

# ANDAL'S THIRUPPAVAI



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

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THIRUVAYIPATI RAGHAVAIAH



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# **ANDAL'S THIRUPPAVAI.**

by

**T. Raghavaiah**

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## FOREWORD

Among the countless saints who pioneered and sustained the Bhakti movement, the Alvars occupy an important position. Though they all hailed from different backgrounds, they were all one in their mystical or intuitive realisation of God. All these Vaishanava Saints glorified the name of God as the supreme means of attaining liberation.

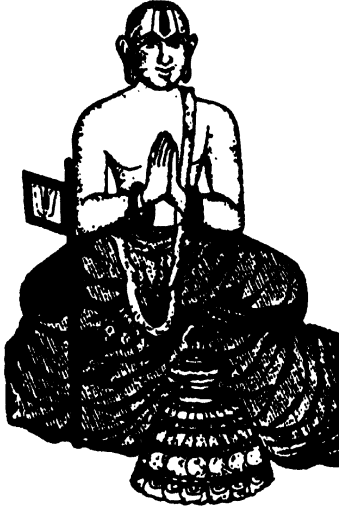
Of the twelve divine messengers of Srīman Narayana, Sri Andal or Godadevi is the only lady saint. According to tradition, Sri Andal is said to be an Avatara of the Mother Earth. Her two hymns the "Thiruppavai" in thirty verses and "Nachiyar Thirumozhi" in 143 verses express the saint's deep yearning for union with her beloved Lord Vishnu. According to scholars, the "Thiruppavai" incorporates in a way, the "Artha panchaka jnana", the knowledge of the nature and significance of five truths, such as Soul, God, means to the goal, the summum bonum and the impediments which entangle the soul on its path of perfection.

Sri Andal's Thiruppavai is an interesting study of Godadevi's life and work. The author discusses vital aspects of Goda's mystic vision in a clear and simple style.

We hope this publication will be well received by the discerning readers.

Executive Officer  
T.T.Devasthanams





## **SRI RAMANUJACHARYA**

The propounder of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha  
and the propagator of Thirumanthra)

**“Om namo narayanaya”**

*(The Thirumanthra or the Ashtakshari)*



**Andal or Godadevi**

(The author of the Dravida prabandha, Thiruppavai)



## Geethacharya Sri Krishna Bhagavan

### *Charamasloka of the Geetha:*

“Sarvadharmā parithyajya  
Mamēkaṁ Śaraṇam Vraja |  
Ahaṁthva sarva pāpēbhyo  
Mokṣa yishyami maśuchaha ||

(Ch. 18. Sloka 66)

### *Meaning of the sloka:*

“Abandoning all the Dharmas (principles so far enunciated), stick to this one Dharma of utter surrender to Me alone; I will liberate you from all sins; Grieve not”.

### *Effectual meaning:*

“You may abandon all Dharmas' but follow the Dharma of unselfishness (selflessness = sva-dhara-hitya); and that will keep you out of sin and keep you in Moksha Bhava (The blissful of freedom from all earthly bonds)”.

***Geetha - Chapter 18, Sloka 78:***

**“Yathra yogeswara Krishno  
 Yathra pardho dhanurdharah  
 Thathra Srir vijayo bhutir  
 Dhruva nithir mathir mama”**

**Substance:**

“Where there is Krishna, the yogeswara (the Lord of yoga) along with Arjuna armed with bow and arrows, there exist prosperity, victory, splendour and sound moral policy; and that is my conviction”.

**Effectual meaning:**

“Where there is the wise elder or teacher preaching the Dharma (legitimate duty) and where there is the youngster or the pupil prepared fully and readily to implement the instructions of the former, there exist all prosperity, victory, joy and morality”.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

“Andal’s Thiruppavai” is one of the five chapters of my Telugu work, “Sri Bhakthi Saram” (first part), which contains the missions of devotion (Bhakthi) furnished in five Dravida Bhakthi prabandhas of five Alvars, who lived in South India long before Sri Ramanujacharya (1017 A.D. - 1137 A.D.), the propagator of Visishtadvaitha philosophy.

Andal (Godadevi) was one of the twelve Alvars, whose splendid divine lives spread over a period of 3 or 4 centuries from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. All the Alvars showed the path of surrender and devotion to “Vishnu”, the omnipresent life-force. Andal also produced two Dravida Prabandhas (Tamil Epic Poems) of rare literary excellence and unique splendour of devotion, namely, “Thiruppavai” and “Nachchiyar Thirumoli”.

As an introduction to the study and appreciation of Andal’s Thiruppavai and the particular or special introduction there-of furnished next to this, it is quite essential and desirable to have a correct and detailed understanding of what Bhakthi (Devotion to God) is.

The concept of Bhakthi (Devotion) is clearly and elaborately dealt with by me in my books, *Alvarula Divya Vaibhavam*, *Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam*, *Vasthavam* (The Truth of Hinduism) and *Thirumala Thirupathi Venkateswara Divya Vaibhavam*, by the study of which you can understand clearly what Bhakthi Yoga (the path of Devotion), Bhakthi Thathva (the attitude of Devotion), Bhakthi Bhava (the idea or feeling of Devotion), Bhakthi Pradarsana (the display of Devotion), and Bhakthyanubhuthi (the experience of Devotion) are of the four books mentioned above, the first three are produced both in Telugu and English and the last one is produced in Telugu only. All the four books in Telugu have been so far adopted as T.T.D. publication.

Lord Sri Krishna, Geethacharya, in the Bhakthi yoga of Geetha, defines a Bhaktha (Devotee) thus :-

**Sloka :** “*Adveshta sarvabhuthanam  
Maithrah karuna evacha|  
Nirmamo nirahankarah  
Samaduhka sukhah kshami||  
Samthushtah sathatham yogi  
Yathathma dhridha nischayah|  
Mayyarpitha manobuddhir  
Yo madhbhakthah same priyah||*”

(Ch.12-slokas 12 & 14)

“He is a real Bhaktha, (Devotee) quite dear to me, who hates no creature, who is friendly and merciful to all, who is free from any attachment and egoism, who is balanced in joy and sorrow, who is of an excusing temperament, who is ever self-contented, who is self-controlled and steady in mind, who is of firm conviction and determination and who has dedicated himself to me with all his mind and intellect.”

**Sloka :** “*Anapekshah suchirdaksha  
udasino gathavyadhah|  
sarvarambha parithyagi  
yo madhbhakthah samepriyah||*” (12-16)

“He is my dear and real Bhaktha (Devotee) who is free from desires, who is pure in mind, word and deed, who is efficient in the discharge of his duties, and who is unconcerned and untroubled renouncing all undertakings with a spirit of selflessness and humbleness”.

**Sloka :** “*Yo na hrishyathi na dveshti  
Na sochathi na kankshathi|  
Subhasubha parithyagi  
Bhakthimanyah samepriyah||*” (12-17)

“He is a real and dear Bhaktha (Devotee) of mine who neither rejoices nor hates nor grieves, who renounces good and evil and who is devoted to me (The Omni present).”

**Sloka :** “*Samah Sathroucha mitrecha*

*Thadha manavamanayoh|*

*Sithoshna sukhadukeshu*

*Samah sangavivarjithah||*

*Thulya ninda smrithir mauni*

*Samthshto yenakena chit|*

*Anikethah sthiramathir*

*Bhakthiman me priyonarah||”* (12-18 and 19)

“He is my dear devotee who is the same to friend and foe, in honour and dishonour, in cold and heat and in pleasure and pain. He is a true devotee who is the same for censure and praise, who is calm and silent, who is contented with what he gets, who is not of a fixed and permanent residence, and who is steady minded out of full devotion”.

Thus Geethacharya defines a devotee as one who is thoughtful and knows the truth, who is selfless, loving and lovable for his friendly nature, who is neutral to opposites and contradictions, who is an expert in the discharge of his duties and who is service minded. Geetha does not admit any one as a devotee who is idle, who pretends to be, and assumes the guise and make-up of, a monk, who is hypocritical, who is the observer of orthodoxy and superstition, who pretends to sit in penance, who observes certain meaningless vows as to avoid certain items of foods, who subjects himself to some meaningless observances, who is a Thantric versed in tricks passing for supernatural powers to deceive others, who observes certain fixed modes of dress, hair cut and the so called caste mark on the face, Vibudi, Urdhva pundras or red or yellow thilak, who displays some physical skills, who is a juggler etc.

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Of the several virtues of a real devotee, the most important four are surrender to the universal and omnipresent power. The spirit of universal brotherhood, selflessness and Karma phala thyaga (the spirit of allowing others to enjoy the fruit of his work.) Of these four virtues, selflessness is fundamental. Selflessness brings forth peace and happiness to the individual and to the society; There will be no scope for feuds, strifes, fears and atrocities, To the extent people are selfless, to that extent the society or the world will be peaceful and happy.

The spirit of real devotion was advocated by the ancient sages in Prasthanathraya (the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Brahmasuthras) and in Geetha long long ago in our country. But unfortunately this great and fundamental virtue has been going underground though prophets arose in the different parts of the land at different times and reminded the humanity about the virtue of life. The reasons for the decay of virtue are the continued ignorance and selfishness of the people and their so called spiritual guides.

The auspicious benediction (mangalasasanams) namely, "Sarvejananam Sukhino Bhavanthu" (May the whole humanity be happy) and "Om Santhih - Santhih - Santhih (Peace! Peace! Peace - Om) echo and re-echo in the scriptures. But it is not known why the social evils like disunity, caste distinction, untouchability etc. have ever been squatting heavily on the head of the society! The origin and source for this social misfortune are not traceable. The caste system and untouchability are particularly Indian misfortunes; they have been standing for thousands of years in this so called Veda Bhumi and are meant to doom the Indian society.

From the stories of Sathyakama Jabali, Arundhathi, Shabari, Dharma Vyadha etc. one can infer that in the acquisition of knowledge and in the pursuit of devotion, the ancient sages, Adikavi Valmiki and Vyasa, the author of Puranas, denounced the

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evils of distinction of caste, creed and sex. Alas! in what past age and under what circumstances the seeds of caste system had been sown in the Indian society! Though often the prophets and reformers caught this dragon by the tail and tried to pull it out from the society, only the tail got into their hands torn out from the body, but its head and body got stuckup in the society. The lizard loses a part or whole of the tail, and again the tail grows to its full shape and size; similarly the dragon - the caste system attains its tail of full stature and it roams freely in the society, which it devastates. Perhaps at any time in future, this evil can be washed out from the society only as a result of a mental reformation and revolution on the part of the thinking people who shall be in a dominating majority. The man runs after the fleeing and frightened dog with a stick till the dog suddenly, out of despair, turns back with a loud bark to bite him.

The Geetha, the most authoritative and the last testament on spiritualism, does not layout any prohibitions for any class of men and women from the study of scriptures, from spiritual pursuits from devotional principles and practices and from prayers and worships. It was only due to a reformatory zeal and desire that Vyasa wrote the story of Brahmarshi Vasishta, marrying the most virtuous maid from the so called Chandala section of the so called Panchama caste. To explain to the world that virtue and not the caste was to be counted to classify humanity into two broad sections, virtuous and wicked, that the sage-poet Vyasa gave to Arundhati the status of a prominent star in the sky, around which the Saptha Maharshi stars move in worship and which is worshipped by the newly wedded Hindu couple on the occasion of the marriage ceremony.

It was for the establishment of an ideal human society based on equality and love that the great sage, Jagadguru Adi Sankaracharya, evolved the theory of Advaita from all scriptural knowledge and wisdom. He adopted the Brahmasuthra,

## XIV

**“Thathvamasi” (Thath + Thvam + Asi = That + you + are = You are that) and established that the whole universe is the “one and the same omnipresent energy”, that there is nothing beyond this “Advaita Energy”, that every human being is a speck of that “Advaita Power”, that every object and power in the universe is a manifestation of the “Omnipresent Advaita energy”.**

Advaita Siddhantha, in fact, was meant for the development of individuality and sense of self respect in each individual, for the development of sympathy and universal brotherhood, etc. while the Siddhantha was such; the so-called pandits and Gurus of the Agravarna, the highest Supreme Caste, said to be the followers of Advaita, in course of time after the death of Sri Sankaracharya, gave an unhealthy twist to the meaning of another Brahmasuthra, “Aham Brahmasmi” (I am the Brahma, the God), and began to declare “I am God: you belonging to lower castes, who are prohibited by the religious law from reading the scriptures and doing penance, should worship me as God. I am Bhusura, God on earth”, and began to illtreat others of their community even who were not wellversed in scriptures, and all other people of all other communities. Hence the majority of the human community became neglected and downtrodden; They were ignorant and uneducated and were deceived and exploited by the so called Gurus of the “Agravarna”. Where was then any scope for the uplift of the community in general as a whole?

Before Adisankara, who belonged to the tenth century, lived twelve Alvars, the great Vaishnava devotees, in South India or Dravida Nadu, who lived at different periods spread over a span of four centuries from 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. to 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The twelve Alvars belonged to different castes of all the Pancha Varnas. One of them was Panchama by name Thiruppan Alvar and one was a lady, Andal. The Alvars' mission was Vishnu Samslesha Bhava (feeling one with the Supreme Omnipresent Power, Vishnu), universal brotherhood and surrender to the Omnipresent power. They showed the way for a life of bliss.

Any amount of knowledge of scriptures is a waste if the man does not have Bhakthi Bhava (love of fellowmen).

Vedavyasa, who culled, classified and codified the Prasthanas (The Vedas, the Upanishads and the Brahmasutras) and produced Panchama Veda, The Maha Bharatha, was said to have been feeling a sort of mental languor and discomposure to overcome which and to enjoy the mental satisfaction and pleasure, he produced the famous epic, "Maha Bhagavatha, containing accounts of success and bliss of so many devotees. So the ultimate means by which man attains bliss is the path of devotion (Bhakthi Bhava).

The Alvars, who were perfect and blissful devotees, followed the nine-fold ways of Bhakthi Bhava as enunciated by Vyasa in Bhagavatha (namely, a sincere and perfect feeling of association with the Omnipresent Vaishnava Power, listening to the stories about the great devotees, service, salutations and benedictions, worship, a sense of surrender to the Omnipresent Easwara, an inner awareness of godliness, singing in praise of the Lord and a deep meditation in search of the truth eternal) and had a divine experience with nature around and were ever in ecstasy and bliss. Taking into account all the nine fold ways of devotion, the Alvars stressed the unique state of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava by their personal life and by their writings: "The Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava" is the feeling of one with the Omnipresent universal power, the capacity to admire both the aspects of the Vaishnava Shakthi (Omnipresent force), namely the Saiva aspect (the auspicious and pleasure giving aspect of Nature) and the Roudra aspect (the powerful, magnificent and terrible aspect of Nature), the feeling of surrender to the universal force, the feeling of adoration to all aspects of creation, and to recognise his "Sesha Seshi Bhava" with the universal Lord "Sesha" is the Beyond. God is the Beyond: It is what remains beyond the comprehension of a man, even a sage. And you are again a "Sesha" (a speck) of the Beyond. The recognition of this knowledge about "self" is what is termed in

Hindu philosophy (as per Geetha) as "Sesha Seshi" Bhava. It is this Sesha Seshi Bhava that is called Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava: This is scientific, psychological and emotional.

Which philosophy, based on logic and rationalism, can denounce "Vishnu Samslesha Bhava" and "Sesha-Seshi Bhava"? How can a man of any religion denounce that any other religion contains these noble and scientific ideas (Religion, I define as realisation of truth). Never anywhere and at anytime religion has been reflected correctly and fully in the mind and action of the common man; by common man, I mean one who is not a sage, a scientist or a philosopher. There was nothing wrong in any religion as it was preached at the outset by a saint or a prophet. The defect lay in the man, not capable of understanding the truth of the religion or not putting into practice correctly the principles of the religion. Humanity has been a victim to this two fold disease to some extent at anytime. This is true; and this truth can be understood only by a scholar who is selfless and uninfluenced by wrong propagations. A man who is self centred and partial cannot grasp the truth of religion.

The great Vaishnavacharya Sri Nadhamuni, who was the founder of the Vaishnava Mutt at Srirangam in the second half of the tenth century, and his grand son Yamunacharya, otherwise called Alavandar, who succeeded his grand father as the Head of the Vaishnava Mutt and who in his time renamed the Mutt as Vaishnava Visishtadvaita Mutt, grasped the philosophy of the great twelve Alvars of the old, and felt the supremacy of the spirit of surrender - cum - Vishnusamslesha Bhava in the path of the Bhakthi or Devotion through the study of the Alvar's Pasuras, Keerthans and Prabandas (Tamil slokas, songs and epic poems). Sri Nadhamuni strived hard to secure and to cull the writings of all the Alvars, which were collectively named "Nalayiram" (The Dravida Divya Prabhandha of 4000 (four) thousand pasuras). Yamunacharya not only mastered Nalayiram, but also added to it

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certain rare portions of the Alvars' writings which he had discovered. All the Prabandas of Nalayiram reveal the attitude of "Vishnu Samslesha Bhava".

The disciple of Sri Yamunacharya, namely, Sri Ramanujacharya, who succeed his Guru to the Vaishnava Visishtadvaita Mutt at Srirangam (1017 A.D. to 1137 A.D.) studied all the writings of the Dvadasalvars (Twelve Alvars) with a deep insight and inspiration, and did a thorough research of the Theory or Siddhantha of Visishtadvaita with reference to not only the writings of the Alvars and the two Vaishnava Acharyas, Nadamuni, and Yamunacharya, but also with reference to Prasthanathraya, Geetha and Vishnupurana and Bhodayana Vritthi etc, convinced the philosophers of his time of the entire Bharath regarding the truth of his Siddhantha, propagated his Siddhantha widely among the people, mostly of the South, strengthened the Siddhantha firmly, and could establish it permanently in the realm of philosophical thought, and thus arrived at this life's fulfilment! How?

The Visishtadvaita Siddhantha is based on a "scientific understanding of the universe and its existences" which is termed in Sanskrit as "Thathva Thraya Gnana".

"Parasara" dealt with "Thathva Thraya Gnana" specifically for the first time in his own production, Vishnu Purana. This knowledge of Thathva Thraya was revealed by Vyasa later in Narayanaopakyanam of Bhishma Parva of Maha Bharatha. Equipped with this knowledge, Sri Ramanuja, who had learnt that this knowledge of Thathva Thraya was more elaborately discussed by Bodhayana Rishi in his book, Bodhayana Vritthi, travelled all the way to Kashmir with his Sishya (disciple) Kuresa, and obtained the famous book of Bodhayana Vritthi with the help and cooperation of the King of Kashmir, and mastered the knowledge of Thathva Thraya, which stood him in good stead in his evolution of the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha.

## XVIII

**What is meant by the knowledge of Thathva Thraya?**

Thathva Thraya (the three aspects which constitute The Universe - and - the universal Lording force) are "the Achith, the Chith, and the Easwara" (The physical matter including the air, the live creatures and the Omnipresent life-energy). There is nothing in the universe beyond these three aspects. The "Achith" consists within itself all the physical aspects of nature, the Pancha Bhuthas, namely, the earth, water, heat and light, air and the empty space - (The five elements namely, Prithvi, Ap, Thejah, Vayu and Akash) - All the living beings in all Achith constitute the Chith. And there is the Omnipresent energy, called Easwara, pervading all physical matter (Achith), and all living beings, (Chith). Hence the Omnipresent Easwara energy or Vaishnava energy is called "Chidachidvishnu" (Chith + Achith + Vishnu). "Chidachidvishnu" means thus :- Chith = the living beings, Achith = physical matter, Vishnu = Omnipresent power, i.e., the Omnipresent energy pervading the whole universe, which in common language is called God. "Chidachidvishnu" scientifically appears to be a chemical name for the usually spoken word, God or Vishnu, which is a personification, a figure of speech.

The Advaita Siddhantha of Sri Adisankara maintains that the whole universe consists of only one and the same energy (an energy, unique, without a second one A + dvaita = not two), and what all we see are the temporary manifestations of that one and the same energy (the Advaita energy), which are termed as "Midhya or Maya" (illusion or unreality); what all we perceive is unreal (Maya). and the reality is incomprehensible.

The Visishtadvaita Siddhantha of Sri Ramanuja differs from the Advaita Siddhantha thus :- All the three aspects of the universe or nature or creation, namely the Thathva Thraya are real. All the three aspects, namely, Chith, Achith and Easwara, have been considered to have no beginning, a middle and an end (Adimadhyantha rahithas). The Advaita Easwara energy is so

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called as it pervades both the achith and the chith. That is, the Omnipresent Vaishnava energy, by virtue of its presence equally both in the Chith and Achith is called the Advaita energy. But the other two aspects, namely, the Chith and the Achith are true and eternal as the Advaita energy. It is the Advaita energy that is responsible for the forms and the beings of the other two aspects. The change of state of things and beings should not be considered that they don't exist and that they are unreal (Maya). That all things and beings in this nature undergo change of state is the "reality" about them. Each of the Thathva Thraya has its separate and unique quality and existence (Visishta Guna). This is the scientific knowledge about the Thathva Thraya on which Sri Ramanuja's "Visishtadvaita" Siddhantha is based, which is termed as "Qualified Advaita". This is the scientific and logical evolution of the philosophy of Visishtadvaita.

The knowledge of Thathva Thraya is based on the Brahmasuthra, Ekamevadvithiyam, which defines the Easwara energy or the Divine force.

Ekam + Eva + Advithiyam = One + That + without a second = That is the only one without a second. The Omnipresent Easwara energy is unique which is without a second (Advaita), and which is the same one (Advaita) pervading both the Achit and the Chith of the nature. It is in you, but you are not that. It prevades all universe, but all universe is not that. You must understand your littleness when you compare yourself with that. So you must surrender to that. You should not forget you are a speck of that, and that you are not different from that; You should feel one with that and you should develop the spirit of sympathy and universal brotherhood.

Similarly the Brahmasutra, on which the Advait Siddhantha of Sri Sankaracharya is based, namely, Thathvamasi, etymologically means "you are that". (Thath + Thvam + Asi = That + you + are). You are not completely and acutally that, but

**“you are that”. You are of that Omnipresent energy, and you must understand your relationship with that. Hence both the Brahmasuthras quoted above teach you the spirit of surrender to the Omnipresent Easwara energy or Vishnu; and you should not think that you are that entirely, and there is no scope for egoism.**

**In course of time after Sri Adisankaracharya, the meaning of the Brahmasuthra, “Aham Brahmasmi” was thwarted by the so called Brahmin Scholars, who asserted that, as they were learned in scriptures, they were Brahman itself. The suthra which was intended to enlighten man on his relationship with Brahman and to inculcate in him the spirit of surrender and universal brotherhood, unfortunately developed pride and egoism in the minds of the Vedic scholars. To uplift the man of scriptural erudition from this egoism and pride, Sri Ramanuja later strived hard to develop in man the spirit of surrender, selflessness, brotherhood and service.**

**Vishnu, Easwara, Brahman, all stand for the “Omnipresent and Omnipotent Energy” and the personifications used in epics should not be misunderstood. For example, Sagaram (sea) when personified becomes Sagaraha (the personified god of sea). The first word, Sagaram, is of neuter gender, and is factual; the second word Sagaraha is of masculine gender, and is a personification, a figure of speech. The figure of speech should not mislead you from the fact.**

**The Munithraya (Sri Nadhamuni, Yamunacharya and Sri Ramanujacharya) followed the truth of the knowledge based on the scientific principle of Thathva Thraya, and they tried to teach the truth of religion to people to extricate them from superstitions and meaningless customs, and to teach them the real Bhakthi marga (the path of devotion) to enable them to become lovers of peace, brotherhood and bliss. The last of the Munithraya, Srimal Ramanujacharya, particularly tried to convey the spirit of surrender and service to every section of humanity irrespective of class,**

caste, creed and sex through the Bhakthi Marga and Vishnu Samslesha Bhava of the Alvars.

Gnana (knowledge) and Bhakthi (Devotion) are not different from each other. The person of real Gnana about his self in relation to the universal self (Vishnu) alone inculcates within himself the spirit of devotion, which is universal love. The question which is better, Gnanayoga (the path of the knowledge) or Bhakthi yoga (the path of Devotion) is of a boy or an ignorant person! You can infer that one leads to the other by a study of Sri Adisankaracharya's Bhaja Govinda Slokas and "Lakshminrisimha sthothra". These two works clearly indicate the Devotional spirit (Bhakthi) of Sankara, who laid stress on Gnana (knowledge). Knowledge is fundamental; it leads to the spirit of devotion. In the series of steps for spiritual elevation, the order is-good practice, knowledge, wisdom, devotion, surrender, bliss etc.

Periyalvar in a particular sloka of his maintains thus regarding "realisation of truth" - Svadharma Gnana Vairagya Sadhya Bhakthyaika Gocharam Narayana Parabrahma ---". In the ladder of spiritually leading a person to the ultimate step of Bliss, there are four most important steps, namely, duty, knowledge, selflessness, and devotion, one leading to the next.

"Devotion" (Bhakthi) should not be misconstrued for the practice of Penance (Thapas) and Orthodox observance (Nishta). Bhakthi is in fact Vishnusamslesha Bhava (feeling one with the Omnipresent power) and universal brotherhood.

Observe the following sloka of The Geetha (Chapter 12 - sloka 12) :-

***"Sreyohi Jnanam abhyasath  
Jnana dhyanam visishyathe|  
Dhyanaath Karmaphala thyagah  
Thyagacchantir anantharam."***||

## XXII

**Substance: Knowledge is better than practice; meditation is superior to knowledge; renunciation of the fruits of actions is better than meditation; for renunciation brings forth peace. (Peace to the individuals, society and the world).**

So in the order of spiritual improvement (i.e. elevation of the self) understand where the stage of knowledge (Jnana) is. Geethacharya pronounces that selfless discharge of righteous action is paramount.

Who can get the spirit of the renunciation? The selfless person - who can inculcate the spirit of selflessness. The person of universal brotherhood - which person can nurture the spirit of universal brotherhood? The person of devotion, of surrender and of Vishnu - samslesha Bhava.

Hence real devotion (Bhakthi) should mean the spirit of surrender - selflessness - service.

Hence Sri Ramanuja, in his Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, preached the spirit of surrender - selflessness - service as the ultimate purpose of religion.

This unique spirit of surrender - selflessness - service can emanate only from Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, which affords eternal bliss to the devotee.

Prahlada, Vibhishana, Bhishma etc are epic examples of devotees who were ever in bliss owing to their Vishnu Samslesha Bhava. There are very many such examples of devotees, furnished in the three great Hindu epics, namely, Ramayana, Bharatha and Bhagavatha, who are laudable and exemplary.

Vishnusamslesha Bhava (feeling one with the entire Omnipresent power) is advocated by the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha which is based on the scientific knowledge of Thathva Thraya. Which section of the thinking people refuse to accept Thathva Thraya Jnana? Any thinking person, who grasps the truth

of Thathva Thraya, does surrender to the Omnipresent power (Vishnu); and such a person is called a Vaishnava. The Vaishnavite worships the auspicious aspect of the Omnipresent universal power (Vishnu), which is personified as Sreeman Narayana, the Anantha Kalyana Guna paripurna (Sreeman Narayana, who is an incarnation of all auspicious virtues).

Sri Ramanujacharya was clearly both a Visishtadvaiti and a Vaishnavite. He believed, in the science of Thathvathraya, and so he was a Visishtadvaiti; he believed in the all pervading (Vaishnava) energy, and hence he was a Vaishnavite. It goes without saying that he was a saivite! How can a real Vaishnavite avoid to be a saivite, when Saiva is an aspect of Vaishnava? Everybody does admire and enjoy the Saiva aspect as it is apparent and as it is essential for life, growth and existence; Regarding Vaishnava aspect, which is the whole, it depends upon man's understanding, comprehension and genius. Yamunacharya, the spiritual Guru of Sree Ramanuja, advocated that the devotee should consider qualities (Anantha Kalyana Guna Paripurna) and live in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava. Sree Ramanuja described at length all the saiva or auspicious qualities (Kalyan gunas) of Vishnu (the all pervading force) in his Gadya Thraya. The experience with the "Kalyana Gunas" of Vishnu is said to be Bliss or Moksha Bhava, which was ever the lot of the Alvars.

Considering the reformation that is expected to be brought over the devotee who understands and observes the doctrine of Visishtadvaita, he is in utter surrender to Vishnu, the Omnipresent power; The spirit of surrender generates the spirit of selflessness; The spirit of selflessness makes him Karmaphala Thyagi: These are the ethical and social values. The Karmaphala Thyagi lives in Samslesha Bhava with the auspicious all-pervading power, Vishnu and hence he is always in a state of elation and Bliss, which is otherwise called Moksha Bhava: These are the spiritual and psychological experiences. This is the uniqueness of the Visishtadvaita the Siddhantha over all other Siddhanthas. But

mind it that either the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha or the Advaita Siddhantha or the Dvaita Siddhantha, all are evolved from one and the same Bhagavad Geetha. The Visishtadvaita Siddhantha is considered the most complete essence of the Geetha. While the Advaita Siddhantha lays full stress on Jnana, the Visishtadvaita lays stress on Bhakthi - Prapathi Yoga, which is achieved from Jnana Yoga, which at the outset is the development of Karma Yoga, the proper discharge of duty. While the path of Visishtadvaita is righteous life, pleasurable experience and Bliss or Moksha Bhava, the path of Advaita is a hard unending search for truth.

“Vaishnava Samslesha” is to be understood clearly. The Samslesha Bhava is not new to us. It is what anybody feels at times. It is the psychological and emotional quality of the thinking mind. In the ordinary English language it is “living in imagination of an emotional import”.

Observe the following example :- children, ranging, say from four to eight years, mix together in a group and play certain group games. A four year old girl plays the part of a mother; she takes a rubber or wooden toy (of little baby) imagines it to be her own baby, gives it a bath, dresses it etc. Other children act as nurses or servants or helpers. The girl (playing the mother) lies on the bed with the baby toy. She acts as if she suckles the baby from her breasts. She kisses the toy baby, she sings a lullaby to send the baby to sleep..... This is “Samslesha Bhava”..... If any elder goes near her, while she is acting the part of mother, she suddenly throws the toy away, feels shy and runs away! All other children also suddenly stop their play! We might have witnessed several games like this played by children. Now examine the mind of the girl while she is acting as mother. Though temporarily, the girl feels that the toy is her own real baby; This is Samslesha Bhava. When she threw away the toy on seeing an elder approaching her, she was not in Samslesha Bhava. Do you think that the baby was mad while she was in Samslesha Bhava. No. Not at all.

Now we can comprehend the mind of a devotee, like an Alvar, when he is in Samslesha Bhava. He feels one with the auspicious Easwara. He is overjoyed in his imagination, forgetting his self. His mind has departed from his body. He has no "Dehabhimanam" - He is unconscious of his body. He has nothing to pray to God far. There is nothing like God granting his request or desire. Where are the wants and desire in respect of a selfless man? This is the joy which the true devotee achieves, and that is called Bliss or Moksha Bhava.

Sometimes a person, who claims himself to be an devotee (Bhaktha) tells others that he has seen his God in a dream or in a day dream. He describes his god whom he claims to have been. It would have been god in a particular form in which he has expected god to be. In this case you should not contradict him. The holy apparition which he claims to have witnessed and his hallucination. That he has seen his god is truth, a psychological truth. He has seen his god; but his god has not appeared before him - both are truths. The former is a psychological truth, and the latter is an eternal truth, a factual truth.

The son, the only son, an energetic elegant and lovable youth, is abroad in a far off foreign land in pursuit of his studies in a university. The mother of course feels the absence of her son from her at home. She craves to see her son, and to enjoy conversation with him though she quite well knows that she cannot expect the son to return within two years owing to known conditions and circumstances. She cannot control her anxiety and longing; that is the nature of the mother's heart. Do you know what this loving mother does? She often lies on her bed alone and in silence with closed eyes thinking about her son and seeing him in her mental eye. She feels as if her son were with her. She forgets herself suddenly as if she were in a hallucination; she feels the presence of her son with her; she smiles; she muses; this is "Samslesha Bhava". She feels to be with her son in her presence - suddenly she gets out of her day dream, and witnesses her real environment,

suddenly feels for the absence of the son, sheds a tear of love and anxiety musing within herself; Now she is out of "Samslesha Bhava". She is not associated with him mentally; she is in "Vislesha Bhava"; she is separated from him and she feels the separation. In her experience in Samslesha Bhava, she has seen her son in the form and gestures in which she had seen her son when he was with her before going abroad. But the son did not appear to her. It is a fact that she has seen her son in her dream; it is true to the dream. It is a fact that the son did not physically appear before her; this is also true to the fact.

And when the son actually returns home after his foreign studies, the expecting and anxious mother embraces him with tears of love in her eyes, and exclaims to him, "My dear son, I saw you often in my dreams. I saw you active and joyful. Once I saw you in my dream as a bridegroom! Ah-Ah." The son, who is amused at her mother's affection and fancy is tempted to respond to his mother in a happy humour, "Oh, was it so, mother! Did I appear to you in your dream? Did I appear before you with your loving daughter-in-law? Where is she? Dear innocent mother"; and she and her son hug each other in humour and joy which they are unable to control.

These are examples for "Samslesha Bhava". But the joy, surprise, satisfaction, peace, emotion etc. which the person enjoys and experiences during the while of his "Samslesha Bhava" are really splendid and beyond expression or description.

An unfortunate mother, suppose, has lost her only son aged five years. Her bereavement and grief, of course, are beyond description. It so happens sometimes that she intends to have some relief and comfort from her bereavement thus; She lies on her sad bed in silence and solitude, and begins to imagine her son to be lying with her on the bed. She forgets herself and lives in her own frenzy and fancy. She imagines to touch and to kiss her last son, to speak to him to have all experiences which she had when he was alive. Temporarily she forgets her actual surroundings,

circumstances and situations, and lives in her own imaginary world. This is an example of "Samslesha Bhava". This experience is "Sweet-sorrow". She gets some comfort while recollection all her past experience in her solitude. This is psychological.

In the state of Samslesha Bhava, the person lives in ecstasy and bliss in some circumstances, and he gets satisfaction and peace of mind in some other circumstances. This explanation of what Samslesha Bhava is can better be understood by readers who have some knowledge of psychology.

It was the Alvars who considered Sreeman Narayanamurty as a personified symbolic representation of the Omnipresent and All-pervading (Vaishnava) power, which is Thribhuvana Sundara (an incarnation of truth, beauty and goodness = Sathya - soundarya - suguna murty). They lived in Samslesha Bhava with Sreeman Narayana, The Anantha Kalyana Guna Paripurna, and were ever in bliss singing songs, slokas and pasuras in praise of Vishnu.

Kulasekharalvar, in his Samslesha Bhava, felt himself to be king Dasaradha, and composed his Thirumoli (his sacred composition) in beautiful pasuras expressing fatherly love for Sree Rama. This Thirumoli of Kulasekharalvar is an important literal piece in Dravida Divya Prabandha (The sacred Tamil Devotional epic). Periyalvar, in his Samslesha Bhava, imagined himself to be Yasoda Devi and composed his famous Thirumoli describing the beauty of Sree Krishna as a lovable baby at bath, at dressing, at ornamentation, at food and drink, at lulling him to sleep with a lullaby and so on. Andal (Godadevi), in her Samslesha Bhava, felt herself to be a Yadava girl of Gokulam (Thiruvayappadu), loved Sree Krishna as her chosen lover and life partner, and produced two great Prabandhas, Thiruppavai and Nanchiyar Thirumoli, which are renowned as great devotional poems of Tamil devotional literature. The readers can learn more and more about the Alvars, Samslesha Bhava, their divine experience and their sacred ecstasy from a study of my other

Devotional production, namely, Alvarula Divya Vaibhavam, Sreebhakthisaram and Thirumala Thirupathi Venkateswara Divya Vaibhavam. (The first two books are produced both in Telugu and in English and the third one is produced in Telugu only).

I am trying to bring to light to the advantage of the readers and devotees in simple and direct way the philosophical truths contained, in several Dravida Prabandhas (Tamil Devotional epic poems) produced by the twelve Alvars who lived during sixth to ninth centuries A.D. long before Sri Ramanujacharya (1017-1137 A.D.) the founder and propagator of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, in some Dravida Prabandhas produced in Sri Ramanuja's time by his disciples like Yagnamurty (Sri Arulalapperumal Emberumanar) and Dasaradhi (Mudaliyandan), and in some other Dravida Divya Prabandhas produced after Sri Ramanuja by the followers of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha and Ramanuja Matha like Thiruvarangathamudanar Sri Manavala Mamuni, Pilla Lokam Jeear etc. This divine material is planned to be presented in book series by name "Sree Bhakthi Saram" not only about selected Dravida Divya Prabandhas but also about selected portions from Maha Bharatha and Mahabhagavatha. Books 1 and 2 deal with Dravida Divya Prabandhas, and this book, "Andal's Thiruppavai" is an English version of one of the five topics of "Sree Bhakthi Saram - Part I" originally produced by me in Telugu.

As all the ancient Hindu scriptures had been produced in Sanskrit, as a very few pandits belonging to only one caste of people could read them, as there had been an unhealthy and undesirable ban on all other castes from learning Sanskrit language and reading the scriptures, as even the few so called Sanskrit scholars were not critical scholars and researchers, as the priests even in temples were reciting the scriptures without understanding them, and as it follows that the ignorant listeners did not understand and what they heard, etc, the Alvars of the old, who were wise and scholarly, intellectual and kind, sympathetic and serviceable,

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who realised that recitals without understanding were of no use and purpose, though they were erudite scholars, writers and singers in Sanskrit, chose to produce the scriptural knowledge in the regional and popular language, Tamil so that all the people, educated and uneducated, could understand the contents of the scriptures: The wisdom, the discretion and the generosity of the Alvars were such!

I, in turn, for my part, got the substance of some of the Dravida Prabandhas from the book, "Nityanusandhanam" composed by Sreenivasa Ramanuja Das, and for the benefit of the Andhra readers, I have furnished substance in Telugu for each Dravida Pasura, under which I have furnished a detailed explanation of all devotional and ethical and literal aspects of each pasura, under which I have furnished a detailed explanation of all devotional and ethical and literal aspects of each pasura. This is the nature of the project of my "Sribhakthi Sara Book Series" in Telugu. These explanation are true to life, nature and creation based on Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, which may enlighten the devotees in the path of truth and devotion. All are Vaishnavas in the sense that they believe that god is "Omnipresent Power" (Vaishnava energy), and real devotion is surrender-cum-service. In this case who will reject the truth of Vaishnavism and Visishtadvaita Siddhantha?

In this book, Andal's Thiruppavai, each Tamil pasura is presented (having been transliterated in Telugu) followed by its substance in English, which is again succeeded by a detailed account of all its implications, literal, devotional and ethical.

As the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha is reflected in Thirumanthra, Dvaymanthra and Geetha Charma Sloka, and as Thirumalesa Sree Venkateswara is the interpreter of the substance of the Geetha Charama sloka with his "Upaya and Abhaya Hasthas", I feel it quite fitting and proper to humbly and piously

dedicate this book, Andal's Thiruppavai, to the lotus feet of Sree Venkateswara Swami, in the same manner in which I have already dedicated to Thirumalesa all my devotional productions so far produced, namely, Alvarula Divya Vaibhavam (Telugu and English), Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam (Telugu and English), Thirumala Thirupathi Venkateswara Divya Vaibhavam (Telugu), Vasthavam - Vyasa Panchakam (Telugu and English) and Sri Bhakthi Saram - Book 1 (Telugu).

I humbly confess that I have discharged my legitimate duty in dedicating all my devotional production to Thirumalesa, who is our family deity, as our family from ancient times had been and has been observing the principles of Visishtadvaita. My parents, Thiruvongadaiah and Lakshmamma, who were Visishtadvaitis and Chattada Sreevaishnavas had dedicated themselves to Sri Venkateswara. Similarly my late brother Sreenivasulu and sister Ranganayakamma were devotees of Thirumalesa. My other brothers, Narasimhaiah and Venkata Ramanujaiah and my sister Sreedevamma are also worshippers of Sri Venkateswara. For the pleasure of all of them and for my self satisfaction, I have decided to dedicate all my devotional works to Thirumalesa.

Through out my official life of 34 years as teacher, Headmaster and Principal, I administered a greater stress on the ethical and disciplined development of the young scholars till my retirement in July 1975, after which I have undertaken to produce Devotional and Ethical literature to promote in the minds of the people a thinking attitude for truth and universalism, and to foster in them the spirit of surrender - selflessness - service. The only pleasure and satisfaction for me shall be to find more and more thinking readers, who in turn will propagate the values of truthful knowledge and serviceable life. That is why I am happy to give away full copy rights to T.T.D. authorities. For me Thirumalesa, the Archavathara, is the Acharya Supreme teaching me the substance of the Charama sloka of the Geetha, which is the ultimate philosophy of life.

I offer my thanks of gratitude to the T.T.D. authorities for kindly adopting my religious and devotional production as T.T.D. publications. As all my writings are meant to spread the fragrance of Visishtadvaitha Siddhantic principles, and as the Thirumalesa shrine is related to Vaishnavism and Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha, it is quite fitting and desirable that the T.T.D. authorities should evince greater interest to publish books on this type of literature and to enable a wide evide of readers here and abroad to have printed copies of this literature. As Thirumalesa is the interpreter of the meaning of the Charama sloka of the Geetha, which is the essence of Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha, He is Acharya Supreme (A Supreme religious teacher); the Thirumalesa shrine is a supreme Vaishnava Visishtadvaitha Peetham (a religious institution). Hence it is but duteous that the T.T.D. authorities should adopt the pious project of propagation of Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha, through proper literature.

When a Vaishnava shrine commands considerable financial resources, it will be failing in its religious duty if it does not undertake publishing of Vaishnava Visishtadvaithic literature. To enable the people and devotees to carry on their worship meaningfully, and to enjoy the different activities and performances of the Shrine with proper Samslesha Bhava, it is necessary to equip the devotes with proper literature based on the true and scientific aspects of Visishtadvaitha. The T.T.D. authorities richly deserve to be congratulated by writers and devotees on their pious project of carrying on with the publication of devotional literature; this is praiseworthy. This project will enable the spread of true religious fragrance among people which is a true development for establishing peace and tolerance among people, which are drastically lacking now. It is, because the authorities of different prominent Hindu Shrines and Mutts in India have not taken such a responsibility of propagating truth and brotherhood, that religious strifes and heinous customs like untouchability still persist in India society. What do you think the

reason, for the Harijans embracing other foreign religions, to be? Religious faith yet cannot easily be erased. May religion assert its truth and the purpose of universal brotherhood through proper publication of true religious literature without tinges of superstitions and differences.

It is expected that a study of this general introduction will enable the readers to understand and directly the contents of the particular or special introduction which follows in the next page.

## SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

**“Thiruppavai”** the Tamil Devotional epic poem of prayer, was produced by **“Andal”**, a maiden-saint-poet, who was one of the Twelve Alvars. (Thiru = sacred, ppavai = prayer). **“Nanchiar Thirumoli”** was her other famous **“Dravida Divya Prabandha”** (Tamil sacred epic poem). (Nanchiar = sacred mother; Thirumoli = sacred expression or production). There cannot be any Vaishnava who has not heard of **“Thiruppavai”**. It needs to mention regarding pandits (erudite scholars in literature) who are well-versed in Tamil or Dravida Literature.

Thiruppavai is a supreme Tamil prabandha of thirty sacred, charming, splendid and elegant pasuras. (Pasura = sloka = stanza). It is enshrined not only with piety and devotion, but also with equisite and touching description of Nature. It is honoured as a rare pious literal piece in Tamil Literature.

Andal occupies a supreme status in the kingdoms of Devotion and Literature on account of her great twin prabandhas, Thiruppavai and Nanchiar Thirumoli. She is given the unique status of **“Saint-poet”** in Tamil literature. (All the Alvars were saint-poets; Vyasa and Valmiki were saint poets in Sanskrit; Pothana and Vemana were saint-poets in Telugu; These are of course a few examples).

To understand the production and the mission of Thiruppavai, the reader should have some knowledge of the splendid life of its author, Andal.

The story of Andal’s birth is wonderful; her life is splendid and divine :-

Vishnu Chitta, otherwise famously called Periyalvar, of Sreevilliputtur, who was devoted to **“Vata pathra shayi Sreemannarayana”** of the temple there, as the symbolic

representation of the Omnipresent and Omnipotent Vaishnava power, used to present to the “Archavathara” in the temple, flower garlands, which he prepared out of choicest beautiful fragrant flowers like jasmins, chamomiles, parijathams, lotus flowers etc. and and Thulasi, Maruvam and Davanam (Sweet smelling leaves).

One morning as he was slowly strolling among the Thulasi plants and the flower plants in the sweet smelling temple garden, Vishnu Chitta suddenly espied an angelic infant baby girl, looking cheerfully, calmly and innocently with smiling lips and quivering golden tiny limbs. The baby, with sweet smiles and shaking little limbs, was like the lotus, just blossomed by the touch of the morning bright red sun's rays, with petals gently fluttering in the sweet cool morning breeze. It appeared as though the baby was accorded a sweet affectionate and pleasant welcome by the beauties of nature, such as the melodious tunes, cries and chirpings of the cuckoos, the parrots and the little birds of variety, the fragrant gentle breeze from the numerous fresh blossoms and the gentle bright morning sun.

Vishnu Chitta, who lived in Samslesha Bhava with Nature (Prakrithi) and the Omnipresent force (Purusha), took the baby into his pious and loving hands, considered it as a divine gift to him, adopted it as his daughter, named her Godadevi (Goda=Earth, Devi=Lady=She, who was found on the earth = Bhudevi), and was bringing her up most dearly in his humble cottage of leaves (Parnasala) in the temple garden to the admiration of his disciples. This was the wonderful advent of Godadevi, and she was considered Ayonija as was Sitha, the daughter of King Janaka. (Ayonija=Not born to human parents). The Vaishnava devotees express their respect and salutation to Godadevi in a beautiful Sanskrit sloka thus :-

***“Karkate purvaphalgunyam***

***Thulasi kananobdhavam|***

***pandye visvambharam Godam***

***Vande Sreeranganayakim||”***

**Substance:**

“I bow in salutation to Sreeranganayaki (Andal, the consort of Sreeranganayaka), Godadevi, born in Karkata Lagna of Purvaphalgun Nakshthra of the month of Adi, in the Thulasi garden of Sreevilliputtur of the world-renowned pandya kingdom.”

The Vaishnava Bhakthas (Devotees) consider her as the incarnation of Bhudevi, consort of Sreemaha Vishnu.

Godadevi, who grew up like the moon of Shukla paksha (shukla paksha = the first fortnight of the month after the new moon day upto the fullmoon day) came to the age of twelve. Even from her childhood onwards, she inculcated within herself a pure and devotional attitude, and in her Vishnu Samslesha Bhava she was ever in a blissful state of mind.

It was the usual evening engagement for Vishnuchitta to prepare a grand and beautiful garland of fragrant flowers and sacred Thulasi, to have an evening bath and traditional prayers, to take the basket of flowers and garland to the temple, to offer in loving respect his garland of flowers to the God Vatapathra Shayi, to receive from the high priest "Thirtha-Prasada-Shatahkopa" and to return to his cottage in a method state of Bliss.

It so used to happen every evening in the cottage before Vishnu Chitta started for the temple with the basket of flowers and garland, that, while Vishnuchitta was out in the garden having bath etc. at the well, Godadevi wore the garland around her neck hanging down from over her chest, looked into the mirror and enjoyed the pleasant sight of her own beauty in the mirror. It so happened that, one evening, Vishnu Chitta saw, on suddenly entering the cottage, Godadevi standing at the mirror with the garland round her neck, the garland that was intended to be offered

to God in the temple. Baffled with surprise and fear of God, he exclaimed to his daughter, who had just removed the garland and placed it in its usual place, the basket on seeing her father entering the cottage, and who was still standing near the mirror in fear, shyness and silence, "why, my dear daughter, Goda, this sacrilegious act!" He turned aside in displeasure, disappointment and disgust, felt sorry and distressed for his inability that evening to offer garland to God as there was no time to pluck flowers and to make another garland, and lay silently on his bed in meditation for the atonement of the wrong done to the divinity by his daughter. Vishnuchitta began to ponder over thus, "My daughter, Goda, is pious and wise. It is quite clean to her nature to contemplate any undivine and sacrilegious act... I often see her, in the Thulasi garden, in complete Samslesha Bhava with Sree Krishna, the young son of Yasoda, as my humble self is in Samslesha Bhava with Sree Krishna, the Geethacharya. She dresses her body and dresses her hair in the fashion of Golla Bhama (Gopika kanya = the maiden of Gokulam, the shepherds village, of which Krishna's father Nandagopa was the Head), walks and moves like a Gopika in dramatic and appropriate gestures, smiles and talks within herself, laughs and runs as if to catch Sree Krishna whom perhaps she imagines to see. She might have been worn the garland intended for God in her Advaita Bhava (Aham Brahmasmi), in her Sesha Seshi Bhava (I am a part of the universal self), and in her Krishna Samslesha Bhava. In that case I can't consider her guilty of sacrilege".

On rising from bed early in the morning, Vishnuchitta found the garland hanging from the peg as fresh as it was the previous evening, to his pleasure and surprise. Vishnuchitta felt in his Vishnu Samslesha Bhava that God told him that his way of thinking and conclusion were correct, and that the garland once used by Godadevi did not become polluted, and that it was then fit to be offered to the God in the temple as Godadevi was Sri Krishna

**Samsleshi.**

Vishnu chitta, after his morning bath and his usual daily ceremonial observances of prayer etc, took the garland from the peg, went to the temple and handed it over to the priest to be offered to God. When it was so done, the garland appeared to shine with double refreshness and brightness; and the Archavathara, in double glory of decoration of the garland, appeared to Vishnuchitta, in his Samslesha Bhava, as if smiling in acceptance of the garland, once already worn by young Godadevi. Vishnuchitta was in an ecstasy; He felt proud of his daughter for her Bhakthi and Krishna Samslesha Bhava, which were recongised and blessed by God himself. From that time onwards Godadevi acquired the titled name, "Amukthamalyada". (Amuktha + Malya + do = Already worn once and left + garland + giver = The giver of the garland already once worn by her).

That was why Parasara Bhattar, who succeeded Sri Ramanuja to the Visishtadvaita peetham, produced the following Sanskrit sloka in praise of Godadevi :-

**Sloka :** *"Nilatthunga sthanagiri thati  
suptha mudbodhya Krishnam|  
parardham svamshruthi satha  
shirasiddha madhya payanthi|  
svocchishtayam srajinigalitham  
yablathkrithya bhungthe |  
Godathasmai nama idhamidam  
Bhuya Evasthu bhuyaha" ||*

**Substance:**

"The Omnipresent Sri Krishna lies at rest on the mountain slopes of truth. Godadevi, in her Samslesha Bhava, feels herself as one with Him, for she knows the "Sesha-Seshi Bhava" (God is

everything and the beyond, which is called Sesha or remainder. Any creature on earth is a part of this "Sesha"). Hence she adorns the Lord's neck with the Thulasi garland which she had already worn once; thus she claims her rightful relation with Him. To such Godadevi, I bow in salutation".

"The Omnipresent Divine Energy is said to spread itself on the slopes of Truth. It means that to learn about God is to learn about Truth, for Truth is God. It is natural that Godadevi, who feels the "Sesha Seshi Bhava" and the "Krishna Samslesha Bhava", should feel she is one with the divinity and that she is ever in bliss".

It was a divine wonder that Godadevi, whose birth itself was a wonder, should have acquired the title, amukthamalyada, a meaningful, pleasurable, wonderful and spiritual name.

It is to be recollected with pleasure that Sri Krishna Devaraya, the greatest of the Vijayanagara kings, produced an eminent Telugu "Padyakavya" (poetical work) of name Amukthamalyada.

"If you remember the body, you forget the soul: If you remember the soul, you forget the body" is a scriptural quotation. The contrast between persons after physical comforts and those after the knowledge of the self (i.e. the Dehabhimanis and the Athma Swarupa Jnanis) is similar to the contrast between the atom and the mountain, similarly the contrast between the Rishis after knowledge (Jnanayogi's) and the ever blissful Alvars (Prapattis) is such, so also is the contrast between the Advait's and the visishtadvaitis in respect of peace and bliss. Do the penance and thirst for knowledge eternal (Thapas and Brahmajijnasa) get you peace and satisfaction? When the Omnipresent Divinity is incomprehensible (Avagmanasagocharam = beyond mind and expression) where is the point of attaining the knowledge eternal? Hence where are peace and satisfaction to the so called spiritual

seeker of Brahman? (Knowledge eternal). It is only a devotee (Bhaktha) with the spirit of surrender and dedication (Saranagathi and Prapatthi) that is ever in peace, satisfaction and Bliss. As the spirit of surrender develops the spirit of selflessness, it gets the Bhaktha, Bliss or Joy Eternal; it was already observed that a totally selfless person is a renouncer of the fruits of his action (Karmaphala Thyagi). The spirit of selflessness gets peace and joy not only to the individual but also to the society.

In respect of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, Swardharahitya Bhava (The spirit of selflessness), and Bhakthi Bhava (The spirit of devotion), daughter Godadevi, in a measure, excelled the father, Vishnuchitta! In her utter surrender to the divinity, she felt one with it. Godadevi actually approached the Archavathara, Sreeranganadha, and expressed her eternal relationship (sesha-Seshi Bhava) with the Lord. She appeared purer and clearer, in her presumption that she was one with a Lord, than her father. Godadevi chose to marry Sreeranganadha, approached the Lord's feet, and became one with the Lord; She became Ranganayaki (The consort of Sri Ranganayaka) and was considered by the devotees as Andal (The mother, the universal mother). This wonderful and splendid biography of Andal is furnished in full detail in my book Alvarula Divya Vaibhavam (Telugu and English) which the readers may go through with interest and benefit.

From her childhood onwards, Andal was piously experiencing "Bhagavadgunanubhava" (feeling and experiencing the auspicious and splendid qualities of the Omnipresent power in nature and creation). This is the basis for her production of the two sacred works, Thiruppavai and Nachiyar Thirumoli.

It is of course easier and more natural that a lady should love a man than a man should love another man-friend. Andal, who was a young maid loved God as a young friend. She loved Sree Krishna, who for her was the personification of the universe, the

universal lording force, and particularly the truth, goodness and beauty of the universe. This is in brief the substance of "Thiruppavai" which Andal composed out of her pure love and devotion for the truth, goodness and beauty of Sri Krishna, The Thirubhuvana Sundara (The incarnation of all universal beauty).

The following is the context, the gist and the philosophical mission of Thiruppavai:

"On the pretext of inviting Sri Krishna for the early downbath in connection with her commencement and accomplishment of the pious bath programmes of Dhanurmasa or Margalimasa (the name of a particular month in the year generally from about 12th or 13th December and ending with 13th or 14th of January, the Bhogi and Sankranthi festivals), Andal approaches Sri Krishna (the personification of the Easwara energy of the Thathva Thraya) and expresses her longing and entreaty, "This humble soul of mine is a remainder of your soul, the universal and eternal soul (This is the Seshi Bhava of Andal, the spirit of a real philosopher who has attained swarupajnana i.e. Athmajnana i.e. the truth of what 'one' is in relation to the universe and the universal lording force). That this humble soul should exist meaningfully, may this soul have the privilege of your worship and service. May this privilege be enjoyed by every human soul through all the eternity of Time".

Andal wishes that every human being should be consciousness of its "Sesha Seshi Bhava" with the Omnipresent (Vaishnava) soul as she is, and that it should exist in a "State of Bliss" (Moksha Bhava). She wishes that every human being, like herself, should have these two regular engagements, namely, Thiruvadhyanam (sacred meditation about the universal Truth) and Thiuvaradhana (worship and service of the Omnipresent through all fellow-beings). This is the mission of Andal to all humanity through her sacred work, Thiruppavai. This is the Karmaphala Thyaga of Andal (the renunciation of fruit of action)

in other words, "The Moksha Sanyasa Yoga". (Andal is not satisfied with her unique privilege of being free from earthly bondage; she wishes that this unique privilege should be enjoyed by all human beings. This is the speciality of the king on the part of a Visishtadvaithi as against the so called Advaiti who is said to be in his endless search for God (Truth) in his Jnana Yoga). Andal, like all other Alvars, out her Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava, express benediction (Mangalasanam) to all human beings.

When Godadevi attained marriageable age, having inferred that her father, Vishnuchitta, was on the earnest look-out for her bride-groom, she made herself bold enough to express her mind openly without any reserve to her father, "Dear father, no human bridegroom is competent to marry me; I have already chosen God as my husband. My soul is divinely wedded to the universal soul, the paramathma". She thus expressed her strong will definitely and precisely without giving any scope for any further argument. The father could give no scope for any further argument. The father could give no reply to his daughter who was an abode and mine of knowledge and piety.

Godadevi was in all enthusiasm and devotion in her "Samslesha Bhava" with "God Vatapathrasayi" (Sri Krishna) of the temple of her own place, Sri Villiputtur; with deep fervor and enthusiasm, she entered the temple alone one evening in all innocence to have communion with God, Krishna. As the Archavathara (Idol) did not respond to her, she felt disappointed and fell in a deep meditation and reverie, "Is there not anybody else, other than myself, who could dwell in Samslesha Bhava with the Archavathara (God - Idol)?..... What is my state? What is my realization? What is my disappointment and what is my bewilderment? What is my innocence and what is my ignorance? Let me come to a proper understanding of "Myself and of the Eternal Truth!..."

Godadevi had learnt from Mahabhagavatha Epic that the Gopikas (Yadava Maidens), who were much fascinated with the beauty and goodness of Sri Krishna and who were enamoured of his divine and splendid notes of his flute, were fond of Sri Krishna's company, and they felt that they were in a divine bliss as long as they were in his company. During the time when Sri Krishna was away from them, they could not bear the feeling of separation from Krishna, and they sought a mental comfort and peace by their actions in imitation to Krishna in his playful gestures, in his playing the flute and in his so many attractive and splendid actions. But she could not resort to such actions and dispositions of the Gopika maidens, as Krishna belonged to a time, far in the distant past. She had an alternative idea of visiting Gokulam, Madhura etc. where Sri Krishna had moved during his life time, of visiting the Yamuna river where Sri Krishna had bathed, of visiting Govardhanagiri which Krishna had lifted etc. and thus to make her life pure and sacred. But this was also not possible for her in view of the great distance between those places in the North of Bharath and her native place, Sri Villiputtur in the South of Bharath; she felt distressed in her helplessness! Siva Dhanassu (The bow of Siva) was set as a test for Sri Rama to display his mighty strength and to win the hand of Sitha; A set of seven strong sinewed brazen browny oxen was set as a test, and Sri Krishna vanquished them, showed his matchless might and won the hand of Neeladevi. What was there as a test before her by which she could establish her strength of piety to win the hand of Sri Krishna who was separated from her naturally in time and distance!? She pondered over for a long time.

At last Godadevi came to this decision: She would consider herself as a Gopika maiden and would live in Samslesha Bhava with Sri Krishna; she would consider her own native place as Gokulam and her vast Thulasi garden as Brindavanam.

As the dramatic personnel, the actors, appear on the stage like Sreerama and Sri Krishna in their colour and costume and in their speech and actions, Godadevi (Andal), though she was a Brahmin girl in up-bringing, dressed herself as a Gopika girl, moved in such gestures and danced in such a way, sang songs in praise of Sri Krishna in such a feeling of reality in her Samslesha Bhava, that she was appearing, for all intents and purpose, like a Gopika maiden. She considered Sri Villiputtur as Gokulam, the young girls there as Gopika maidens, the temple there with its compound wall and precincts as Sri Krishna's palace, and the divine Idol of Sri Vatapathrasayi as Sri Krishna, and in her utter emotional imagination, she appeared in clothes, in hair dress, in gestures, in words and in culture just like a Gopika maiden.

It was in this emotional feeling of Samslesha Bhava with Sri Krishna that she composed her two great works of Tamil literature, namely, Nachiar Thirumoli and Thiruppavai. In "Nachiar Thirumoli", Andal narrated what she experienced in a series of dreams in her Krishna Samslesha Bhava; she narrated in splendid Dravida pasuras her dream sequence how Lord Sri Krishna married her in a highly ceremonial marriage function in all splendour in the presence of a splendid gathering.

The theme and the splendid excellence of the other prabandha, namely Thiruppavai are presented in this book in all detail, and of course, this is the purpose of this book.

The following is the context designed and adopted by Andal for her sacred Prabandha, Thiruppavai :-

Andal who considers her native place, Sri Villiputtur, as Gokulam as already mentioned, calls it Thiruvayippadu in her Prabandha. (Thiruvayipaddu = Thiru + Vayippadu = sacred + Gokulam = sacred + shepherd village. At this context I, the author of this book feel an undefined pleasure to think of my surname or

family name, which is "Thiruvayippadu". Evidently my ancestors, who had migrated to these parts once upon a time in the distant past from Sri Villiputtur, should have chosen "Thiruvayippadu" as their surname instead of Srivilliputtur, owing to their respect and attachment to Thiruppavai Prabandha and Andal.

Srimannarayana, the Omnipresent Vishnu, the Lord of all wealth and enjoyment, had given all wisdom and knowledge through the Vedas to the humanity so that they might live long in safety and in joy and make their lives purposeful and fruitful. But it so happened that human beings, perhaps by their instinctive behaviour, trespassed the scriptural rules and ways, and trod new grounds of evil in their own pride, ignorance and selfishness. When, as a result of this, utter confusion prevailed in the human society, God, the creator and the merciful, took the human form, lived among human beings as a jewel of the human race, and with his eminence of Beauty, Truth and Goodness, of knowledge, wisdom and leadership and of splendid miraculous and kind actions, corrected the human race, directed them to goodness, truth and beauty, and enlightened them on the purpose and fruitfulness of life. It was thus the same good and merciful Lord Srimannarayana, with the same good and merciful intention and for the same good and merciful purpose of putting an end of evil and fostering virtue, was born as Sri Krishna in Thiruvayippadu (Gokulam) and gave the unique pleasure of his company to the Gopika girls through his handsome ways and miraculous deeds. The Gopikas were believed to be great saints in their previous births, who had chosen to be born as Gopikas for the fulfillment of their desire to enjoy the company of the Lord in all its joy, fullness and splendour. (This is of course the usual epic way of establishing the importance of an extremely great and virtuous person who could render splendid service to the humanity by his virtue, knowledge and leadership, the humanity that believes in

rebirth and the incarnations of God. But what we actually learn, from the pages of the history of the human race, is that there had been now and then, after long intervals of time, great personalities of extraordinary intellect and abilities in different walks of life who acted as benefactors of the human race in a certain field in a certain part of the world. Man, by nature, has the tendency to consider such great benefactors as incarnations of God, the supreme power. Whatever it is, great personalities of rare virtue and abilities illumined the dark folds of time in the course of the history of the world. Of course Sri Krishna was a jewel of wisdom who gave the Eternal Geetha knowledge to the world, which will ever brighten the paths of the human race. In this aspect, people, why, scholars and saints, presume Sri Krishna as the Divine Geethacharya.

The Gopika maidens of Gokulam (Thiruvayippadu), of whom Andal presumed herself to be one, had been playmates of Sri Krishna since their early childhood; and now Sri Krishna was a newly married young prince of Yaduvamsa (Yadava dynasty). Even then, i.e., even in their youthful years, the Yadava maidens were moving closely with Sri Krishna as usual as playmates; and the elderly Yadava gentleman could not relish it as desirable or honourable. They met at an evening conference and began to discuss the affair thus, "so far, till now, our young daughter maidens have been playmates of Prince Krishna and all of them have been together at play, at song, at folk dance and at every moment of pleasurable company except during night time, the sleeping time. We have so far allowed them free movements with Sri Krishna, and it has been a pleasure to us all to see our daughters in the company of the good and cheerful Prince Krishna; we considered it proper and honourable too; Our ladies also considered it so. But now the situation is different. Our daughters have become mature and have come to marriageable age, and Sri Krishna has been

recently married to Rukmini and Satya. At this stage it is not proper nor honourable for us to allow our young daughters to move and converse freely with Sri Krishna. It is better we keep them aloof from him. We cannot presume things go on smoothly all the time. Any untoward gestures of Krishna towards our daughter might create awkward situation, and we, the common folk, cannot raise a finger at the Royal prince. We will have to be in shame and in silence if anything goes wrong. Why should we put our leg in the mire and then take the trouble of cleaning it with water? Prevention is better than rectification. When once we allow our daughters to move out to the well, the pond, the river, the garden, the temple etc, we cannot prevent them from the influence of Sri Krishna, who is so handsome and welcome with all his auspicious virtues. So, the best thing we should do is to keep our daughters always indoors and not to allow them to step out of the house-gates". This suggestion was unanimously accepted and adopted, and the Yadava gentlemen and ladies, from the very next morning, strictly instructed their daughters not to stir out of their houses. Andal (who was a yadava girl as per her presumption in her piously concocted epic, Thiruppavai) was also kept under house-arrest!

It so happened that after a time of a few months, the people of Thiruvayippadu witnessed a severe drought owing to absence of rain throughout the season. Lands could not be cultivated; there was no green fodder for the cattle; the climate in general was hot and unpleasant. There was the pious custom of performing Varuna Yagna or Varuna Nomu in those days in that part of the land to invoke God Varuna or God Indra for rain. Their belief was that young maidens and young youths of marriageable age should piously come together and perform a vow (Nomu) to God Varuna or Indra for one month everyday after a pious morning both in the Yamuna river, which would reward them with a downpour of rain.

## XLVII

So the yadava elders of Thiruvayippadu (Gokulam) met at an evening conference to which all the young maidens, the youths and Sri Krishna were invited. The elders said, "Oh, Gopika maidens and youths! You should all join together and perform 'Varuna Nomu' to invoke the God of rain to bless us with good rains for the benefit of our comfortable lives, for the crops and for the cattle. O, Krishna, you are the wisest youth, the prince and the youth leader of our Gokulam; and so you should act as 'Ghataka' (agent or leader) and see and supervise the successful conduct of Varuna Nomu".

Sri Krishna at first did not accept to act as Ghataka for Varuna Nomu; but the Yadava elders prevailed upon him strongly and requested him to condescend their plea and to act as 'Ghataka' for the Varuna Nomu in the general interest of their land. Said they to Sri Krishna, "Oh, good and wise Krishna! Don't consider us to have underestimated your goodness and virtue as we have till now. Kept our daughters in house arrest with instructions not to be playmates of yourself. We consider it as a flaw on our part; and it is due to normal human being; O Krishna, we realize your flawless personality and your virtuous character. You are our benefactor, our protector and our guide. We can't forget your lifting on your little finger the Govardhana Hill and your dances on the hoods of the terrible serpent Kaliya. Having known your greatness, your miracles and your virtues, we have committed a mistake in considering that your company might land our daughters into some criticism. Kindly excuse us, O Lord and accept to act as Ghataka for the Varuna Nomu in the interest and welfare of our land". Sri Krishna in the end yielded and satisfaction of all, the Yadava elders, the Yadava youths and the Yadava maidens. The yadava maidens to the care and supervision of Krishna requesting him to commence the Varuna Nomu, the every next day, the first day of Dhanurmasa month or the Margasirsha month.

## XLVIII

The same night, early after supper, Sri Krishna, the gopika maidens and the Gopika youths, having felt it was an auspicious time, gathered in Brindavan garden, the Gokula community garden, and spent their time happily in song, dance and different playful activities to mark their joy in having to mix together from the next morning onwards in the performance of their happy and sacred Varuna Nomu or Dhanumasa Yagna. They had a pleasurable time till late midnight, when Sri Krishna, the "Ghataka-designate" of the Varuna Yagna to be commenced the very next morning, announced to the Yadava maidens, "It is now nearly mid-night and it is proper for us all to return to our homes and go to bed. You know we have to begin our 'Varuna Vow' tomorrow itself. We will have to go to the sacred Yamuna river for our dawn-sacred-bath tomorrow. I caution you that you should rise from your beds quite early at dawn and you should in a gathering go to my palace and wake me up. Do you understand? Yes, let us disperse; Goodnight!" They all dispersed to their homes and Sri Krishna entered "Satya's Sadan". (The palace of Satya Devi, Nappina Piratti..... Nappinna Piratti = The younger mother, as she was the second younger Consort of the Lord).

That night, though the Gopika maidens went to bed so late, they could not get into sleep as their minds were filled with their thoughts about Sri Krishna, the Thribhuvana Sundara, the most handsome in all the three worlds in respect of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. As they were recollecting in tranquility their experiences with Krishna the very previous evening, they were awake till very late in the night, far beyond midnight and they could not wake up from their beds early in the dawn as already programmed.; They had been instructed by Sri Krishna at the time of dispersal the previous night from their joyful activities that all the Gopika maidens should get up from their beds at "Brahmamuhurtha" (early dawn), gather together to proceed to Sri Krishna's residence to rouse him from sleep so that all of them

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headed by Krishna could proceed to sacred Yamuna river for the sacred dawn-bath; that was the first day of Margali masa or Dhanurmasa.

Andal poses herself (in Thiruppavai) as the very first Gopika maiden who rises from sleep at early dawn according to stipulation. Some Gopikas rise up from sleep just along with Andal under an uncomfortable stress of drowsiness, but are unable to get out of their beds, and they still lie on beds. The gopika maidens, who rise up from beds early in time, of whom Andal is the leader, rouse up other Gopika girls from their beds. They all gather together into a joyful and pious crowd, proceed to Sri Krishna's palace, wake him up with their auspicious entreaties, and submit to him their request or desire.

As Arjuna, who entertained doubts even after listening to the whole of Geetha (The eighteen chapters) from Sri Krishna, attained the knowledge and wisdom Eternal with the hearing of Charama Sloka from Sri Krishna, which was all the substance of the Vedantha (scriptures), Andal also imagined herself to have approached Lord Krishna for the ultimate Bliss. She had realized what she was in relation to the Lord (What the jeevathma was in relation to paramathma or what the individual soul was in relation to the universal soul-supreme) in her "Samslesha Bhava".

Andal, who imagines herself to be a Gopika maiden of Thiruvayippadu, and who always loves to be in Samslesha Bhava with Lord Sri Krishna, could not afford to live even a minute in Vishnu Bhava, separation from Krishna (that was the attitude of all the Gopika maidens of Gokulam according to the epic, Maha Bhagavatha). She loves to enjoy mentally her union with Krishna. She wants to dance with Krishna in her Samslesha Bhava. She enjoys writing pasuras about her meeting Krishna in her Samslesha Bhava. On the pretext of performing Varuna Nomu, she enjoys Krishna's company with her other Gopika playmates in her

Samslesha Bhava. Andal in the company of Gopikas goes to Sri Krishna's palace every morning during Dhanurmasa, and sings one pious pasura in praise of Lord Sri Krishna. The collection of these thirty pasuras in praise of Lord Krishna is named Thiruppavai (sacred prayer) by Andal. This is a wakening prayer; This is a morning prayer of the devotee explaining his connections with the Almightys and the Omnipresent. This is the context and evolution of this great splendid pious Prabandha-poem. It is famously and popularly known as "Andal's Thiruppavai".

According to this custom, established in Thiruppavai, you find, in Southern Indian Hindu villages, Haridasas (the devotees of Lord Vishnu) going about the streets at dawn, singing wakening and devotional songs during the whole of Dhanumasa or Margalimasa preceding Makhara Sankranthi Day.

The Thiruppavai Prabandha abounds with the spirit of devotion and surrender, the divine relation between man and God (between the jeevathama and paramathma i.e. the relation between the individual soul and the soul-supreme), an account of the creation, the existence and the end, the attitude of real devotees and the religious Gurus or Acharyas, and the descriptions of natural beauties. This is not only a divine devotional prabandha-poem in Tamil, but also a great piece of Tamil literature. The concoction, composition etc of this famous prabandha are charming, pleasing, devotional and thought-provoking. That is why the author of Thiruppavai, Andal, is said to be a saint by the philosophers, a poet by men of letters and the Divine Consort by the pious traditional believers. She is in short considered a saint-poet in Tamil literature. It should be recalled that all the twelve Alvars are considered saint-poems in Tamil literature and they are considered purely divine by the Vaishnava devotees.

In this book, each of the Tamil pasuras of Thiruppavai (30 in number) transliterated into English, its substance and its spiritual and literal values are furnished.

Let us now consider in brief the spiritual knowledge and wisdom imparted by Thiruppavai :-

1. "Andal wakes up the Gopika maidens from sleep at dawn, reaches Sri Krishna's palace in their company, and expresses her pious request to Lord Krishna. (This is the context of "Thiruppavai" which means "A sacred prayer"). What is Andal's Thiruppavai or sacred prayer? What is her pious request which she entreat Krishna to fulfil? Her prayer is that Sri Krishna should follow her and the Gopika maidens to the sacred Yamuna river for a holy community bath of the Dhanurmasa".

Here "Andal" signifies "The Human soul" or "The Jeevathma" or "any human being endowed with Athma Jnana", the knowledge of the self. "Sri Krishna" signifies the "Omnipresent Vaishnava power or energy". "Their community bath in the sacred Yamuna river" signifies the union of Jeevathma(the human individual soul) with the paramathma(the universal soul) of which the former is a speck. This is the Divine union of the individual soul with the Soul Supreme. This is what is termed in scriptures as "Moksha". This is the individual soul, in Samslesha Bhava, enjoying the bliss of its company or oneness with the Omnipresent Vishnu, which is "all matter-cum-energy of the universe". This, in epic figurative language, is termed as the Divine union of the individual soul with the soul supreme (Jeevathma-Paramathama-Divya Dampatyam = The sacred or divine wedding of the Jeevathma with Paramathma). It is the recognition of the individual soul in relation to the Supreme soul.

God, the Divine power or energy, is described in the scripture as the "Beyond". It is what remains beyond all possible mental comprehension and imagination, it is "The Beyond" or "the remainder" (sesha). God, the Omnipresent energy, Vishnu, is said to be "Sarvaseshi", "The All Beyond". How can there be "A Beyond" (Sesha or remainder) beyond "The Beyond" (Sarvaseshi,

what remains at last). The understanding or The Awareness that you are a speck of the Omnipresent Vishnu, "Sarvaseshi" is what is called in the Visishtadvaitha philosophy as "Sesha-Seshi-Bhava". Andal, with the awareness of "Sesha-Seshi-Bhava" dwells in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava which is "The Eternal Bliss" or "Moksha Bhava". "Moksha Bhava" is the feeling of selflessness and of oneness with the Omnipresent Vaishnava energy. Andal is "a perfect Atmajnani" i.e. one who knows what he or she is in relation to Vishnu. The Atmajnani is rid of any "Enamoured-ness of his body or his self" (Dehabhimanam), and he is enamoured with his oneness with the universe. This is the state of bliss of Andal.

Andal does not feel equal to the Omnipresent Easwara Energy; she feels one with it; she is wedded to it; she lives in it and with it. That is what is called her "Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava": This is what called "Divya Dampatya Bhava" (The feeling of the sacred wedlock with the Divine). It is this Divya dampathya Bhava of Andal in particular and of any devotee in general that is depicted in Thiruppavai in the most artistic and devotional style.

A young couple coming together, loving each other, opting each other and getting united at a ceremonial marriage celebration is called wedding (Dampathyam). This Dampathya is physical, social or worldly or customary. This Dampatya is the union of or relationship between a young man and a young maiden. This worldly or physical Dampatya has its limitations.

But a devotee of "Athmajnana" becoming aware of his relation (Sesha Seshi Bhava) with the universal aware of his power (Vaishna energy or Vishnu) with his Samslesha Bhava, and dwelling in Bliss or Moksha Bhava is said to be Divine wedding (Divya Dampathya). This Divya Dampathya exists between any creature of this world and the universal life force (Vishnu). Who can deny this? But all creatures are not conscious of this Divya

**Dampathya! Even all human creatures ordinarily are not aware of this Divine relationship! One rare individuals with "Athmajnana" and with "Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava" are capable of being aware of this Divya Dampathya. And this awareness is what is called Bhakthi or devotion. This Bhakthi Bhava (The feeling of devotion) towards the Omnipresent Vishnu lends Bliss or Moksha to the individual. So the feeling of oneness with soul supreme, the feeling of union with it, the feeling of Samslesha Bhava with it, all come under Divya Dampathya, which in simpler language is called Bhakthi (Devotion).**

The sacred or Divine devotional experience which Andal depicts in Thiruppavai Prabandha is "The Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava", and it is in such Samslesha Bhava that all the twelve Alvars (including Andal) of this yuga (age) and the epic Alvars like Prabandha, Vibhishana and Bhishma were said to have lived. And as Andal calls this Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava Divya Dampathya, "it" appears in Thiruppavai enjoyable, figurative and sacred. This is the literal and spiritual eminence of Thiruppavai.

This Divya Dampathya is depicted later by Nammalvar also in "Alvar Nayaki" of the second chapter of his "Koil Thiruvaimoli" of one thousand pasuras. This has such literal elegance and spiritual loftiness that men of letters of the wide circle of readers enjoy its literal excellences and men of saintliness enjoy its spiritual values.

Sri Ramanujacharya (1017 A.D. - 1137) in later times adopted the "Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava of the Alvars" which he interpreted as "Real Bhakthi" (True Devotion) leading to surrender - selflessness - service, which he described as the essence of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, popularly cherished as "Sri Ramanuja Matha". Thus it was that Sri Ramanuja established that Visishtadvaita Siddhantha laid down tenets for spiritual understanding (what the individual soul is in relation to the soul supreme, the Omnipresent power) and for life's fulfillment through

surrender-selflessness-service. This is one aspect of impact of Thiruppavai on the spiritual and devotional world.

2. Another aspect of spiritual knowledge or the Eternal Truth imparted in Andal's Thiruppavai is this :-

It has been already observed that "Andal" signifies the individual human soul. Here the individual soul in particular is the human being with Athma Jnana, who has got a clear understanding of what he is in relation to the universe and the universal Lording force.

As per Thathva, Thraya Jnana expounded by Sri Ramanujacharya in his Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, the whole universe (including the universal lording force) is divided into three aspects: The Achith, the Chith and the Easwara. The Achith signifies all physical matter including solids, liquids, and gases. The Chith stands for all creatures from the germs to the elephants or any other bigger animal of the land or the sea. The Easwara signifies The Advaita power or energy (the identical energy in the creatures all and the divinity, undefined and beyond human grasp) pervading all the Achith and the Chith. All these three are Eternal without a beginning, a middle and an end though individual forms of the Chith and the Achith constantly undergo changes form or state. As the same Advaita shakthi (the one and the same and the only one all-pervading energy) pervades both the Achith and the Chith aspects of the universe, and as their existence including their forms and changes of state depends upon the unitary and Omnipresent energy (the Advaita Vaishnava shakthi), these two aspects, namely, the Achith and the Chith, like the Easwara Shakthi, have their own specific qualities and existence; and hence Sri Ramanuja made it clear that all Vedantha (all scriptural knowledge) indicates the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha. (Visishtadvaita = Visishta + Advaita + Qualified Advaita).

When it is said that “Andal” stands for the human soul (Jeevathma), it comes to mean that Andal stands for the combination of the Chith and the Achith (forming the human being in its form and state); and it has already been established that the Chith and the Achith are dependent upon the Easwara. Hence, in essence, “Andal” stands for a “firm” in which all the three aspects of the universe are combined. It is so with any creature of any human being. So any human being is a product of the three aspects of the universe, namely, the Chith, the Achith and the Easwara. This is the relationship between any human being and the universe. As the human soul is said to be a speak of the universal soul (The Advaita Shakthi), the human body is also a speck of the universe. Hence any creature in this universe is a product of the said Thathva Thraya; but we find the difference in form, in magnitude, in strength and in power. That is all! And this is the relationship existing between the human soul (Jeevathma) and the Omnipresent soul supreme (the paramathma), which Andal is aware of and which is described by her in her Thiruppavai as Divya Dampathyam (The sacred wedlock). It is in this way that Thiruppavai ventilates the knowledge of Thathva Thraya. Sri Ramanuja is enlightened thus about Thathva Thraya Jnana given in Thiruppavai, and also in Vishnupurana of Parasara. His knowledge of Thathva thraya becomes perfect with the knowledge of Bodhayana Rishi furnished in his work, Bodhayana Vritthi. And the Thathva Thraya Jnana is the source for Sri Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita Siddhantha.

Thus Sri Ramanuja established the scientific basis of Thathva Thraya Jnana in his Vaishnava Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, and propagated that the Alvar's Vishnu Samslesha Bhava was the real Bhakthi Bhava. Sri Ramanuja was much inspired by Andal's Thiruppavai wherein both the Thathva Thraya Jnana and Vishnu Samslesha Bhava were presented in a very artistic and inspiring

way. That was why Sri Ramanuja, who had learnt by heart the whole of Thiruppavai Prabandha in his youth itself, used to enjoy reciting it often when he became an Acharya; and often during such recitations and singings, he was in a fit of emotion in his Samslesha Bhava, as he used to feel that he was Andal entreating Krishna for his acceptance and grace. At times he is unconscious or subconscious in his blissful emotion and Samslesha Bhava.

One day it so happened that Sri Ramanuja went to the house of Periyambai, who was one of his Acharya panchakam (a group of five religious teachers or Gurus). He was standing in the Verandha singing joyfully the pasuras of Thiruppavai in his Samslesha Bhava; he felt that he was Andal herself, and on seeing Periyambai's young daughter, Athulya, coming towards him, Sri Ramanuja taking her to be Satyadevi, began to address to her the pasuras of Thiruppavai requesting her to rouse Sri Krishna from bed! Athulya felt bewildered and thought that Sri Ramanuja, whom she used to treat as her own elder brother, had gone mad, and ran to her father, Periyambai inside the house to convey to him her distressing news. Periyambai, who had a full knowledge of Sri Ramanuja's devotion and Samslesha Bhava, with a broad smile, said to her, "My dear daughter, Athulya! Your brother Ramanuja does not have any mental derailment. He is only reciting sacred Thiruppavai of Andal in his emotional joy and in his utter Samslesha Bhava. That is the difference between your brother Ramanuja and the elderly Gurus even. His Bhakthi Bhava is so deep. Even though he is a youngster, he inspires us all, the elders!" from this it was evident that Thiruppavai influenced Sri Ramanuja to a very great extent in his Bhakthi Bhava and Vishnu Samslesha Bhava.

**3. There was the third impact of Thiruppavai on Sri Ramanuja:- Besides helping Sri Ramanuja in attaining Thathva Thraya Jnana, and in considering that Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava**

was the real form of Bhakthi or Devotion, Thiruppavai impressed upon Sri Ramanuja the value and importance and the inevitability of service to fellow beings (Seva Bhava) :

Andal did not intend to enjoy and experience for herself alone the unique blessed prospects of meeting Krishna and conversing with Krishna. She wished that the bliss of Sri Krishna's company should equally be shared by all the Gopika maidens along with her. This was the religious or spiritual socialism or communion contemplated by Andal! A man of real wisdom would always aspire to give spiritual uplift to all fellow-beings; he would not be satisfied with his own uplift. A pretending so called Jnani would do things prompted by selfishness and self interest where as a real Jnani would perform any act for the welfare of the society (for Loka Sangraha) - Geetha - Chapter 3 - Sloka 25.

This mission of Andal for social service enlightened Sri Ramanuja to a great extent. Thiruppavai also taught Sri Ramanuja the duties of a real Acharya that his purpose in life was to lead to all the subordinate Acharyas and the wider public to salvation. That was why Sri Ramanuja climbed up the temple tower at Thirukkottiyur and loudly and openly announced the sacred Thirumanthra to all in spite of warnings and cautions at the outset by his Guru Thirukkottiyur Nambi (Ghostipurna) that Sri Ramanuja should keep the sacred Thirumanthra a secret and should initiate it only to the much deserving devotees forming the front line of Acharyas entrusted with the duties of Acharyas and heads of Visishtadvaita peethams. Sri Ramanuja was prepared to bear the sin of having violated by Guru's commandments when he was able to give spiritual enlightenment to many thereby. This admirable spirit of Sri Ramanuja of selflessness and Moksha Sanyasa Bhava was due to the impact of Thiruppavai on Sri Ramanuja. Sri Ramanuja was a real Acharya on the lines suggested by Andal in Thiruppavai.

Thus Sri Ramanuja, who was guided by the triple principles of Thathva Thraya Jnana, Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, and Seva Bhava, ventilated in Andal's Thiruppavai, established his Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha on the foundations of truth, emotion and service, and propagated that his Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha laid stress on Bhava Thraya, the triple ideals, namely surrender - selflessness - service.

In the light of this special introduction to Thiruppavai, we shall now proceed to learn the missions and implications of each of the pasuras of the thirty pasuras of Thiruppavai!

**T. RAGHAVAIAH**

Author.

# THIRUPPAVAI

(Text, meaning, implications and mission)

## 1. The Tamil pasura, No. 1 of Thiruppavai, transliterated in English :-

*“Margalitthingal madi nirrainda nannalal  
Neerada ppoduvir podumine Nerilaiyir,  
Sir malgu maippadi shelvachchirumirgal,  
Kurvelkodundolilan Nandagopan Kumaran,  
Erarndakanni Yasodai elangshingam,  
Karmeni cchengan kadir madiyambol mugatthan,  
Paror pugala ppadindeloembavai”.*

(This transliteration in English is furnished for the benefit and enjoyment of the Tamil-knowing readers, who, with an awareness that English language is not phonetic, will compromise with the inevitable lapses, and will be good and magnanimous enough to catch the original sounds and pronunciation. The transliteration into English is provided for the benefit of those non-Tamil-knowing readers also who by a pious sentiment may aspire to utter the Tamil pasura in its original sounds and pronunciation: It is naturally so with people having a sentimental respect for scriptures, spells, charms etc. This is what is going on with the orthodox system of worship conducted in temples.

### Substance :

“O, Gopika maidens, my friends, playmates and collaborators! Of the ever exceedingly prosperous Thiruvayippadu (The sacred Gokulam), who are blessed with all super ornamentation and the unique fortune of service divine! Today is the sacred full moon day (Shukla paksha Pournami day) of the month of Margali (Margasirsha). Sri Krishna, whose comforts are ever-guarded even from the stings of a fly or a mosquito by his alert and careful father Nandagopa, who is the handsome and charming youthful son, of a young lion's strength and valor, of the

wide-charming-eyed Yasoda-Devi, whose sacred body of the bright-blue-cloud-hue parts on end to the anxieties of the devotees and dependents with its cooling presence, who is red-lotus eyed, whose face is like the sun and the moon giving the world light and comfort respectively, and who is Sreeman Narayana himself, flourishes here in our Thiruvayippadu (Sri Villiputtur) in all glory to grant all wishes of ourselves, who have all their hopes in him and him alone, their only single and sole protector. So let us all join together, at this dawn, in our sacred vow (Varuna Nomu) to the praise and admiration of all our elders of this Gokulam, and let us proceed to the sacred Yamuna for our sacred-dawn-bath”.

Exploration of Literary excellences, Devotional and Religious implications, and the special spiritual mission contained in the pasura:

“Taking a pleasant dawn both along with Krishna in the huge sacred river, Yamuna” means “enjoying the inexpressible bliss in Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava”. (“The Samslesha Bhava” has been explained clearly in the two introductions). As Sri Krishna stands for “Anantha Kalyana Paripurna” (The supreme Purushottama with all auspicious qualities), “Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava” means “living in joy with a mental association with all good qualities”. It means “the knowledge of the sacredness and benefits of goodness for the fellow beings, the wish that all such auspicious qualities should flourish freely and stupendously in all human beings and the imaginary enjoyment with such good society”.

The Vaishnava Shakthi (The Omnipresent energy) is incomprehensible to all the panchendriyas (The five senses). Is it possible for the human mind to imagine atleast the "Anantha Kalyana guna" aspect of the Vaishnava Energy (the innumerable auspicious and pleasing qualities of the Omnipresent Vaishnava energy)? Hence the scripture or the Acharya advocates the worship of or the comprehension of a personified God with all the auspicious qualities as "Sreemannarayana moorthy of Vaikuntah."

("Sreemannarayana murty" is the personified form of all good qualities and "Vaikuntah" is the "white, bright and pure world", which stands for "a pure, enlightened and wise mind". Hence "Sreemannarayana of Vaikuntah" means "the imaginary personified auspicious form of the universal lording force, arising from a pure pious mind in his own Samslesha Bhava"). But for an ordinary mind is it possible to conceive of Sreemannarayana murty of the so called world of Vaikuntah? Hence for the pious human being, the living jewel of a person (Purushottama) of all good and auspicious qualities is the deity to be worshipped. Hence Andal invites all her Gopika friends (the other Yadava maidens) to join her in the worship of Lord Sri Krishna.

This aspect of the worship of the universal Lord (Vishnu), as described and indicated by Andal in her Thiruppavai, enlightened and guided Sri Ramanuja in later centuries in respect of comprehension and worship of the universal Lord. That was why the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha of Sri Ramanuja advocated the worship of "Sri Rama of Ramayana" and "Sri Krishna of Mahabharatha" as personified gods as Valmiki and Vyasa described them in their epics respectively as purushottamas (men supreme) of all auspicious qualities.

A real religious teacher (an Acharya), without any reservations, for the enlightenment and welfare of the humanity in general, reveals the knowledge divine, the wisdom supreme, to his fellow-men, and helps them to accede to a pure plane of life, the Moksha Bhava. Just as Sri Ramanujacharya made known to the people, openly irrespective of any distinctions, the Thirumanthra in his time, Andal, in the past, had invited all the Gopika maidens for a sacred bath along with her in "the river of Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava". In this aspect Andal was a supreme, selfless, and real Acharya through her Thiruppavai, and Sri Ramanuja in later times was inspired by her "Acharya Qualities". Andal, in Thiruppavai, was symbol for the "Supreme Vaishnava Acharya" of exemplary attitudes towards disciples.

Nandagopa, Sri Krishna's foster father, was in essence "Ananda Gopa" (The happy shepherd chief), as he fostered Sri Krishna, and lent him to the humanity for its joy. Similarly the status of Sri Krishna's foster mother, Yasoda, is to be understood. "Yasoda" means "One who has given fame". To whom? to the dynasty, to Bharath as a whole! How? What was that fame? That fame was "Sri Krishna"; That fame was "Geethacharya". (The preacher of Bhagavad Geetha, the song celestial). Sri Krishna, the foster-son of Nandagopa and Yasoda, made the world happy with his Celestial Geetha. Hence Sri Krishna was Supreme "Purushottama" of all "Kalyana gunas" (auspicious qualities). He was the living God of Andal; and he is the living God in Geetha, which guides humanity to virtue divine.

The Gopa gentlemen of Gokulam (Thiruvayippadu), who had prohibited their young daughters from moving freely with young Sri Krishna a few days ago, realized their wrong ideas about Sri Krishna, and now requested Sri Krishna to act as agent or conductor of "the Varuna Nomu" to be observed by the Gopika maidens to propitiate the God of Rain: What is the philosophical implication here?

In the past, before the time of the Alvars, the saints and the religious teachers attached all importance to penance which would reward the individuals with the fulfillment of their desires. They had advocated the efficiency of individual penance in solitude detached from the rest of the society. It was Sri Krishna, in his Geetha, that corrected this notion about individual and solitary penance (Thapas) and advocated "Karma Phala Thyaga" as supreme over penance and knowledge (Thapas and Jnana). The Alvars later advocated that man could achieve "Moksha Bhava" only through "Vishnu Samslesha Bhava", and this they demonstrated to the world by their own personal examples of life. Hence, later, there appeared a change in the line of Vaishnava Acharyas in their outlook and understanding of the purpose of

life. This was the change which Andal also expected in the Vaishnava Acharyas. This change of attitude from the importance of penance to the need for Karmaphala Thyaga was indicated through the change in the thinking of the Gopa elders and their realization about Sri Krishna in this pasura.

Hence this pasura, through the idea of common dawn bath in the Yamuna of all Gopika maidens along with Sri Krishna, the Ghataka, indicates the philosophical truth and importance of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava. This pasura teaches the readers that, though penance, yoga; Hatayoga etc. are cited in the scriptures for individual fulfillment of desires, it is that man should acquire Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, the spirit of surrender and the spirit of social service for the common uplift of the society of which he is a member.

A proper time, an auspicious time, prompts a proper action, a good deed. A proper time enables proper and successful fulfillment of one's endeavours; And this is a natural belief with human beings in general.

Hence Andal cites the proper auspicious day, the very next day, the full moon day of Margali month (the full moon day of Margasirsha month) as the proper day for the commencement of "Varuna Nomu". ("Masanam margasirshoham" - Geetha). The full moon day of Margali was the beginning of "Dhanurmasa". The auspicious time at which a good action is commenced, and the auspicious time at which the proposed action is fulfilled with good results are times that we cherish in our minds with pleasure, regard and respect. That is why this auspicious day, namely, the full moon day of Margali Masa, when Andal began her Varuna Nomu has become an auspicious festival and ceremonious day for the progeny, for all times to come. Andal here hints the importance of proper time for the execution of any performance or project.

These are the points of spiritual and philosophical importance revealed in this pasura.

The picturesque, elegant and magnificent descriptions of the parental love, care and concern for their young ones, of the divine and handsome personality of Krishna, and of the auspicious time for the commencement of the Varuna Nomu are touching and pleasing. In this pasura of rare composition and exquisite exposition there is the superb combination of divine and literal excellences. Every pasura of Thiruppavai is of such excellences. (The pasuras of Nacchiyar Thirumoli, the other Prabandha of Andal are also of such excellences.) That is why Andal is considered as a saint-poet by men of letters and of divinity.

Each pasura of Thiruppavai ends with "Elorembavai", which means, "think out and follow me". This shall be the inspiring word of guidance and instruction of any good Acharya. Andal acts as a powerful Acharya in Thiruppavai.

Spiritually, in this pasura, the possibility, the means, and the authority are cited : In philosophical terms these three aspects are respectively called "Sadhya Swarupa, Sadhana Swarupa and Adhikara Swarupa", which constitute "Swarupa Jnana", the real and perfect knowledge.

**Pasura No. 2**

*“Vaiyatthuval - veergal namum nambavaikku,  
 Ccheyyum kirisaigal keliro, parkadalul  
 Paiyatthu yinra paramanadi padi;  
 Neyyunnon palunnom natkale neeradi,  
 Maiyitteludom malarittu nam mudiyom,  
 she yyadana sheyyom thiikkuralai chenrodom,  
 Aiyamum picchaiyumandanaikum kaikaatti,  
 Uyyumaa renni yugandu elorembaavai”.*

**Substance :**

“Oh, the lucky prosperous maidens, born in this world to lead a fruitful life! Hear from me what we should do and what we should observe till we complete and accomplish our sacred vow (Nomu). Let us ever be in bliss uttering the sacred and auspicious names of “Sriyahpathi” (the lord of all wealth = Sreemannarayana), and let us live in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava.... When we are in the period of Nomu, we are not to enjoy the physical company of Sri Krishna: hence we don't enjoy the usual comforts and beautifications : Let us avoid pleasurable and luxurious things; Let us not enjoy the delicious pure superb ghee; Let us not drink the delicious pure sweet milk; let us avoid flowers, eye-salve, and all cosmetics.... Let us observe good customs and practices. Let us not utter lies that harm others; let us not backbite others; let us respond to and satisfy the wishes of beggars, guests, the saints, the religious students (Brahmacharis), and the pious monks. Let us thus make our lives holy; let us think of ways of pure happiness; Let us thus perform our sacred vow”.

**Exploration :**

While the first pasura hints at spiritual knowledge, this second pasura hints at the type of life and practices to be followed to achieve spiritual knowledge and experience. The actions to be

observed, and the actions to be shunned by devotees, who consider that what is to be attained and the means to attain it both are Easwara himself, are described in this second pasura. (The Prapya and the Prapaka, the Krithya and the Akrithya are described here.)

The Bhagavad Geetha, the Alwar's way of life, and the Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha do not admit "Sanyasa" (utter renunciation from action). They advocate a good purposeful and virtuous life and Karmaphala Thyaga.

Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava is advocated to attain Bliss or Moksha Bhava, and Karmaphala Thyaga is advocated for Loka Kalyana (the welfare of the world).

What Andal teaches in this pasura is this, "May we, during Krishna Samslesha Bhava, enjoy the Bliss. And during the other hours of Vislesha (not in communion with God) let us be engaged in virtuous and noble actions with a spirit of duty, selflessness and disinterestedness and with a spirit of service, for the welfare of the society".

Sri Ramanujacharya, who was inspired by Thiruppavai, towards the conclusion of his celebrated Sarangathi Gadya, recorded the following lines as his scruples, which were termed by his immediate disciples as "Ramanuja Matha Suthras" :- The said lines in Sanskrit :-

***"Anritham noktha purvam me, nacha vakshye***

***kadachana***

***Ramodvirnabhi bhashyathe***

***Sakrideva prapannaya thavasmithicha yachathe |***

***Abhayam sarvabhuthebhya dadamyethathvratham***

***mama ||***

***Sarva dharman parithyajya mamekam saranam vraja |***

***Ahamthva sarva papebhyo moksha yishyami masuchaha||***

***Iti mamaiva hyuktham.***

*Athasthvam Thava thathvatho madjnana darsana  
prapthishu nissamshayaha sukha mastva.*

*Anthyakale smrithiryathu thava kaimkarya karika,  
Themenam bhagavannadya kriyamanam kurushyame*

The following is the meaning of the above Sanskrit lines :-

*"I have not hitherto uttered falsehood; Neither shall I  
hence;*

*Rama never speaks a double word.*

*To fall in utter surrender to Thee, I now confess that I  
am Thine;*

*May I be of no threat or harm to any creature; And this  
is my scruple.*

*Abandon all diverse ways, and follow only mine  
principle of surrender;*

*That will keep thee out of sin; and thou need no worry -  
This I assert.*

*Hence, with thy keen intellect, thou doubtless will attain  
the wisdom of my philosophy; Be happy.*

*My Lord! May I now perform Thine assignments;*

*Any may I remember it at the last moment of my life".*

(Here, two expressions, namely, "Rama" and "Thine assignments" require elucidation :-

1. "Rama" here is not the prince of Ayodhya, the son of Dasaradha. Etymologically "Rama" means "a person to gives pleasure to all by his good conduct". It is certain that "a person of truth" gives pleasure to all, whereas "a person of falsehood" gives displeasure to all, sometimes danger too. Hence "Rama" is not double tongued. He is a person of one world, the truth. "Rama" is not a proper noun here; it is a common noun.

2. "Thine assignments" means "God's assignments" and they are three fold, namely, to create, to foster and to destroy. In respect of a human being, they mean "to create anew a good thing or a good method that has not been there so far", "to foster a good thing that is already there", and "to destroy an evil thing that is there now in the society").

Readers are advised to find the similarity between the substance of the second pasura of Thiruppavai and the substance of "Sri Ramanuja matha". Both advocate the spirit of surrender, Vishnu Samslesha Bhava and a virtuous life. When we understand this similarity, we can grasp Ramanuja's regard and respect for Andal and her mission incorporated in Thiruppavai. It is wonderful how Andal incorporated such spiritual mission through the execution of the yow (Varuna Nomu), which appears to be the subject of the Prabandha.

The expression ending each pasura, namely, "Eolermbavai" indicates that Andal is an Acharya giving her spiritual mission and persuading her disciples to follow her principles. Besides spiritual wisdom, description of nature's beauty, literal excellences etc, Thiruppavai expresses a missionary zeal, which is significant in the expression, "Elorembavai", meaning "think out and follow me".

**Pasura No. 3**

*“Omgi yulagalanda vutthaman perpadi,  
 Nangal nambavaikku cchathi neeradinal,  
 Thin ginri naadellam thingal mummari paidu,  
 Omg u peruncenne ludukaya lugala,  
 ppuunguvalai ppodil paarivannu kanbaduppa,  
 Thengaade pukkirundu sheerthamulai patthi  
 Vanga, kkudam niraikkum vallal perumbashukkal,  
 Neengada Shelvam niraindelorembavai”.*

**Substance:**

“We are confident that this sacred land, where we all join together for a holy dawn-bath in the sacred Yamuna, for the successful conduct of our “Nomu”, singing in praise of the Purushotthama (young Vamana) who had grown to the extent of the heavens to measure the three “lokas” (worlds) with his sacred feet, will ever grow prosperous in all aspects. There shall not be evils of disease and famine. There shall be rains each month at three regular intervals. The rice crops, grown so tall glittering with reddish long ears of grain, shall ever be in plenty and in prosperity; At the foot of the cluster of rice plants there appear collections of water full of fish. The black shining bees, in the intoxication of excessive drink of honey, shall sleep calm in the petals of the red lotus flowers. The cattle and the dairies shall ever be prosperous with the milking cowherds milking the cows and buffaloes in the morning in the cattle sheds, while the generous and sturdy cattle stand steadily with the heaviness of their udders fully charged with milk, prepared to shed pots of milk while the men are milking them with both hands”.

**Exploration :-**

The substance of the pasura is simply charming. The descriptions of regular rains, the crops, the vegetation, the fish at

the foot of rice-plant clusters, the black bees on the red petals of the lotus flowers, the generous cows in the dairy, etc. are splendidly charming revealing the beauties of nature on the country side. Andal is a poetess of a very high order. Her poetry is lyrical and reflective. At the same time it is didactic in the pasura which reveals didactic spiritualism.

“The land, wherein dwell supreme Acharyas (spiritual teachers), with their discipline bands of disciples and devotees, who are ever in ecstasy in Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava, singing in excessive devotion in praise of the divine auspicious qualities, shall ever be happy and prosperous! Man, either for his individual happiness or for the happiness of the society, has to inculcate the attitude of Bhagavath Samslesha Bhava!” What a fine benediction! What a winning assurance!

It is again hinted in this pasura that "Devotion" is "living in Samslesha Bhava with the Omnipresent Vaishnava Shakthi (Easwara) and singing in ecstasy in admiration of the divine auspicious qualities.

Here Andal signifies an exemplary "Acharya". The Gopika maidens stand for disciplined disciples (sishtyas). Their combination is auspicious for the society (Gokulam). Their friendship with Sri Krishna is tantamount to "understanding the Divine". Their community bath at dawn in the Yamuna river stands for "Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava". (The devotional readers are advised to find the difference between the Vishnu Samslesha Bhava advocated by Andal and the mere superstitious worships, Vratas (vows), penance and prayers carried on by men, for their own selfish gains, without knowing their meaning, purpose and context. The difference is simply similar to that between light and darkness). The allegory employed in the pasuara is lofty and revealing.

When a person is convinced that a society of people, who are of real devotion, shall ever be happy and peaceful, he should have a correct understanding of what "Devotion" is. May the slokas of Bhagavad Geetha, Chapter XII, slokas 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 etc. defining a "devotee", inspire and instruct the reader!

It is to be understood how people should respect and honour the real Acharyas and their devoted disciples who, in their Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava, wish for the welfare of the world. The welfare of a society lies in the benedictions of the Acharyas for the people and the latter's goodwill and respect for the former.

The strength and power of the "Thirumanthra" is also hinted in this pasura:

The assurance for bliss which Andal gives in this pasura is the assurance (Abhaya) given in the Charama sloka of the Geetha (Chapter 18, Sloka 66 ... "Sarvadarman parithyajya.....), the essence of which is the Thirumanthra. As an ardent follower of Andal's philosophy, explained in her Thiruppavai, Sri Ramanuja later gives similar "Abhaya" in his "Matha Suthras" furnished towards the conclusion of his "Sarangathi Gadya". (Vide exploration under pasura No. 2) :- Hence with keen intellect, thou doubtless will attain the wisdom of my philosophy; Be happy".

The implications to be derived from the expression, "The Purushottama (young Vamana) who had grown to the extent of the heavens to measure the three "Lokas" (worlds) with his sacred feet" are the following :-

As per the "Dasavathara episodes" furnished in Maha Bhagavatha, do you conclude that God Vishnu punished king "Bali" or that God protected him?! :- Vishnu protected Bali! From what? From his ignorance and pride! Follow the explanation below:-

“Bali” means “food that is given”. It means “charity”. “Bali” also means “a person of great strength”. Hence “King Bali” means “The King in the quality of charity, and the king in the aspect of great strength”. According to the story of Bali Chakravarthi, Bali was famous for his strength and charity, unrivalled. Despite such great and good qualities, Bali came to be criticized and hated on account of his blind and inestimable pride. This was his primary defect ..... He felt there was nobody greater than himself. He was a symbol of egoism and egotism. There was not a trace of humility in him ..... (An exemplary man should be kind to people lower than himself, and humble to those greater than himself)..... Bali utterly lacked the qualities of humility and the spirit of surrender. He lacked “the knowledge of the self”. He lacked the knowledge of the “self” in relation to the “universal self” or the “Divine self”. He lacked the wisdom of “Thathvathraya Jnana”. This was the utter darkness (ignorance) in which Bali was. Though Bali was physically so great and strong, he was mentally and spiritually so weak and little. .... Regarding Vamana, he was physically small and weak, but mentally great and strong. Vamana was capable of making Bali realise the universal truth that any creature in this world, however great and strong, was temporary and subject to change and decay, whereas it was the Vaishnava Shakthi alone that was Eternal, Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient..... When Bali grasped this real knowledge, this divine wisdom, he got the spirit of surrender to the Omnipresent Vaishnava energy. He surrendered to the Omnipresent energy pervading the whole universe, the three Lokas namely Swarga (Heaven), the Marthya (the middle world i.e. the world we are in) and the Pathala (the under world). This was the auspicious mental change brought about in Bali due to the inspiring influence of Vamana over him. Bali was not physically crushed to the ground! He became extremely humble having lost his ignorance, pride and egoism. He became

mentally "Dasanudasa" (the humble servant of a humble servant of God). It was the auspicious personality of such Vamana that Andal referred to in her Thiruppavai. [The influence of Vamana over Bali was the same as the influence of Sri Krishna over Arjuna after the Geetha Jnana was imparted. .... Bali was ignorant on account of his pride and egoism whereas Arjuna was ignorant on account of his lack of knowledge of Svadharma (his legitimate duty) and timidity due to compassion.]

Andal and her companions, the Gopika maidens, sang in praise of Vamana, who taught King Bali the spirit of surrender. (The spirit of surrender is the essence of the Charama sloka of the Geetha or the Thirumanthra, the Ashtakshari.)

Hence "singing in praise of the auspicious qualities (Kalyana gunas) of Vishnu" means "uttering Thirumanthra with knowledge and awareness of its meaning". It again means "inculcating the spirit of surrender". A person of utter surrender to the Omnipresent Vishnu shall ever live in Bliss with the knowledge of "Akarathraya Jnana", namely Ananya seshathva (that he is a part of that only Omnipresent Vishnu Shakthi), Ananya Saranathva (that he should surrender to that only Advaita shakthi, the Omnipresent Vaishnava energy) and the Ananya Bhogathva (that the wisdom about, and the Samslesha Bhava with Vishnu alone is the supreme comfort and bliss).

As Vamana taught the spirit of surrender to king Bali, Andal teaches the world of devotees the spirit of surrender and dedication (Sarangathi Bhava and Prapatthi Bhava) through her celebrated Prabandha, Thiruppavai. This Pasura establishes the unique position of an Acharya, which Andal herself assumed. As any other Alvar was a Swacharya (born-preacher), Andal also was a Swacharya and a Jagadacharya. As Swacharya, she did not have an Acharya to guide her; As Jagadacharya she ever stands to teach the world through her Thiruppavai.

This is the spiritual wealth contained in this Pasura. The devotees have to unfold their desires for Bhagavadanubhava (Samslesha Bhava; the capacity to enjoy the presence of the Omnipresent Vishnu) in the presence of Vishnu himself: The saints, the devotees of the highest order like the Alvars get Bhagavadanubhava anywhere and everywhere irrespective of a particular time; the ordinary sincere devotees have Bhagavadanubhava at their own chosen and arranged place in their home, or at a celebrated place outside or the inner shrine of the temple; Andal with her followers, the Gopika maidens, enjoy the Bhagavadanubhava in the presence of Lord Sri Krishna, their contemporary Purushottama, the Anantha Kalyanaguna Paripurna.

**Pasura No. 4**

*“Aalimalaikkannaa vonru nii kaikaraveel,  
 Aaliyutpukku mugandu kodartheri,  
 Ulimudalva nuruvambol mei Karutthu,  
 ppaliyandoludai pparpanabam kaiyil,  
 Aalipol minni valamburipol ninradrindu,  
 Thalade sharnga mudaittha saramalaipol,  
 Valavulagini rpeididai nangalum,  
 Margali niirada magilndu eleorembavai.”*

**Substance :**

“O! Parjanya! Indra! The God of rain! The authority over the rain bearing clouds! Exhibit your matchless generosity by entering the ocean, by receiving water therefrom, by spreading yourself swiftly over the whole of the sky with loud thunders and brilliant lightnings, by taking the form of a huge limitless blue cloud resembling the sacred blue body of Sreemannarayana, by shining bright like Vishnu's sudarsana, by producing thunderous peals as those of Vishnumurty's panchajanya, and by producing a downpour of rain through the unending splendid continuous fall of huge rain drops, similar to the discharge of powerful arrows from Vishnu's bow, Sharngam. If you kindly do so, humanity will feel comforted. As far as we, Gopikas, are concerned, we shall have happy and comfortable baths in the sacred Yamuna waters. As far as you are concerned, you will be considered to have cooperated with us in this, our, sacred deed (the Nomu)”.

**Exploration:**

How beautiful is the description of the rain! The scientific principle of the cause of rain as the evaporation of sea water and the forming of the rain bearing cloud is hinted at first. As per the

spiritual description according to the Visishtadvaitic theory, that every natural force or phenomenon is a part of Vishnu, the Omnipresent Energy, the different stages in the process of rainfall, namely, the evaporation of sea water, the blue cloud, the lightning, the thunder, the pouring down of continuous lines of rain water etc. and their comparisons with the different aspects of the pouranic representation of the personification of the Vaishnava Shakthi are wonderful, amusing, appealing, picturesque and thought-provoking. The description of nature reaches its zenith of beauty, wonder and spirituality.

A good action is for the welfare of humanity in general, and the agent of such action is selfless. Hence a good action is a divine action, as divine action is meant for the good of all humanity without any distinction. For example, the sunshine is divine in the sense that it shines equally on all irrespective of good or bad. Similarly the rain, the breeze etc. or any natural force affects favourably all human beings equally.

Andal is confident that a good action or a divine action receives help, strength and cooperation from all agencies in all ways. That is why Andal requests Indra, the God of rain, to cause a heavy downpour of rain to make their dawn-baths of the sacred Margalimasa comfortable, which baths are meant for the Varuna Nomu for the welfare of all the humanity of that land.

It is dramatically described that as Indra has realized that the Margalimasa dawn-baths are meant for a sacred purpose of Varuna Nomu for the welfare of humanity, Indra himself requests Andal to tell him kindly what he can do to help them (Gopikas) in their Nomu; and hence Andal requests Indra to cause a heavy downpour of rain.

Of course a good rain is a blessing to all the land as it helps the living beings in so many ways besides the significant growth of crops and vegetation. Besides too, there is a wonderful and

happy effect of rain here! What is it? It is a wonderful and scientific effect: As Margalimasa is a cold month of winter, the water in the Yamuna river is biting cold at dawn before sunshine: In such a case a dawn bath in the river is neither happy, nor enjoyable nor comfortable. If there is a very heavy downpour of rain on such cold water with a dense layer of mist and snow over it, the river water is prone to become warm to make the bath comfortable, enjoyable and happy. This shall be an immediate salutary effect on Yamuna waters, conducive for the dawn bath of Andal and her companion - Gopikas. That is why Andal requests Indra, "kindly cause immediate and heavy down pour of rain for the good of the world and for the good of our baths. How finely and wonderfully Andal hints that the morning down-pour of rain helps her and her companion Gopikas! How pleasant is the description here! How scientifically true. How lyrical is the poetry!

As Andal is ever in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava and in bliss thereof, for her everything in the world is of Vishnu - (Sarvam Vishnu mayam). For the devoted Andal all aspects of, and stages in, the process of rainfall are all aspects of Vishnu. When Andal witnesses the terrible downpour of rain with its lightnings and thunders, she feels Samslesha Bhava with the rain and its aspects, and simultaneously feels the Samslesha Bhava with her personified Purushottama, Vishnu, whose physical aspects are taken for comparison of the different aspects and stages of the rain. How splendid is the description of the rain touching the figurative and pouranic aspects! The reader also gets into the Samslesha Bhava with the Vaishnava aspects :

The metaphors employed in respect of comparison of the different aspects and stages of the downpour of rain are wonderfully and emotionally enjoyable: The thick, blue and heavy rain bearing cloud spreading all over the sky is said to be the sacred, shining blue-hued body of Lord Vishnu, the personified

Purushotthama of the Omnipresent Vishnu Shakthi. Vishnu is Omnipresent; so also the whole sky is one vast blue cloud, heavy and strong. The lightnings of the cloud are said to be the glitterings of the ever rotating Sudarshana Chakra of Vishnu. The peals of thunder are said to be the sounds of Vishnu's conch, panchajanya. The continuous downpour of heavy rain drops are said to be the powerful windfall of arrows discharged from Vishnu's sacred bow, Sharngam. How wonderfully the physical or natural aspects and the spiritual aspects are wedded together in this supreme poetry of Andal.

Andal asserts her belief in this pasura that the selfless devotees have all the cooperation of the natural forces. The real devotees, who believe in one and the same Advaita Shakthi alone, and who have nothing to do with the so called plurality of gods or angels, when they associate themselves mentally with aspects of nature, do obtain the grace of all the so called presiding deities of natural forces if any there are because they are concerned only with Loka Kalyana (the welfare of the world). This stresses the theory of and the belief in one God, the Advaita Shakthi and the Bliss of Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava.

This pasura is pregnant with nature's beauties, spiritual ideas and the spirit of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava.

**Pasura No. 5**

*"Mayanai mannu Vadamadurai maindanai,  
 Ithuya peruneer yamunaitthuraivanai,  
 Aayar kulatthinil thonrum manivilakkai,  
 Thayai kkudal vilakkanshiedadamodaranai,  
 Ithuyo maayvandu namthumalar thuvittholodu,  
 Vayinarpadi manatthinarchindikka,  
 ppoya pilaiyum pugударuva ninranavum,  
 Thiynil thusagum sheppe elorembavai".*

**Substance :**

"Let us approach Sri Krishna with the triple sanctity of body, mind and soul, fling choicest flowers over him, bow to him, praise him and pray to him, who causes wonders in his actions, who is the king of North Madhura of divine aspects and connections, who strolls joyfully on the sandy banks of the deep Yamuna river, who is the divine light of the Yadava dynasty, who has made his mother's womb fertile and famous, and who is "Thamodara" - (Thamodara = he, who was tied (to the tree) with the rough rope passing round his stomach and back i.e. the body; Damodara = he with the fine flower garland over his chest and stomach or he with the lotus in his stomach, Kamala garbha; Dhamodara = He, with the brightest brilliance in his stomach). If we do so, all our sins accrued before we obtained the divine wisdom (Swarupa Jnana or the knowledge of the self in relation to the supreme self) and all our sins accrued later by accident shall get burnt like cotton in the burning flames. Eleorembavai! (This is our determined view or confidence; think out well and follow us)"

**Exploration:**

The pasura contains spiritual experience on practical lines, the wonderful biographical elements of Sri Krishna as a boy, and the aspects of love-poetry (Madhura Kavithvam).

Andal tells that in the case of sincere devotees, who choose to experience "Bhagavadanubhava" (Vishnu Samslesha Bhava), their actual attachment with their devoted experience itself will dispel the hurdles and temptation likely to affect the devotee in the initial stages.

In the first five pasuras (Pradhana pasura panchakam) the alternative means for obtaining Sri Krishnanubhava (Vaishnavanubhava or Bliss) are hinted.

In the second and third pasura panchakams (i.e. from 6th pasura to 15th pasura) the devotees who have adopted the said means are awakened and encouraged and persuaded to stick to their chosen means. Throughout the prabandha of Thiruppavai, the speaker, Andal is the Acharya (Religious teacher or Guru) and all other Gopikas of different attachments and approaches to Sri Krishna are the Vaishnava devotees seeking Sri Krishnanubhava. The allegory runs unhampered through out the long sacred poem of 30 pasuras.

As per the Thathva thraya jnana explained in the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, it has been hinted or rather established that, in the process of comprehending, to the extent possible, the Divine incomprehensible power, to conceive of such power or energy as the personification of all good and auspicious qualities (as the Purushoththama of Anantha Kalyana gunas) and to worship, to praise and to pray to him, is cited as a fine enjoyable divine process. That is why the Purushoththamas, Sri Rama and Sri Krishna are presented in Srimad Ramayana and Mahabharatha by the sage poets, Valmiki and Vyasa respectively to serve as imitable examples of adoration to humanity. (This aspect of worshipping the Purushoththama of the epic or the living Purushoththama of the present times is dealt with clearly, elaborately and logically or convincingly in my other books, "The truth of Hinduism - pentagon essays" and "Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam). (Sri Krishna was the contemporary living Purushoththama for the Gopika maidens, and is now and for ever mentally and spiritually living Purushoththama, for us and for all progeny to come, ever inspiring

and guiding the humanity. If Sri Krishna inspired and guided Arjuna directly, he, through his Geetha, inspires and guides the humanity for ever.)

It is reiterated once again that in Thiruppavai, the triangular glory is (1) the Purushottahama Sri Krishna, the only and the most adorable the deservedly obtainable, (2) the Acharya Andal awakening and guiding the devotees and (3) the Gopikas, the most disciplines seekers of the divine power.

The five aspects of devotion (Pancha Bhakthi Margas) namely, Sanctity (of word, mind and deed, the Thrikaranas), worship, the spirit of surrender (mental) with complete prostration (Saashtanga Namaskaram), praise and deep meditation are depicted in this pasura.

The famous Telugu poet, Bhaktha Pothana, in Prahlada Charithram of Mahabhagavatha, derives the nine devotional ways in greater detail from out of Andal's pancha Bhakthi Margas. (The particular stanza in Telugu runs thus :- "Thanuhridbhashala sakhyamun, Shravanamun, dasthvamun, vandana, Archanamul, Sevayu, Athmalonerukayun, Sankeerthanal, Chinthanambu Anunithommidi Bhakthimargamula Sarvathmun Harin nammi sajja nudai yunduta Bhadramanchu dalathun Santyambu daithoththamaa!"). The nine aspects of devotion according to Pothana are enumerated thus : Association with divine through body, mind and word, listening to divine stories and accounts, preparedness to serve with a feeling of surrender, devotional prostration, worship, service to devotees, inner awareness, devotional praise, and deep meditation. Pothana is a saint poet in Telugu (as Andal in Tamil) who has depicted the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha in a most enjoyable and practical way.

Let us not forget the "Geetha" line of Sri Krishna, "Dhyanaath Karmaphala Thyagam Shreyohi" (Chapter 12, Sloka 12). Geethacharya maintains that "Renunciation of the fruit of action" is supreme over even penance, and of course over all other devotional ways.

**"Service of God or Devotion to God"** should mean **"kindness and love"** to all creatures. Similarly the Sanskrit term, **"Hari seva"** should be understood. Hari (God) is **"Sarvathma"** and **"Sarvathmaka"**. Any soul is Hari (the Omnipresent divine energy) and Hari is in very soul. So love of God is love of all creation, in which god dwells. And there is no creature without God within: How can there be a flame without heat and light? The flame is the body and the light - and - heat are the life or soul; they are indivisible.

Andal's words, that if we follow Pancha Bhakthi Margas, our previous sins get obliterated and we don't commit any more sins in future, indicate positively that we are led to render virtuous deeds influenced by the Pancha Bhakthi Margas. These sins or virtues are meant to be committed not in respect of God, but in respect of God's creation. Hence the ultimate purpose of practice of devotional ways is to observe and lead a virtuous life. In other words, devotional ways prompt a person to think well and to do well.

Here Andal (the Acharya) teaches the Gopikas (disciples) to lead a virtuous life following the devotional ways. This is in fact the teaching of the Geetha also, which is summed up as the spirit of surrender - selflessness - service.

The expression, **Eelorembavai**, with which every pasura ends, signifies Andal as an Acharya. **"Eelorembavai shall be the words of a real Acharya - "This is my view; this is my vow; think out and understand it; And follow it"**. A real Acharya should have a clear understanding of what he teaches; he should initially follow and observe what he teaches. With the strength of his firm confidence and his own personal experience, he should be capable of preaching with an authority. He should infuse confidence in the minds of his followers. He should order his disciples to assimilate the meaning and spirit of his preaching before they begin to observe it in their actual life. Andal richly possesses all these deserving qualities and traits of a real Acharya. **"A real**

Acharya" is clearly defined in the last chapter, "Saptha Gadha", of my book, "Sree Bhakthi Saaram - Part II".

The assurance given by Andal in this pasura is just similar to that given by Sri Krishna in the Charama sloka of the Geetha. Both this pasura and the Charama sloka show the mean and the assurance i.e, the "Upaya and the Abhaya".

The Charama sloka (Chapter 18, Sloka 66) :-

"Sarvadharmam parithyajya, mamekam sharanam vraja |  
Ahamthvaa Sarva papebhyo, Moksha yishyami  
mashuchaha" ||

**Substance:** "Through "Sarangathi Bhava", you will be away from sins; you get the "Moksha Bhava"; you need not worry any more". (This is not the literal substance. Exactly it is the resultant gist). This idea is very well illustrated in this pasura.

Sri Ramanuja, who wants to give the same assurance to his disciples and devotees, does not like to choose any other expression; he quotes the very same "Charama sloka" verbatim, and asserts the same with an authority. Please read once again this account furnished under pasura no. 2.

"The cotton, thrown into a flame, gets burnt in no time, and even the ash there-of gets blown away by the slightest wind, and you find no trace of the cotton and its remnants. Similar is the condition with the attitude for committing a sinful act in respect of a real devotee with the spirit of surrender", says Andal. The simile employed is very fine. Andal's persuasive and winning power of preaching is displayed here.

"Let us 'fling' our choicest flowers at Sri Krishna", tells Andal to the Gopika maidens. There is the amorous touch of love. In the bright beam of light of Devotion, there are the glitterings of "Love". The poetic touch is wonderfully thrilling to describe Andal as saint-poetess.

**Pasura No. 6**

*"Pullum shilumbinagan pullaraiyan Koyil,  
 Vellai vili shangin peraravankettillatyo,  
 pillayelundirai peeyumalai manjundu,  
 Kallacchagadam kalakkliyakkaalocchi,  
 Vellattharavil thuylamarnda vitthinai,  
 ullatthukkondum munivargalum yogigalum,  
 Mellavelundari yenra peeraravam,  
 ullambugundum kulirnod ecorembavai."*

**Substance :**

(The Gopika maidens, who have risen up from their beds quite early in the dawn as per schedule for the service of God Krishna, under the leadership of Andal, go to the house of a particular Gopika maid, who is still abed and ask her, "why are you still lying abed? It will be day break soon. Don't you hear the twitter of the birds flying in the sky? Wake up; rise up".)

The Gopika maid, still drowsy and unwilling to rise up from bed replies, "I am unable to feel it is dawn, you might have yourselves disturbed the birds from their nests, give me another sign in proof of dawn".

"Don't you hear the sounds of the conch, shining bright white, blown to produce loud sounds to wake up the temple men and servants of the "Koyil of Vishnumurthy", the master of Garuthmantha, who is the King of birds"? questioned the Gopikas.

Replied the drowsy Gopika maid, still abed, "that is all right; you have come to wake me up! Please tell me who has roused you from sleep?"

"O, listen to us! The saints and the sages have quietly risen up from their beds without causing any disturbance to God Hari

lying in their hearts and have began singing in praise of the Lord lying on "Sesha" amidst the milk-sea and of the same Lord who killed Puthana and Shakatasura. We have heard their sacred utterances of the words, Hari, Hari, and we have risen up from our beds", said the Gopika maidens".

### **Exploration:**

As per the situation in the story connected with Thiruppavai, the Gopika maidens, who rose up from beds early in the dawn to facilitate themselves in time for the service of Sri Krishna, under the leadership of Andal, proceed to the house of a particular Gopika maid to rouse her from sleep, as she was still abed contrary to the decision taken the previous night. Of course this situation is amusing.

Let us make a research of the inner meaning of the pasura:

Here, "Sri Krishna" stands for the "Easwara Energy" responsible for the welfare and progress of the world, "Andal" stands for the "Acharya". The "Gopika maidens who have risen up from sleep early in the dawn as per principle" stand for "the first order of the Sishyas". "The other Gopika maidens", who are still abed stand for the ordinary disciples, who, having some culture and knowledge of devotion, still are in need of further enlightenment and keen guidance. This discrimination of classification shall be borne in mind by the readers while going through Thiruppavai. The allegory runs throughout the Prabandha, from the first pasura to the thirtieth pasura: The love aspect and the spiritual aspect running together from the perfect allegory making the poem splendid, and making the composer "a saint-poetess".

As per the story of performing the "Nomu" (vow), the Gopika maidens, who have got up from beds early in the dawn, under the leadership of Andal, go out to wake up other Gopika maids who are still abed. When all the Gopika maidens are equally enamoured of Sri Krishna's company and grace, where is the question of some

waking up the others? Just as the people, crossing the heavy floods, require the assistance of others who are better swimmers, so also the devotees, who are getting into the deep and swift floods of devotion, require the large company of other devotees. Further those young girls, who are not yet experts in "Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava" do require the company and guidance of more experienced maidens like Andal. Further, selfless people are not contented with their own comforts and pleasures; they are sympathetic, kind, and they always wish for the welfare of others. Similar is the case with the Gopikas who want to share among themselves "Sri Krishnanubhava".

"Eekasvadu na bhunjitha" - one should not lonely enjoy a good feast. He should enjoy the company of his friends sharing the feast. This is the spirit of the Gopika maidens under the leadership of Andal. There is another maxim - "go not to the place of worship or prayer alone". The Gopika maidens are of this fine culture, and hence they are kind enough to wake up their other friends to join them in "Sri Krishnanubhava". Further it was a vow (Varuna Nomu) ordained by their elders to be performed for "Loka sangraha" (the welfare of the humanity in general). Hence the Gopika maidens are bound to cooperate among themselves. Cooperation is the sacred quality of real devotees. And cooperation is an inevitable need for people pursuing a noble deed for the benefit of the society.

When all the Gopika maidens are equally and fondly enamoured of Sri Krishna, how does it happen that some Gopikas wake up early zealously and some others remain abed drowsily? Those devotees, who wish to experience "Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava", may sometimes get mentally disturbed towards their own worldly affairs; This depends upon their mental and spiritual strength though they start with a determination. Is it possible for all to get mentally detached from the narrow domestic walls, in a minute, for good, and to feel partners in the universe? Though

their desire for Vishnu Samslesha Bhava is intense, yet they require the company and guidance, in the initial and middle stages, of experienced devotional experts. For devotees the guidance of an expert devotional Acharya is quite essential and necessary. Further a real, selfless and generous Acharya is never satisfied with his own deliverance; but he goes in search of a multitude of brotheren to facilitate and guide them to achieve deliverance or "Moksha Bhava". (It is on account of such mentality, zeal and service mindedness that Sri Ramanujacharya announced openly "Thirumanthra" to all people irrespective of caste, creed and sex). This is the essence of "Moksha sanyasa yoga", the final yoga of Bhagavadgeetha. It is such a spirit of generosity and self sacrifice (Thyaga) among the humanity that can ensure peace to the society and the world. When this spirit of selflessness and service mindedness is lacking, how can we expect peace and happiness for the world?

"Andal", here, stands for "The Acharya supreme" with the wisdom of "Thirumanthra". The "Gopikas who woke up early stand for "wise devotees". "The other Gopikas who are still abed" stands for "people in ignorance". The duty of the former two is to lift them (the latter third) up from the drowsiness of ignorance to the awareness of wisdom. (This secret of Thiruppavai had enlightened Sri Ramanuja later and his propagation of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha progressed on such generous lines.)

Andal aspires that the ever regularly uttered "Vishnu sahasra guna nama gana" (The singing of the thousand auspicious qualities about "Srimaha Vishnu") shall ever enlighten and guide the common man. To indicate this the Gopika girls under the leadership of Andal say that the utterances of the sacred word, "Hari - Hari". of the Vaishnava saints at dawn woke them up from sleep. It is also indicated that saints, sages and thinkers are in the habit of rising up from their beds at early dawn (Brahma Muhurtha).

"Puthana and Shakatasura" signify "Kama and Kroda" (evil desire or ambition and jealousy, malice or anger). In other words they are selfishness and pride (Mamakara and Ahamkara). One, who wins over these two foes, Ahamkara and Mamakara, can alone expect himself to get into "Vishnu Samslesha Bhava" by gradual mental concentration. Such a pure devotee feels himself one with "Sheshashayi"; he feels himself "Seshashayi". He is one with the knowledge of "Shesha - Sheshi Bhava". He is ever in peace and Bliss.

Please examine and enjoy how much "wisdom-and-culture", social; ethical and spiritual, is packed up and stored up in this eight lined pasura. The reader might realize that it is the case with any pasura of Thiruppavai.

**Pasura No. 7**

*"Kishu kishenrengu maanaicchaatthangalandu,  
 peshina peccharava jagettilaiyo peyppenne,  
 kashum pirappum kalagalappa kkaiperthu,  
 vasha narungkula laicchiyar, maltinaa,  
 Loshai paduttha tthayirava ngetti laiyo,  
 Nayagapenbillay Narayanan murthi,  
 Keshavanai ppadavum nikette kidatthiyo,  
 Thesha mudaiyay thira velorembavai".*

**Substance:**

(When the Gopika maidens under the leadership of Andal try to wake up a Gopika girl, who, having the experience in Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava, is again in temporary oblivion, the latter asks, "Tell me the signs in nature and the changes in nature in support of your statement about dawn and day-break". Thereupon the Gopikas under the leadership of Andal exhort her thus to rise up from bed. This is the preface to the seventh pasura.)

"Don't you hear the loud cries of the conversations among the larks? Rise up, friend! (The girl is still rolling on her bed unable to get over from the uppressing drowsiness.) What a foolish girl you are still to be sleeping under the wrong notion that it is not still dawn! Hark, don't you hear the melodious sounds of the songs of the Gopika women? Don't you hear the chiming rhythmic sounds of the churning of the curds by the Gopika women quickly turning, the churns with their rasied hands while their light golden "Thattabottu and Kanne bottu" worn round their necks tinkle, and while their scented anointed thick long black hair spreads fragrance around? (Kannebottu is worn by the maiden tied to her neck with an ornamental auspicious yellow thread, and Thattabottua, bigger

one, is added to it at the time of her marriage. Both are worn by the married lady as marks of auspiciousness of a wife.) The yadava ladies, in happy Samslesha Bhava with the auspicious qualities of Sri Krishna, namely, beauty, goodness and truth, sing melodiously while they are churning the curds. Don't you hear their songs? Rise up soon from your bed!" (The Gopika girl is still abed unwilling to rise). She remarks, "What of it! Our Gopika ladies in this Gokulam churn curds day and night, irrespective of particular fixed timings". Of course she wants to continue on her bed for some time more under some pretext or other. The band of Gopikas begin to plead, "Oh, what a drowsiness it is for you! You are not a simple ignorant girl! You are the head of a small group of girls! You should not roll on your bed thus! Hark, don't you hear the sounds of the songs of the Yadava maidens concerning the episode of Sri Krishna, the advent of Sremannarayana murty, putting an end to the terrible demon, kesi? Still you wish to sleep, O beautiful sister! Open the main door!" The Gopika maidens thus shouted lightly through the window.

### **Exploration:**

Here, the Gopika maid, who is still asleep, is not like the other maidens who are yet to rise up from sleep. She is one, who is to some extent experienced in "Sree Krishnagunanubhava. Yet she does not hasten to join the Gopika maidens for the dawn bath in Yamuna along with Sri Krishna; she has that boldness and confidence that she is not a novice in the devotional path, and that she has trodden the path to some distance; When a sudden and unexpected need occurs for some expenditure of money, the person who as some financial support does not become to perturbed and terrified as one who is quite penniless.

But social justice and ethics demand that the haves should come to the rescue of the have nots! Hence should this maiden,

who has to some extent been experienced in Krishnagunanubhava, be careless and evasive? She has, in fact, to lead the other juniors and freshers. That is her legitimate and just duty too. That is why she is addressed "leader" by the first group of maidens. She is addressed as the "enlightened sister". It is clear that the other Gopikas have some regard for her. Hence the Gopikas are requesting her to join them, expressing due regard for her at the same time.

What a fine courtesy! What a fine spirit of union and cooperation! This is the type of regard and courtesy to be shown to the aged, the wise and the experienced by those who are youngsters and less experienced. This is the way how the help, direction and leadership of the elders should be sought. It is significant that the Gopika maidens are approaching and inviting all, their elders and their Juniors as well, for the success of the "Varuna Nomu". This is exemplary for any society to execute a project successfully.

The wakening cries of the larks at early dawn, the decorations and ornaments of the Yadava ladies, the method of churning the curds and their songs and the rhythmic sounds of the churning are described picturesquely producing a sensuous effect on the minds of imaginative readers. A reader with "Samslesha Bhava" and a sense of imagination may feel frenzied that he is a habitant of Gokulam or Thiruvayippadu!

The Gopika maiden's remark, "our Gopika ladies in this Gokulam (Thiruvayippadu) churn curds day and night without any fixed timings", indicates the prosperity of the profusion of dairy in each yadava household. Milch cows and buffaloes are milked not once in the day! They are so generous. Milk, curd, buttermilk, butter, cheese, milk-cream and ghee (i.e. all the dairy products) are always available in plenty at anytime of the day.

(What a contrast there is of the present Indian village and Andalus Thiruvayippadu). What a great wealth of milch cattle! What a prosperity of dairy! What a duty minded busy population! What a happiness for the inhabitants of Gokulam!

The young married yadava ladies, melodiously singing the sweet songs on Sri Krishna's handsome personality and his wondrous acts of bravery, kindness and love, consistent with the regular and harmonious chiming of the churning churns, and their Thattabottu and Kannebottu producing tinkling sounds of afford a regular musical beat, are all exquisitely charming. It is an example of rare sensuous beauty and picturesqueness. The readers with proper imagination get mentally transported to enjoy the beauties of Gokulam; As visiles they feel to have seen the beautiful spectacles; as audiles they feel to hear the music of the Gopikas; as nosiles they feel to enjoy the sweet odours of the sented fragrance of the yadava ladies' flowing hair and of the sweet dairy products. How romantic and sensuous the poetry of Thiruppavai is!

The humble and simple life of the yadava ladies is also ventilated. Their jewellery around their necks are not costly glamorous sophisticated ornaments of gold and diamonds; They are simple "Thattabottu and Kannebottu". The yadavas get up very early in the morning regularly to attend to their morning duties. They are simple and contented, and hence music flows out of their mouths from the perennial source of their blissful minds. They are happily and active. Their activities are doubly blessed; they are productive and pleasure giving. (This is the exemplary specimen of ladies' country life as against the ambitious lives of the urban ladies infested with worries, discontent, disappointments, jealousy, hatred and so on. The purchased civilisation of the urban rich ladies is to be contrasted with the natural happy and quiet life of the ladies of the countryside!)

Only the jewellery of the yadava ladies worn around their necks is dealt with and described. Their ornaments of their hands are not touched; for, the lady, before she begins to churn the curd with the wooden churn, removes her bangles and other ornaments of the hands, for otherwise they are a hindrance for their work. The skill, the observation and the discretion of the poetess Andal are kun and equisite!

- Sreeman Narayana of Vaikuntah or of Kshirasagara with his innumerable auspicious qualities (Anantha Kalyana Guna Paripurna) is said to be Purushottama to be adored and worshipped. How to conceive of such a figure, such an imaginary Purushottama, such a masculine handsomeness and goodness! Andal tells that Sri Krishna of Thrivayippadu is the Anantha Kalyana Guna Paripurna Purushottama, born in the aspect of Srimaha Vishnu and that he should be visited, worshipped and praised. (In fact every creature on earth has its source from the Vaishnava energy, and according to this law of nature every human being is a significant aspect of the Vaishnava energy, and a supreme human being like Sri Rama or Sri Krishna with all good qualities of Truth, goodness and beauty is Purushottama. The difference between the properties of one individual and those of the other is due to the difference in proportion of the Vaishnava energy the individual possesses. These are the scientific and spiritual aspects of "Thathvathraya" on which the Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha is based.) (A very detailed explanation of this same Vaishnava energy being the source of all creation and existence is given in my other books, namely the Truth of Hinduism (Vasthavam) and Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam published by T.T.D).

These are such thought-gems and description that this pasura contains.

Now, let us dive into the spiritual depths of this stanza. It has already been hinted that Thiruppavai is an allegorical poem throughout :-

Here "the band of Gopika maidens, who woke up early and are going about to wake up a few other individuals who are still abed "stand for" devotees who are interested in the path of devotion and who intend sincerely to practice it". "The Gopika maid who is still abed" stands for "a devotee who is already in the devotional path and who is a bit evasive in her own confidence". "Andal" stands for an ideal "Acharya" (a religious propagator) properly directing the followers.

A real devotee, while practicing in the devotional path and while awaiting his own bliss and deliverance, tries to guide others into the good path with the "spirit of common welfare of all". (Samana Shreya Bhava). This is the same as the spirit, that all are brethren depending upon the same and the one Advaita Vaishnava power (Samashraya Bhava). An efficient wise Acharya rears up a skilful and intelligent group of first ranking disciples through, whom he expects to propagate his principles among all common people. The real devotee - disciples act in accordance with the dictates of their Guru or Acharya. Here the devotional path and the organizational system of religion and its propagation are hinted. (Sri Ramanuja seems to have been enlightened and inspired in this respect due to his respect for Andal and her wisdom ventilated in Thiruppavai; Ramanuja has trained and appointed various Acharyas, Desikas and so many types of propagators of his Siddhantha, who influenced the entire Bharath in respect of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha).

"The chirpings and the cries of the larks at dawn" indicate the affectionate parting good-bye words of the selfless saintly devotees, who having met at a place accidentally the previous evening, depart early the next morning on their own ways and pursuits.

What is the spiritual significance in "the Gopika ladies, the yadava family ladies or house wives, singing songs of piety to the

tune and rhythm of their churning the curd"? the churning sound signify "the sounds of the readings, recitings and the singings of the Divya Prabandhas (the divine epic poems) by the well disciplined and successful family men (Grihasthas) who have been with the guidance of expert Acharyas, able to obtain the supreme wisdom of Swarupa - Upaya - Purushardha Jnana (the knowledge of what he is (Atmajnana), the knowledge of the means to get wisdom supreme and bliss, and the knowledge of the supreme lording force, the Easwara) by the combined and comparative study and understanding of the supreme wisdom of the three great divine spells or Manthras, namely, The Thirumanthra, the Dvayamanthra and the Charama sloka. (The meanings of the said sacred spell trio are discussed in the general and particular introduction furnished at the beginning of this book).

The life of true devotion reached through a disciplined and successful family life is the life of supreme fulfillment, superior even to the lives of monks and sages of penance, and yagnikas of vedic ceremonial functions and vedic recitations. The sounds of the devotional songs of the family people who are leading disciplined, purposeful and fruitful lives are superior to the sounds of the recitals of the scriptures. The Jnana, Bhakthi and Vairagya Bhavas (The paths of true knowledge of the creation, the devotion and the renunciation of worldly comforts) should help a "grihastha" (family man) to lead a virtuous and purposeful life, and not an idle life. The discharge of an active virtuous duty for the welfare of the world should be the product of the spirit of knowledge - devotion - renunciation. The Visishtadvaita Siddhantha does not admit "Sanyasam" (Renunciation from action). It advocates an active life of purpose and fruit with an awareness of the knowledge - eternal and bliss". The songs of the Gopika ladies in Samslesha Bhava with Krishna's virutes" stand to teach all the great ideals, aforesaid.

The Gopika maiden, who has an understanding of the virtuous and glorious life of Sri Krishna, and who is capable of feeling Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava, perhaps lies comfortably and happily hearing the other maidens sing in praise of Sri Krishna. It is all right as far as she is concerned. It is for her enjoyable. But should she evade giving the required cooperation to her other Gopika friends? Should she forget the assigned engagement for the morn along with them? No. The spirit of service and cooperation is hinted in this context.

Similarly a real devotee is not contented with his own uplift and bliss. He aspires for the spiritual uplift of all his fellowmen. This is for the welfare of the whole world. This spirit of aspiration for the uplift of all others is what is said to be "Moksha Sanyas Yoga" in Geetha. (Sri Ramanuja should have got the inspiration for Bhavathraya, the spirit of surrender, selflessness service, from the Dravida Prabandhas like Andal's Thiruppavai).

## 8. Pasura No. 8

*"Kül vaanam velle nrerumai shiruvidu,  
Meivan parandanagan mikkulla pillaigalum,  
povan poginrarai ppogamar kaatthu, unna  
kkuvuvan vandu ninrom, kodukulamu daiya,  
paavaa yelundirai padi pparai konnu,  
Mavaai pilamdanai mallarai maattiya,  
Thevadidevanai cchenrunam shevitthal,  
Aavaavenraaraaindarul elorembavai."*

### Substance:

(The preface for this pasura is that the Gopika maidens under the leadership of Andal go out at dawn to wake up a Gopika maid, who has already obtained direct the grace of Sri Krishna to some extent, and who is still abed).

"It will be day break soon; see the reddened eastern horizon; get up from your bed", said the Gopika maidens to the yadava girl, still abed. She suddenly reacted with a reflective remark, "It is not dawn; The eastern horizon is reddened not on account of the sun who is by now far below. One of you, a moon-faced sister, perhaps has looked at the clear eastern horizon, and the brightness of her face might have caused a brighter reflection on the east, and you are deceived to think it is day break! Please tell me another clear point in proof of the impending dawn".

Said the Gopika maidens, "The buffaloes, normally released at dawn from the cattle sheds, are moving about freely, grazing the snow covered green grass. Now even, rise up, "The Gopika girl continued to be abed and asked, "Have all our friends reached the Yamuna bank for bath?" The Gopika maidens replied, "except yourself, all our friends joined together and have been cheerfully

moving as the sacred Thirumala bound pious pilgrims. We have stopped them there, hark!, and we have come here for you so that you can also join the main group. Further we know your importance as one blessed by Sri Krishna's grace, and hence we fondly and eagerly await you. Please get up from bed."

The yadava girl again interrogated, "What you say is all right: What am I to perform after rising up from bed?" The Gopika maidens replied, "Let us go to Sri Krishna's residence first and let us sing to our hearts content in the glorious praise of Sri Krishna; and then let us express our sense of surrender and dedication to him. Don't you know the glories of our Sri Krishna? You know quite well about his wondrous deeds. He tore the mouth of the demon, Kesi, in the form of a horse, into two pieces. He put an end to the two powerful Demons, Chanura and Mushtika. He is the god of gods including Brahma deva. Such a Purushottama he is, and let us surrender to his grace. He will be sure to receive us kindly, to listen to use leisurely, and will surely bless us. Eelorbavai! Understand what we say, and follow us".

### **Exploration:**

Normally, a person deep asleep does not easily wake up and come to normal senses from his drowsiness. Even if he wakes up from sleep, he does not soon rise up bodily from his bed. A kind of drowsiness, lethargy, indifference and evasiveness overlap him. Similarly a person steeped in the darkness of ignorance cannot get into the light of knowledge soon and easily. Even if he falls into the path of knowledge and wisdom, there is likelihood of his reverting to his old path of ignorance and foolishness due to his carelessness and the force of previous habit. There is also another aspect of character of this man: Sometimes a person who has fallen into the path of Jnana (knowledge cum wisdom), due to his imperfectness of real Jnana, is likely to become proud, and then to fall into ignorance, more dangerous. Hence a real devotee should

guard himself against either of these two eventualities. Hence a sincere devotee should always strive to be in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, in awareness and in bliss. Whenever he is in "Vislesha" (mental separation), there is the danger of evasiveness. Hence he should always try to be in Samslesha Bhava. Then only he can ensure himself to be in the straight path (Rruju Marga). The ideas so far expressed are derived from the attitude of this particular Gopika maiden, who at first has been deep asleep; then she has been in wakeful drowsiness and then in indifference. She remains for comparison with a devotee in temporary Vislesha Bhava.

As cooperation is quite essential among members of a society for the execution of a plan or project envisaged for the welfare of the society, cooperation is essential among devotees for a divine cause, which is meant for the all round development of man, physical, moral and spiritual. The devotees are essentially selfless; they have a feeling of equality and brotherhood towards brother devotees. In any divine service, the feeling of brotherhood is intrinsically essential. There is nothing like devotion to God without love and brotherhood for fellow-men. It is to be carefully observed here how the Gopika maidens, bound for a pious purpose, try themselves to get together, how they encourage in a friendly way their juniors, less experienced, how they are inviting with proper regard and estimation their Gopika friends who are better placed in the path of devotion. This is the real attitude of a real Vaishnava. (A Vaishnava is one who believes in the Omnipresence of God or the divine power. The term, Vaishnava is irrespective of caste, class, creed, sex, language etc).

Hence the attitude of a real Vaishnava shall be towards universal brotherhood; it is simply logical and should be natural. In Vaishnava phraseology, the ceremonies of "Samashrayam" (Sama shrenam) and "Chakrankitham" (Chakrankanam) are meant not for age long superstitious customs: they have a meaning and a

purpose. "Samashrayam" is a Vaishnava ceremonial function at which the Acharya (religious teacher) teaches his disciple, the young man, before marriage, that God is Omnipresent and all creatures in the world are children of God, and that equality should be observed among them; it teaches universal brotherhood, and before god all belong to one and the same line (Shreni) "Chakrankitham" is a similar function at which the Guru teaches his disciple that "Chakra" (disk - sudarshanam) stands for time which is eternal, without a beginning, a middle and an end, and that man should dedicate himself to the concept of time, which will make understand the concept of life. When these ceremonies are meaningfully performed and observed, they are worthy ones.

These ideals are expressed in the company of the Gopika maidens, constituting Andal, the Acharya, supreme, the so many ordinary Gopikas (the ordinary devotees), some Gopikas experienced to some extent in Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava, some maids who are more experienced in Sri Krishnagunagana, and some others who are not upto the ordinary mark even. But the cooperation, sympathy and sisterhood, animated in them, binding them together with mutual love and concern are exemplary.

Andal shows in this pasura the supreme and most desirable "Samana Shreya" and "Samshraya" Bhavas. These are meant for social welfare first, leading to spiritual enlightenment. The Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava, the Sarangathi Bhava, and the brotherhood among the devotees are the important spiritual and social points ventilated in this pasura.

There are some points of literal excellences: The Gopika maiden's sudden reaction with a reflective remark, "It is not dawn; the eastern horizon is reddened not on account of the sun who is by now far below. One of you, a moon faced sister, perhaps has looked at the clear eastern horizon, and the brightness of her face might have caused a brighter reflection on the east, and your are

deceived to think it is day break," contains the figures of speech, namely, fanciful metaphor and hyperbole, which are enjoyable. The dense fall of snow at dawn in Margasira month, the snowy green grass covering the ground, the eagerness with which the buffaloes graze the green tufts of grass, the light sounds of the cattle cutting the grass, with their teeth while grazing, the sounds of the heavy breathing out of the cattle in their eagerness while grazing etc. are description of natural beauty of sensuous effect on the mind of the reader. The poetic skill is wonderful.

**Pasura No. 9**

*“Thumanimadatthu cchutthum vilakkeriya,  
 Thupangamala tthuyi lanimel kanvalarumm  
 Maamaan magale manikkadavam thal thiravai,  
 maami ravalai yeluppiro, vun magaldaan,  
 umaiyo vanri cchevido vanandalo,  
 emapperunduyil mandirappattalo,  
 Maamaayan madavan vaigunda nenenru,  
 Namam palavum navinru Elorembavai”.*

**Substance:**

“Oh! maternal uncle's daughter! Who is comfortably sleeping on the softest and comfortable bed, stuffed with swans, down in your bedroom, while the bedroom is filled with fragrance of the sweet smokes from the burning perfumes, and while bright lights are illuminating the entire mansion, the walls of which are studded with precious diamonds of the nine rare varieties! Rise up and open the door of the gate of your room!” said the Gopikas to one Gopika maid, who is still abed.

The mother having seen her daughter still abed, admonished her daughter, “why are you still abed without even responding to the calls of your companions?” Thereupon the Gopika maidens said, “Aunt! Atleast you please try to wake up your daughter. She continues to sleep! Perhaps she is unable to hear our calls and shouts! Is she deaf perhaps she has gone to sleep quite late, and perhaps she is guarded so that she may sleep for long undisturbed! Is she influenced by a magical spell to get a long deep slumber? Please enlighten us!”

The mother from inside bawled out to the Gopika maidens standing outside, “you please utter aloud the sacred and auspicious

names of Sri Krishna, so that she may wake up". "We have already pronounced Vishnu Sahasra Namavali (the thousand auspicious names of Sri Mahavishnu). You also please utter aloud Vishnu's auspicious names and wake up your daughter", replied the Gopika maidens - "Elorembavai".

### **Exploration:**

The young Gopika maid, who is still asleep soundly, is perhaps one belonging to a noble and rich family of Thiruvayippadu. She belongs perhaps to a family closely related to Sri Krishna's foster father, Nandagopa, or to a family of governmental powers. That is why she is so bold, calm and composed. It is clear she is in prosperous and comfortable state; Her beautiful and grand mansion, with gates and doors, gold plated and studded with precious diamonds, with bright lights, with smokes of fragrance and of sweet odours, and with seats and beds stuffed with swan's down, are fascinatingly and charmingly described, producing a sensuous effect on the minds of the reflective readers.

This Gopika maiden signifies an accomplished devotee who has attained divine grace. A devotee, who feels that he has attained divine grace, is naturally in elation, satisfaction, composedness and bliss. A person, who has achieved God's grace, is said to be possessing all prosperities, comforts and joy.

A devotee in full faith, in deep meditation and in full Samslesha Bhava, is undisturbed as he has no further ambitions and worries nor fears. He has not any other temptations. As he is in utter Samslesha Bhava, he is almost unconscious of his surroundings, and he cannot hear even the divine praise made by his fellow devotees around. When water is poured into a pot, which is already filled up to the brim, no additional drop of water can be held by the fill pot. Similarly no sound, whatever, divine or loud, can enter the ear of a devotee who is almost unconscious in his

Samslesha Bhava, nothing can disturb - him from his deep Samslesha Bhava. He appears to be spell bound under the influence of a divine spell. The louder praise of God, made by the other devotees around him, falls in less intensity than his deep blissful Samslesha Bhava.

For a perfect devotee of full divine knowledge (Brahma Jnana), who is aware of "Kshethra kshethrajna Bhava). Shesha Sheshi Bhava and Swami Sampada Bhava" (these three expressions are clearly explained in the introduction and under the previous pasuras), has not to make further search for divinity. As God is said to be the lover of his own devotees, He himself comes in search of his devotees. The devotee with the precious knowledge of the "availability of god's grace" (Bhakthavatchalatha of God) is undisturbed and calm like a full pot. Of course what the devotee aspires, the grace or the bliss, he is sure to achieve. This power is generated within one's own mind, which is the aspect of the Omnipresent power (Vaishnava Shakthi). Hence a real devotee in deep Samslesha Bhava is in bliss and tranquillity.

**Pasura No. 10**

*"Notthucchu varkam puguginra vammai,  
 Matthamunthararo vashal thiravadar,  
 Natthatthulaimudi narayanan nammal,  
 Potthapparai darum punniyanal, pandorunal,  
 kuthatthin vai vilnda kumbakarana num,  
 thotthu munakke perundu yilthan thandano,  
 Aattha vanandaludaiya yarungalame,  
 Thetthamaai vandu thira velorembavai".*

**Substance:**

"O, madam, enjoying bliss, having fulfilled your vow to attain it! Why don't you utter a word even, though you don't open the door"? The band of Gopikas ask a particular Gopika maiden, who has been successful in her practice and experience of Sri Krishnanubhava.

"Why do you express a grievance against me? Is He here?" replied the Gopika maiden.

The band of Gopikas said, "though you deny His presence with you in your house, we are able to get the sweet and sacred smell of the Thulasi garland worn by him..... We assert that the particular fragrant smell, of the Thirutthulai garlands, worn by Sri Krishna, is profusely flowing out of your house; it is certainly the smell of Sri Krishna's garlands which decorate his head. The fragrance is of Sri Krishna to whom we utter benediction, and who is sure to grant us purushartha, the bliss that we aspire for ..... we know what you are in relation to Him! Please get up from your bed..... have your defeated Kumbhakarna and got from him the boon of the prosperity of 'sleep'? Oh, sister, fond of sleep! O, our leader! Please rise up and open the door! Elorembavai".

**Exploration:**

The Gopika maiden, who is being roused up from sleep, stands for a successful and blessed devotee, who has attained Sri Krishna's grace and who is in blissful Samslesha Bhava with Krishna.

When some young scholars in a group first commence reading and studying the Vedas, the one who is most proficient becomes the leader and guide for all the others. Similarly the Gopikas are addressing this particular Yadava maid as their leader, as she is most advanced in the sacred experience of Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava, who has won the grace of Lord Sri Krishna by a direct means being just quite close to Krishna as the first neighbour. This is described in a fanciful and enjoyable way.

When the Gopika maiden denies Sri Krishna's presence in her house, the other maidens point out that the sweet fragrance of Sri Krishna's presence is spread over everywhere in her house: this indicates that the yadava maiden is an expert in Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava: As Sri Krishna's fragrance is Omnipresent, his fragrance is felt everywhere by his devotees, provided they have the belief.

The Gopika maiden, in perfect Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava, denying Krishna's presence with her, indicates her humility, simplicity and condescension. A real Bhaktha (devotee), when he is approached by others to praise him or to worship him, he simply tells that all are children of god, and that he is one among them. He advocates a pious community of devotees based on universal brotherhood and love; he will never assert his greatness or speciality.

It is not a mean charge against the Gopika, abed, that the band of Gopika maidens make a remark that she is sleeping like Kumbakarna. Her seeming asleepness is not a real-physical sleep

of laziness and dullness. She appears only bodily asleep; on the other hand, she is mentally alert. In her deep and enjoyable Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava, she is only unconscious to her physical surroundings; she is spiritually conscious and alert in her mental experience with unlimited auspicious qualities of Sri Krishna. The Gopika maidens' expression, "Has Kumbakarna handed over to you 'his sleep', having died in the broad day light? Is a literal joke and produces humour in the minds of the readers.

There is a subtle spiritual implication in the Gopika maidens inviting this particular Gopika to be their leader: What the Gopika maidens mean by their asking her to be their leader in this: "should you not be kind enough to utter a word to us even though you are immersed in deep Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava? If you are deaf to our loving call, you lend us scope to consider as selfish and proud! But we don't consider you so. We quite well known your deep and mystic Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava. That is why we request you to be our leader and lead us to the dizzy heights of spiritualism. The spiritual bias and understanding of the Gopika maidens are so subtle, discriminative and desirable.

It is to be reiterated here that this particular Gopika, deaf to the call of others, being immersed in her own bliss, signifies "a real devotee who is in deep Vishnu Samslesha Bhava". This is the spiritual and "philosophical point for learning here". In this connection it is desirable to remember once again what has been so far said about "a devotee of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava", and his relationship with the rest of the society. The Visishtadvaitha philosophy does not approve of utter secluedness of an individual devotee even though he is a "Sarvasanga parithyagi" (complete renouncer from everything). The Siddhantha expects even such a sacred person to be of help and guidance to manhood in his own way and impact. Please follow this elucidation closely:-

“The supreme devotee in utter Vishnu Samslesha Bhava is one, cited in this pasura particularly. Such a devotee is beyond the established “Pancha Bhakthi Margas and Nava Bhakthi Margas” (which have been already explained) and he is above them having reached the spirit of Charamopaya (surrender and dedication) shown by Sri Krishna in the Charama sloka of the Geetha (Chapter 18, Sloka 66) namely, “*Sarvadharmam parithyajya mamekam saranam vraja | Ahamthva sarva papebhyo moksha yishyam Masuchaha ||*” This supreme devotee is one who is immersed in the spirit of surrender and dedication, and enjoys the bliss of thin king and knowing about his relation with the Omnipresent lording force. The spirit of Sarangathi-cum-dedication is the supreme, sure and most direct way for Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, which is pure bliss. This is the sure way for sure success of attainment of bliss; this is the never failing aid, the Supreme aid, the Charama marga. This Charama marga of surrender - dedication is otherwise termed as “Thirumanthra marga” or “Tharaka manthra marga.” When there is such a supreme devotee of utter Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, even though he declares himself as Sarvasangaparithyagi, it is desirable and incumbent on the part of the devotees to approach him for spiritual guidance even though he may not take the responsibility of them all practically. The devotees all need his benediction (mangalasasanam), which is sure to inspire them and to enlighten them. His own life is an example for all others. It is quite natural that a supreme devotee of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava is in his own bliss. But he is a comfort, a protection and a support to the rest of the devotees who are pursuing the same path. As his spirit is “Moksha Sanyasa Bhava”, he wishes for the uplift of all others, which is accomplished by his graceful looks, words and guidance. He is really the leader of those in the line though he does not get physically involved in the society of others.

**Pasura No. 11**

*"Ketthukkaravai kkangal pala karandu,  
 Shetthar thira laliya cchenru sheruccheyyum,  
 kutthamonrillada kovalartham porkodiye,  
 putthara valgul punamayile podaraai,  
 shutthatthu ttholima rellarum vandu nin,  
 Muthampugundu mugilvannan perpada,  
 cchitthade peshade shelva ppendattinii,  
 Ettthu kkurangum porul elorembavai".*

**Substance:**

"The Gopika maidens are now walking up a yadava maid, who is praiseworthy in every aspect and who is associated with Sri Krishna on equal friendly terms". This is the preface to this pasura.

"O, our companion, who is the golden creeper of the famous yadava race, noted for its dairy of many huge herds of milch cattle, and for its valor suppressing the forces of the foes! O, voluptuous beauty! O, a swan in walking! O, peacock in gaity! Get up from your bed soon. We, your relatives are standing at your gate and singing in praise of the sacred and auspicious names of the shining blue complexioned (Syamasundara) Sri Krishna! Oh, prosperous sister lying still and motionless on the bed! Why do you still lie abed? Please rise up. Elorembavai".

**Exploration:**

This yadava maiden signifies "a devotee of a supreme status, lying at rest in utter surrender to God, thinking that Easwara (the universal Lord) is the means as well as the end for the righteous pursuit of man".

The voluptuous beauty of the maiden, with a lean waist and huge posteriors, with the grandeur of her general exterior beauty, with a dignified gait etc. is described fascinatingly with metaphors and hyperboles in the pouranic (epic) style. This is a point of literal eminence.

The devotee, who knows and feels that God alone is the means as well as the end, is generally ground and dignified, disturbed by none, and tempted by none. He is the Lord of "Bhagavad gunanubhava", and this is his mental and spiritual grandeur.

There is an answer here for the question if family life is the proper life, the desirable life: One can assume any duty ordained to him by caste or society or circumstance. But he should discharge his righteous duty with "a spirit of service", (Kainkarya Buddhi), which is most important.

There is a sloka thus in the preface to "Geetha" :-

**Sloka :** *prarabdham bhujiyamanopi githabhyasa rathassada  
Samukthassa sukhiloke karmana nopalipyathe||*

**Pasura No. 12**

*“Kanaithhilangattherumai kanruk kirangi,  
 Ninaitthu mulai valiye ninru palshora,  
 Nanaitthilam sherakkum nanchelvantrangai,  
 pani tthalai viila ninvashal kadai pathi,  
 cchinatthinal thenilangaikkomanaicchettha,  
 Manathkukkiniyanai ppadavum ni vaai thiravaai,  
 Initthaa nelundira yiidenna perurakkam,  
 Anaitthillattharumaurindu - Elorembavai”.*

**Substance:**

(The yadava maiden that is roused from sleep here is one, who is the sister of a yadava chief who is a constant companion of Sri Krishna at all times and all circumstances.)

“O, Gopika! You, the sister of the yadava prosperous chief, whose floor of the house is made damp and wet with the milk of the buffalo of the first calving, causing to fall in drops of milk from its heavily milk-charged udder, thinking of its young one. We are standing at your gate with our heads wet with the heavily-falling-snow of this "Margali" month, singing in praise of Sri Rama, the destroyer of Ravana. Don't you hear us? Why don't you open your mouth? Please rise up from your bed even now. We have understood your excessive sleep. Please get up. Elorembavai”.

**Exploration :**

The Gopika maiden, who is lying still on her bed, signifies "a devotee, supreme, who has great respect, regard and kindness towards other devotee - brotheren". This supreme devotee is a "Swacharya" (a born teacher who has nothing to learn from others. This is explained in detail in the introduction). The sacred

teachings of such a "swacharya" cool down the heat of anxieties and the family problems of the listeners, who are family men. This effect is signified in the expression, "the Gopika maidens standing at the gate of the particular Gopika (standing for a supreme devotee, swacharya) with heads wet with the heavy snow fall".

"The milch cow, thinking of its calf, and causing its udder pour down milk" signifies the Swacharya, in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, remaining as a guide for inspiring the other devotee - brotheren.

No difference is felt between Sri Rama and Sri Krishna as both are considered as the advents of Vishnumurty. (In fact no difference be felt between any two perfect saints of this world though they belong to different times, regions, languages and races.)

As Sri Krishna has tested the temperaments of the maidens, and as Sri Rama is said to have been mild and respectful to the maidens, perhaps it is felt that the praise of Sri Rama will be more convincing to the maidens. Rama is established in the epic as the advent of Vishnu in the past, and perhaps the present aspect of Vishnu as Sri Krishna is yet to be understood by the Gopika maidens. It is quite natural as Sri Krishna is their contemporary companion with too much of familiarity. This is a literal skill which is truly fascinating. Andal, as one of the Gopika maidens, has understood the personality of Sri Krishna completely, and hence she assumes the responsibility of apprising the sister-gopika-maidens about "Sri Krishnavathara".

"The seeming slumber of this particular Gopika maiden" signifies "the Vishnu Samslesha Bhava of the devotee".

Owing to her deep Vishnu Samslesha Bhava perhaps, the Gopika maid is not hearing the sounds and songs of the other

maidens. Or is she keeping quiet thinking that the sacred points about God are secret points? No, points about the divinity are open to all, and need not be concealed.

“The Gopika maiden's irresponsiveness to the other Gopika maidens”, and “the floor of her house being wet with milk” signify the plentiness of physical and spiritual wealth of the Gopika maid. The divine wealth of the Swacharya, the Alvar and the supreme devotee with love for other brethren-devotees is limitless and inestimable.

**Pasura No. 13**

*"Pullin vaai kindaanai ppolla varakkanai,  
 kkilli kkalaindanai kkirthimai paadippooi  
 ppillaigalellarum paavaikkalampukkar,  
 velli yelundu viyala murangitthu,  
 pullum shilumbinagaan podarikkanninaai,  
 kkullakku lirakkudaindu niradade,  
 pallikkidatthiyo pavaai ninannalaal,  
 kallantha virndu kalandu Elorembavaai".*

**Substance:**

"O, Gopika sister with the attractive beauty of the eyes which are like the black bee in the white lotus! Our Gopika sisters have by now reached the proposed place on the bank of the Yamuna having traversed the distance singing in chorus the songs of the sacred story of Rama who put an end to the cruel demon Ravana. It is dawn: the planet, shukra, has come to the mid sky. The Jupiter has set. Further, the birds have flown away from their nests to seek their morning dole. Sister, please wake up from sleep. Today is an auspicious day, and now, the present moment, is also auspicious. Please get up from your bed. Be not reserved; join us to take bath in the pleasant cool waters of the Yamuna, which will surely cool down our constitutions which are now hot and agitated due to our separation from Sri Krishna since last night. Why do you still embrace your bed? Please get up, join us, and partake the pleasure. Elorembavai".

**Exploration:**

The Gopika maidens are waking up a yadava maid, who is under the firm belief that Sri Krishna himself will go to her lured by the beauty of her lotus-eyes.

No difference is felt between Sri Krishna and Sri Rama in respect of their auspicious virtues as they are believed to be the aspects of the same Vishnu murty. This is the case with the real Vaishnava devotees.

The Gopika maidens maintain that one will enjoy the company of Sri Krishna better in a group than alone.

The Gopika maidens inform this particular solitary maid that living alone in mental Samslesha Bhava with Sri Krishna is not so pleasurable as enjoying his company along with all other Gopika maidens. When the Purushottama is bodily available, why should she choose to be alone and away from him and to live in mental Samslesha Bhava with him?

The inner and philosophical meaning of this pasura is easily understandable and highly enjoyable: It is desirable that a devotee, who is practiced in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, should not lie in contentment in his own bliss. On the other hand he should gather other devotees, assume their leadership and lead them all also to the unique mental plane of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava. This is for "Loka Kalyana" (welfare of the world). There is another point : a devotee who is not perfect in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava is prone to get a better atmosphere and encouragement in the company of other Vaishnava devotee brethren, and the chorus singing and the group activities do render a good and salient atmosphere for devotion. The kind and pure minded devotees, with the spirit of "Loka sangraha" advocate "Vaishnava Ghosti". (A company of Vaishnava devotees for prayer, worship and kind deeds).

**Pasura No. 14**

*"Ungal pullaikkadai tthottatthu vaviyul,  
 Shengalunear vainegilndaambalavaai kumbinagaan,  
 Shengar podi kkurai venbaltha vatthavar,  
 Thangal Thirukkoil shangiduvan poginraar,  
 Engalai munna meluppuvan vaaipeshum,  
 Nangaa yelundiraai nanaadaai naavu daiyaai,  
 Shangodu shakkara mendu mthadakkiyan,  
 Pangaya kkannaanai ppaada Elorembaavai."*

**Substance:**

"Why are you still sleeping? You, who promised last night that you will wake up first, and then rouse up all others from sleep! Shameless! Rise up, and look yonder! It is day break! The red lotus flowers have bloomed in the well of your backyard. The black lotus flowers that have shone all the night are closed now. Understand that it is day break..... The Shaivite priests, in the guise of orange robes for their pretentious airs of monks of penance, appearing ascetic with their white teeth, are going to the Shaiva temples with the long keys in their hands. O, skilled talker! Rise up to join us in singing in praise of Sri Krishna and his innumerable auspicious qualities, Sri Krishna, you know, the Lord with Sudarsana and Panchajanya (Disk and Conch) in his hands. Rise up! Elorembaavai!"

**Exploration:**

In this stanza, Andal speaks like a "Vaishnava preacher and an ardent and enthusiastic missionary". A caution is given to the Vaishnava Acharyas (Gurus in charge of propagation of Vaishnavism), who are perfect in Jnana, Bhakthi and Vairagya (knowledge, devotion and renunciation), who are experts in turning

persons to piety and devotion, and who are the administrators of Vaishnava association (Vaishnava ghostis). Such Acharyas should act quickly, enthusiastically and skillfully, and transform and inspire people into the true universal faith, Vaishnavism. (Vaishnavism is belief, or fact rather, that the divine power is Omnipresent. A person who believes in this fact, so to say, is a Vaishnava.) There are such great responsibilities on the Vaishnava Acharyas. Only under such eminent Vaishnava Acharyas can it be expected that the activities of the Vaishnava associations, and their activities of propagation of religion can progress and prosper splendidly.

Vaishnavam advocates family life, which is but natural; but man should live in a spirit of Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, and should choose to lead a virtuous life, beneficial to his body, mind and soul, and to fellowbeings. ("Abhayam Sarvabhuthebhya, dadamyethathvratham mama" = May I be of no threat or harm to any creature, and this is my scruple. Vide exploration under pasura no. 2). The Vaishnavism advocates the principles (given in Geetha) of limited food, proper exercise, a spirit of mental equilibrium in sorrow and joy and in prosperity and adversity. Thus a family man is expected to lead a purposeful life of selflessness and service, which is essential for the progress of the society. Vaishnavism does not admit (as in the Geetha) sanyasam, renunciation of action, wearing orange robes to put on airs of asceticism, fastings, avoidance of innocent and pleasurable things like "thambula charvanam" (chewing betel) and sandal wood paste and spices.

The Gopika maidens cite the instance of the saivite temple priests, in the guise of orange robes for their pretentious airs of sanyasam and of penance, appearing ascetic with their white teeth, going to the Shaiva temples with the long temple keys in their hands. Many hypocrites, to pass for monks or sanyasis, put on orange coloured clothes. A real sanyasi should relinquish the fruit

of his righteous duties for the welfare of the fellowbeings whatever type of dress or guise he chooses. The expression, "The saivite priests with white teeth indicates that the hyponite monks (monks in all hypocrisy and with hypocritical conduct) preferred to be ascetic outwardly. They appear to be following a vow of asceticism for their penance etc.

"Sri Krishna", the Thribhuvanasundara, dressed in yellow silk and ornaments, with panchajanya and sudarsana in his hands, is presented as the Purushotthama with all auspicious virtues to signify the universe and the universal lording force. Persons, who live in Samslesha Bhava with such a divine personality, do enjoy the bliss, Vaishnavism advocates a life of purpose, service and bliss.

**Pasura No. 15**

*"Elle yilangiliye yinnamurangudi yo,  
 shillennralai yelmin nangaimir podaruginren,  
 vallai yunkatturaigal pande yun vayaridum,  
 vallirgal ningale naneda nayiduga,  
 Ollai nipoda yunakkenna verudaiyai,  
 Ellarumpondaro pondar pondennikkol,  
 Vallanai konranai mattharai matthalikar,  
 Vallanai, mayanai ppada Elorembaavai".*

**Substance:**

(This pasura is the dialogue between the particular Gopika maid abed inside her room and the band of Gopika maidens outside, who have come to wake her up)

1. "O sister! The parrot tongued! Why are you still abed?"
2. "O, the wise elders! dont bawl out so loud! I am coming soon".
1. "O, we know already that you are skilled - tongued!"
2. "O, you are skilled talkers! And you attribute me as a skilled talker! All right, let it be so. Now let me know what I have to do?"
1. "You please join our group for "Sri Krishnanubhava". Why do you choose to be alone at home of course to have "Sri Krishnanubhava", in your own "Samslesha Bhava".
2. "That is all right, what you say: Are all come?"
1. "All have come, come on, you can see and verify".
2. "Yes in that case, tell me what is it that we should all together do in a group?"

1. "O, you want to know what we have to do! What we have to do is to sing in chorus in praise of Sri Krishna, the Purushotthama of wondrous acts, who killed the terrible elephant, Kuvalayapedam, and who destroyed Kamsa and other evil demons".

### **Exploration:**

It is explained in this pasura, in a skilful literal presentation of a dialogue, that the formation of a pious group of devotees to collectively assemble together, to discuss the divinity and its ways, and to sing in chorus in praise of the divinity is a better way of spending time more usefully, joyfully and fruitfully than the solitary meditation of one individual.

The solitary thinker should know for himself what he does, what he sees, what he attains and what he enjoys! We can't explain it!

On the other hand, the associate life in a group of Vaishnava devotees is far superior, useful and enjoyable. The devotee hears and learns from other devotees knowledge and wisdom of their mature experience, and the wisdom of the scriptures as interpreted by them. The devotees enjoy and spend their time piously and joyfully. The chorus singing in praise of the divinity lends joy and amusement to the singers as well as the listeners or spectators. It lends, to both, a mystic joy, satisfaction and peace. This develops goodwill and brotherhood among all the devotees of the group (Ghosti).

The preamble to the Bhagavad Geetha tells that God dwells in the association of the devotees, at the place where Geetha is read, and at a place where chorus singing in praise of divinity is conducted. Here please understand by "God" "peace". God is said to be "Santhakaram" (manifestation of peace). It is quite clear, that amidst wisemen discussing the truth of the universe, the virtues in favour of the progress of the world etc. peace lives.

Observe the following slokas of the introduction to Geetha:-

1. *“Yathra Geetha vicharashcha patahnam paatahnam  
thadhaal |  
Modate thathra bhagavan Krishno Radhikaya saha ||”*
2. *“Gopalo Balakrishnopi Narada dhruva paarshadaihi|  
Sahayo jayathi shighram yathra Geetha pravarthatthe||”*
3. *“Geethayaah pusthakam yathra Nithya paatahshcha  
varthathe|  
Thathra sarvani thirthani prayagaduni bhuthale||”*
4. *“Vivasamthi sadadehe dehasheshe pi sarvadaa|  
Sarve devascha rrishayo yogino deharakshakaah||”*

See how the desirability and the importance of "an association of devotees" are explained. It is the duty of the Acharya, as the spiritual and devotional leader, to start and establish the "associations of devotees" (Bhaktha Goshtih) and to see to their proper functioning.

In this pasura “Kualayapeedam, and Kamsa” stand for “Madam and Matcharya” (proud arrogance, and malice). Sri Krishna, the Purushoththama is free from "Madam and Matcharya". A devotee too is free from "Madam and Matcharya". A devotee too is expected to be free from these two evil qualities. To the extent he is free from them to that extent he is nearer to God (which is Truth and universalism) i.e. the farther away the devotee is from these two evils, the nearer he is to God (which is Anantha Kalyana Paripurnam - an incarnation of all auspicious virtues).

In this pasura, Andal as an Acharya supreme is inspiring all other Acharyas and devotees to assume their duties with sincerity and awareness.

**Pasura No. 16**

*"Nayaganai ninra nandagopanudaiya  
 koyil kaappaane, koditthonrum thorana  
 Vaashal kaappaane, manikkadavantai thiravaai,  
 Aayar shirumiyaromukkaraiparai  
 Mayan manivannan nennale vaainerndan,  
 Thuyomaai vandom thuyi lela paaduvan,  
 Vaayaal munna munnam matthadeyammaa, nii  
 Nesha nilaikkadavam niikkelorembaavaai".*

**Substance:**

"O, the gate guard of our leader Nandagopa! O, protective guard, guarding the palace's gate, bright and grand with the decorative and auspicious festoons! Please open the golden doors, studded with diamonds! We are innocent and pure minded Gopika girls. Sri Krishna, the Purushottama of wondrous actions, and the shinning blue complexioned young and handsome yadava prince, promised us last night his accompaniment, the flute, for our devotional songs of prayer. We have come here, in all purity and sanctity to sing to wake him up. Whatever you think about us, please first open the door of the main gate of Sri Krishna's palace. Don't obstruct us with your talk. Swami! Open this firm gate for our divine friendship."

**Exploration:**

It has already been hinted that the alert and devotional Gopika maidens, who woke up in advance as per stipulation, under the leadership of Andal, wake up the other few still-sleeping maidens, in Pasuras from one to fifteen.

Now, in this sixteenth pasura, all the Gopika maidens, under the expert leadership of Andal, have reached Sri Krishna's palace

to render their morning - wakening prayers. (Suprabhatha sthothram).

(The allegorical implication is that all the pious and ardent devotees have gathered together into an auspicious Vaishnava group (Goshtih), and are preparing themselves for the divine and devotional programme).

Even if all the Gopika maidens could reach the gate of Sri Krishna's palace, could they visit (have the Darsan of) Sri Krishna without the kind and affectionate cooperation of the protective guard at the gate? Hence they request the guard to permit them in.

(The allegorical implication is that the pious and pure minded devotees, who wish ardently for the divine grace, have to approach first for expert guidance and cooperation of the expert Acharya (Guru supreme) who has mastered and experienced and enjoyed the meaning and the uplifting spirit of Thirumanthra).

The inevitable and indispensable importance of the Acharya is hinted in this guiding pasura.

It has already been pointed out that Thiruppavai is an allegorical poem throughout; That is its intrinsic greatness as "a devotional literal piece". How fine, instructive and enjoyable the allegory is!

(Sri Ramanuja in later times is said to have been inspired by this pasura, and he equipped himself with all material required for an Acharya).

**Pasura No. 17**

*"Ambarame thannire shore yarranjeeyum,  
 Emberuman Nandagopala vellundiraai,  
 Kombanarkellaam kolunde kulavilakke,  
 Emberumaatti yasodaa yarivuraai,  
 Ambara mudaru tthongiyula galanda,  
 umbar komane yurangaa delundiraai,  
 Shemmorrkalaladi cchelvaa Baladevaa,  
 umbiyum niiyu murangel, O rembaavaai."*

**Substance:**

"Oh, our Lord, the chief of Gokulam (Thiruvayippadu), the benevolent chief of Gokulam, who gives away in kind charity food, drink and clothes to the yadava population! Oh, Nandagopal! Please wake up - O, Yasoda! Madam! The jewel of ladies, the light of the yadava race and womanhood, O, our Lordess! Please wake up -O, God of Gods, who has risen to loftiest heights into the space and the sky to measure the worlds, kindly rise up - O, Balaramadeva, the prosperous hero with the golden anklet! We request you and your brother not to be asleep any more and to wake up at once".

**Exploration:**

Andal with the band of Gopikas is first waking up all the important members of the nanda -household, who are the nearest and dearest to the central figure, Sri Krishna, and then she is trying to wake up her Lord Sri Krishna in the presence of and with the cooperation of all of them.

The allegorical implication is that for attaining God's grace, the devotees should have the cooperation, guidance and blessings of the Acharyas, and the devotees - supreme.

**Pasura No. 18**

*"Undu madagalittha nodada tholvaliyan,  
 Nandagopalan marumagale nappinnaai,  
 Kandanagamalum kularii kadai thiravaai  
 Vandengum koli yalaitthangaan, madavi  
 Ppandal mel pal kaal kuyilingal kuvinagan,  
 Pandar virali yun maitthunan perpada,  
 Shendamarai kkaiyal shirar valai yolippa,  
 Vandu thiravaai magilndu Elorembaavaai."*

**Substance:**

"O, Satya devi, the daughter-in-law of Nandagopa, the mighty man of an elephant's strength, the powerful person of mighty, constant and undiminishing strength of hands! O, the prosperous lady of the unique wealth of the beautiful fragrant hair! Please unbolt the door of the gate of your bed-room. It is dawn proceeding to day break: the cocks are crowing around. The groups of cuckoos, perched in the trellis-pandals of flowery Abrus precatorious (Guruvenda creeper), are cooing melodiously. O, auspicious lady with a sweet flowery ball in hand! Please open the door. You may like to ask the purpose of our arrival here; we do tell you; listen to us; we have come to sing in praise of the auspicious virtues of your loving husband. O, you seem to think that in our zeal, ecstasy and enthusiasm, we may ourselves push the doors and rush into your bedroom! No .... O, Satyadevi, you please yourself open the door with your sacred red-lotus palmed hands while your golden ornaments worn round your wrists are producing tinkling sounds".

**Exploration:**

The beautiful, artistic and picturesque description rendered in respect of "Andal with her band of young and youthful Gopika

maids, requesting the mistress of Sri Krishna, namely, Satyadevi, to open the door of her sacred bedroom, and addressing her as a prosperous lady with the wealth of fragrant black hair, Satya's lotus-palmed hands holding a sweet scented flowery ball, the tinkling sounds produced by the shaking of the golden ornaments of her wrists when Satyadevi opens the doors etc. are poetically wonderful, and sensuously touching to the reader, emitting flavours of "Sringara rasa" (the essence of literal eminence delicately dealing with and describing beauty, pleasure and love).

The crowing of the cocks around at dawn, the singing of the Cuckoo birds from their perches amidst creepers on the pendals, are the aspects of natural beauties at dawn. You imagine to see the birds in their natural settings as visiles, and you imagine to hear their cries as audiles. The poetry emits sensuous beauty. The situations are naturally pleasing.

Sri Krishna and Satyadevi are divine lovers. Their mutual love and regard are beyond human conception. The words of Andal along with the Gopika maidens that they have come to sing in praise of the auspicious qualities of Sri Krishna should have afforded Satyadevi immense pleasure.

To this extent the pasura is full of "Sringara rasa".

In the partial context of a home, Sri Krishna is the family man or house-holder (Grihastha), and his mistress Satyadevi's is the house-wife (Grihini). The respect, regard and honour due to a family lady, and the responsibilities and authorities of a house-wife are finely hinted.

All the above points are of literal excellences regarding natural beauties and social or domestic life.

Now we dive deep into the devotional and spiritual implications of the pasura :-

God is said to be the bearer or the protector of the world. Hence he is called "Loka Bhartha" (Loka = world, Bhartha = bearer, protector, husband). In this context "the world" is said to be borne or protected by God, and hence it is etimologically called "Bharya". (Bharya = one who is borne or protected; wife). So the divine "Bharya Bhartha" (wife and husband) are scientifically interpreted as "the universe and the universal lording force").

In the advent of Sri Krishnavathara, Rukmini Devi and Satya Devi are said to be the two queens of Lord Krishna. "Sri Krishna" in the epic signifies the Omnipresent divine energy (Vaishnava Shakthi). The word "Bhagavantham" means vishvam (universe) + the Omnipresent energy (Vaishnava Shakthi). The Omnipresent Vaishnava Shakthi is Eternal, constant and is incomprehensible. All the physical wealth of this universe along with all the energy pervading each atom of such physical wealth or matter constitutes, and is called, "Vaishnava Shakthi". The two aspects of this Vaishnava Shakthi are prosperity and truth". "Rukmini devi" stands for "all the universal wealth" and "Satya devi" stands for "the truth of the universe". Hence "The wealth" and "The truth" together constitute what is called "divinity". "To understand and to attain the grace of, divinity" (or Vishnu or God) means "to understand what the universe is and to understand what the truth of the universe is. This is the meaning or implication in saying "Krishna has two wives, Rukmini, and Satya. "To understand the truth of the universe" is to understand the Divinity or to obtain the grace of the Divinity.

"The truth of the universe" is 'the knowledge of Thathvathraya". This "Thathvathraya Jnana" is packed up in "Thirumanthra" (Ashtakshari Manthra) namely "Om Namo Narayanaya". The devotee who understands the meaning of the Thirumanthra and who conducts himself accordingly is said to have attained Divine Grace or Moksha Bhava.

**"To seek the interview with Lord Sri Krishna" means "To attain God through Thirumanthra". This is the bare truth, which is figuratively expressed in the scriptures in this way - "Thirumanthra is dearest to God Vishnu. God or Vishnu dwells in Thirumanthra". Such personified and figurative statements should not mislead the devotees; they should try to understand the scientific and truthful basis of such statements; otherwise religion turns to superstition which blocks human progress.**

**Man should attain the knowledge and wisdom stored up in the statement of Mahathma Gandhi "God is truth or Truth is God". This statement has such a scientific, logical and philosophical basis.**

**As truth is described as "the dearest" of Divinity, it is easy and fruitful "to search for God through the path of truth". This spiritual truth is propagated through the epic-story-situation. "The Gopika maidens seek the presence of Sri Krishna through the help and cooperation of his Consort, Satyadevi".**

**The religious significance here is "Satya devi" stands for "The Acharya supreme with the knowledge and wisdom of the Thirumanthra. The Vaishnava religious truth of propagation, that the devotee can attain the grace of Vishnu through a virtuous and pious Acharya", is implied here.**

**Even in ordinary social life, though a group of people have the same master and leader, it so happens that the ordinary persons choose to meet their master through a leader, though the said leader and the other persons are all equally dear to the master. This type of interview is said to be easy and successful.**

**You understand God and you attain God's grace through a devotion of awareness and through the knowledge of Thirumanthra and its meaning and mission. Hence seek the guidance of an Acharya who has the knowledge and wisdom of the Thirumanthra.**

(Thiru = sacred, Manthra = Advice, guidance; a spell of advice). This is the spiritual and religious guidance afforded in this pasura.

The speech of Andal (along with the Gopikas), "O, Satyadevi! We have come to sing "Suprabhatham" to your loving husband, Sri Krishna. O, you seem to think that in our zeal, ecstasy and enthusiasm, we may ourselves push the doors and rush into your bedroom. No, not so, O, Satyadevi, you please yourself open the door with your own gold-bangled lotus-palms", indicates a grand spiritual idea. It is indicated that man should not seek divinity through blind superstitious ways; he should, on the other hand lead himself to God with an awareness of the knowledge and wisdom of "Thirumanthra" which he can get from an expert virtuous Acharya.

In this pasura, the true and spiritual meanings of the following words are cited in an amusing and enlightening way - "Divine power (Bhagavath Shakthi), Thirumanthra, truth, Acharya, Bhaktha` (devotee) etc.

**Pasura No. 19**

*"Kuttuvila kkeriya kkottukkal kattilmel,  
 Methenra panchashayantthin meleri,  
 kkotthalar pungulal nappinnai kongaimel,  
 vaiythukkidanda malarmarpa, vaai thira vaai,  
 Maitthadanganninaai niyun manalanai,  
 Etthanaipodum thuyi lela vottaaigaan,  
 Ethanai yelum piri vaatthagillaa yaal,  
 Thattuva manru Thagavu Elorembaavaai."*

**Substance:**

"O, Sri Krishna, whose blooming wide chest spreads itself pleasantly on the golden breasts of Satyadevi, with the large bunches of scented flowers hanging around from the hair, who is lying, gloriously on the beautiful, cool, soft, white and fragrant bed panchasayanam. Sutuffed with the swan-down, spread over the splendid cot, of ivory legs, with bright candles burning on four sides spreading all around bright light and perfumes. Please open your mouth and utter a word! O, beautiful lady, Satya, with wide lotus eyes decked with collyrum. We know that you, who can't endure separation from Sri Krishna even for a moment, would not allow him to wake up! Is it proper for your appearance and for your nature?"

**Exploration:**

Why has Krishna not got up from bed? Is he in such a deep sleep that he is unable to hear the entreaties of the Gopikas? No, it can't be so, god is ever - awake; he has no moments of sleep (Nirnidra = without sleep. God is called nirnidra). The point is this : the Gopika maidens are his people, his devotees. If Sathya devi were to open the door and to allow the Gopikas in, she would

then be an ushur occupying the front or foremost or prominent place, which Krishna does not like. For him all are equal. He does not like that the Gopikas, his people, should take a second place with Satyadevi in front to have their service to Krishna. So Sri Krishna presses Satyadevi tight to his chest to avoid her going to the gate to open it. The Gopika maidens, who see this from outside through the window, remark and entreat Krishna, "please utter a kind word!". This is the preface to this pasura.

This pasura is pregnant with "Shringara Rasa", the essence of pure, innocent and youthful love and of beauty invigorating the youths. How well the youthful couple, newly wedded, of pure love, enjoy the meaning of this stanza at this stage! How amusingly even the old exemplary couple would think of their past, pure and amorous days in their emotional imagination (Samslesha Bhava).

The beautiful and touching and picturesque descriptions of the bright perfumed lights, the ivory legged cot and the swan-down bed, Satyadevi's beauty of her perfumed and decorated hair, her beautiful wide lotus-eyes decked with collyrum, etc. are exquisite and sensuous. Such is the skillful elegance of Andal's literal talents and expression. They do fill the minds of sincere readers with joy and surprise.

Let us now be enlightend by the bright spiritual rays which the pasura is spreading.

Parasarabhattachar (Sri Ramanujacharya's disciple who succeeded Sri Ramanuja to the Visishtadvaita pitham) in later times, was so much inspired by the pious life of Andal and her unique poems of Thiruppavai and Nanchiyar Thirumoli, that he expressed the following pasura in praise of her Samslesha Bhava with God Sriranganadha :- This excellent pasura is adored by the Vaishnava devotees, and it takes a rightful place in Dravida Veda:-

**Sloka :-**

**"Neelaatthunga sthana giri thati suptha mudbodhya  
krishnam|**

**Paararrdhyam svam shruthishatha sirassiddha  
madhyapayanthii|**

**Svocchi shtayam srajanigalitham yaa balathkrithya  
bhunte|**

**Godaa thasyai nama idamidam bhuya Evaasthu  
bhuyaha" ||**

**Substance:**

"Many many salutations to Andal, who, having explained to Krishna her natural connections with him (spiritual connections of sesha seshibhava), having tied him with the garland which she herself had first worn, and having enjoyed him in her Samslesha bhava, woke up Sri Krishna lying peacefully on the mountain slopes of Satyadevi's breasts!"

The spiritual meaning of this splendid beautiful sloka of "Sringara rasa" is this :-

Just as a family man, of too many members and of too many worries, sometimes may seek a solitary lofty place, like a mountain slope of natural beauties just for a diversion and peace of mind, so also god, with his huge family of the universe, sought the peaceful mountain slopes, Satyadevi's breasts. "This is just to enlighten persons to enable them to understand their connections with the universe and the universal lording force. Moreover, God's abode is truth; he lives in truth. That truth is what is called "Sesha sehsi Bhava". Andal, who knew this fundamental and spiritual truth, could feel that she was a part of God. Such was her Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava .

A real devotee of the knowledge and wisdom of his "existence and nature" not only in his Samslesha Bhava enjoys divine bliss, but also wishes that all his devotee - brethren should also grow eligible to enjoy divine bliss. Such are his spirit of selflessness and his "Moksha sanyasa yoga". In this aspect of Sri Ramanuja takes the first place, who announced Thirumanthra to all from the temple tower top of Thirukkottiyur. This is made clear in my other book, "Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam".

**Pasura No. 20**

*"Muppatthu muva ramararku mun shennu,  
 Kappantha virkum kaliye thuyilelaai,  
 Sheppa mudaiyaai thiraludaiyaai, shettharku  
 Veppangodukkum vimalaa thuyi lelaai,  
 Sheppanna menmulai cchevvaai cchiru marungul,  
 Nappinai nangaai thiruuve thuyilelaai  
 Ukkamum thattaaliyum thandun manaalanai,  
 Ippode yemmai niaattu Elorembaavaai".*

**Substance:**

"O, mighty Purushotthama! Who has given "Abhaya" (assurance not to be afraid of) to all the thirty three sects of Devathas! Please rise up from your bed. O, the protector of the devotees who are utterly dependent on your grace with a firm belief! O, who is pure and a terror to the evil minded foes! Please get up from sleep". - (As the Gopika maidens fail to wake up Sri Krishna, the Gopikas again entreat Satyadevi to rouse Krishna from sleep) - "O, Satyadevi, the perfect embodiment of voluptuous beauty, with soft gold-bright vessel like breasts, with coral bright-red lips, and with a lean waste! O, Sri Mahalakshmi, rise up from sleep! Please lend us your Alavattam (The circular colthmade decorative fan) and your mirror, and allow us and your lover Sri Krishna to take our morning sacred bath".

**Exploration:**

The description of the most beautiful Satyadevi is pleasing and touching and is full of "Shringara Rasa".

The Gopika maidens request Satyadevi for help and cooperation required for their morning bath in the Yamuna river along with Krishna. Is it easy and possible for the Gopikas to

make such a request with Satyadevi, who is the mistress of Sri Krishna? Even the truth underlying here is of Shringara Rasa.

Immediately after bath, the Gopikas have to comb their hair and have to adjust and arrange their beautiful curls. They have to decorate their faces with cosmetics and thilakam; For this the Gopikas need a mirror. They require at such moments to fan off the light moist-sweat on their faces; for this the Gopikas need a fan. Hence they request Satyadevi for those two articles. This is also a beautiful situation, and is full of "Shringara Rasa" (Beauty and love).

The beauty of Satyadevi is of symmetrical perfection. She is also perfect in mind. That is why she is addressed by the Gopikas as "A perfect lady", who is perfect in body, mind and soul.

The readers can find for themselves the pleasant literal elegance of this pasura.

Now, let us dive deep into the inner spiritual meaning of this pasura :-

In the expression, "The terror to the evil minded foes", the foes are six in number, ("Arishadvarga" - Ari - foes, Shadvarga = the group of six). To put an end to all these six foes (the six evil qualities) is to be free from enemies. The "Arishadvarga" are "Kama" (evil desires), "Krodha" (the burning anger), "Lobha" (avarice or greed); "Moha" (lust), "Mada" (arrogance), "Matcharya" (Malice). The Purushottama (an ideal person) is free from "Arishadvarga" which are responsible for man's sorrow. Hence the Purushottama is pure-minded. Similarly, a real devotee is pure minded as he is free from "Arishadvarga".

Either Sri Krishna or the Gopikas are dependent on Satyadevi; only through the help and cooperation of Satyadevi, the Gopikas can seek Krishna. Again, Sri Krishna's interview cant be made available to the Gopikas without the consent of Satyadevi. This is the connecting link of Satyadevi between Krishna and the Gopikas.

This indicates the link between God and man:

"Om" in Sanskrit is said to be "Pranavam" or the "Pranava naadam" (the original and the mystical sound of the rotation of the spheres in universe). This "Om" constitutes three element-sounds: A, U, Ma. "A" stands for God, "U" stands for all the creatures of this Universe. "Ma" stands for all the physical matter of this universe. So "Om" stands for the universe and the universal lording force.

While "Om" indicates everything i.e. the universe and the universal lording force, A, u, ma respectively indicate "Eswara" (the Lording force) "the Achith" (the physical matter) and the "Chith" (the live creatures). Thus it is seen that the physical matter is fundamentally the source for the display of "Eswara" or the "Chith". Life emanates only from physical substance. "Eswara" pervades both the physical as well as the live aspects of the world. This is the "Thathvathraya Jnana". According to the wisdom of Thathvathraya (the three aspects - Thathva = aspects, thraya = three) all the three aspects constituting "the universe with its lording force", namely, "Chith, Achith and Eswara", are equally important and everyone of these three aspects is without a beginning, a middle and an end. Of the three aspects of the universe, the "Achith" is the basis for the other two.

Here in this pasura, "Satya" stands for all Achith, the Gopikas stand for Chith and Sri Krishna stands for the Eswara. So Satya stands responsible for the connection between Sri Krishna and Gopikas.

As per Visishtadvaita philosophy, it is established that the devotees (Gopikas) obtain God or Eswara (Krishna) through Lakshmi, the universal wealth Lord's Consort, (Satya).

It is also interpreted in Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, that "Satya" stands for an Acharya between God and Devotees.

**Pasura No. 21**

*"Ettha kalanaga ledir pongi miidalippa,  
 Maatthaadepaal Shoriyum Vallal perumbashukkal,  
 Aatthappadaithan magane yarivuraai,  
 utthamudaiyaa periyaa, yulaginil,  
 Thotthamaai ninra shudare thuyi lellaai,  
 Maatthaarunakku valitholaindun vaasharkan,  
 Aatthaduvandunnadi paniyu maapole,  
 Potthiyam vandom pugalndu etorembaavaai".*

**Substance:**

"Oh Sri Krishna, Nandakumar, the son of the Gopa chief Nanda who is the owner of a large herd of hefty and healthy milch cows. So generous as to give bit pots of milk! Please rise up from your bed atleast for our sake. O, Sri Krishna, the authentically recognised Purushotthama of all good qualities! The wondrous and mystical incarnation beyond comprehension even by the tenets of the vedic universally approved standards, who is born in this world to establish righteousness, peace and goodness in this world! Please rise up! Just as your previous enemies, who have been vanquished by you, and who have surrendered to you, gather together at your gate and bow for your mercy, we also, who are your devotees and slaves (Dasa) have gathered at your gate singing in praise of you, and uttering benediction to you, O, Krishna, O our God and saviour, kindly rise up".

**Exploration:**

As per the epic story, the prosperity of Krishna's foster father, Nandagopa, the supreme personality of Krishna, Sri Krishna's unquestionable power and authority over the other kings, the songs of praise and benedictions sung by the Gopika maidens to rouse Krishna from sleep etc. are described here.

Here the benedictions are uttered by Satyadevi also as one of the group of the Gopika maidens; Satyadevi has said to other Gopika maids, "I am one with you all; I am one of you. I join you in singing benedictions to the Lord; Before the Lord all take equal status".

We have already understood that the divine power is based on "Truth".

All the Gopikas including Satyadevi are approaching Sri Krishna with these words of relationship and surrender, "O, Krishna, your manifestations are beyond comprehension. Your "Pancha Vibhutis" (five kinds of manifestations) are indeed wonderful. Your qualities and actions are wondrous. Your actions are exemplary. We are won over by your beauty and goodness; we surrender to you; we sing our benedictions to you. We have understood what we are in relation to you, and what you are in relation to us. We have renounced everything, our bodily comforts, our personal freedom, our relations with any, other than you, our propriety over anything, our relations and friendships with all others, nearest and dearest, all other means, all other purushardhas except attaining your grace or union with you etc. You are the only one to be desired by us, to be possessed by us. We dedicate ourselves to you, body, mind and soul". With these words of dedication the Gopikas approach Sri Krishna.

The real devotees also approach God in this type of dedication and surrender.

This is what is called "surrender" (Sharanagathi Bhava) and renunciation of all worldly connections (Sarva Sangaparithyaga).

Prahlada, Vibhishana and Bhishma are unique epic examples for such surrender and dedication. (Sharanagathi and prapatthi).

The disciples, who deserve to be initiated into divine search by their own innate abilities and insight, really become perfect with the proper guidance of an eminent Guru (religious teacher).

A real Acharya, who is prosperous with many deserving disciples, has access to the divine grace. This idea is indicated in the descriptions of Nanda's household full of pots of milk, Nanda's superiority, Nanda's possession of Sri Krishna etc. Here all the Gopa population represent the ardent devotees; Nandagopa represents a perfect Acharya, and Sri Krishna represents the Divine grace.

God not only loves his devotees, but he is within the control of the devotees. If this idea is properly understood in a scientific way, the meaning of the following sloka appears to be correct :-

**Sloka :-**

***“Daivadhinam Jagath sarvam***

***manthradhinanthu daivatham |***

***Thanmanthram brahmanadhinam***

***, brahmana mama devatha ||”***

Here, “Brahmana” is not one by caste; Brahmana is one of supreme knowledge of truth, which is called Brahmajnana. (“Brahmajnananthu Brahmancha”). Such a person is a real devotee (Sri Bhaktha). Certain caste-brahmins, without the least worthiness to be called “Brahmins” in the correct sense of the term, claim to be considered as Brahmins and make the word, “Brahmana”, meaningless. It is a well known fact that in the epics, many of the famous Brahmanas, like Viswamithra, Vyasa, Valmiki and so on were not born in the so called Brahmin caste. “Brahmana” which is an attribute, has come to be named as a “caste”. Though the truth is said so openly in the epics, it is a wonder why the truth has gone underground and superstition came up to the surface.

If in the above sloka, the word “Sri Bhaktha” is substituted for the word, “Brahmana”, then the meaning of the sloka becomes meaningful and true, which will be beyond all false notions and superstitions.

So with the suggested substitution, the sloka reads thus :-

***"Daivadhinam Jagathsarvam***

***Manthradhinanthu daivatham|***

***Thanmanthram Sribhakthadhinam***

***Sribhaktha mama devatha||"***

Says the Lord thus -

"The one Advaita power pervades everywhere. This truth is manifest in "Thathvathraya Jnana", that is in "Thirumanthra". This Thirumanthra is mastered by the real Bhaktha, and he enjoys the meaning of it. And so, such Bhaktha is of supreme value to me".

That is why in epics like Bharatha, Ramayana, Bhagavatha etc, the Purushothama like Sri Krishna and Sri Rama, worshipped the saints Narada, Vasishta etc. The saints received worship from Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, knowing them to be divine advents. This is the guiding principle for man's conduct. In such a case there will be no lacking in the society for humility, love, respect and sympathy.

The lofty truths implied in the terms, "God's grace to the devotees, the equality of both the Gurus and Shishyas (the religious teacher and his disciples) before God, the benedictions of the devotees to God etc. are clearly explained in the Visishtadvaitha Siddhantha. This is the truth of Satyadevi's words, "I am only one of you in the enjoyment of Divine grace and bliss".

The central idea of the pasura is this:- "where the real Acharya and his real disciples dwell, there exist in abundance the real love and devotion, and all live in a spirit of equality, fraternity and love".

In this pasura, Nandagopa stands for the supreme Acharya; Sri Krishna represents the divine grace; Satyadevi stands for the devotee supreme, and all the Gopikas including Andal stand for devotees enjoying the same bliss as that of Satyadevi. (Of course Andal feels herself one with Satyadevi in her Krishna Samslesha Bhava).

**Pasura No. 22**

*"Angan maa ngaalatthrasha rabhimana,  
 Bangamaai vandu nin pallikkattir kiile,  
 shangamiruppar pol vandu thalai ppeidom,  
 kingini vaaiccheida thaamarai ppuppole,  
 shengan shirucchiride yemmel viliyaavo,  
 thingalu maadithiyanu melundaappol,  
 Anga nirandu ngko ndngal mel nokkudiyel,  
 Engalme rchabamilandu Eloreмбаavaai".*

**Substance:**

"Several Kings (rulers) who are ruling different parts of this beautiful, wide, vast, and wondrous Earth, who are rid of their selflessness, have approached your throne in groups in a spirit of surrender. Similarly we have come for the service of the Lord. Please open your half closed eyes, which are like groins, and which are reddened with love, like the red lotus flowers, and kindly cast your gracious looks on us, O Lord! If your beautiful eyes cast their rays on us, like the rays of the sun and the moon, we shall be rid of all our troubles and evils."

**Exploration:**

In this pasura, it is narrated that the Gopika maidens, under the leadership of Andal, who are rid of pride, self consciousness and selfishness, approach Sri Krishna and submit to him their spiritual connections with him in their "Shesha-Sheshi Bhava".

Similarly a real devotee should first become rid of his selfishness, pride and enamouredness; (please refer to slokas nos. 13, 14, 16 of Chapter 12 of Geetha where "a real devotee" is defined.)

This enjoyment of the Gopikas of the beauty of Sri Krishna's eyes is tinged with divine love (Sringara Rasa).

It is described that Sri Krishna's eyes are the source of enlightenment, to the devotees, as bright and powerful as the sun; at the same time Krishna's eyes shed rays of joy on the devotees, like the pleasant light of the full-moon. Just as the sun dispels darkness and gives light, health and life to the world, and just as the moon at night shines giving the world pleasure, so also Sri Krishna's grace lends the devotee divine wisdom leading him to "Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava", which is "Mokshabhava", the spirit of freedom from the worries of this mundane life. Such a life is what is to be desired by the wiseman, which is purushartha.

A very pleasurable and convincing explanation is given in the "Visishtadvaita Siddhantha", which is an eye opener for a devotee seeking Moksha Bhava. "Moksha Bhava" is the spirit of selflessness and detachment from the wordly bonds. It is a pure pleasurable plane of mental disposition. The substance of the principles of Visishtadvaita in this respect is furnished below, which may be received with pleasure and awakening and awareness by the thinking devotee :-

The following are the series of steps leading to Moksha Bhava: Being rid of an enamouredness for physical comforts, being rid of self consciousness and pride, the knowledge of what he is with the universe (Sesha Sehsi Bhava), being rid of the dependence on any other than the truth, being rid of the idea of mastership and ownership over anything or anybody, being rid of the desire to protect himself and to assume charge of other things, being rid of other means beyond the advocated means of selflessness - surrender - service, being attached only to this one and the only one means, being rid of the feeling of self in the performance of an act, being capable of detachment from the mundane affairs and connections, to live in Samslesha Bhava with the Anantha

Kalyana Paripurna (personified as Sreemannarayana murty) the performance of righteous acts of service to fellow human beings, to be rid of the desire to enjoy the fruit of his divine service done in the interest of Loka Kalyana, etc. are the series of enlightening and reforming steps which the devotee should gradually climb up one by one. If the reader studies "Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam" (my other book), he will be able to grasp how Sri Ramanuja ascended all these steps one by one and achieved life's fulfillment. Sri Ramanuja's is a personal example to guide us.

The person, enamoured of his physical comforts, who is self-conscious, cannot accede to the level of pure devotion for Loka Kalyana. Attempts of an eminent Acharya to reform such a person may not be fruitful.

The sum and substance of the prayer contained in this pasura is this :- Just as the sun and the moon shine respectively during the day and during the night to make the world pleasant and beautiful, so also, O, Krishna bestow on us the spirit of real devotion as we are mature already with divine knowledge and divine joy.

"It is by pure devotion that man becomes rid of all evil desires to enjoy this and that". This idea is finely brought out in the pasura on behalf of the Gopika maidens as well as on behalf of the devotees - we have already noticed how the allegory runs throughout this great epic poem.

"Sri Krishna's grace dispels our ignorance and grants us happiness".

**Pasura No. 23**

*"Mari malai mulangil manni kkidandurangum,  
 shiriya singamari vutthu thi vilittu,  
 Veri mayir ponga veppadum perndudari,  
 Muri nimirndu mulangi ppurappattu,  
 podaru mapole ni puvaippu vanna, vun  
 koyil nirringane pondaruli, koppudaiya,  
 shiriya singasana tthirundu, yamvanda  
 kariya maraaindu Arul, Eloreмбаavaai".*

**Substance:**

"Just as the powerful young lion, having slept all the night in winder in the mountain den, gets up in the morning, with its odorous hair, all over the body, straightened, rolls a little this side and that side, shakes the whole body with a sudden mighty jerk, looks proud around, roars and then comes out of its den, so also, O, Krishna, of the body of shining-blue of that of Pongamia glabra flowers (in Telugu, Kanngu flowers - Indian Buch)! You please come out of your bedroom, be seated in your glorious throne, the seat of wealth, prosperity and success, enquire the purpose of our visit and shower your mercy on us."

**Exploration:**

The gestures, of the grand, powerful and valorous lion getting out of its den with a roar, are picturesquely described to produce a natural effect. The beauty and grandeur of Sri Krishna, the Yadusimha, who is compared with the lion, are to be imagined by the clever reader. The devotee reader shall, in his Samslesha Bhava, mentally enjoys the beauty, the shining and the sweet fragrance of Sri Krishna's personality.

A person of sound health, having enjoyed a long deep sleep, during a winter night, on a comfortable bed, though gets up from bed unwillingly at the outset, soon displays the alertness, quickness and the pleasure of his movements. Such a healthy man's gestures and quick movements come to our mind picturesquely when we observe mentally the gestures of the lion and of Sri Krishna.

The beauty, grandeur and the valor of the lion are concealed while it is asleep at night in its den. Its power, and its valor, and its grandeur are displayed when it comes out of the den making of a terrible roar. So also there is the display of Sri Krishna's grandeur when he comes out of the bed room to the throne. Similar is the grandeur of nature after day break, succeeding its silent concealment all the foregoing dark night time.

While abed, Sri Krishna appeared one with Satya; both of them were of one body. As Satya has got herself detached from Krishna a short while ago, Krishna can't conceal himself any longer in Satya. He has to present himself to the wider world and make it bright and blooming. (Similar is the function of the universal lording force (Eswara) on the physical universe).

It is on account of the influence of the Omnipresent Easwara energy that the physical matter gets alive and rejuvenated and productive. As the short curled hair on the lions body with a sudden shake by the lion gets longer and straightened the physical matter gets expanded and rejuvenated due to impact of the Omnipresent energy.

With the sudden shake of the body by the lion the hairs not only become straightened and longer but also they emit odour around. Similarly with the impact of the Easwara energy, the physical matter gets expanded and alive, and it emits fragrances around with its productions.

The person who is in "Yoganidra" (Bodily sleep with mental awareness) acquires knowledge and wisdom during that state, and when he gets up, he falls into discharge of righteous actions.

This scientific process of the existence of nature and the existence of Natural phenomena undergoing changes every moment are beautifully and wonderfully presented in this pasura by the situation of Sri Krishna rising up from sleep.

**Pasura No. 24**

*"An rivvulaga malandaa yadi potthi,  
 Shen rangu tthennilangai shetthaai thiral potthi,  
 ponracchagada mudaitthaai pugai potthi,  
 Kanru kunilaa verindaai kalai potthi,  
 kunru kudaiya vedutthaai kunambotthi  
 venru pagai kedukkumnin kaiyil velpotthi,  
 Enrenrun shevagame yetthipparaikolvan,  
 Inriyam vando mirangu Eloreмбаavaai".*

**Substance:**

(The preface to this pasura :- The Gopikas were successful in rousing up Sri Krishna from sleep; Sri Krishna condescended to their request; he came out of his bed room and began to pace slowly in a dignified gait to his throne in the main hall. Their minds were filled with wonder, and joy, and piety, as they saw Krishna's beautiful and dignified pacing to the throne. In this ecstasy and wonder, they forgot their purpose; they were simply standing and gazing eagerly at Sri Krishna).

The Gopika maidens, under the leadership of Andal, utter benedictions (Mangalasanams) to Sri Krishna as he walks to the throne in this royal gait :-

"Mangalasanams to your sacred feet which surveyed the three worlds that day to protect the Devas!

Mangalasanams to your strong, powerful and valorous long arms which put on end to Ravana and his fourteen thousand followers in the battle during the invasion to Lanka!

Mangalasanams to your fame in having kicked Shakatasura to death!

Mangalasanams to your left leg which firmly supported your beautiful body when you lifted your right leg in forcibly throwing, like an elephant apple, one Rakshasa over another Rakshasa in the form of a calf!

Mangalasanams to your gracious act in raising up "Govardhana giri" on your left hand's little finger to protect the Gopas and the cows from the storm and hail!

Mangalasanams to your sword, the destroyer of the enemy - demons!

We have been thinking and singing of your valorous acts all these days to meet you and to enjoy your company. Though we have had a little separation from you for the last few days owing to certain objections of our elders; we come to you today with the willing approval of all our elders so that we may reap the joy of your sacred company. O, Krishna be merciful".

### **Exploration:**

It has been established in Geetha that God exists in this world, sometimes, taking an advent, for the purpose of destroying the evil, and for protecting the virtue. Whenever Dharma (Legitimate duty) suffers, he protects Dharma from going astray, and establishes the straight path.

In this pasura, Andal gives at first examples of God's of destroying the evil; In the end she cites God's deed to mercy and protection.

The Purushoththama (the jewel of the human race or the man supreme of the age) tries to dispel pride, arrogance, selfishness and ignorance from the society by setting his own personal example, and thus protects his faithful followers and keeps them in straight path. This is clearly hinted in this pasura.

The triple noble deeds of a Purushottama, namely destroying the evil, protecting the virtuous and establishing Dharma, are furnished in this pasura. The purpose of the life of a purushottama in this world is, in fact, to accomplish these three noble deeds.

Follow the 8th sloka of the 4th chapter of the Geetha :-

***"Parithranaya saadhunam***

***vinaashaa yacha dushkritham|***

***Dharma samsthapanardhaya***

***Sambhavami yuge yuge"***||

In the expression, "Dharma Samsthapanarthaya", (establishing firmly the righteousness), both the noble acts of destroying the evil and of protecting the virtue are implied.

In this pasura, benediction is uttered in praise of the Lord's handsome limbs, his sacred weapons and his noble qualities and deeds.

The benediction uttered in this pasura by Andal is similar to the benediction uttered by her father, Periyalvar (Vishnu Chitta) in "Thiruppallandu".

**Pasura No. 25**

*"orutthi maganaai ppirandoriravil,  
 Orutthi maganayolitthu valara,  
 Tharikkilanagi tthan tthingu ninainda,  
 Karutthai ppilaippittha kkanzan vayitthil,  
 Neruppenna ninra nedumaale, yunnai,  
 Yarutthitthu vandom parai tharu diyaagil,  
 Thirutthakka shelvamam shevagamum yaambaadi,  
 varutthamunthirndu maglindu Elorembaavaai".*

**Substance:**

(When Sri Krishna makes enquiries about Gopika's wishes, the latter reply, "you know fully well our hurdles, hindrances and our attachments, and it is upto you to deliver us from our bonds and to receive us into your gracious fold: This is the context of this pasura).

"O, Sri Krishna! You were born to the most virtuous Devakidevi in prison at night, and in the same night you reached the bed of the most enlightened Yasodadevi to be fostered by her secretly without the knowledge of your cruel uncle, Kamsa, who, not being able to foresee his evil fate for the future, tried to put an end to you, his own nephew, out of his ignorance, selfishness, jealousy and pride. O, the protector of the virtue and the destroyer of evil! You pooh-poohed his evil attempts and you turned to be a burning flame in his stomache till his end in your hands. O, the gracious Lord, merciful to your devotees! We have come to request you for purushartha (The real purpose and end of human life). If you are kind enough to grant our righteous desire (purushartha), please grant us that prosperity of union which Sri Malakshmi requests you for, the strength to keep up that divine union and the earnest desire on our part to ever sing in praise of your auspicious qualities! kindly relieve us from the agony of separation we have been in so far from you, and grant us comfort and bliss".

**Exploration:**

The person of the "real knowledge of self" (Athma Jnana or Swarupa Jnana) is capable of removing all evil from himself, if any, and then lives in utter purity of mind and spirit, which is called "Moksha Bhava". This is what is called "destroying the evil and protecting the virtue" as far as the individual is concerned with himself. So "self correction" and "self sublimation" comes under "Dushta Sikshana and Sishta Rakshna" as far as each individual is concerned. This attitude and capacity of the individual depends upon his knowledge of "Thathva Thraya", in other words his knowledge of the self or Athmajnana. The Thathvathraya Jnana leads to Athmajnana which in turn leads to Athmananda or Bliss.

When the Gopika maidens have the satisfaction that they have attained Sri Krishna's grace, have they expressed their desires? No, they have not expressed any desires for physical wealth or physical comforts. Why? They don't have any worldly desires beyond the condescension of Sri Krishna! The allegory suddenly ceases to exist here. The saint-poet, Andal, suddenly present the Gopika maidens as supreme devotees with no desires other than God's grace.

What is the wealth that Sri Mahalakshmi desires? What is the strength or energy required to preserve it? - Here lies the supreme spiritual knowledge! :- It has already been established that "Om" stands for the "knowledge of Thathvathraya". "A, u, ma" constitute "Om". "Thathva Thraya" are the three aspects forming the universe "A" stands for the Omnipresent Vaishnava Shakthi. "Ma" stands for "the creatures" and "u" stands for "all physical matter".

"u" stands for Sri Mahalakshmi, the all physical wealth or matter of this universe. The physical matter becomes "live" only when Eswara energy comes into contact with it. This is "creation" and the Easwara energy is called "creator". The physical matter not only gets into contact with the Easwara energy, but also the

former must have the capacity to hold the later. Then only the natural wealth grows, such as all creatures and all vegetation. The first is "creation", and the second is its "existence".

The ardent devotee requires this knowledge, this wisdom. When the real devotee attains this wisdom, he has nothing to wish for any further. What he desires is Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava, the capacity to feel one with the universe and the universal lording force. Such a devotee cannot exist in "Vishnu Bhava" (separation from the bliss). He always yearns to get into "Samslesha Bhava"; that is his restoration, his satisfaction, his being and his goal.

"The Gopikas separated from Sri Krishna at first" stand for the persons without the feeling of union with the Lord. That is, "The Gopikas in Vislesha Bhava" stand for the "devotees in Vislesha Bhava". "The Gopikas enjoying the presence of Sri Krishna i.e. in Samslesha with Krishna" signify "the devotees in Vishnu Samslesha Bhava".

A real devotee likes to think about and to sing in praise of the auspicious qualities of the Lord; he gets joy in it; he witnesses the joy of the world in it. He wishes for the development of nature and the wellbeing of humanity. Though the praise of the Omnipresent Vaishnava Shakthi abounds in "Mahabharatha's Vishnu Sahasra Nama Sthothra" and in the innumerable devotional songs composed by devotee-poets, yet all praise of the Lord is packed up in one "Thiru Manthra".

"Thirumanthra" is otherwise called "Ashtakshari Manthra" (the spell, sacred, of 8 letters or syllables), namely, "O na mo na ra ya na ya". Uttering this Ashtakshari Manthra is tantamount to praising the innumerable auspicious qualities of the Divinity. This is the greatness of Thirumanthra.

"What the Gopika maidens in the end wished for was the knowledge of the Thirumanthra".

It is hoped that the superstitious ignorant lot, who believe that prayers are meant for getting gifts, health and longevity, may get over from their muddy pool of ignorance with the enlightening wisdom of Thirumanthra.

Divine wisdom or Divine prayer come under "Thathva Thraya Jnana", which keeps the man in "Moksha Bhava" i.e. the spirit of joy and deliverance.

**Pasura No. 26**

*"Maale manivannaa maargali niraaduvaan,  
 Melaiyaar sheivanagal vennuvana kettiyel,  
 Ngalatthai yellaam nadunga muralvana,  
 paalannatthun paanchashanniyame,  
 polvana shangangal pooi ppaadudaiyanave,  
 shaalapperum paraiye pallandi shaippaare,  
 kola vilakke kodiye vithaaname,  
 Aalinilaiyaa yarul elorembaavaai".*

**Substance:**

"O, loving father of the devotees! O, Sri Krishna of the bright blue sapphire body! We request you to accomplish us with all the essentials required for our Margali morning sacred bath of the "sacred vow" (Nomu) as prescribed by your elders: please grant us conches as powerfully sounding as the sacred panchajanya, the many well-sounding musical instruments, the devotee - singers proficient in singing songs of divine praise and benedictions, the pious people to hold the bright auspicious candles, the devoted person to hold the ensign, and the "Melkattu" (canopy), O, Vatapathrashayi!"

**Exploration:**

The Gopika maidens are requesting for musical and other accompaniments; they are in fact aspiring for "Sri Krishna Samslesha" (Sri Krishna's company), and why are they in need of musical accompaniments? They do require them for their chorus-singing and for an emotional impact of devotion on their minds.

It has been observed under exploration of the previous pasura that the allegory ceased to function, and the Gopika maidens are

represented as mere pure devotees. So the musical accompaniments and other accomplishments mentioned here refer to those required for the chorus devotional singings (Brinda Gana or Bhajana performance) of the company of devotees. It is an usual sight that the devotees, early in the morning during Dhanurmasa, return to the temple from the place of their sacred baths in group singing of devotional songs; it provides a festive appearance to the village, or the part of the town. The traditional Haridasas, dressed in the established traditional manner, go about the main streets of the village singing songs of devotion (Haribhakthi Keerthans). "The group of Gopika maidens" here represents "The group of devotees at their Bhajan performance". (Bhajan = singing in praise of God).

The Gopika maidens clearly know that panchajanya (proper noun) is the only one of its kind and name, and that particular conch belongs to Vishnu murty or Vishnu in the form of Sri Krishna. But they ask Krishna for many panchajanyas! How is it possible? It only represents their emotional feeling that there is nothing impossible for God or Krishna, who is Vasudeva. (Vasudeva = one who exists everywhere (and also) one in whom everything exists, the smallest as well as the biggest).

Observe sloka no. 9 of Chapter 8 of Geetha :-

*"Kavim purana mama shasitharam  
Anoraniyam samannusmaredyah|  
Sarvasya dhatharama chinthya rupam  
Adithya varnam thamasahe parasthath||"*

**Substance:**

"The Omniscient, the Omnipresent, the creator, the smaller than the atom, the protector, the incomprehensible, the ever bright enlightening force beyond all ignorance, the supreme Lord..."

**"For ordinary persons of desires, any" well established good performance is a means for achieving their desires; It is a normal daily performance of custom and habit for the virtuous persons; the same is service divine or service to humanity in case of real devotees of the spirit of surrender and dedication".**

**What the real devotees require is the knowledge of the self, that is, the knowledge of what he is in relation to the universe (Athmajnanam or Seshaseshi Bhava- these terms have been already explained). All this knowledge is packed up in the One lettered sacred spell. The Ekakshari manthra, namely, "Om". The sound of the conch signifies the sound of "Om". When the Gopika maidens wish for the "panchajanya", they wish for the "Ekashari manthra" or "the Athmajnana". "Athmajnana" makes the person humble, and inculcates in him the spirit of surrender, dedication and service.**

**"The devotee singers singing songs of loving benedictions" stand for "virtuous company" "God's grace" stands for "true knowledge cum wisdom", the spirit of love and sympathy and the state of bliss or ecstasy. These are what any real devotee should wish for.**

**Pasura No. 27**

*“Kudaarai vellum shirkovindaa, unrannai  
 ppodipparai kondu yaamberu shanmanam,  
 Naadu pugalum parisinaal nanraaga,  
 cchudagame thotvalaiye thode sherrippuve,  
 paadagame yenra naiyappal kalanum yamani vom,  
 Aadai yuduppo madanpinne paarchoru,  
 Muda neipeidu mulangai valivara,  
 kkudi yirundu kulirndu Elorembavaai.”*

**Substance:**

“O, Govinda!, the most prosperous in all virtues! We sing in praise of your innumerable auspicious qualities, and we obtain all our righteous aspirations (Purusharthas). To the wondrous praise of all, we shall display our presents, dearly obtained by us, namely the ornament of the hand, the ornaments of the shoulders, the earrings, the Karna pushpa (flowers worn above the ears) the ornament of your sacred leg, and the precious waist-band-cloth. We then in your sacred company dip our hands in the sacred-delicious food mixed with milk and ghee, and enjoy it”. “Elorembaavaai”.

**Exploration:**

The purusharthas (the righteous accomplishments) which are to be divided as a result of The Nomu (The sacred performance of the vow) are expressed by the Gopika maidens.

On behalf of the Gopika maidens, their Varuna Nomu, their essentials for the performance of the Nomu, their expected fruits as a result of the fulfillment of the Nomu, their various types of ornaments, their clothes, their proposed enjoyment of delicious foods etc. are described to be most pleasing, enjoyable and convincingly attractive.

When all the above items are observed in relation to the devotees (it has been already stated that the Gopikas stand for ardent devotees), they all appear auspicious and sacred to the readers.

As for as the Bhakthas (devotees) are concerned, God is described as the destroyer of the evil forces, the handsome, supreme of truth, goodness and beauty, and as a protector of the righteous. How? The real devotee (the lover of God) with his accomplished attributes of wisdom, love and renunciation, who exists emotionally in Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava, becomes free from his internal enemies, The Arishadvargas, becomes perfectly virtuous, and leads an exemplary life of service. It is defined in the Geetha that a real devotee (Bhaktha) is a bundle of all virtues and lives a life of bliss while making all others around him blissful:-

***Slokas Nos. 13 and 14 of Bhakthi Yoga of Geetha :-***

***Adveshta sarva bhuthanam|***

***Maithraha karuna Evacha|***

***Nirmamo nirahankara|***

***Ssama dhuhkah sukakshami|***

***Samthushta ssathatham yogi|***

***Yathathma dridah nishchayaha|***

***Mayyarpitha mano buddhihryo|***

***Madbhakthassame priyaha||***

**Substance:**

"That my Bhaktha (devotee) is dearest to me who does not hate any creature, who is friendly and kind to all creatures, who is free from selfishness, egoism and pride, who is in mental equilibrium in joy and sorrow; who is of a forgiving nature, who is ever contented, who is principled and disciplined, who is of a determined view for righteousness and who is in a spirit of surrender to Me (the Omnipresent Vaishnava power).

"God destroys the vicious enemies" means "as a result of real and sincere devotional spirit, man becomes rid of his natural 'arishadvargas' and he had no hatred for anybody, but love for all". A real devotee is infact "Ajathashatru" (a person of no enemies i.e a person without hatred for any).

The word, "Ajathasathru" is to be correctly understood. It does not mean "a man without physical enemies", but it means "that he does feel that anybody is his foe. He feels friendly to all. "Dharmaraja" is called "Ajathasathru". It does not mean that there are not enemies that hate him. The Kouravas and their friends and associates do hate him. But, yet, Dharmaraja does not consider anybody as his enemy.

The devotee who thinks and sings in praise of the many auspicious qualities of God, does try to possess all good qualities. Further he is free from 'Arishadvargas'. So the bliss of a devotees in "Samslesha Bhava" with God's auspicious qualities is indescribable.

"O, Govinda! You are "Sarvasulabha". To attain your grace is easy; only man should be of sincere devotion, which means is within himself. It is not only easy to understand and to sing in praise of your auspicious qualities, it is also comfortable. As you are everywhere, you are within our reach. We, who sing in praise of you, do get what we righteously desire, the "purusharthas". The valuable presents or gifts which we need are the following :-

1. "Shudagame" - The ornament of the hand (The thulasi garland; the charity)
2. "Tholvalaiye" - The ornament of the shoulder (Chakrankitham - the mark of Sudarsana chakra -the concept of time - that we in this world are not permanent here).
3. "Thode" - The ornament of the ear - ear ring (Thirumanthra).
4. "Shevippuve" - 'Karna pushpa" - the flower used over the ear. It is enjoyable. (It stands for Dwayamanthra).

5. Padagame - the ornament of the leg - the ornament of Krishna's leg - the means to achieve the end, the desired end - (Charama sloka).

"With the enlightenment obtained from the knowledge of Thirumanthra, Dvayamanthra and Charama sloka, we are sure to get the real spirit of Jnana, Bhakthi and Vairagya. (Universal knowledge, universal love and a spirit of renunciation bred up by selflessness).

We then put on the cloth signifying the knowledge of the "Omnipresent energy. And in this Divine function, you are in "Bhoktha" and we are the Bhogyam. (Universal lording force ever works on the physical matter on the nature of this world). This is the loving treatment that we expect in your presence; O, Sri Krishna" - This forms the prayer of the Gopika maidens to Sri Krishna - This is Thiruppavai, the sacred prayer, a prayer not for obtaining selfish comforts, but a prayer for the eternal bliss of humanity. The substance of the prabandha of Thiruppavai is furnished in this pasura. This pasura deserves to be called "Charama pasura" - the next three pasuras, pasuras 28, 29 and 30, are in support of this.

On the pretext of Gopikas approaching Sri Krishna and requesting him for the Nomu-dawn-bath, Andal enumerates here the sacred aspirations of the Vaishnava devotees.

**Pasura No.28**

*"Karavaikal pin shenru kanam sherndunbom,  
 Arivonru millada vaaykkula, ttunrannai,  
 ppiravi purrandanai punniyam yaamudaiyom,  
 kurai vonru millada gov'ndaa, vunranno,  
 Duravel namakkingolikka voliyaadu,  
 Ariyada pillaigato manbinaa, lunrannai  
 cchirupera laitthanavum shiri yarulaade  
 Eraivaa ni thaaraai parai Eloreмбаavaai".*

**Substance:**

"We follow the cattle into the forest and look after him. That is our life and profession. We are born in the most ignorant and rustic community, the yadava caste. But as you, our Lord Sri Krishna, are also born in the same our community, we feel ourselves blessed. This is the means for our uplift. O, Lord Krishna, the all-prosperous, the relation between yourself and ourselves is one which can't be denied or disinherited by neither of us. We are innocent and ignorant children. Out of our ignorance, frankness, and loving familiarity, we have been addressing you, just in a short name as Krishna (O, Krishna, O, cunning boy, O, deceitful Krishna, O, the thief of butter etc); O, our Lord, don't be angry about all this, our innocence and ignorance; O, grant us purusharthas, our pious aspirations! Eloreмбаavaai".

**Exploration:**

In the very first pasura of Thiruppavai it is said of 'prapya prapaka' (The desirable and the obtainable) that Lord Narayana, who is our only refuge, is here in Thiruvayippadu to grand us our righteous desires (Narayanane namakke parai tharuvan). Such "Prapya prapakas" are explained in detail in this pasura and in the pasura to follow.

What is it, that is explained in this pasura?

"We have approached you on the worldly pretext of 'Nomu'. O, Lord, our aspiration is not that. Our righteous desire is service at your lotus feet. To be able to live in such righteous divine service, we are Karma yogis nor Jnana yogis. (We don't have such divine knowledge nor can we follow the established procedure of a divine performance). We only submit that your alone should act as a means for us to achieve our aspiration; this we venture to submit owing to our personal and friendly contact with you. You kindly pardon us, accede to our request and help us to achieve the righteous end, the Purushartha". So the Gopikas pray to Sri Krishna.

Here the Gopikas are no more ordinary maidens. They cease to be so. They stand for sincere devotees in a spirit of surrender and dedication. They declare that Bhakthi Yoga is superior to the other two established paths, namely, Karma yoga and Jnana yoga. They indicate that the Bhakthi yoga becomes perfect with Vishnu Samslesha Bhava (all the technical terms used here have been defined previously).

The Gopikas, maidens who started their contact, company and friendship with Sri Krishna, at the outset with all familiarity, intimacy and friendship, in course of time, having observed his virtues, his conduct and his wondrous actions in course of time, have come to recognize him as a purushotham, and as an advent of God:

This is similar to the recognition of Arjuna, who, having treated Sri Krishna as an intimate brother-in-law, with all happy jokes, familiarity and love due to a close relative, began to consider Sri Krishna as Purushottama and divine advent on hearing from him the Divine Geetha on such a recognition, Arjuna corrected himself with the following humble submission :- (Chapter II, slokas 41 to 44)

**Sloka 41:-**

***"Sakhethi mathva prasabhayaduktham|***

***He Krishna! He yadava! He Sakthi|***

***Ajanatha mahimanam thavedam|***

***Maya pramadath pranaye navapī||"***

**Substance:**

("Being ignorant of your divine greatness, I have been, either by mistake or by excessive intimacy and love, addressing you, in my own humour as per my will, as 'friend, Krishna, yadava etc.")

**Sloka 42 :-**

***"Yacchapahasardha masathkrithosi |***

***vihara shayyasana bhojane shu |***

***ekothavapyachyuthah thvath samaksham|***

***Thath kshama yethva maha maprameyam ||"***

**Substance:**

("During recreative walks, while sitting together, while abed, during dinner time, whether we two were alone, or whether we were in the midst of others, for fun or for humour, if I had not shown you the due regard and respect, O, Krishna, the inestimable! I pray you to pardon me").

**Sloka 43 :-**

***"Pithasi loksya chara charasya|***

***Thvamasya pujuyascha gururgariyan |***

***Nathvathsamo sthyabhyadhikah kutho nyo |***

***Lokathraye pyaprathima prabhava ||"***

**Substance :**

("O, the extraordinary mystical and powerful! You are the father of this entire universe containing within itself all the physical matter (Achith) and all the live creatures (Chith). And you are the most adorable loftiest Purushottama. When it is said there is no equal to you in all the three worlds, where can there be one greater than yourself?")

**Sloka 44 :-**

*"Thasmath pranamya pranidhaya kayam |  
prasaadayethva mahamisa midyam |  
pitheva puthrasya sakhena skahyuhu |  
Priyah Priya yarha sideva sodhum ||"*

**Substance:**

("I prostrate on your feet and pray for your condecension, O, the universal Lord, and the praise worthy! O, God, you are to excuse my faults, if any, as a father forgives his son, as a friend excuses his friend and as a lover bears the trifling mistake of his lady love.")

In the same way the Gopikas addressed Sri Krishna in familiar terms, and Arjuna treated Sri Krishna as a familiar brother-in-law, a real devotee out of his Samslesha Bhava addresses God in singular number as "Are! Ram, Om Ram etc" There is nothing wrong with the devotee here as not shouring due respect to the divine name.

In the humble and true expressions of the yadava maidens about their physical environs, their profession, their lowliness, their innocence, their ignorance etc. the Gopikas humility, simplicity, frankness, unreservedness etc. are worth nothing. Similarly a true devotee is humble and sympathetic to all fellowmen.

A real devotee out of his humility, selfishness etc. is always aware of his doings, and he is ever careful that he may not do wrong to others knowingly or unknowingly. Observe the last sloka of Sri Venkateswara Sthotram :-

***"Ajnanina mayadoshan***

***Asheshan vihithan Hare |***

***Kshamasvathvam kshamasvathvam***

***Shesha Shaila Sikhamaane.||"***

There is a line in Telugu poetry of Vemana thus :- "Kulomuto nokandu gunavanthu dundina, kulamu velayu vani gunamu chetha". "If there is a celebrated personality in a community, the whole community becomes famous on account of him. Similarly the yadava community became famous on account of Krishna's existence in that community. Krishna is called "Yadukula thilaka" (The supreme jewel of the yadava race). The Gopikas felt that their lives are fortunate and sacred as they belong to the same yadava race as Krishna belongs to.

The Gopika maidens, who were in the service and worship of Sri Krishna, expressed to him thus - "The relationship between yourself and ourselves is one which is permanent, which is in divisible inseparable even if we try to get apart from each other". These are the words of self awareness, Athmajnana, of great devotees like the Alvars. Andal is an Alvar and she expresses her connections with the Omnipresent Lord in these words. This is a splendid sentence which is pregnant with the wisdom of Thathva Thraya Jnana, which is the source for the Visishtadvaita Siddhantha. This is the wisdom of Geetha's chapters 13 and 15. (Kshethra kshethragna yoga and Purushottama prapthi yoga). This is the Arthapanchaka Jnana or Swarupa Jnana furnished in Pancharathragamam. This is the spiritual eminence of Andal based on a scientific understanding of Thathva Thraya.

The divine wisdom, contained in the sentence underlined in the preceding paragraph, is furnished by Geethacharya thus :-

**Chapter 13, Sloka 2 :-**

*"Idam shariram Kountiya |  
Kshetra mithyabhidhi yathe |  
Ethathdyo vethitham prahuh |  
Kshethrajana Ithi thathvidaha ||"*

**Substance :**

"Arjuna, this "body" is called "Kshethra". He, who understands the nature of this Kshethra, is said to be "Shethrajna").

**Chapter 13, sloka 3 :-**

*"Kshetrajnam chapimam viddhi |  
Sarvakshethushu Bharatha |  
Kshethra kshethrajnayoh jnanam |  
Yatthath Jnanam matham mama ||"*

**Substance:**

(Understand that I am that Kshethrajna in every Kshethra. The knowledge relating to these two terms, namely, "Kshethra and Kshetrajna", is the real knowledge.)

This is the knowledge supreme which the Gopikas give vent to in pasura No. 28.

**13- 34.**

*"yadhaa prakaashaya thyekah |  
krithsnam loka mimam ravih |  
kshethram kshethri thadha krithsnam |  
prakasayathi Bharatha ||"*

**Substance:**

(Just as the only sun brightens the whole world. So also the Kshethrajna keeps alive every body of the creative).

"Kshethrajna" should be understood as the "Omnipresent Vaishnava Energy". This is called "Eswara" in Thathva Thraya. Hence it is clear that the relationship between the Kshethra and the Kshethrajna can't be removed. This is the relationship between any creative and the Vaishnava Energy. This is the relationship between one creature and the other as the same Advaita Energy pervades all the other as the same Advaita Energy pervades all the creatures. Just as the universe is made up of Achith, Chith and Easwara, so also each creature in turn is made up of Achith, Chith and Easwara in a varying magnitude. This is the true scientific knowledge which the Gopikas express to Krishna. This is the supreme, knowledge of "nature or of the creation and the creator", furnished by the wise lady Alvar, Andal. It is clear how Thiruppavai is Bhagavad Geetha in a briefer form!

In this way, the real devotee, with his Athma Jnana, understands the distinction between and the relationship between the "Kshethra" and "the Kshethrajna". He understands his relation with this world. He understands his bonds with this world and he is capable of "freedom from these bonds which is called "Moksha Bhava" (The mental disposition of detachment). The Moksha Bhava is also called "Paramagathi" or Paramapadam" (The supreme state).

It has already been stated elsewhere that "Kshetra Kshetrajna Bhava" is also called "Shesha Sheshi Bhava". The Omnipresent Vaishnava Shakti is not only all pervading but also it is "Sarvasheshi" (The beyond). This supreme knowledge is expressed by Geethacharya in "Purushottama prapthi yoga" (15th Chapter) of the Geetha :-

**Chapter 15, Sloka 16 :-**

*"Dvavimau purusham loke |  
 Ksharascha kshara Evacha |  
 Kshara ssarvani Bhuthani |  
 Kutasthoh kshara uchyaathe ||"*

**Substance:**

There are two aspects in this world, the "Kshara" (destructable or subject to decay or change) and the "Akshara" (the permanent, the eternal). The "Kshara" stands for all material, and material forms appearing in this world. The "Akshara" stands for the "energy" responsible for its existence, state or change.)

This energy in creatures, beyond the material of their bodies, which is incomprehensible is called "Pranam" (Life) or "Athma" (soul) as the case may be.

**Chapter 15, Sloka 17 :-**

*"utthamah purehsasthavanya |  
 paramathmethyuda hrithah |  
 yoloka thraya mavishya |  
 Bibharthya vyaya Eswarah ||"*

**Substance:**

Besides the two purushas (the two aspects namely "the Chith and the Achith") there is another purusha (The eternal energy). This eternal energy pervading both the Chith and the Achith is called paramapurusha or Eswara.)

The Easwara energy pervades both the "chith" and the "Achith" aspects of creation. Hence it is called the Advaita energy (the one and the same energy). Of the "Thathvathraya" all the three aspects have their particular qualities and purposes; and hence the Siddhantha or principle relating to these three aspects is called "Visishtadvaita Siddhantha".

**Chapter 15, Sloka 18 :-**

*"Yasmathkshara mathithoha |  
 Maksharara dapi chotthamah |  
 Athosmi loke vedecha |  
 Pradhithaha Purushotthamaha ||"*

**Substance :**

As I am superior of "Kshara" and "to Akshara" (Achith and Chith), I am considered Purushotthama (superior to the other two purushas - superior to all other aspects and energies).

The Gopikas (in the correct term Andal) consider Sri Krishna as "Purushotthama" and lived in Samslesha Bhava with him.

**Chapter 15, Sloka 19 :-**

*"Yoma mevamasa mmudoh |  
 Janathi Purushotthamam |  
 Sasarva vidbhajathi maam |  
 Sarvabhavena Bharatha ||"*

**Substance :**

"That all knowing devotee, who understands that I am Purushotthama, praises me as the all pervading soul)".

"When the Easwara Energy (Purushotthama energy) pervades all life and soul (Jeevathma), or Paramathma there is no question of separation of Jeevathma and the Paramathma (the individual soul and the supreme soul energizing the former). This supreme scientific truth is expressed by Andal in this pasura in such simple personified language - "The relationship between yourself and ourselves is one which is indivisible and inseparable despite our vain trail to get part from each other".

Just as Athma (life) dwells in a "body" and cannot dwell of itself, so also the Easwara energy dwells equally in "the body" as well as "the life". And so the Easwara energy does not dwell apart. This is the Thathva Thraya Jnana as per Visishtadvaita Siddhantha. (This is similar to the fact that electricity dwells in a bulb through a medium; it does exist separately by itself). Hence "man" is ever "associated" with the Vaishnava energy. (The Jeevathma is ever associated with Paramathma). Being in such an association with the Paramathma, the ordinary human being is not conscious of it; he is not conscious of his fundamental sacred connection. He does not have "knowledge of his self" (Athma jnanam). But the wise devotee, who is conscious of this truth, and who is conscious of his self, lives in the Samslesha Bhava with the Easwara energy (Paramathma). How true, how encouraging, how enjoyable, how self respectful this Thathva Thraya Jnana is! A person of this knowledge knows the noble existence of the fellow being; He develops universal brotherhood. He is neither proud, nor selfish.

Observe the following slokas of the Geetha:

#### Chapter-7, Sloka 7 :-

*"Matthaha paraparamnayna |  
Thkinchi dasthi Dhananjaya |  
mayi sarvamidam protham |  
Suthre manigana Iva||"*

#### Substance :

"There is no power greater than I (Easwara or Purushottama). As all the beads take a thread passing through them, I pass through all the atoms of this world).

A person having this "Jnana" does foster in himself sympathy, kindness and universal brotherhood. The person having none of

this knowledge is equal to an animal, and he becomes selfish, proud, ignorant, unsympathetic and cruel. The so called person of high birth, the so called Guru etc. who don't have this "Atma Jnana" think high of themselves and they don't hesitate to treat others in a mean way.

### Chapter-7, Sloka-16 :-

*"Chaturvidha bhajanthemam |*

*Janassu Krithinorjuna |*

*Artho Jijnasurzardhardhi |*

*Jnanicha Bharatharshabha ||"*

### Substance:

The following four types of people worship "me" (The Omnipresent Easwara Shakthi or Purushothama) :-

1. Aarthah. (One who is in troubles)
2. Jijnasah. (One who has a zeal to learn)
3. Ardhardhi (One who seeks prosperity)
4. Jnani (One who has the correct knowledge of Thathva Thraya)

Of the above 4 types of persons, the last type, namely, the Jnani, is the supreme: To this class belong to the Gopika maidens, and their leader is Andal.

The supreme sentence of this Pasura, "the relationship between yourself and ourselves is eternal and cannot be erased even if we want", is more powerful than the atomic energy! This is the supreme scientific wisdom of "Thathvathraya" which is packed up in Ekakshari Manthra (one lettered spell), "Om" or in Asthakshari Manthra (The eight lettered or syllabled spell), "Om namo narayanaya".

Let us follow the progress of thought of the Gopikas (the devotees) to become eligible for "Dahiva kripa" (Bliss) :-

"We have been all long following the ways of the ignorant family people (samsaris); we have been in the wrong notion that the family life is Be-all and End-all; Our main and the only aim - cum - amusement - cum - engagement has been looking after our bodies, these physical bodies. This has been "our observance" all along to obtain your grace! There has not been a better means within our reach and our possibility! We have not been initiated into Jnana (knowledge - cum - wisdom) or into its essence, Bhakthi (devotion). But we have never followed any wrong ways or means in our life; to that extent we are pure. We are born in a community, though ignorant, but innocent. Though we are considered to have been born in a so-called low -community, we are not disqualified for "purushartha", which we firmly pursue. You may question where there is "purushardha" for us when we don't have "punyam" (virtue of benevolent charities)! We don't lack punyam! We have it in abundance! You, who are born in our community, are our "punyam", you are our qualifying factor for "purushardha". We don't require any other means for "punyam"; we don't lack anything when we have you as "our Lord, lacking none." .... (How wonderful, convincing and amusing this speech of the Gopikas is! How finely a true devotee's mind is expressed through the mouths of the Gopikas in a concocted context! How can the spiritual and poetic eminence of this saint-poet, Andal, be estimated, and expressed in an apt language! (as for my humble self, I fall in a reverie) .....

The Gopikas pose another question to Sri Krishna, and they themselves furnish the answer - "when we maintain that we lack nothing when you, the all prosperous lord, are there for us, you may interrogate us if there is a binding on the part of "the haves" to come to the rescue of the "Have-nots"! Swami! We submit that we, devoid of any succour from any source other than yourself,

have surrendered to you alone; this, our relation to you, is a binding on your part to uplift us".

The Gopikas further continue thus, "There is not any particular contextual cause for our relationship with you. It is but natural. It is based on the Thathvathraya connections or combinations. It is clear to one, of the knowledge of the self (Atmajnana or Swarupa Jnana). How can those devotees who are aware of the relationship between the Jeevathma (the individual soul) and the Paramathma (the soul supreme; the soul of souls), become forgetful of their connections with you? (The men of Athma Jnana do treat their fellow beings with feeling of brotherhood; they would not assume superiority complex, and would not belittle others nor ill-treat them. A person, who is self conscious and treats others with a difference, is to be deemed a person without Athma Jnana even if he professes to have read all the scriptures; with all his bookish scholarship he is to be considered as an ignorant man ("a two-legged animal" in the words of Prahlada).

"Bhagavad Vishaya" is "the happiness and welfare of the World". "Purushartha" is "Moksha Bhava" which is the state of Bliss with a feeling of detachment and selflessness. "To be not averse to social welfare" is the only means for "Moksha Bhava" or "Purushartha". The life of a real devotee is such: This is what the Gopikas submit to Krishna; they are innocent and their lives are unharmed to any other; hence they claim their eligibility for "Purushartha". It has already been stated that the "Gopikas" stand for "devotees".

"Purushartha" is what is to be desired; it is what is worthiest of desire. And Purushartha is said in this pasura as "Daiva Kainkarya". (Daiva = God, Kainkarya =work). What is Daiva Kainkarya? Is it the worship of a mere idol? Is it some type of offering to the Idol? Is it fulfilling a vow already taken? Think about it clearly what it is and what it should mean! "Daiva

Kainkarya" should mean "a life of service with a self-awareness". Even in actual practice, though the performer is not aware of the significance and purpose, when some offerings of food are placed before the Idol, the performer is not the eater, the sole eater, of all the food-offerings; they are offered to all others (in whom the same life-speck dwells). This was why Sri Ramanuja, the propagator of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, introduced the practice of offering daily in the Vaishnava temple, huge cooked rice-food offerings, which are, after the traditional worship, distributed openly to all, the priests, the Acharyas, the devotees, the visitors, the temple workers etc.

"The life of Daiva Kainkarya" should mean "A selfless life of service". This is "purushartha or Moksha Bhava". This is the Daiva Kainkarya which the Gopikas (Bhakthas) are hinting at in this splendid pasura. This is, in Vaishnava technical language, called Thiruvaradhana (Thiru=sacred, Aradhana = worship). 'Thiruvadhyanam' is the sacred meditation, the understanding of the Thathvathrayas, which in other words called "Athma Jnana. These two sacred performances, namely Thiruvadhyanam, and Thiruvaradhana are daily observances in a Vaishnava temple, and they should be the daily observances in any household.

**Pasura No. 29**

*"Shittham shirukalai vandunnai cchevi, tthum  
 potthamarai yadiye potthum porul kelaai  
 pettham meitthunnum kulatthirpiranda, ni  
 kuttheva lengalai kkollamarpogadhu,  
 Itthaipparai kolva nanrugaan Govindaa,  
 Etthaikku melelu piravikku, munranno  
 Dutthome ya vo munakke naamatcheivom,  
 Matthai nangalmangal maathelorembaavaai."*

**Substance:**

"At this very early morning hour, we have all gathered together in your presence to utter "Mangalasaranams" (benedictions) to your sacred lotus feet, worthy of worship. Kindly listen to us: Though you are bred up in a yadava community (the community of shepherds and cattle herds, proverbially noted for its ignorance and foolishness), we are sure, you don't lack the grace to accept our sacred service of submission and dedication. Let us make ourselves clear to you that we have not approached you today just for one temporary purpose to serve the day. Though you are bred up in a community, exemplary for ignorance and foolishness, do you fail to understand our dedicated minds? No - O, the wondrous Lord in Human form! O, the pleasure-giving source to all, O, Govinda! Our contacts and relationship with you, O, Lord, shall be eternal. We are a part of your elf. We shall ever be yours in service. May we be rid of any other worldly desire! O, for your Grace".

**Exploration:**

Andal enunciates in her celebrated scripture, Thiruppavai, that her righteous desire (purushartha or saduddesa) is "Daiva Kaikarya" (righteous discharge of duty for the welfare of the

society), which is also her means (upaya). For her the end and the means, "the uddisa and the upaya", "the "prapya" and the Prapaka", are the same, which is "Daiva Kainkarya".

Andal also describes the "Prapaya" (what is to be obtained i.e. the purushardha) and the "prapya ruchi" (the taste and enjoyment of purushardha) and believes that the purushardha is possible only through Sri Krishna, the Purushotthama, and then expresses her zealous taste to obtain purushartha. Andal is capable of enjoying the purushartha (Charmaa dasa = the ultimate end) at the outset itself (for she is a swacharya), and then she lays down the means, for the guidance of the devotees, for strengthening it and for continuous fostering of it: thus she concludes her celebrated epic poem, Thiruppavai.

The final gist of this prabandha is brought out in the 28th and the 29th pasuras, and the 29th pasura is almost the conclusion of the prabandha. The 30th pasura deals with "Phalasthuthi", the benefits of reading Thiruppavai and of following its mission in life.

The "Gopikas" signify ordinary humanbeings, who after having been guided by an Acharya (Andal) confess their ignorance, their littleness, and surrender to the Omnipresent Vaishnava Energy, the Easwara, which is signified by Sri Krishna.

The perfect devotee utters benedictions to the Lord's feet (which signify service), and , in his Samslesha Bhava, receives benedictions from the Lord in return; he not only decides to live in such submission, surrender and in selfless service, but also ardently wishes that his race, his heirs i.e. the progeny of the humanity shall live like wise for all time to come. What a virtuous desire! ("So the wish of the devotee is that humanity should ever exist in peace and happiness through the spirit of surrender selflessness - service!")

Sri Ramanujacharya towards the conclusion of his celebrated "Sarangathi Gadya" expressed the same wish, sentiment and mission :-

**"Anthya kale smithiryathu thava kaimkarya  
karika | Thamenam bhagavannadya kriyamanam  
kurushyame".**

**"My Lord, may I now perform thine assignments:  
And may I remember it at the last moment of my  
life"**

"Daiva Kainkarya" has been already defined as "Righteous action for the service of the humanity".

Andal's sentiment-and-mission, "may the idea of Daiva Kainkarya ever flourish in my mind", shall get to our mind the following great quotations :-

1. Sri Ramanuja's sentiment has been furnished above.
2. "Kuryadvidvam sthadah saktha | schyi kirshurloka sangraham". (Geetha - Chapter-3, Sloka-25, second half)
1. *Meaning: A really learned man does render actions only in view of social welfare.*
3. "Dhimahi dhiyoyonaha prachodayath" (The second half of Gayathri Manthra)

*Meaning: May I ever be prompted to render good and virtuous deeds.*

Observe the way of thinking of the devotees as ventilated in this pasura :-

"Lord, consider our expected purpose, in our disposition not to able to bear our separation from you, in approaching you, in worshipping you and in uttering benedictions to your sacred feet twain! The wise men, out of love and kindness for all others, being

unable to bear to see others in sufferings, wish to brighten their lot by suitable service through mind, word and deed. As we pray for Daiva Kainkarya (welfare of all i.e. Loka Kalyana), which is itself an auspicious benediction, what we pray for our mangalasasanam, what you have to grant us, and what we have to receive from you is only the Mangalasasanam. If, perhaps under stress of improper choice for desires and physical comforts, we express so, you, who is our sympathizer and well-wisher, need not take into account such of our desires, and you, need not assume the responsibility to fulfill our desires."

The following is the essence we derive or deduce hereby :-

Man, equipped with Thathva Thraya Jnana, in a spirit of surrender - selflessness - service, should lead a life of righteous deeds, and of bliss. .... he can, with a sense of service to the society, do temple service; he can cooperate in the construction of places of worship and places of prayer which are useful and meaningful to the people; he can donate for the proper functioning of such institutions; But it should be understood by the thinking man how ignorant, meaningless and vain it is on the part of the traditionally superstitious person to think that he is offering to "his god" donations, presents and gifts and "shelter" and to request "his god" to grant "this and that" for his physical elevation! It should also be considered how this ignorant person, steeped in superstition, is engaged in a trade-like transaction, in a barterlike transaction, with his God, which is so ignorant and so superstitious, and far away from the reality of a same philosophy, meant for peace and welfare of the world (Loka Kalyana).

The two pasuras no. 28 and 29, of the 30 pasuras of Thiruppavai, are like the enlightening, brightening and enlivening sun and moon of the innumerable shining heavenly bodies; they are like the diamonds among the precious stones; they are like the parijatha blossoms among the host of the many different fragrant and beautiful flowers.

**Pasura No. 30**

*“Vangakkadal kadainda madavanai kkesvanai,  
 Thingal thirumugatthu ccheyilaiyaar shenrirainji,  
 Angapparai kona vaatthai, yanipuduvai  
 ppaingamala tthanderiyar pattarpiraana kodaishonna,  
 shangatthamilmaalai muppadun dappaame,  
 Ingippari shuraippaa ririndu maalvaraitthol,  
 Shengan thirumugatthu cchelva tthiru maalaal,  
 Engum Thiruvarul petthinburuvar Eloreмбаavaai.”*

**Substance:**

“The Thiruppavai prabandha, of thirty Tamil pasuras, ever shines in the worlds of poetry and philosophy, with the sequence of the story of Sri Krishna, the explorer of the mighty ocean covered with ships and the destroyer of the Demon kesi, and the story of the moon-faced Gopikas, decked with their rare ornaments, who approach Sri Krishna singing in prayerful praise of him and obtaining from him the accomplishments (Purusharthas) required for their pious vow of life.”

This rare prabandha of thirty splendid pasuras is pleasingly produced by Godadevi (Andal), the amiable daughter of Vishnu Chittha (Periyalvar), the Brahmin supreme, the inhabitant of Srivilliputtur, the jewel of the mother-earth, who prepares daily garlands of pleasant, fragrant and soothing blossoms and sacred Thulasi leaves, and piously offers them to Sri Krishna of the local temple.

This is a supreme devotional epic poem, acclaimed by the Tamil devotees, pandits and scholars, and emotionally and ecstatically sung in chorus in group dances by the young Gopika maidens of Thiruvayippadu.

The ardent and thoughtful reader, who receives this garland of thirty pasura - flowers fondly, and who reads all the thirty pasuras, everyone of them, during his life time or during his family lifetime grasping and enjoying the full gist, is sure to reap the physical, mental and spiritual bliss of the supreme grace of Shriyahpati (The Lord of all wealth, Sreenivasa), the mountain - mighty - four armed, the lotus - eyed and the auspicious faced, who is the supreme lord of the physical and spiritual manifestations. "Elorembaavaai".

### **Exploration:**

This last pasura clearly indicates the conclusion of the prabanda, the fullness of it, the method of its study and the fruits of its study.

The Omnipresent power (Vaishnava Shakthi) is indicative through eternity from "Adi Vishnu Murty" (The personification of the source - energy) to Sri Krishna (The Geethacharya, and the embodiment of all auspicious qualities). It is tantamount to have indicated all the divine advents upto Sri Krishna.

Sri Maha Vishnu, as per the Bhagavatha epic, explored the ocean without causing alarm and disturbance to the numerous ships sailing on the water, and obtained Sri Mahalakshmi. (It means scientifically, if we remove the personifications, that it is with his own genius, the Easwara energy, that man explores the ocean and finds the hidden treasure, Sri Mahalakshmi). Similarly a devotee, with Vaishnava Samslesha Bhava, is free from physical and mental discomforts while obtaining the inestimable treasures of Athmajnana (knowledge of the self) and Athmananda (Bliss).

The Gopikas, brilliant with their beautiful faces, and decked with pure simple ornaments, signify the devotees, brilliant with wisdom and shining with all good virtues. The devotees here are Vaishnava Bhakthas who have nothing to do with caste, crud, sex

and pedantry; A Vaishnava Bhaktha is one who believes in the Omnipresence of the Vaishnava energy; he is one with a clear understanding of "Thathva Thraya Jnana". A real Bhaktha meditates upon "Thathva Thraya Jnana" and gets the bliss of Moksha Bhava, which makes life blissful and worth living.

Ordinarily, what is normally found in the so called world of piousman worships. God's idol in the temple or in his prayer room, prays to his god, expresses within himself to his God his desires etc. this is what is seen in the society in the name of piety. Such a devotee in such customs and observances should grow in course of time wise, and attain Atmajnana and Athmanandha according to the guidance given by Geethacharya (Sri Krishna) and Bhashyakar (Ramanuja).

The reader will note with interest how Andal, the authoress of this "Thiruppavai" gives a short, but pointed account of her authorship of the poem, its popularity and importance, her nativity and her parentage.

The writer herself declares the unique and multifarious merits of Thiruppavai as a classical literal, composition, as a poem of piety, devotion and wisdom, as a collection of musical, sensuous and rhythmic songs suitable for the chorus singing and dancing. She is a saint-poet every inch.

In her citing the method of proper study of this epic poem, Andal advises the reader to study the whole poem, every pasura, line and word, with proper understanding of the various implications of the poem. This suggestion is unique and most important. This is different from the traditional method adopted in most Sanskrit productions of scriptures by the author or the commentator, which is likewise in an odd and meaningless and further ridiculous way" if you simply read the whole, or a chapter or a sloka or a part of the sloka, you will get this benefit, that benefit etc. in life or after life." You find such "Phalashuthi" (praise

of benefits of study) even in respect of Geetha, needless to cite other scriptures and epics. Don't you think that such blind guidance makes the ignorant and superstitious reader more and more blind? It is to be gathered that the Alvars were the first to abandon this method of "Phalasthuthi", and they recorded the same towards the conclusions of their pious and devotional productions thus: "The reader who studies this whole composition with proper and correct understanding, and who leads a virtuous life as per guidance given herein, is sure to obtain Bliss or "Moksha Bhava". In the same way, Andal records "Phala sthuthi" in the last pasura of Thiruppavai.

Andal accomplishes her triple purpose in composing this prabandha, namely, as a swacharya she teaches the divine wisdom (Bhagavad Vishaya), as a philosophical guide she advises the humanity to understand her mission and to follow it in life, and as a saintly Acharya she utters benediction (mangalasanam) to the reader.

All the valuable materials contained in Thiruppavai are like the purple -shining sweet-juicy seeds of the well-ripe-broken pomegranate fruit: They are the proper method of performance of a pious deed, the idea that God is easily attainable, Sri Krishna as Purushottama with all auspicious virtues, Sri Krishna Samslesha Bhava, the brotherhood of the devotees and of the virtuous persons, the responsibilities of Acharyas (religious teachers), the sympathetic kindness shown by the Alvars to the humanity, the Thirumanthra, the "Pranava", the "Dvaya manthra", the Charama sloka, the spirit of surrender - selflessness - service, the "sesha-seshi" Bhava, the "Kshethra-kshethrangna" Bhava, the knowledge of sathya thraya namely Pramana, prameya, and pramatha, the manifestations twain (ubhaya vibhuthis), the Ardhapanchaka Jnana, Swarupa Jnana, the Prapya and the Prapaka, Moksha Bhava etc. (Most of the Sanskrit technical terms of this list have been already explained at relevant contexts).

According to the contents of this Divya prabandha, three divisions can be made of the material supplied. The first division comprising pasuras, from 1 to 5, tells us about the scruples of observance of the pious vow, the easy path to attain divinity, and the specific essence of the advent of Sri Krishna. The second section, from pasuras 6 to 15, deals with the desirability of brotherhood among the Acharyas and their sishtyas according to the wisdom and the sentiments and teachings of the Alvars, the spirit of Samslesha Bhava and the spirit of selfless service. The third part, from pasura 16 to 30 deals with the blissful experience of the devotees with the Lord.

It is the belief of the Vaishnava devotees that Thiruppavai contains all the knowledge and wisdom of all the nine Alvars preceding her. She is the tenth Alvar in the chronological order, and she is succeeded by two more Alvars, Madhurakavi Alvar and Nammalavar. The beauties of Thiruppavai literal and spiritual, are reflected in Nammalvar's Thiruvoymoli

It has been hinted in Thiurppavai that the devotee, in his Samslesha Bhava, should feel that he is standing behind or amidst all the twelve Alvars, the three epic Alvars namely Prahlada, Vibhishana and Bhishma, and the long line of all Acharyas, the Nithyas and the Mukthas, and the ever fostering and cooperating Sri Mahalakshmi (the natural wealth) while he is worshipping and meditating. What a fine method of approach to the Divine grace!

Andal has cited in her Thiruppavai what all is implied in "Dvayamanthra" passed on through "guruparampara" (The long line of Acharyas). As prapatthi, Vishnu Samslesha Bhava, Nithya Thiruvadhyanam and Nithya Thiruvadaradhana are presented in order in this prabandha, this sacred prabandha has come to be considered as the most important and authoritative scripture for Nithyanusandhanam (daily recital) and Nitya Thiruvadhyanam

(Daily sacred meditation or prayer) of Vaishnava devotees in the temple or at home.

It has been recognised by the scholarly devotees that the "Jnanasara" (the essence of knowledge) and the "Bhakthisara" (the essence of devotion) passed on through Acharya parampara (the long line of Acharyas) in respect of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha, are kept stored and packed up in Thiruppavai. (The Guruparampara thaniyan with its meaning has already been furnished at the outset in my "Alvarula Divya Vaibhavam" and "Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam").

A proper reading with understanding of Thiruppavai is tantamount to the reading of the entire Dravida Divya Veda, Nalayiram. This status of Thiruppavai is similar to that of Geetha among all other scriptures: All believe that Geetha contains all knowledge and wisdom of prasthanas, the Veda, the Upanishads and the Brahmasutras..." Sarva Shashtra mayi Geetha" is the statement of estimation. Similarly, "Sarva Dravida Veda mayi Thiruppavai". What is to be stated in brief finally is "The Thiruppavai" not only imparts the truth of spiritual knowledge but also indicates a clear and sure guidance for the actual living experience with such knowledge. What should we think of the spiritual wisdom and literary talents of Andal who has produced such unique prabandha in her teens! She is an Alvar, saint and poetess!

This was why Sri Ramanuja used Thiruppavai for his "Nityanusandhanam". (Daily pious recitals). It has become a religious traditional practice with the Vaishnava Visishtadvaita devotees to observe the recital of Thiruppavai as Nityanusandhanam.

It has been already observed that Thiruppavai is pregnant with all the Divya Manthras namely (1) Pranavamanttra, (2) Ashtakshari Manthra, (3) Dwayamanthra and (4) Geethacharama

sloka. The explanations of these manthras are important and quite necessary for the devotee - readers, and therefore they are furnished below :-

(1) "Pranava Manthra" is "Om" (a letter in Sanskrit). "Om" is also called "Pranavanada", "Omkaara", "Pranava Manthra", "Ekakshari Manthra", etc. This has its source from the original Indian scriptures, the Vedas and the Upanishads. "Giramasmekamaksharam" is a quotation from Geetha (Chapter 10, Sloka 25) which means, "of the words, the one syllabled word (Ekashari) is myself".

The single syllabled. Ekashari, "Om" contains within itself three sound A, U, Ma, ..... "A" Stands for " the Omnipresent divine lording force; "Ma" stands for "all creatures or for all life", "U" stands for all physical matter of all universe (i.e. the all universal wealth or Mahalakshmi). In the Sanskrit terminology, A, U, Ma stand for the divinity (Bhagavatham), the "Achith" and the "Chith" respectively. So it is clear that "Om" stands for "Thathva Thraya Jnana" (This term has already been explained else where). So, "Om" which is a symbolic representation of the knowledge of the universe, has come to be called in the scriptures "Ekashari Manthra" (The single syllabled divine spell). The word "Manthra" should not be understood in a narrow superstitious or Orthodox way. The word "Manthra" means "advice", or "formula" or "wisdom" or "knowledge".

The uniqueness of "Om" as a great "spell" may be considered. "Om" stands for "sound" - this is called "pranava sound", the first sound produced in the universe, before the creation of life. God is said to be "sound" - (Swararupi). Of the five elements constituting the universe (Pancha Bhutas) the Akasa (the entire space) is one; and you know "sound" fills "the space". So "sound" (swara) is Omnipresent and hence it stands for the Divine force which is Omnipresent.

"Om kara japa" should not mean "uttering simply and endlessly with your loud mouth, the sound "Om". It stands to teach that man should ever be aware of Thathva Thraya Jnana, his relation with the rest of the universe, and that he should lead a life of humility, the spirit of Sarangathi Bhava (surrender). This virtuous idea is ventilated at many a place in "Thiruppavai".

Is there any "word" in any language of the world, which etymologically conveys such universal and complete wisdom as the single syllabled, single lettered, word, "Om" (Ekakshari) of the Sanskrit language?

(2) "Om na mo na ra ya na ya" is the Ashtakshari Manthra, the eight syllable spell. This is popularly known among the Vaishnavites, as "Thirumanthra". (Thiru=sacred, Manthra=spell). This is considered by all as the sacred spell, supreme. There are there words in this eight syllabled Manthra, namely, "Om + Namu + Narayanaya" regarding "Om" we have already learnt. So the Astakshari is Ekashari + something more.

"Om" signifies the universe and the universal lording force.

"Narayana" signifies the universal lording Force.

"Namu" signifies I surrender to the Omnipresent lording force."

Hence, in total, the meaning of "Ashtakshair Manthra" is "with the knowledge and wisdom of the Thathvathraya I surrender to the Omnipresent Vaishnava Shakhti (Energy)".

The "Ashtakshari" is also called "Vaishnava Manthra".

Thus Thiruppavai spreads the fragrance of the "Ashtakshair Manthra", as we have observed that it spreads the fragrance of the "Panchakshari Manthra". We have to realize the close relation, between the two great Manthras, and enjoy the wisdom of it.

A very detailed account of this supremely sacred idea has been furnished under one of the pasuras of Thiruppavai.

**(3) The following is the "Dvaya Manthra" :-**

***"Sreemannarayana Charanau sharanam prapadye |  
Srimathe Narayanaya namaha ||"***

Its meaning is "I take refuge at the feet of Narayana, the Lord of all wealth. I salute to Narayana, the Lord of all wealth"

"The divine energy is Omnipresent; it is associated with all the wealth of the universe, with all the physical matter of this universe; This Omnipresent energy, Narayanam is personified and named "Narayanamurty" and surrender is expressed to "His feet" - The reader should comprehend beyond the figure of speech, and should understand the bare naked of speech, and should understand the bare naked truth of the Manthra. There is nothing orthodox about it; it is purely true, scientific, but emotionally felt and expressed.

"The feet" stand for "service", "I surrender and salute to the divine power associated with all wealth and enjoyment of this universe. With this knowledge I choose to be a humble servant of the humanity" - This is what is to be learnt from Dvaya Manthra.

Dvaya Manthra = Dvaya + Manthra = Two + advice = A Manthra of instructions twain. What are they? Divine meditation and divine service (These two terms have been already explained else where).

The "Dvaya Manthra" is tantamount to "Thirumanthra". Though the Ashtakshari (Thirumanthra) was made known in Vedas the Upanishads, though this manthra was ung repeated by the Alvars in their pasuras and kirthans, yet it appears that the first Vaishnavacharya, Sriman Nadhamuni, in the tenth century, started the religious practice of initiating his sishyas to the Thirumanthra

with a generous spirit for the uplift of man. But in course of time the religious ceremonial took an odd and undesirable turn of the Guru, keeping the Thirumanthra a secret and passing it on to his principal sishya at the time of the former leaving this world or at the time of his relinquishing "Guru-ship" (Acharyakathva) in his old age. The fate of every manthra or knowledge or wisdom was blocked thus; superstition took the place of truth, which was driven underground; when the weeds are allowed to grow freely around, the main plant suffers growth!

It was the generous Sri Ramanuja (1017 A.D - 1137 A.D) the Dayaika sindho (the ocean of kindness and love) who declared openly the Thirumanthra to all, irrespective of religion, caste, creed, class and sex. Sri Ramanuja coined "Dvaya Manthra" incorporating there-in the meaning of Thirumanthra and the spirit of service, which was infact his mission of Visishtadvaita Siddhantha. To express in brief and pointedly, the Dvaya Manthra is both for Thiruvādhyana (sacred meditation about the eternal truth) and Thiruvārādhanā (sacred worship or service). It lays stress on knowledge-cum-wisdom and social service. This is its uniqueness and speciality; It is spiritualism-cum-materialism. The expression "Sreemathe Narayanaya" (The universal lording force associated with the universal physical wealth) itself lays down the principle of "spiritualism-cum-materialism", which are inseparable though anybody, spiritualist or materialist, out of imperfect or lopsided understanding, may denounce materialism or spiritualism as the case may be respectively.

It is the greatness and uniqueness of Thiruppavai that it teaches the readers or the devotees the spirit of Dvayamanthra. (Meditation and Service)

***(4) Now let us explore the last time, the Charama sloka of the Geetha :-***

**Sloka:** *"Sarva dharman parithyajaya  
Mamekam sharanam vraja |  
Ahamthva sarva papebhho  
Moksha yishami mashuchaha ||"*

**Substance:**

"Though you may not be able to follow the several duties and observances suggested to you by me so far, follow at-least this principle. Surrender to me, the one and the unique; In that case I shall release you from all sins; don't be worried".

Though the above is the etymological meaning of the sloka, the following is the effectual meaning, which we have to understand clearly and follow in life:

"Of all the principles and virtues of life, selflessness is the most supreme, which keeps you ever away from sin, don't be worried".

The Charama sloka guides you with "means" and "assurance" ("upaya" and "Abhaya"). Some devotees consider the Charama sloka (the sloka suggesting the ultimate means) as "Dvaya Manthra" in its effect.

Thiruppavai abounds in the principles of surrender, Moksha Bhava and dedication, which are the contents of the Charama sloka.

These sacred points of surrender (Sarangathi humility), dedication (prapatthi - moksha bhava), selflessness (service) etc. are dealt with more and more elaborately and clearly in my other production, Sri Ramanuja Divya Vaibhavam, the truth of Hinduism pentagon essays, and Sri Bhakthi Saram Part I.

Some Vaishnava devotees consider Thiruppavai equal to Bhagavad Geetha.

Let us compare them: from the Charama sloka of the Geetha, it can easily be inferred that the Geetha conveys to the reader or devotee several instructions based on several philosophies and theories (siddhanthas) in vogue and in prominence by the time of its impartation, and in the end the most essential principle of guidance is given. But the Thiruppavai does not touch all other unimportant material, and directly gives the essential principle of guidance. It is just the end of the Geetha. In Geetha so many points in vogue are given, which are negative or denounced at the end, when the essential and positive guidance is given. But Thiruppavai directly keeps you in the positive path. The Geetha is more and more scholarly where as the Thiruppavai is directly devotional. The Geetha is prosaic with series of eternal truths, while Thiruppavai is highly poetic and brings the eternal truth into the purview of actual, real, and enjoyable life.

Geetha is series of instructions by a wise teacher to a pupil evading his legitimate duty under the influence of wrong notions. The pupil is instructed to realize "Atmajnana and kshethra-kshetragna Bhva" (these terms are already explained) and to conduct himself in a spirit of surrender-selfless-ness-service. But Thiruppavai is spoken by the devotee to God; the devotee explains to God what he is in relation to God. While Geetha is meant to foster Atma Jnana in the reader, in Thiruppavai the devotee presents his Atmajnana.

In Geetha Sri Krishna stands for the Omnipresent Power (Acharya) and Arjuna stands for the ordinary human being (pupil). In Thiruppavai, Sri Krishna stands for Omnipresent Vaishnava Power and the Gopika (Andal) stands for the most enlightened human being with the realization of truth.

Geetha is supremely instructive where as Thiruppavai is instruction and emotionally enjoyable.

Thiruppavai is the juicy Rasala fruit, sweet and energising of the great mango tree (Rasala Tree), the Geetha.

*Om*

*Shanthi Shanthi Shanthi*

***"Om namo narayanaya!***

***Andal Thiruvadigale saranam!***

***Srimathe Ramanujaya Namah!***



