in the middle of the garden. The garden was filled with not only the fragrance of flowers but also the beautiful essence of her literary works. The first *kriti* from this pleasant place was *Srikrishna manjari*. This was spontaneously sung by the great poetess when she was meditating God Venkateswara in a single-leg standing posture. She began the *kriti* as “*Srivenkatesa.....krishna*” and concluded as “*Mangala.....sarva mangalam*”, praising the God as the husband of Goddess Alamelumanga which makes this *kriti* eligible as a daily prayer. She dedicated all her literary works wrote after reaching Tirumala to both Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy of Tharigonda and Sri Venkateswara Swamy.

Vengamamba believed that God Venkateswara is no other than Srikrishna himself. One noon while she was sitting thinking about emancipation, God Venkateswara appeared as Bala Krishna (child Krishna), handed her *Sri Bhagavata* book and asked her to write it as *dwipada kavyam*, a poetic form. She wrote the entire book of *Sri Andhra Bhagavata* in this form. There used to be eight writers with the name *Ashta Ghantalu* in her *mutt* to make copies of her literary works. Kuchipudi bhaagavathars, representatives of Kalahasthi, Karveti nagaram Jameendars etc used to visit Tirumala to take copies of her books. The *mutt* of Vengamamba was a spiritual and knowledge center to the devotees visiting Tirumala those times.

The devout poetess conducted the birth celebrations of Sri Narasimha Swamy every year in the month of Vaisakha for ten days. During these times food donations and water-centers were arranged for the poor and needy. Donations of money, land, food were made by various landlords, rich and normal people from Dindigul in the south to Golconda in the north as quoted on several inscriptions. These inscriptions and

donations reveal the greatness of Sri Vengamamba. Even today, on the tenth day of these celebrations, *utsava murthy* of Sri Venkateswara Swamy visits the *mutt* of Vengamamba to receive *pooja* and food offerings.

The prominent one among the literary works of Vengamamba is *Venkatachalamaahathmyam* which has approximately 2000 poetic and prose verses. The entire life of Vengamamba- her birth, naming after God (Vengamamba), residing at Tirumala and making it a knowledge center- happened only due to the divine blessings of Venkateswara. This book played a prominent role in the publicity of Tirumala temple. The scriptures of this book are available even today.

Mukthi kantha vilaasam and *Vaasishtha Ramayanam* were her last books. She quoted in her books that Venkateswara possesses the strengths of devotion, knowledge, intelligence, *maya*, and spirituality. She wrote 18 books in total and instinctively sung several poems, *slokas*, and *keerthanas* in various situations. Many of the literary works still remained unpublished.

Apart from the literary contributions, this poetess began the permanent *kainkaryam* called *Nitya Muthyala Harathi* to Venkateswara. The ten forms of Sri Mahavishnu, one form each day was arranged with pearls in a big tray and decorated with vermilion and rangoli colours. She used to daily visit the temple during *Ekantha seva* and gave *harathi* to God while singing songs. The famous saying “*Tallapaka’s lali* and *Tharigonda’s harathi*” emerged from this *kainkaryam*.

Thus residing on Tirumala Tirupati in the vicinity of God Venkateswara, not only served God with her literature and *kainkaryams* but also preached spirituality to her disciples. She left her earthly body in 1817 C.E in the month of Sravana and the year of Eeswara.

She did not learn alphabets from teachers but learnt *yogavidya* from a yogi named ‘Subramanya’, and attained the spiritual and devotional knowledge. She belongs to the category of masters of natural poetry like *Bammera Pothanaamathya*, *Varalabdudannamaryudu*, *Giridhara Gopalabhaktha Meerabai*. The inspiration of Vengamamba’s life is God Venkateswara.



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English by : - Smt. D. Aruna Padmavathi



TRAUMA AND YOGA

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We all undergo trauma in one form or the other in our life. No human can ever say that he/she has never undergone trauma in life. This is as bad saying I have never fallen ill. Let us first understand what trauma is. Our world is characterized by the schisms of social numbness and mental breakdown. Trauma derives its meaning from Greek which means wound/physical injury. Trauma is not that which encompasses death directly but that which forces the subjects to somehow confront the death-like situations.

Our life witnesses shocking events like murder, rapes, assaults, humiliations, tortures, and robberies, etc. which are the result of deliberate attempts. With these events, we become more aware of our vulnerability. Our view on life changes, our values and priorities change, the value of family and interpersonal relationships change, perception of the entire human society.

Trauma can be referred to as an overwhelming experience and calamity that brings out a rupture so violent that dissociates a person or community at both social and personal levels. It disrupts a sense of continuity in our lives and dissipates our concepts and ideas which are fundamental to our very existence. It breaks apart the entire conceptual defence and support systems which help us manage and transform a myriad of random experiences into what we perceive as reality.

II

Trauma as defined by J. Laplanche and J.B Pontalis refers to an event in the subject a life defined by its intensity by the subject's incapacity to respond adequately to it and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects that it brings about in the

psychical organization (465). The Oxford English Dictionary defines the term trauma as originating from a medical term used to refer to a wound or an external bodily injury, psychic injury especially one caused by emotional shock, the memory of which is repressed and remains unhealed or the state of a condition so caused. Freud termed it as a "breach in the protective shield" (292).

Sigmund Freud has introduced the concept of trauma to Psychology. He elaborated on the concept of trauma (injury, wound) to the phenomena of mind. According to him, a trauma is defined as a powerful event in a person's life to which the individual is unable to respond appropriately and which has a powerful sudden and enduring effect on him. A trauma is characterized by a flood of extremely strong stimuli that exceeds the individual's tolerance threshold, his ability to control his failing of agitation and to process it. The concept when adapted to psychoanalysis carried three features central to it that include the idea of violence, the idea of an injury, the whole organism.

According to Freud, psychological trauma is an experience, where, in a short span of time, the mind is forced to receive a great amount of stimuli that are too powerful to be processed by the brain in the usual way, resulting in either the system to incorporate it as a foreign body or not even complete but in traces. The brain usually allows penetration of those stimuli that the mind is capable of tolerating. If the threshold is exceeded, it results in trauma. Then the function of the protective system is to reach a state of equilibrium by every possible means by reducing the state of stimulation and thus achieve the state favoured by the pleasure principle.

Freud, in his essays like “Thoughts for the Times on War and Death” (1915), “On Transience” (1915), “Mourning and Melancholia” (1917), “The Uncanny”(1919) and “Beyond the Pleasure Principle” (1920) had expressed his views on the different psychic states and trauma which ceaselessly return to the precise traumatic moment through flashbacks, nightmares, dreams etc. For Freud, trauma is characterized by the failure of memory and a victim’s compulsion to repeat the traumatic event.

Several psychologists after Freud like Anne Whitehead, Cathy Caruth, Carl Jung, Herman, Ann Kaplan, Kai Erikson, Susan Najita and others have elaborately developed and expounded various theories on trauma. All these theories have thrown light on the victim’s consequences and experiences besides widened the scope and study of trauma.

III

Today’s academic, artistic, journalistic, psychiatric, psychoanalytic, and cultural discourses are increasingly engaged in the analysis of traumata; this has in turn privileged trauma as a route through which one can examine cultural issues of experience, memory, the body and representation especially in the fields of history literature and culture studies.

We undoubtedly live in an age of trauma and testimony. The bombarding news of war and genocide, mass exodus, pride killing, rape and domestic violence in our own country and also in other parts of the world and the abiding presence of the terrorist threats within the borders of our own country have become a part of people’s daily lives as they find themselves just a few sound bites away from the sites of violence when they watch the evening news. This has in turn plunged the threshold of the people’s general sense of safety and security. It is no longer possible to envision a world immune from the pain of others and the immediacy from the danger that can haunt one’s life without a warning.

Traumatization involves very painful experiences which are so difficult to cope with, which often result in psychological dysfunction for those who are involved; the effects of which are felt psychically, emotionally, spiritually and cognitively. Today, the world is witnessing rampant war and refugee crisis, which leads to uprooting wherein people are forced to leave everything familiar including one’s language, culture, and position in society, job, relatives, and social network and start a new life in a completely different environment.

IV

Victims of trauma often show various symptoms and reactions. The most common response to a traumatic event is survival. Violent trauma triggers emotions of “fight or flight” which puts the body in a hyper-aroused state. When this happens, the person will either run away or fight to survive. If this is not possible, a person may freeze





and will not be able to think, talk or move. Immediately following the trauma, which is single or multiple events, the survivor experiences many physical, cognitive and emotional responses and symptoms which may remain active until worked through.

Physical reactions include headaches, stomach pain, disturbed sleep patterns, and are easily startled by noise or touch, have breathing difficulties, sweats shakes, and trembles. Cognitive reactions include preoccupation with trauma, confusion, decreased self-esteem, loss of purpose or meaning in life, difficulty concentrating, fear of future and flashbacks. The effects manifest physically as migraines, nervous tics, clenched muscles in the neck, shoulders, and jaw, a sunken chest, or a heavy heart. They can exact an even heavier toll in the form of heart disease, diabetes, panic attacks, ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder – neurodevelopmental disorder) in children, fibromyalgia, irritable bowel syndrome, and a host of autoimmune disorders. Behavioural reactions include shock and disbelief, fear and anxiety, grief and denial, hyper-alertness, irritability, and anger outburst, feeling of helplessness, panic and feeling out of control and often attempts to avoid triggers of trauma. Difficulty in trusting, feeling betrayed, unable to relax, feeling guilty, hopeless, appetite changes, self-harming and being suicidal along with a detachment and numbing constitute emotional reactions.

A traumatic event breaks up and creates a fissure in the basic human relationship and attachments of family, friendship, love, and community, undermines the belief systems and the idea of self which gives meaning to life. Trauma not only affects oneself psychologically, but also dismantles the attachment systems that link oneself to others and the community.

Victims lose faith in natural or the divine leaving them in a state of existential crisis. One acquires a sense of safety and trust during one's childhood years at the hands of their first caretaker (father/mother). This sense of safety and trust is sustained throughout the lifecycle. In a traumatic situation, people call for their first caretaker usually, their mother, who is their source of comfort and protection. A sense of trust is lost when they fail to find a secure base. They feel abandoned, lonely and cast out from the human system of safety and care which results in a sense of disconnection even within most intimate familial bonds. They feel utterly lost and almost dead than the living which eventually tempts them to commit suicide.

In case of a traumatic event, a person loses his sense of self and conflicts within him of childhood and adolescence re-emerges. The victim re-lives all his initial struggles. A positive sense of self is crucial in outliving one's trauma. Feeling valued and respected cultivates self-esteem and a sense of autonomy resulting from one's own separateness which helps one regulate one's own bodily function and points of view.

Developmental conflicts in oneself lead to the development of shame and doubt, guilt and inferiority. Traumatic events thwart a person's initiative and overwhelm individual competence. Feelings of guilt, inferiority, helplessness, etc. are severe when one is a witness to the suffering or death of others and are haunted by the images of the dying whom they could not help.

Social support systems in the form of a positive and supportive response from the society and the dear ones may help reduce the impact of the event. This alone is not enough. However, in the context of rapid urbanization resulting in the fast-changing lifestyles, expecting such social supportive response is a far-reaching reality. Whereas a negative response may aggravate the trauma and become vulnerable.

V

Western medicines will do more damage to the system than bring in vital changes in the victim's body and mind. Yoga can make a big difference in trauma victims. Yoga touches on every level of victim, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. It makes a powerful and effective means for trauma victims to calm their minds, experience emotions directly, and begin to feel a sense of strength and control. Trauma's effects live not only in the body but also in mind. Various body-based and mind-based therapies cannot undo the *effects* of what happened—the terror, rage, helplessness, and depression that manifest in the body. It's not even erasing the event itself from the victim's psyche that is important. Instead, it's the *samskaras* (the residue imprints) that get rooted in sensory and hormonal systems that need to be addressed with sympathy, love, and understanding.

Asanas can reduce disorders in the victim's body. Moving from one *asana* to another, slowly, deliberately and concentrated, bring in vast changes. The simplest of poses (standing or sitting) can produce profound results. Just feeling his feet on the ground for the very first time in *Tadasana* (standing palm tree position) and *Vrikshasana* (standing tree position) can give the victim a sense of balance, stability, and safety. Doing gentle supported backbends and forward bends will increase blood flow which is vital for rectifying imbalances. Building a strong, capable body goes a long way toward developing a strong, centered mind. Similarly, *Asanas* can induce similar chemical changes in the brain. The impact of *Asanas* and *Pranayama* on negative symptoms is much stronger than other forms of exercise such as calisthenics, walking, jogging, running, gymnastics, etc. These *Asanas* and *Pranayama* should be practiced with mindfulness. Then one can see the real impact.

Around of simple *Pranayama*, deep breathing called *Nadisodhana Pranayama* (inhaling through

the left nostril and releasing through the right nostril while closing the former and alternatively) might tone up feelings, reduce cortisol, a stress hormone that triggers depression and increase oxytocin, the so-called "love hormone" and improve social interaction. *Pranayama* can have an energizing or calming effect on the nervous system and quiet the brain. The simple breathing can keep the victim *in* the body. The underneath overwhelming emotions have to be tackled. With all Yoga practices, the victim may be encouraged to stay with the sensation for as long as s/he chooses. Yoga can mitigate the horrific responses of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system.

Meditation can also help trauma victims to bring their nervous system back into balance. *Mantra* meditation and *yoga nidra* and *yoga mudra* provide two alternatives to following one's thoughts in silence. Using a *mantra* (chanting *Om*) gives the mind a calm state and prepares the victim for the journey inward, something to return to as memories and sensations surface and dissolve. *Yoga nidra* helps the victim stay present to what's going on—feeling the energy of the body and exploring sensations without judgment or attachment. *Shavasana*, if done properly under the guidance of a master, gives total relaxation to the body as well as to the mind. Yoga provides a powerful ally on the journey home and allows the victim to create a loving and nurturing relationship with his/her body.

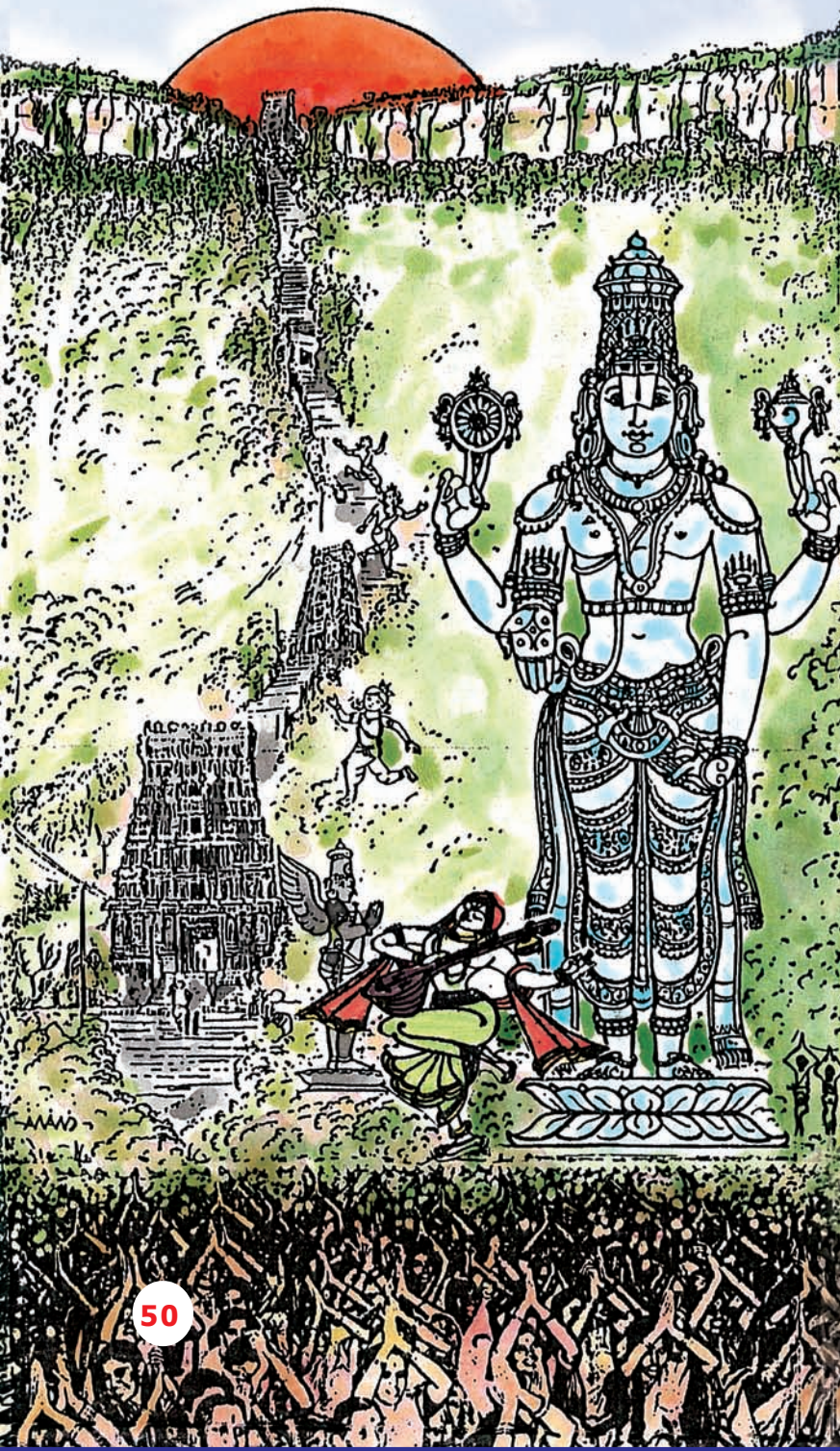
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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF Dasa Bhakti

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In Hinduism, the path of devotion or *bhakt* is the culmination of perfection in all Yogas. True devotion does not easily arise by itself. It requires years of spiritual practice, self-discipline, purification, and renunciation. In its simplest sense, devotion means love for God. In its widest sense, it means love for all because God is all-pervading. A true devotee of God recognizes the universal presence of God in all things as God is the Omni-present, the Omnipotent and the Omniscient. Since he loves God unconditionally, he transcends all duality, attraction, and aversion and cultivates a sense of equality in humanity.

According to *Srimad Bhagavatham*, there are nine kinds of devotion. Here is the sloka:

*sravanam kirtanam Vishnoh smaranam pada-sevanam
archanam vandanam daasyam sakhyam atma-nivedanam ||*
(*Srimad Bhagavatam*) (7.5.23)

The following are the nine accepted services of a true devotee. 1. A true devotee always likes to hear the transcendental holy name i.e., God, His form, qualities, paraphernalia, and pastimes. 2. He desires to chant about the transcendental divine name and the pastimes of Lord Vishnu. 3. He wishes to remember His holy name. 4. He loves to serve the lotus feet of the Lord. 5. He always likes to offer worship to the Lord. He wishes to offer prayers to Him. 7. He wants to become His servant. 8. A true devotee considers Him as his Best Friend. 9. Finally, he surrenders everything to the Almighty.

According to the following *sloka*, there are nine kinds of devotees in the *arsha* tradition who attained in the Supreme Godhead. Here is the *sloka*:

*Sri Vishno sravane parikshida bhavada vaiyasee kankirtane
Prahlada smarane tadandhi bhajane lakshmihi prudhu poojane
Akrurastyabhi vandane kapipatirdaseda sakyerjune
Sarvasyatma nivedane balira bhoot Krishnapti resham phalam ||*

Out of all kinds of *bhakti*, *Dasya bhakti* is the most excellent type of devotion. *Srimad Bhagavatham* elaborates on nine kinds of devotion. *Sravanam*, *Keerthanam*, *Vishnu Smaranam*, *Paada Sevanam*, *Archanam*, *Vandaman*, *Daasyam*, *Sakhyam*, and *Aatma-Nivedanam* are types of *sevas*. The nine devotees in the mythology are the true representations of nine kinds of devotion respectively.

They are King Parikshit, Sri Sukha Maharshi, Prahlada, Goddess Mahalakshmi, King Pridhu, Akrurudu, Lord Hanaman, Arjuna and King Bali. *Dasya bhakti* is necessary for man to lead his life to achieve both mundane and heavenly bliss and receive all physical prosperity and eternal bliss. In his chief preaching, Sriman Madvacharya said: *swatantra maswatantramcha dwividham sammatam*. He also gave a good example regarding the *dasya bhakti* as *kapipatirdaseda* in the above *sloka*. Lord Hanuman is *kapipati* and He stands as a symbol for *Dasya bhakti*. Lord Vaayu Deva has his three incarnations in Lord Hanuma, Sri Bhima and Sri Madvacharya and they have their *dasya bhakti* in Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, and Sri Veda Vyasa respectively. One can say that the originator to the *daasya bhakti* is Lord Sri Hari only. The word *daasya* stands as a technical term for virtues like obedience, wisdom and good character. It is like an instrument to show the Omnipresence of God. As Lord Vishnu wants to sanction happiness to His devotees, He says in His incarnations of *leela*,: *mahidaasabhido jajje etarayasthapo balat*. Goddess Lakshmi resides in His residence as a servant. So it is said: *niruta ninnaramaney daasi enipalu*. Though goddess Lakshmi is all powerful in word, in all times and situations, She is always bound to the Lord.

*Yasyaam apangalava maatrata uurjitaasa
Sriyatkataksha balavatyajitam namami ||*

In the *Venkatachalamahatyam* which is a part in *Aditya Puranam*, goddess Mahalakshmi sees all kinds of services done by all gods to Lord Sri Hari, she has decided to do all those services to Her Lord. Though Goddess Mahalakshmi resides in the hearts of Lord Sri Hari, she always follows *daasya bhakti*.

*Tatsukhantu ramaa drustya mene sshaika bhajanam |
Ahamevanu bhoshyami matpate ranga sangajam ||
Sarvaanya bhudramaadevi devaa yaananta tejase |
Bhogyavastu swarupena tava sevabhilashinee ||
Mahanandambhude magna ramate saaramatvaya |
Ramase ramayevatvam Vaikuntadishu Dhamasu ||*

Sri Madvacharya describes how goddess Lakshmi looks at Her Lord affectionately and serves Him sweetly and wonderfully every day with love sweetly and wonderfully in an eye-catching manner. He says: *Indiraa chanchalaapaanga neerajitam mandaroddhari hrutyobhuja bhoginam* goddess Lakshmi with her graceful looks offering *karpura neerajanam* to Her

Lord, and she became like a parrot in the cage of His embrace. Sri Purandaradasu mentioned the same idea as follows:

*Kotakoti brutya riralu
haatakambharana seve
Paati illade maadi purna notadinda
sukhisutihalu ||*

*Chatrachamara vyajanaparyanka paatra rupadalli nintu
Chitra charita nada hariya nitya sevemadu tihalu ||*

*Purandara vithalanna sevi sutihalu
Emadhanyalola kumiyam dhaamaanyalo ||*

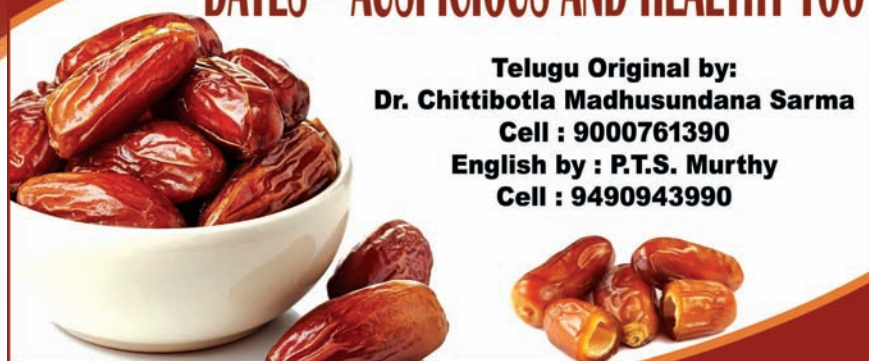
A large number of servants like Lord Brahma, Lord Rudra, and others are ready to serve the Lord till the end of their existence. But Goddess Lakshmi gets enjoyment by her continuous glances at the Lord and is serving Him more than those deities. Goddess Lakshmi is a blessed one because she serves the mysterious and wonderful Lord by the instruments of worship like *chatra*, *chamara* and *vinjamara*, etc. How much auspicious and respectable goddess Lakshmi is!

Depending on the ranks, Lord Brahma and other deities including goddess Lakshmi performed service to the Lord as servants. Lord Chaturmukha said: *tava daasosmi kevalam*, and *Janma prabhrutibhihi daasosmi kevalam*. Lord Hanuman who will be Lord Brahma in the future and the best example of *Daasya bhakti* said: *Daasoham kosalendrasya Ramasya klistakarmana!* He further said that he was the true servant of Lord Sri Rama Chandra, the king of Kosaladesa in the presence of enemies and King Ravana. King Prahlada, the jewel of all great devotees also followed *daasya bhakti* by saying *Bhooman bhramami vadame tava daasya yogam*. By saying *Daasanamadiko enna swami saasiranaamada Venkaataramana*, Sri Purandaradasu asked the Lord, 'O! Lord Venkateswara! Treat me as your servant. Sri Vijayadasulavaru said: *Daasa daasa daasara daasyava kodu*. He requests the Lord to grant him *daasa daasa daasula* servanthood. Sri Gopala dasulu once said: *Daasa nemtenda myete ghasi maduvare*. He feels: 'I am your servant. You are still testing me, O! Lord.' By saying, *Daasoham tava daasoham*, Sri Jagannadhadaasulu also followed *daasya bhakti*. By saying *Daasa daasa daasaramaneya daasi yera maganaanu*, Sri Kanakadaasulu also said: 'I am the son in the house of many servants.' One can admit the fact that *daasya bhakti* has its own uniqueness.

(to be contd...)



DATES - AUSPICIOUS AND HEALTHY TOO



Telugu Original by:
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There are two types of dates, dry and pinda. Both are extensively available. Dry dates are used in religious functions, such as *poojas*, religious vows (*vratas*), marriages and ceremonial gatherings. They are considered auspicious as per our ancient Indian culture. They are called *Kajur* in Hindi, *Karjoram* in Telugu and its scientific name is *Phoenix Dactylifera* and it belongs to arakesi tree family.

Dates have nutrients and also possess unlimited medicinal ingredients. It dissolves in the digestive system and turns to blood very fast and gives immediate stamina. Dates can be used to cure several diseases and provide relief from illness.

Constipation : Take two or three dry dates without seeds and smash them. Take 100 ml of water and keep them along with 10 dry grapes. Underdo for a while and take the water.

For immediate strength after fasting: Take two dry dates without seeds, one or two grams of pistachio (*pista*). Underdo a while by keeping them in 100 ml of water. Add 100 ml of milk to this water and consume after adding sufficient sugar.

Regular menstrual cycle: Make 50 grams of powder of dry dates and 50 grams of dry ginger. Add half spoon of this mixed powder in 200 ml lukewarm water or milk and consume it for ten days before the menstrual cycle begins. It should be stopped once the cycle starts. If it is repeated for three to four cycles, then the disorder is reduced.

Blood improvement: Store two dry smashed dates, three or four skin removed almonds and 15-20 dry grapes in 100 ml water overnight. Chew them and drink the water the next morning. (almonds should be kept in lukewarm water for one hour and then the skin should be removed)

Excessive blood discharge in women: Make 25 grams each of powder of dry dates, black pepper, candy sugar and dry grapes. Take 2-3 grams of this powder in 50 ml of water daily in the morning and evening.

For excessive urination: Take 2-3 dry smashed dates and 2-3 grams of Coriander seeds and make them into a smooth powder. Dissolve in 100 ml of water. Boil it, cool it and drink the water. If consumed like this, blood in urine will also stop.

For fertility in men: Early in the morning, men should eat one or two dry dates, *pista*, *Akrot*, *Anjeera* and almonds (skin removed) each. Drink warm milk after that. It will help in increasing sperm count. Chances for bearing children will increase.

Back pain: Split dry date. Keep resin (*guggilam*) in that. Cover it with wheat powder mixed in water. Fry it on hot fire. Thereafter, remove the wheat powder. Make the dry date into smooth powder and make a bean size capsules. Consume one or two of them daily in the morning and evening. Afterward, take one cup of lukewarm milk.

Nutrients for pregnant women: Take powder of dry dates, almonds and fry them with ghee. Mix them with 100 grams of dry grapes, 20 grams of cardamom. Grind them in a mixer till it becomes a smooth powder. Add candy sugar powder and one teaspoon of this mixed powder in 100 ml of lukewarm milk. Consume it daily twice. It will provide nutrients not only to the mother but also to the newly born child.



THE SACRED NAME 'GOVINDA' : MEDICINE FOR CORONA**- Sri Y.V. Subba Reddy, Chairman, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams**

The chanting of the celestial name 'Govinda' is a marvellous medicine for driving out Corona from the world. At present, we are in critical times because the entire world is suffering from the vicious blow of Corona. The dreadful dance of Corona has thrown a terrible challenge and is shaking all nations in the world. The present scenario is filled with fear and tragic incidents. At this critical juncture, the courage and composure of the public is highly appreciative. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, the most renowned spiritual and charitable institution in the world, is performing many charitable activities by following the dictum '*Maanava Seve Madhava Seva*' and promoting the ancient spiritual practice '*Sarvejana Sukhino Bhavantu*' whole-heartedly.

THE FORECAST OF THE T.T.D: Expecting the calamities of Corona in advance and keeping the safety of the devotees in view, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has taken necessary measures to curb the spread of the terrible virus. As a part of it, it had issued time slot tokens from 17th March. The devotees were allowed directly for the 'darshan' of the Lord without waiting in the Vaikuntam queue complexes I and II. Sanitization activities are going on in all the places in Tirumala for every two hours. On 19th March, the authorities of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams declared that the devotees are not permitted to enter temple temporarily as per the suggestions of our Hon.Chief Minister Y.S.Jagan Mohan Reddy after proper consultations with him as it is a pivotal point to observe physical distance in the temple against the backdrop of the outbreak of Corona. On the morning of 20th March, the devotees of Arjit Sevas were allowed for the V.I.P. break 'darshan' of Srivaru and they were requested to get down from Tirumala for their safety. From that day onwards, the Tirumala Tirupati



Devasthanams alone is organizing the daily rituals to the Lord in the temple according to the 'agama shastra.' In this context, the SVBC is giving live telecast on the Kalyanotsavam of Lord Srivaru every day to make the devotees happy and forget about their unhappiness caused by the lock-down issue. This channel is also telecasting the Kalyanotsavam of Goddess Padmavathi Devi and Lord Venkateswara at Tiruchanur and the devotees are enjoying the programme and are blessed. The Kalyanotsavam of Lord Rama and Goddess Sita was also confined to the temple of Lord Sitarama Swami, Vontimitta in view of the lockdown as there are innumerable devotees who wish to enjoy the grand Kalyanotsavam. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams is able to satisfy the devotees by telecasting the Kalyanotsavam as a live programme through the SVBC in the present crisis.

ORGANIZING 'YAGAS' FOR DRIVING OUT THE DISEASES: In the times of massive expansion of Corona, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams felt that the humanity must come out safely from the fatal fangs of Corona so that it has given much importance to the Vedic literature in order to solve the problems raised by the dreadful virus. As a part of the activity, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams organized Sri Srinivasa Santyotsava Sahita

Dhanvantari Mahayagam for three days i.e., from March 26th to 28th in Dharmagiri Veda Vignana Peetham in Tirumala in a grand manner. It also organized Srinivasa Veda Mantra Arogya Japa Yajnam in Asthana Mandap in Tirumala from 16th March to 25th March for controlling Corona. In the programme, four Vedas and 'Panchasaakhas' along with Srinivasa Veda Mantra Arogya Japa Yajna Mantras were recited by the Vedic scholars belong to Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamilnadu and Karnataka. On 10th April, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams arranged a programme in which great Vedic scholars recited the mantras from Sri Yogavasistam and Sri Dhanvantary Maha Mantra Parayanam in Nada Nirajanam in Tirumala. Devotees are also participating in the spiritual programme. They are chanting those mantras sitting before the T.V as it is a live programme telecasted by SVBC.

SERVICE TO MAN IS SERVICE TO GOD: The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has arranged 1, 20,000 food packets from Anna Prasada Section daily to the migrant workers and also to the thousands of homeless people who are in and around Tirupati during the lockdown period. In addition to that, it is providing food to nearly 500 stray dogs in Tirupati along with the innumerable cows in the cowsheds in Tirumala. It has arranged a temporary shelter to the wandering animals at Alipiri Link Bus stand. It is also supplying nearly three metric tons fodder and three hundred kgs cattle feed to them a day. As a part research in Ayurveda, it has prepared five kinds of medicines for the purpose of controlling Corona. In the beginning, these medicines were given to the staff who is preparing food in Anna Prasada Centres for giving them food to the emigrant workers and to the people who have no shelter due to lockdown. Nearly two hundred staff members received these medicines for their safety. There medicines are:

'Rakshoja Dhoopam (incense for destroying bacteria), Pavitra (solvent for washing hands), and Ganduushakam (medicine for gargling), and Nimba nasyam (Nasal drops) and Amruta (Tablets for Immunity).

19 CRORES ON THE CORONA WAR: The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has totally changed the renowned super speciality hospital SVIMS, Tirupati in Rayalaseema as Covid-19 hospital. Sri Padmavathi Medical College for Women which is in the campus of the SVIMS has also been added. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has sanctioned nineteen crores of rupees for the purchase of ventilators and other medical equipment and for providing accommodation for the Covid-19 patients. It has also handed over Padmavathi Nilayam in Tiruchanur, Vishnu Nivasam and Madhavam Rest Houses in Tirupati to the official machinery of Chittore district in the context of Covid-19.

AWARENESS THROUGH THE SVBC CHANNEL: The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams is broadcasting Srivari Kalyanotsavam and 'homas' being performed on Tirumala Hill as live programmes through its channel. In the same manner, it is telecasting the framed programmes for taking all essential precautions with special suggestions in order to control the deadly virus. Even though, there is a temporary prohibition imposed on the devotees denying the access of entering the temple for having the grand 'darshan' of the Lord during the lockdown period, the channel is providing the opportunity of having the grand 'darshan' of the Lord every day.

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams is putting its wonderful effort without causing any disturbance to the popular saying 'Nitya Kalyanam Paccha Thoranam'. Let us chant the name of 'Govinda.'

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA!

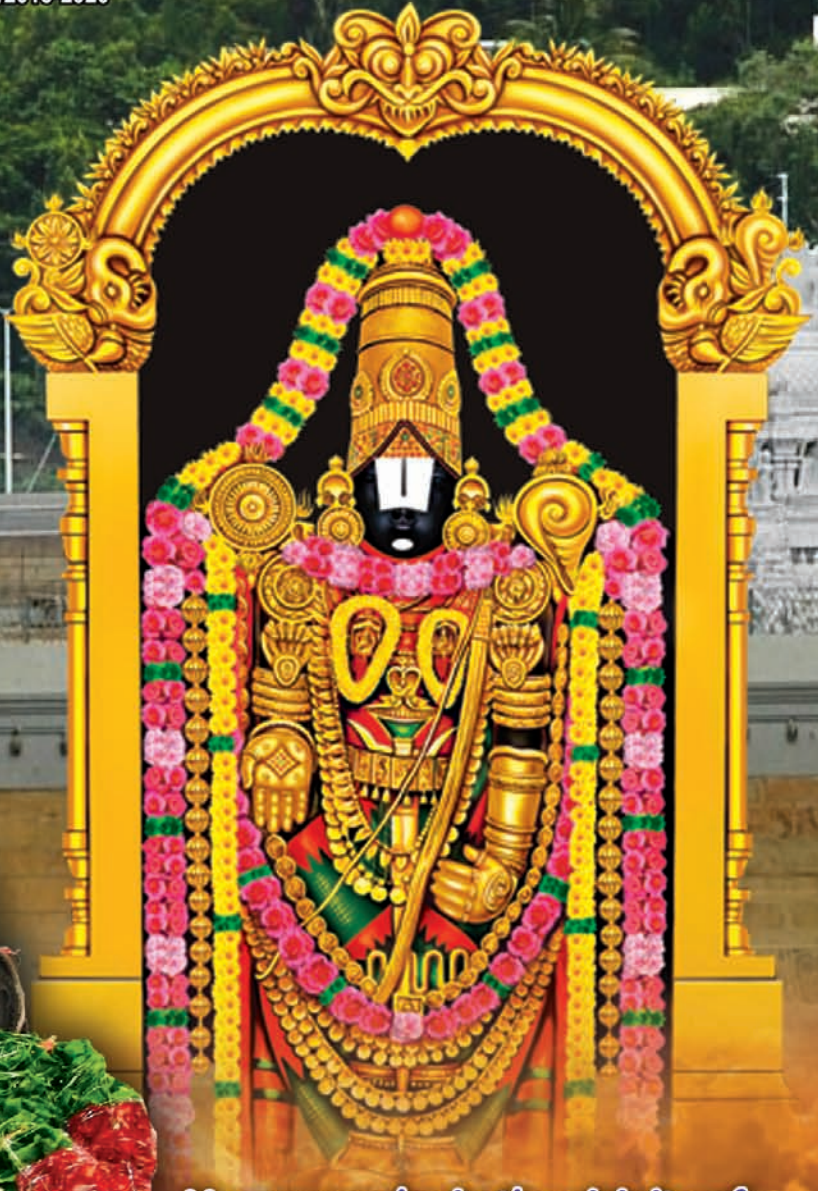
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TTD supplying food to the migrant labour and animals left without shelter during the Lockdown imposed to arrest the spread of international Corona pandemic.





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*Vengamamba in the vicinity of
Lord Venkateswara*