

# THE GLORY OF VENKATAACHALAM

-Chintagunta Subba Rao, M.A.

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(Venkataachala Maahaatmyam)

*Telugu Version*

**Paravastu Venkata Ramanuja Swamy**

*English Rendering*

**Chintagunta Subba Rao, M.A.**



**Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams  
Tirupati**

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*Editor-in-Chief*

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## PREAMBLE

Venkataachalam is a hill-top-prominent feature in the spiritual kingdom of Lord Venkateswara by virtue of his dwelling and settlement there. It is an *achalam* (non-moving mount) famed after his name. It has thus gained a legendary status as Venkataachalam.

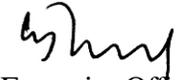
This book, dealing with the celebrity, sublimity and divinity of the sacred hill, is originally written in Telugu as “Venkatachala Mahatmyam” and it comprehends the whole journey of Srinivaasa from Vaikuntham to Venkataadri. The scriptural basis for the elaborate stories therein is owned by Varaahapuram and Bhavishyottara puranam.

The ancient story-teller, Soota narrates first the virtue of Venkataachalam, and then in order, the descending of Lord Vishnu to Kreedadri, his play activities in great Pushkarini, Padmasarovaram and other thirthas, his ant-hill residency, his golden marriage with Padmavati, his blessings showered on the king Tondaman, the building of divine temple and the order of holy celebrations including Brahmastavam.

The Telugu prose textual version of Sri Paravastu Venkata Ramanuja Swamy is rendered into simple-smooth-streaming English language by Sri Chintagunta Subba Rao, a learned writer.

I feel happy to prelude this modest but august work to the devotees of Sri Swamivaru.

In the Service of the Lord



Executive Officer

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

Tirupati.

Tirupati.

07-08-2013





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## THE GLORY OF VENKATAACHALAM

### Chapter I

Glory be to Lakshmi's Lord, a mine of bliss,  
A treasure-trove to all that ask,  
Srinivas who dwells on Venkaatachalam.

I worship the Lord of Venkataachalam  
Whose bosom by Lakshmi presided,  
Is Himself the tree of plenty to noble hearts.

#### 1. The holy saints request Suta to describe the divine virtue of Venkataachalam.

Holy saints like Shaunaka requested Suta to tell them about the Vaishnava pilgrimage which is, of all the places of Vishnu's manifestation, dear to Vishnu, where all prayers are granted, where Vishnu's story is a marvel, where to all the residents Hari is an eyewitness reality, where Vishnu's story is feast to hear, and which is the happiness of the eyes to see.

To them Suta said "O saints! I am glad that you ask me thus for this unique story. I am equally interested in narrating this story of Sri Mahaavishnu. Please, listen attentively to the tale of the divine virtue of Venkataachalam known as the story of Varaahakalpa, relating to Sessaachalam. This tale is replete with the play of Srihari, the different events associated with him, potent to bestow all prosperity and all supernatural powers. It is marvellous, auspicious, virtuous, pious, bestowing a long life and all splendid things.

#### 2. Lord Vishnu in the form of Sweta-varaaha lifts up and saves the Earth.

When the deluge flooded all the world, the Earth was submerged in the flood. Then Sri Mahaavishnu who lay on the banyan leaf

incarnated as Swetavaraaha and pulled up the Earth from the flood. He destroyed Hiranyaaksha who tried to hinder him and, re-installing the Earth, asked Lord Brahma to start creation afresh. And then Sri Mahaavishnu incarnated as Swetavaraaha, wished to stay here on Earth for some time to punish the wicked and save the good.

(Chapter 33, Varaahapuraanam)

### 3. Garuda brings Kreedachala from Vaikuntha.

Sri Hari thus desiring to stay here and, searching for an appropriate place for his stay, finally decided upon a holy place about five hundred miles to the south of river Gomati and about forty miles to the west of the western ocean, north of River Suvarnamukhi. There he asked Garuda to plant Narayanagiri, the mound on which Vishnu strolled enjoying himself and which he had carried on his shoulders from Vaikuntha. Garuda promptly obeyed him in the presence of the Lord himself and all his retinue. This Narayanagiri is immense, full of all precious stones, a golden precipice, glorious with divine trees and birds nesting thereon, filling the ears with sweet cooings, and creepers in bloom, and kinnaras singing, and many brooks. It is of the character of the Upanishads adored by liberated souls who could take any form they liked. It is about 250 miles in length and thirty miles in width. It is in form like sesha and serves Hari like Sesha too. It is the protector of all, very holy. It liberates the souls of those that see it. Vishnu incarnated as Swetavaraaha presided over it, resting in a vimanam luminous like a thousand suns, to the west of Swaami Pushkarini. Later Srinivaasa, holding sankam and chakram, manifested himself there in another vimanam to the south of Swami Pushkarini.

(Chapter 34, Varaahapuraanam)

### 4. The greatness of Swaami Pushkarini.

Then Brahma, Rudra, Indra and the other deities, saints, gandharvas, maruts and the like came and prayed Sri Mahaavishnu with salutations and hymns and begged him to withdraw his frightening form of Varaaha with large teeth, tusks and mouth, assumed to destroy Hiranyaaksha, and assume a gracious form, as he had retrieved the earth from the deluge for the sake of men and gods, and enable those men and gods incapable of meditation, women and the ignorant to see him and get boons granted. Then Vishnu assumed a gracious form with four hands, adorned with a lustrous moonlike face and precious ornaments, and accompanied by his consorts Laskhmi and Bhoodevi, professed to stay on Venkataadri, a nobler place than Vaikuntha, granting the needy men their wishes.

Garuda brought from Vaikuntha and installed on Earth Swaami Pushkarini along with Kreedaadri. It was very dear to Sridevi and Bhoodevi. It was filled with supernatural water, sweet - smelling and heart-winning. It was the originator of all rivers like Ganga. It could destroy sins like river Viraja. It nullifies the sins of drunkenness and theft of gold and the like. It grants to the bathers all worldly pleasures, heart's desires and godly powers even for meditating on it.

Hard-earned blessings are these three :

Bathing in Swaami Pushkarini,  
Serving a noble preceptor,  
And observance of Ekaadasi.

Hard-earned blessings are these three :

Birth in the human kind,  
Living near Venkataadri  
And bathing in Swaami Pushkarini.

(Chapter 35, Varaahapuraanam)

### 5. **Kreedadri's (Venkataadri's) several names.**

Kreedadri is known by different names for different reasons. Some of them are mentioned here together with the reasons. It is called Chintaamani because it grants all that is thought of. As it gives divine knowledge or jnaanam it is called Jnaanaadri. It contains all pilgrimages, so is it called Thirthaadri. Because of its many pushkarinis or ponds, it is Pushkaraadri. As Yama did penance on this hill, it got the name of Vrishaadri. It being all in gold, earned the name of Kanakaadri. In times of yore, a Brahmin named Narayana did penance here and prayed Vishnu that this hill be called in his name. So it is famed Naraayanaadri. It is known as Vaikunthaadri as it was brought down from Vaikuntham. As Vishnu took on the man-lion form (Narasimha) to destroy Hiranyakasipu and save Prahlada, on this hill, it is renowned Simhaachalam. Anjana Devi did penance here and gave birth to Hanuman to assist the gods. So this hill is called Anjanaadri. It is called Varaahagiri as it is the domain of Varaaha. The apeman called Nila always lives here and so is it called Nilagiri.

'Vem', the sound, in Sanskrit is considered as the seed of amritam or eternity and 'katam' means fortune, wealth. As this hill is a combination of both these things, it is called Venkataadri. It is called Srinivaasagiri as Lord Srinivaasa is the presiding deity here. It is replete with the play of the Lord and so is it named Aananda adri by the dwellers of Vaikuntha. As Sri is appended to it and as Srinivaasa resides here, it is called Srisailam as befits the truth.

(Chapter 36, Varaahapuraanam)

### 6. **The marvellous deeds of the Lord on Venkataadri.**

Some saints, having heard of the greatness of this hill, came to stay there and after a time they began to perform Yajnam. Then Sri

Mahaavishnu with Lakshmi appeared before them and accepted the sacrificial offerings. All the saints wondered and were pleased that their lives were fruitful.

At another time in times of old, while he was strolling on Venkataadri, Srihari saw an old brahmin whose body was all loose and slack, eye-sight weakened and legs bent, seated on a boulder stone. He lost his way, it appeared, and was troubled by hunger and thirst. The brahmin was shouting the name of his son Kaundinya. He was wailing, "Where have you gone, Kaundinya, leaving me, a hundred year old man!?" Then, Sri Hari who was in the guise of a youth, asked him, "There's no human being around here. Where's Kaundinya? Why do you shout thus?" To him the old man sorrowfully said, "Alas! If that is so, how can I reach my cottage far away? I rest helpless if no relation is around. Why does God keep this weakling still in this body here? Couldn't he carry me away?" Vishnu in the form of a youth, heard him and said in good humour as making fun of him, "O brahmin! Your body is oldened. Your eyes can no longer see. Do you still wish to live? Or, have you spoken the truth, wishing to die?" To him the brahmin said, "Truly, I do not wish to live any longer. But I have not performed my ordained duties of daily Jyotisthoma. And, thus, not paying my debt to the gods, how may I die?" Hearing his words, Sri Hari asked him to catch hold of his hand and led him to an auspicious waterfall and asked him to bathe in the water there. As the brahmin bathed and came out, he found himself changed into a young man of sixteen. Then Sri Hari told him, "Perform all your ordained duties as you have wished. I have given you this body fit for it and I give you wealth enough for the purpose." So saying He vanished as men and gods marveled. As the old man became young with a bath in the water fall, the place became known as Kumaaradhaara as the gods blessed it so.

(Chapter 37, Varaahapuraanam)

In times bygone, king Sankhana of Chandra dynasty ruled Sankasya. But he was defeated by his tributary princes and driven away from his hereditary kingdom along with his wives and ministers. This king in sorrow went southward and bathed in the sea at Setu. He then turned northward hence, reaching river Suvarnamukhi and bathing therein, moved northward thence and reaching the lotus-lake or padma-sarovaram, bathed therein too and after performing the ordained daily austerities, he slept in his sadness. The king who was sorrowing for the loss of his kingdom, then heard an unbodied voice to this effect, "O king! Do not sorrow but be brave and patient. There is a great hill called Venkataadri at about nine miles from here. There is Vishnu whose kindness is motiveless and spontaneous and who is the protector of his devotees that seek refuge in him. There is a lake beautified with lotuses in bloom, called Swaamipushkarini. On its western bank is found an attractive hill. Go there and on the banks of this lake do build a cottage and, living there, bathe in the lake-waters on all the three meridian-points of time (sandhya) and devoutly pray to Lord Hari, four-handed holder of sankha and chakra. Do so for six months, and you will gain your lost kingdom." The king hearing the voice, was free from sorrow and left for Venkataadri without delay and did as he was told by the unbodied voice. Then Vishnu, with the blinding light of innumerable suns blinding the quarters of the sky, rose up from amid the waters of the lake with his consorts Sridevi and Bhoodevi, in all his splendor as sankha-chakrahasta. Sankhana rose up and, saluting Srihari, begged him for kingdom and kingship. Then Srihari consolingly said to him, "Do not worry. You bathed in Swaamipushkarini with deep devotion. You get back your kingship by virtue of it. All those who bathe in Swaamipushkarini get sovereignty as fits the devotion of each one. Go, get your kingdom." And then Srihari vanished. Sankhana was pleased and set out with his wives to his own kingdom.

Then on the banks of River Godavari his subjects met him and said, "All the tributary kings left the kingdom, quarrelling among themselves. Therefore, do come and rule us as of old." So they led him to the kingdom and crowned him king again. This is how the lake became renowned as Swaami Pushkarini, not only because it was the king of holy places but also because it granted kingship to its devotees.

(Chapter 38, Varaahapuraanam)

There was a brahmin called Atmaaraam in mid-country. He was of very noble birth and honoured the gods and brahmins. He was an ardent devotee of Vishnu and had immense knowledge of the Vedas. He lost all his money soon after his father died. He lost his occupation and none cared for him. He pitied himself and gave thought to what could be done and where he could go. At last he decided to go to Kapileswara. He bathed in seventeen thirthams one after another and went to Venkataadri. By virtue of his bathing in these tirthams, he was purified of his sins and his conscience became clear. He sat on the precipice of Venkataadri immersed in sorrowful thought.

He saw in the nearby cave Yogi Sanatkumara who was like the god of fire and was always lost in meditation. He learned that the yogi was very great who knew the past, the present and the future. He decided to ask of him his fate and, nearing him, he saluted and said to him that he sought the Yogi's protection. He prayed the Yogi to pull him out of his misfortune. Yogi Santakumara meditated a while and replied to the brahmin thus: "You sinned in your past life. You are experiencing the fruit of it now. You prevented alms to the poor many times. You created many hardships to those that lived in happiness. You performed many prohibited things. You did not worship Vishnu who could remove all wants of his devotees. You

can still overcome your hardships. Laskhmi can set your sins at naught and grant good fortune. I shall initiate you to her vyuhamantram. Meditate and worship her.” So saying, he gave him the mantram and vanished.

Atmaaraam was very happy. He bathed and, chanting the mantram, went up to Venkataadri. There seeing the many holy places, he reached Swaami Pushkarini and bathed in those waters. He lost his sins in no time and he felt his body relieved of much burden. On the banks of this pushkarini, in a celestial car decorated with many gems, he saw Lord Venkateswara with Sridevi and Bhoodevi accompanying, and beautified with many precious ornaments and dressed in silken garments. Atmaaraam prostrated before him and stood in ecstasy. Srinivaasa who was all-knowing and compassionate, knowing his desire, said to him: "Do not fear. Your sins are pardoned. You are blessed with a long life and much wealth. Enjoy thy heart's fill." Atmaaraam again prostrated to him and as he rose up, Hari vanished. He was not sure that it was all real and not a dream. He got down Venkataadri and, building a house for himself in the vicinity, lived there a long life, enjoying all earthly pleasures.

(Chapter 39, Varaahapuraanam.)

### **7. The greatness of the seventeen sacred places like kapila thirtham.**

At the foot of Venkataadri is situated Kapila-thirtham. The tawny phallus located beside it was worshipped by sage Kapila in the underworld in ancient times. The same phallus rose up above the ground, breaking the earth loose. It stayed installed on earth in answer to the prayers of the gods. In front of it rose Kapila from the ground. Kapila-thirtham washes off all sins.

Beyond it is located Sakra-thirtham which is very holy. Sakra or Indra washed off herein his sin accruing from his intercourse with Ahalya. Still above is the sacred Vishwaksena-thirtham. Vishwaksena, son of Varuna, did unbearably hard penance near it and acquired Hari's form and the position of chief of army.

Beyond it still are found Panchayudha-thirthams, and beyond them is Agni-tirtham, and beyond it is Brahma-thirtham which can wash off the sin of killing a brahmin. Beyond it are seven thirthams called thirthams of the sages seven. All these thirthams progressively in order give each ten times the virtuous fruit of the previous one.

Once upon a time a brahmin set out on pilgrimage, desiring to bathe in all the holy waters of the world. Sri Mahaavishnu appeared to him in a dream and said, "Why do you take such pains as going round the world? There are seventeen thirthams on Venkataadri. If you bathe in them, you will gain righteousness. The brahmin gave up going on the proposed pilgrimage and bathed in the seventeen thirthams as ordained by the sacred books, and obtained, as instructed by Sri Mahaavishnu, the fruit of the pilgrimage. It is so renowned among the people.

On Venkataadri are located in a natural form all the sacred waters belonging to the three worlds. So by circumambulating Venkataadri one gets the piety of circumambulating the globe. It is said that Balaraama got the piety of pilgrimage on sight of Venkataachalam.

On the advice of Sri Krishna Dharmaja and the rest of the Paandavas stayed at Venkataadri and everyday for a year bathed in Paandava-thirtham. At the end of the year, it was heard by Dharmaraaja in a dream that, as they had lived there one year bathing in the thirtham there, they would be devoid of sins and be victorious

in the battle, gaining back their kingdom. Thenceforth the thirtham is popularly known as Paandava-thirtham.

(Chapter 40, Varaahapuraanam.)

### **8. Sri Rama's arrival at Venkataadri.**

Sri Rama, set out with his army of apemen from the mountain Rishyamuka on an expedition to kill Raavana, came near Sessaachalam. Then Anjaneya's mother Anjanaadevi came to Raama and said to him with salutation, "I and the hermits residing in this wood have been awaiting your arrival here. Please bestow your favour on us before you go." Then said Sri Raama, "I am now in a hurry and my visit to you delays my business. I shall make it a point to visit you all on my way back." Hanuman, listened to him and said humbly, "This army of apemen is tired. It has to rest a while at one place or another. This mountain is on our way. Moreover, this place is full of flower and fruit-trees and with many a rivulet. Here are herbs and edible root aplenty and honey on the trees. Think of it and speak your pleasure." Sriraama knew his mind, then, and agreed to rest on that hill.

Sri Rama, going up Venkataadri, accepted the veneration of the brahmin Nirloma who welcomed him together with Saumitri and who by Brahma was granted a boon to worship Raama before obtaining brahma-loka. So Raama sent him to brahma-loka and reached Akaasaganga. There he received the worship of Anjanaadevi in her hermitage and went to Swaami Pushkarini. There Sri Raama bathed in the sacred waters along with Saumitri, Sugreeva, Angada, Jaambavan and Neela, and built a cottage on its southwestern side and rested happily, taking fruit, root and honey for food. The apemen wandered all over the hill, eating tasteful fruit.

(chapter 41, Varaahapuraanam.)

### **9. The apes enter the Vaikuntha cave.**

There is a cave on the north-eastern side of Swaamipushkarini. Gaja, Gavaaksha, Gavaya, Sarabha, Gandhamaadana, Mainda, Dwivida, Sushena and other apemen entered this dark cave. Though it was totally dark inside the cave, these lion-hearted apemen went deep into it for a long distance. There they saw a light as of numberless suns. Therein they found a city which was beautiful with gardens, streams clear as crystal, towers inlaid with precious stones like the diamond, the ruby, lapis lazuli and the pearl, with many halls, palaces, streets and all heavenly grandeur. The citizens there were all four-handed, with their limbs bedaubed with sandal wood paste. They were all in bliss.

In the midst of this city they saw a multi-storeyed building, divine-looking and sun-bright, lifting its head tall like the precipice of mountain Meru. It had many fair diamond-studded pavilions. It echoed the strains of all musical instruments accompanying the dancers and singers of the horse-headed celestial clan of demi-gods called Kinnaras. In the hall they saw a divine presence seated with his right hand on the throne and right leg stretched out. He was beautiful like the fullmoon. He had four hands with sankha and chakra in two of them. He was clad in silken garments. He wore a lustrous diamond-studded crown and proper ornaments on every part of his body. He was attended by his consorts Sridevi and Bhoo devi. He had on his bosom the jewel called Kaustubha. His flag was fluttering and his parasol spread wide above his head. He had a garland around his neck, hanging down on his breast. Women on either side of the throne served him with fans of the tails of the animal called chamari. Seeing him, the apemen were out of their wits when a four-handed man lifted up his baton and threatened them. The frightened apemen ran out of the cave and informed of what they

had seen to the other apemen. They thought that it was Raavana who was in disguise. They searched for this cave. But they could not find it again. They kept quiet that it was but their fancy. The following day Sri Raama went to Lanka with his followers, killed Raavana and, with Sita, reached Ayodhya and got crowned king to the happiness of all. It was the result of the divine virtue of Swaamipushkarini.

#### **10. The efficacy of the Vaikuntha cave.**

The Vaikuntha cave is hard to know even for saints and yogis. It is hard to know even for the gods as it is surrounded by the Lord's maaya. The apemen were shown Vaikuntha itself by the grace of God. The blissful men holding sankham and chakram in their hands, whom the apemen had seen, were nitya-muktas or the liberated souls. They experience beatitude at all times. They walk with God in any form they like. They do service to God at all times. They are associated with Venkataadri. When the place is flooded with pilgrims, they stay in the cave. As the apemen saw Vaikuntham in this cave, it has come to be known as Vaikuntha-cave.

#### **11. The godly saints harassed by demons like Raavana, come searching for Lord Mahaavishnu.**

Once in the bygone times sages like Jaabaali, Kasyapa, Gautama, Agastya, Vaamadeva and Sata ananda, and yogis like Sanaka and gods like Indra, all joined together in a mission to Vishnu: They wished to appraise Vishnu of the hardships created by demons like Raavana, descendents of Hiranya-kasipu, and they made their way north of the milky sea (Ksheera-saagaram) and prayed to the Lord.

After a time a dweller of Vaikuntha with sankham, chakram and gada in hands, appeared and told them that Vishnu was elsewhere

on earth, strolling on a mountain. He said to them, "He is not here now. Go there to see him."

Discussing why Vishnu, leaving the milky seas, was treading the earth, they set out for Earth. On the way they saw Naarada who was bearing the vertical vaishnava mark on his forehead and who was playing on his crystalline veena, the famed Mahati. Naarada was returning from Vaikuntham. Then the sages said to him, "O holy sage! where from are you? You know the three worlds and all that is happening there. Please tell us where Vishnu is now. Demons like Raavana are molesting men, sages, and yogis. Only Vishnu has the power to stop them, and none else has. We wish to take asylum in him. Please show us the way." To them Naarada made reply, "I have gone to Vaikuntham to see him. There I am told that Vishnu was strolling on some hill with Lakshmi on earth. So am I returning. Let us go to the world of Brahma who knows all. He can tell us where Naarayana is." So They all together went to Brahma. They saw there the four-handed, four-headed Brahma who was like the personification of the Vedas, and bright like Agni, the god of fire, and who was attended by Gayatri, Savitri, Saraswatri, and the several clans of demigods like kinnara, gandharva and siddha and all the guardian deities of the eight quarters of the world. They saw him seated on the lotus and prostrated before him. Brahma's queries of their prosperity were answered thus by them: "Lord! By your grace we prosper well. But demon Raavana has become a menace to the sages devoted to their ordained code of conduct. They tolerate him for fear of losing their powers hard earned by penance. But now he is beyond all tolerance. Only Vishnu, an adept in contriving strategies to success, can destroy him. We are in quest of him but we could not find him anywhere in the three worlds. So is your lordship our only assylum now. Save us!" So they prayed for Brahma's help.

(Chapter 43, Varaahapuraanam.)

## **12. The godly saints along with four-faced Brahma go to Venkataadri.**

Lord Brahma then narrated to them the story of Raavana: “In olden days Raavana did great penance. By that he earned the blessing that he would not be killed by a non-human being. He was destined to die in the hands of a man. So only Vishnu can tackle the problem. He is now on Venkataadri on earth. We ought to pray to him for the destruction of the demons. Let us go without delay to find him out. I shall accompany you. But it is not easy to find Vishnu. On the slopes of hills, in rivers, in streams and caves we have to search for him. Venkataadri is very dear to him. In the guise of bird or animal he could be enjoying himself in the company of Lakshmi. He loves going round a hill. So we go round the hill, searching for him. King Dasaratha of ikshwaaku dynasty would come to this hill desirous of sons and do great penance. Vishnu appears to him in response to this penance.” So said Brahma and they reached Seshasailam. There they rested a while and took sacred baths in rivers, holy waters, lakes and wells situated on hill-tops and in woods. They worshipped Srinivaasa and made offerings of nectarine fruit. But they could not see there the Lord, nor his temple nor the temple-dome.

## **13. Desirous of sons Dasaratha comes to Venkataadri.**

At this time the righteous king Dasaratha was ruling Ayodhya. He was not blessed with sons for long years. He was worried that he had no son to continue his dynasty and said to his preceptor Vashistha who was a great sage, “It is my misfortune that I could not beget a son even though I have a priest like you to guide me. Please advise me how I may get rid of my past sins and beget a son. Vasishttha, on hearing him, meditated a while and replied to him thus: “O king! You have no sins haunting you who are virtuous. But it

seems that there is some sin preventing you from becoming father of a son. To appease this sin and beget a son, do worship Sri Venkatesa.” And Dasaratha asked again, “Where is Venkatesa now? How can I get to see him?” and Vasishttha replied, “O king! there is Sri Venkataadri sixteen hundred miles south of Bhaagirathi and eight miles north of Suvarnamukhi. This is a divine hill. It prospers with many holy pilgrimage places and sacred water-spots. To Naarayana and the dwellers of Vaikuntha this hill is very dear. On this hill strolls every day Srinivaasa with Sridevi. Many sages are performing sacrificial worship there. The gods and yogis are doing penance there. Brahma is also doing penance there on that hill for the good of the worlds. Vishnu incarnates to him. Your desire also will be fulfilled there.” Hearing his words, Dasaratha was happy and set out for Venkataadri with Vasishttha. He bathed in all the holy waters there, got purified body and soul, and got his sins washed off. He stayed there for a time, awaiting the boon for a son.

(Chapter 44, Varahapuramam)

## **14. Dasaratha sees the meditating saints at Swaami Pushkarini.**

One day Dasartha visited Swaamipushkarini while wandering on Venkataadri in the company of Vasishttha. He was very much gladdened on sight of the lake filled with lotuses and fish. He saw many sages doing penance on its banks. They were seated, some in veeraasanam, some in padmaasanam, some in bhadraasanam, some in siddhaasanam and some in swastikaasanam. Some others ate leaf and yet others only air for their sustenance. Some were preoccupied in practicing kumbhaka, rechaka or puraka. Some were performing homam. And some were worshipping Vishnu. Some others worshipped Srinivaasa. Some chanted mantras like taaraka.

In the midst of these sages was seen seated on tiger-skin Brahma with four faces meditating on Srinivaasa. Dasaratha wondered at the sight and stood saluting them.

(Chapter 45, Varaahapuraanam)

### 15. The incarnation of the Lord.

Then Vasistha said to king Dasaratha, “O king! Here Brahma is doing inordinate penance along with the sages. So Sri Mahaavishnu will surely incarnate here very soon. Bathe in this pushkarini and piously meditate.” Then Dasaratha said, “I shall do so, Please initiate me to a mantram.” Then Vasistha initiated with the mantram Venkatesa-ashtaakshari and Dasaratha devoutly chanted the mantram.

After a while a loud noise was heard there. While all looked on with wonder there appeared such blinding light as of unnumbered suns. All closed their eyes, unable to see the light. It appeared that the whole world was aflame with its brightness. In the midst of the light a vimaanam was seen. It was full of premises with towers, golden entrances, and thresholds studded with sapphires and emeralds, and cupolas with golden pots, and halls and plains decorated with garlands of pearl and flower. There were in it a hall of a thousand pillar with mounts like cars, horses and elephants. There were tumultuous sounds of percussion instruments like bheri, mridangam, pataham, muraja and dhakka. Youthful and handsome divine women danced. It was a treat to see. Sages like Sanaka, rishis like Agastya stood looking at it with wide-eyed wonder and out of their wits. Even birds and animals forgot to move. Then Brahma in ecstasy said to the sages: "This Vimaanam is divine, miraculons, and looks like the abode of Vishnu." Then he entered it and with him the rest of the sages.

(Chapter 46, Varaahapuraanam)

### 16. Brahma and the rest see Srinivaasa.

Brahma, the gods, sages and Dasaratha saluting the gatekeepers like Chanda and Prachanda and passing through seven gates, gained the presence of the God of gods and were all delighted. There was then the sound of the drums of the gods and profuse rain of flowers in that vimaanam which was very wide and served by siddhas and chaaranas. Hearing it, the gods that ruled the quarters of the world, the presiding deities of the planets, the rudras and clans of naga, yaksha and the like came there to see Achyuta. On the right side of the Lord, seated in a lotus was Padmaavathi Devi whose body was golden-hued, whose face was like the full moon of the autumn season, whose curly hair was like a train of bumble bees, whose graceful smile was like the glow of a full-blown lotus, and who was clothed in bright safflower red like the rising sun, and who was adorned with crown, necklaces, armlets and bracelets, and who held a blue lotus in her left hand while she let her right hand gracefully hanging, and was looking every now and then at the Lord who wore the insignia of Srivatsam. On the left side of the Lord was Bhoodevi seated on a lotus. She was black like the holy basil, adorned with all ornaments, her face a blossomed lotus, her looks amorous like the bird chakora and her smile a moonlight. She held a blue lotus in her right hand and looked at the Lord again and again. They saw Lord Narayana with a gem –studded crown. His face was marked with a bewitching smile. His looks were full of kindness. On both of his ear-lobes were bright golden ear-rings and tight around his neck was a golden necklace. He wore a golden brahmasutram. On his four hands adorned with armlets and bracelets he wore sudarsana-chakram emitting flames from its thousand teeth and paanchajanyam, the moon-bright conch, stancing charity. On his waist-belt he wore a sheathed sword. He was dressed in silks. He

wore anklets that jingled like swans. He was seated on a lotus and looked like a young prince of playful twenty-five, a personification of kindness and charity. He was the one without a beginning and without an end, the purushottama. All eyes were ablaze with the ecstasy of seeing the rare divine vision of the Lord. And sages like Agastya, and yogis like Sanaka, and king Dasaratha praised the Lord and sang hymns to him.

(Chapters 47, 48Varaahapuranam)

### **17. Brahma and the others speak to Lord Vishnu about the misdeeds of Raavana.**

Srinivaasa was pleased with their prayers and asked Brahma what particular purpose brought them there. Brahma answered, “O Lord! Raavana, son of Visraavas, made strenuous penance and got the boon that he shall not die in the hands of non-humans like the gods and the demons. On the strength of this he teases the world beyond forbearance. Some of his followers are creating hardships to sages in the vicinity of Srisailam. Refuge is sought of you for protection from them. Unable to find you in Vaikuntha and on the milky seas, we are here looking for you. If you stroll on this hill that it is more beautiful than chaitra-ratham, who will look after us? Save us!” To him the Lord said, “O Brahma! Don’t be aggrieved. I will protect you. In a short time I shall destroy Raavana with all his wicked followers.” The Lord then turned to sage Agastya and spoke, “O sage! What brings you here?” and Agastya said, “I have come just to see you, O Lord! That is my chief purpose. Some demons born in the neighbourhood of Srisailam and empowered by boons, have become a menace to all living things. It is not just that this suffering goes on in your domain. Your toleration of their misdeeds is not just. You should be kind to remove this cause of suffering and

fear.” Then the Lord re-assuringly said, “Do not fear. I shall destroy the wicked and give health, wealth, progeny and long life to all the good under my care.” Then Srinivaasa asked of Sanaka and others what they had to say. They replied, “Lord! We want nothing. What purpose is served by your staying here unseen by any? We pray that you be seen here by all.” The Lord promised to be as they wished and asked Indra what made him come searching for him. He prayed to him, “Govinda! We roam about for fear of Raavana. Kill him to save us.” Then Srinivaasa said, “Do not be frightened. I shall shortly kill him.” And with a smile asked Sankara what he would and Sankara said, “Venkateswara! I should stay with you where you are.” And Lord Venkateswara said, “I shall stay here till the end of this Kalpa. You may also stay here in the north-east quarter of this hill, nearby.” Then he looked at the king of Kosala, Dasartha, and enquired of him what he would have and Dasartha prayed to him, “Lord! I have by your grace enjoyed all happiness of kingship and earned righteousness by doing benevolent deeds, but I have not had the good fortune of being a father. It is said that the childless man does not have the joys of divine virtuous worlds after death. So I pray, bestow on me the joys of a father.” To him said Sri Venkateswara, “O king! You had greatly sinned in your earlier birth. So are you not blessed with a son. How can I help you?” and Dasartha said with devotion, “O Lord! It should be wonder of wonders if I am still not free from accumulated sins even after obtaining your darshan. On obtaining the graceful look of the Lord, all deeds are severed from their fruit, says the veda. Could it be false? How could darkness linger about when the sun rises?” Lord Srinivaasa was well pleased with his faith and devotion and said, “O king! I am gladdened by your faith. You will beget four valorous and heroic sons. Go to Ayodhya and perform sacrificial offerings.”

Dasaratha was in bliss to hear him and saluted him, circumambulating, and taking leave of him, with friends and relatives made way to Ayodhya.

(Chapter 49, Varaahapuraanam.)

### **18. The Lord in response to Brahma's prayer accepts to stay on Venkataadri.**

After all had left the place, Brahma Stayed back and did not leave. Seeing him, Srinivaasa said, "O Brahma! Why do you stay here still? Is it not getting late? What is your wish? I shall grant it." Then Brahma prayed to him, saying, "O Venkatesa! If you wish to grant it, I shall speak out. It does not go to my heart, your being here unseen by any. In this Kaliyuga all people are not capable of doing penance to see you. In this Kaliyuga people do not perform also their ordained duties. Almost all are weak, sick, lustful, beastly and sinful. If you do not take care of them, they will be condemned to hell. One Hell cannot accommodate them but uncountable others will have to be created. Therefore be kind to them. Let them see you in the physical form that you appear before all, you should stay here. This is my wish." Venkatesa, hearing him, was gladdened by Brahma's consideration for all and said, "O Brahma! I am happy that you care for all. As you wish I shall stay here for all to see in physical form as I am seen now, till the end of this Kalpam. Sridevi and Bhoodevi also will stay with me and grant the desires of the devotees. The sacred scarificial offerings and penances done here bear good fruit without delay. This pushkarini is the Lord of all pushkarinis and thus earns its name of Swaami pushkarini. All the sacred rivers like the Ganga originate in this pushkarini. The sins of those who bathe herein, are totally washed off and their wishes are fulfilled. I shall grant all the wishes of those that visit the place with

faith in me and bathe in these waters. So may all people be without fear." Brahma was happy and again said, "Lord! You are kind enough to grant my wish. I am grateful. But wicked demons molest people in these parts of the land. Destroy them and save the people." Then the Lord of Venkataachalam destroyed the demonly with kith and kin by wielding his weapon Sudarshanam.

### **19. The Lord agrees for Brahmotsavam.**

Brahma still stood there and did not go to his world. Sri Venkateswara asked him again what more he wanted, and to him Brahma said, "O Lord! I have yet another wish. I desire to celebrate your glory here, erecting your ensign or dhvajam. I pray that I may kindly be allowed to do my heart's pleasure." The Lord nodding assent to his wish, Brahma began making preparations for the celebration.

He invited sages like Vikhanasa and having decided to hold the celebrations, first erecting the Lord's ensign or dhvajam, in the month of Kanya, he sent out invitations to all men and gods of all quarters of the world. People from all countries came and climbed up Venkataadri, thinking that Srinivaasa who remains unseen even to the yogis, had been kind to all in accepting the celebration of Brahmotsavam when it would be highly purifactory to see the Lord. On the way, people supplied the pilgrims food and water, transport conveniences, umbrellas, footwear and clothes, earning the merit of righteousness by that means.

Brahma invited Viswakarma to build boarding and lodging houses especially for the pilgrims of Brahmotsavam. He caused erection of cities with royal roads all around Venkataadri. Around the abode of Venkateswara, roads were laid, and a city equalling in grandeur the city of the demigods gandharvas. During the celebration

of Brahmotsavam gandharvas, kinnaras and apsaras came and filled the city with divine dance and music.

(Chapter 50, Varaahapuraanam)

### **20. The splendour of the celebration of Lord Venkateswara.**

Brahma, during the celebrations, offered Venkatesa rice mixed with ghee, boiled dal and jaggery called mudgaannam (or rice with green gram), maashaannam, tilaannam, krisaraannam, mareechyannam, cooked wheat, shalyannam, jaggery-rice, milk-porridge and the like food items, sauces, and different kinds of fruit. He made it convenient for the men and gods that came to watch the celebrations, to see the Lord by making him seated on ucchaishravas the divine horse, airavata the divine elephant, ananta the divine serpent, and garuda the divine bird and by taking him strolling with royal ensigns like the parasol and chaamaram through the streets of the city. Every day musicians, vedic scholars and gods worshipped him. Sages performed sacrificial worship in the halls meant for the purpose. Filled pots called purna-kumbhas were installed. Vaikhanasa made offerings to all the quarters of the world. The pilgrims gave alms and charities, thinking that it would bring them punyam or merits of virtue to do so. Many people made their residences there. One day during the celebrations Srinivaasa along with Sridevi and Bhoodevi was seated on a car studded with diamonds and attended by siddhas and gandharvas and worshipped by gods like Brahma, went around the royal ways and sat in his royal court-hall.

### **21. The good fruit of the celebration of Venkateswara's Brahmotsavam.**

Then Srinivaasa addressed these words to Brahma: I am very much pleased with your devotion and this celebration that is got up here and now. If in the same manner either gods or Yogis or sages

or humans performed the celebration every year in the month of kanya, they enjoy fulfillment of all their desires and attain Brahmlokam. And all those who set out to participate in this celebration, merit the bliss of Vaikuntha by as many steps as they progress on their journey. I shall be kind to those who supply the pilgrims with water and I grant plentifulness of food for seven generations for all those who supply food in charity to the needy pilgrims during these celebrations, and sanction them freedom from all hardships. I shall grant earthly pleasures and Vaikuntham to those who give away the kind of charities that are ordained by the holy books. Those who build cities around this hill, shall enjoy final beatitude. Those who give land or horse in charity, come to live in my abode. Those who give education to those who reside here, will obtain renown in all three worlds.

(Chapter 51, Varaahapuraanam)

### **22. The good fruit of planting flower-gardens and flower-worship.**

Venkateswara continued: "O gods! Listen. Those who rear on Venkataadri gardens of holy basil, flower-gardens and pleasure parks and worship me with the holy basil leaves and flowers, are blessed to enjoy worldly and other-worldly pleasures for long years. Their lineage prospers. Whoever gives me an offering of sauced food every day, obtains the worlds of the virtuous. They reap all riches. Those who offer me ornaments studded with gems, will be enlightened, long-living, affluent and blessed with children. Whoever offers every day holy basil and flowers for my worship, I shall stay in his house along with Lakshmi for ever. Whoever comes to me gets all desires fulfilled. This is my promise. Of the residents of this place and wayfarers, whoever climbs up Venkataadri, bathes in Swaamipushkarini and worships me, shall get all desires fulfilled"

So declaring, Srinivaasa along with Sridevi and Bhoodevi withdrew into his residential palace. Brahma and the gods, sages and prophets, all were delighted and shouted glory to the Lord'. Brahma along with the prophets completed the procedure of the celebrations in accordance with the vedic proclamation.

### **23. The purificatory bath after the celebration.**

Brahma gave the pious, sin-destroying avabritha, the purifactory bath, to Lord Venkatesa during the reign of the 22<sup>nd</sup> asterism Sraavana or Aquila in Swaamipushkarini. The gods, yogis, sages, kings and all people bathed in the pushakarini.

After the bath, yogi Sanaka said, "Listen, O men! the gathered sins of previous births of all those who bathe on this occasion of avabritha of the Lord who is himself the person of all pilgrimages and holy waters, will all be washed off in no time." Vishnu and Maheswara accepted and approved the truth of it. All the gods praised the great power of Swaami Pushkarini, worshipped Lord Venkatesa with flowers and prostrated in salutation.

Venkateswara, pleased with the celebration got up by Brahma, said, "Brahma! I am much pleased. Ask what you would." To him Brahma replied, "O Lord! I desire nothing more than your kindness. My wish is that you should stay here for ever granting the wishes of all people." Vishnu then said, "Be it so!" So pleasing all, he sent them back, Brahma, Indra and the other gods, yogis, sages and kings, each to his abode.

(Chapter 52, Varaahapuraanam)

### **24. The greatness of Phalguni-thirtham.**

Sanaka and some other yogis made paapanaasana thirtham and the wood nearby their abode. The seven rishis built hermitages for themselves north-east to it on the banks of phalguni-thirtham.

Lakshmi Devi, pleased with Arundhati's penance incarnated on the banks of this thirtham and bestowed boons on Arundhatidevi. She blessed the thirtham with the name of phalguni-thirtham on her request. Mother Lakshmi stays with those who bathe in these holy waters on the fullmoon day with the star or asterism phalguni in the month of phaalgunam and blesses them with fulfillment of all their desires. Some gods sat in a conclave and decided to stay there for ever as Lord Venkateswara had made it his abode.

### **25. The greatness of Jaabaali-thirtham.**

Far west to the lake Jabali lived in his hermitage. Agastya raised a pleasure park and stayed on Venkataadri with his disciples for a long time, worshipping Venkateswara with different kinds of flower. Sri Venkateswara, well pleased with the celebrations got up and worship offered during the yugas of Krita, Treta and Dwapara, stayed there with Sridevi and Bhoodevi, granting the desires of devotees.

(Chapter 53, Varaahapuraanam)

### **26. The divine sport of Venkateswara in Kaliyuga.**

The divine ways of Venakteswara during the ages of Krita, Treta, and Dwapara were described. Now his sportive mien in the age of Kali maintains silence. Men see him only as an idol fit for worship. The divine abode descended from Vaikuntha remains invisible. Man in the age of Kali builds another for him. All men believe that he is an idol. He shall own all his divine powers of making and marring but his power of speech. In particular during the age of kali his charity is more than ever in witness. Excepting that his temple is artificial, his darshan burns away all sins. It is only rarely that Venkateswara donns a visible form. This way Venkateswara with Lakshmi glories in the age of kali. He will be manifest to those who

devoutly give charity, though meager, and to those who worship him even casually. He will be pleased enough to grant the wishes of any for merely undertaking a pilgrimage to Venkataadri. Though he is divine, he will be wandering like an earthly being. He will be enjoying human pleasures heartily. Men celebrate his glory through a number of ceremonial festivities.

In the age of kali, even the gods come down to worship the Lord and, having bathed in Swaamipushkarini, they make offerings to the Lord. Unseen by the human eye, they eat the food that has been offered to the Lord. They will be worshipping him sincerely. They even regret that they have not been born humans. They envy the humans that their desires are easily blessed by the Lord to fruition.

In the age of kali, Venkateswara's reputation spreads unusually. All creeds and castes of people become devoted to Venkateswara who fulfills their wishes almost effortlessly. They take part in the celebration of the Lord's glory, not only Indians but foreigners also gather in large numbers and all get their desires fulfilled and go home in full satisfaction.

Though it is an unearthly hill, Venkataadri looks like a natural, earthly hill.

Even people belonging to other religions become devotees of the Lord. The undevoted also turn into devotees on the inspiration drawn from the devotees. Concrete results are bestowed on those who devoutly wish for them. Thus in kaliyuga Venkateswara glories. Therefore devotion to Venkateswara is like an ornament. To those who are hit by the curses of kali there is no other refuge than Lord Venkateswara.

There is no God on earth like Venkateswara;  
There is no thirtham like Swaamipushkarini.

In the age of kali, Venkateswara earns wealth. Though he is self-sufficient, he behaves in this fashion for the world's sake. He amuses himself saying that he would grant wishes only for proper prices.

(Chapter 58, Varaahapuraanam)

### **27. The greatness of Sanaka sanandana thirtham.**

North of paapanaasanam at about four miles, there is Sanakas anandana-thirtham which washes off sins. On the twelfth day of the light half of the month of maargaseersha, at sunrise, having bathed in Swaamipushkarini, if one bathes in Sanakasanandana-thirtham on the following day and chants Venkateswara's eight-lettered mantram, and practices yoga, the result desired would be immediate.

### **28. The greatness of Kaayarasaayana thirtham.**

Near Sanaka sanandana-thirtham is situated Kaayarasaayana-thirtham. Its water, swallowed, purifies the body. This thirtham is concealed by a rock. Great yogis see it.

(Chapter 60, Varaahapuraanam)

This virtuous, pious and noble maahaatmyam

Gives longevity of life and fulfillment of all wishes

To those who devoutly read or hear or write it.

(Chapter 61, Varaahapuraanam)

### **The End of Chapter I**

## Chapter II

### 1. The greatness of Venkataadri.

The gods, prophets and yogis call this Parmaatmaalayam. In the Kritayuga it was called Anjanaadri; in Tretaayuga, Naarayanadri; in Dwaapryuga, Simhaadri; and in Kaliyuga, Venkataadri. A person thousands of miles away or even a foreigner, if he turns his face towards Venkataadri and offers salutations with devotion, he will be rid of his sins and attains the world of Vishnu.

### 2. The greatness of Kumaradhaaraa-thirtham.

Kumaradhaaraa-thirtham is highly sanctifying on the fullmoon day with the asterism magha in the month of maagha. A bath in this thirtham on the midday of this auspicious day, shall bring all the purifying piety of all thirthams like Ganga. He who gives food to the poor on the banks of this thirtham also earns the same good fruit.

### 3. The greatness of Tumburu-thirtham.

One bathing in Tumburu-thirtham on the full-moon day with asterism Uttaraphalguni in the month of phaalgun, shall have no more birth and death.

### 4. The greatness of Aakaasa-ganga.

One who bathes in Akaashaganga at sunrise on the fullmoon day with the asterism chitta in the month of chaitram, shall be liberated.

### 5. The greatness of Paandava-thirtham.

One who bathes in Paandava-thirtham on the twelfth day, it being a Sunday, of the month of Vaishaakh, shall enjoy earthly pleasures as well as otherworldly pleasures.

### 6. The greatness of Paapanaasana-thirtham.

One who bathes in Paapanashana-thirtham on the seventh day, it being a Sunday, with the asterism of either pushyami or hasta, shall be liberated from the accumulated sins of hundred million lives.

### 7. The greatness of Deva-thirtham.

On the north-western side of Srinivaasa's temple, in the hill-cave, devathirtham is situated. Either on a Thursday with the asterism pushyami or on a Monday with the asterism Shraavana, or at the auspicious time of the seventeenth of astrological yogas called vyatipaata, the sins committed knowingly or unknowingly will be washed off by bathing in this holy waters, piety increases, longevity is attained, and progeny will prosper. Heaven, after death, will be attained. Those who feed the poor on this day shall obtain the piety of life-long charity of food.

(chapter 1, Varaahapuraanam)

### 8. The story of the birth of Aakaasaraja.

Long after the demise of king Vikramaarka, Mitraverma of the lunar-dynasty ruled his kingdom called Narayanapuram in the area called Tundeera. In his reign the earth was full of all kinds of food grain. All the people were upright and were not troubled by either too much of rain or absence of rain or locusts or rats or flies and mosquitos or foreign invasion. He had for wife a woman born of the pandya dynasty. They had a son by name Aakaasha. A woman born of the shaka dynasty, called dharani, was his wife. Mitraverma crowned his son king and went to the wood near Venkataadri for penance in his old age.

### 9. The story of the birth of Padmaavati.

Akaasharaja was ploughing land with a golden plough on the banks of Aarani, for the purpose of performing a yajnam or a

sacrificial worship, when he found a baby girl on a bed of lotus rising from beneath the earth. The king was amazed and, gladly accepting the girl, declared to his ministers that she was his daughter. Then an unbodied voice echoed, “O king! She is verily your daughter. Bring her up.” Aakaasharaja went to his palace and said to Dharanidevi, “God-given and earth-born is this female child. See. She will be daughter to us who are childless.” He handed over the baby to Dharanidevi. As she was born in a lotus, she was named Padmini.

#### **10. The story of Vasudana’s birth.**

Dharanidevi, wife of Aakaasharaja, became pregnant after she had accepted Padmaavati : Time went by and in the tenth month of her pregnancy, at an auspicious time when the planet sun was in the Zodiac sign of Aries, she gave birth to a son. Then the wind blew pleasantly gentle. On the twelfth day Jaatakarma was performed and the child was named Vasudaasa. The boy grew up like the moon in the light half of the month. Vasudaasa learned archery from his father, after his initiation into sacred duties called upanayanam. So the king became invincible by virtue of his having a valorous son.

(Chapter 3, Varaahapuraanam)

#### **11. Naarada reads Padmaavati’s palm.**

One day while Padmaavati was strolling in the garden along with her friends Naarada who came that way by chance saw her. Naarada was taken aback by her graceful beauty and asked her whose daughter she was. He also asked her to show him her palm. To him Padmaavati said, “I am daughter to Akaasharaja. Read my life from my palm” and showed him her palm. Looking into her palm, Naarada said, “You are exactly like Lakshmi, fit to be wife of

Vishnu. The lord of the three worlds will be your husband.” He received her worshipful reverence and vanished.

#### **12. Padmaavati with playmates goes to the garden.**

The playmates of Padmaavati made this request to her: “The garden is full of flowers and heart-winning. Let us go to the garden”. They went to the garden and while they were gathering flowers, they saw a royal elephant with two fair and clean tusks, ichor oozing from its cheeks, in the company of a number of female elephants, spitting out water from his trunk. They were terrified by the sight and hid themselves behind a huge tree.

#### **13. Srinivaasa goes hunting to the garden.**

At this juncture was seen a man on a white horse came that way very fastly in quest of an animal. He had wide eyes of lotus lustre, ear-rings studded with rubies, diamond bracelets, shoulder-plates, and glowing golden sacred thread (yajnopaveetam). He was dressed in fine linen. His complexion was an attractive bright black. His structure was a snare to women. At the sight of this man the elephant bent its head low, saluting, and, lifting its trunk high up, it trumpeted loud and withdrew into the woods.

Then the horseman neared the girls and said, “Girls! Has any animal come this way? Have you seen any? Please tell me.” The girls said to him, “We have not seen any animal. Why have you entered our garden with bow and arrow? All the animals here are not to be hunted. Leave this garden quickly. It belongs to king Aakaasha. He got down from his horse at this and asked, “Who are you? Who is this handsome young woman? Tell me this and I shall instantly leave this place and go to my hill.” Prompted by Padmaavati, her playmate replied, “She is Padmaavati, born of earth and daughter

of Aakaasharaja. She is our leader. Who are you? Where do you live? What is your clan? And why have you come here? Kindly let us know." He replied with a smile, "they say I belong to the Sun dynasty. I am known by several names among men. For my complexion and name, I am Krishna called. My chakram is frightful to the ungodly, gods and demons. My foes lose hearts on hearing the sound of my conch. Even the gods do not have a bow equal to mine. I am resident of Venkataadri, called Veerapati. From this hill, with my followers, I have come ahunting into this garden. But the animal whom I chased ran at wind-speed and disappeared. I have come here looking for it. I am in love with this girl. May I get her?" Hearing this, the girls were angry and said, "go back to your place before king Aakaashraja sees you and takes you prisoner." Thus frightened, he mounted his horse and left with his train for his native hill.

(Chapter4, Varaahapuraanam)

#### **14. The reasons for Srinivaasa marrying Padmaavati.**

Having come home to his temple with his followers and asking them to rest a while, Srinivaasa entered pearl-house and lay on the cot studded with diamonds and lost himself in thoughts of Padmaavati. In the mean while, Srinivaasa's friend Vakulamaalika went to him with her playmates, carrying different kinds of cooked rice, fried sweet cakes, and condiments. Paying him salutations, she saw that he lay with closed eyes. She prayed to him, "O God of gods, noblest of all! Please, get up! We have brought rice cooked with milk and the like other items. Get up and accept them." Again she asked him, "Why are you lying like one in deep sorrow. You are the one who should remove the sorrows of all. What have you seen during your hunting expedition? Your state now is like the state of one who is in love. Did you see any woman of the gods, or the

magas, or the humans? May not you confide the matter in me, your friend?" Then Srinivaasa took heavy breath and kept quiet. Vakulamaalika again said to him, "Who is this girl who could attract your attention?" Then Srinivas said, "My friend! Listen! I shall tell you."

In olden days, in Tretayuga, when I killed Raavana, a woman called Vedavati helped Lakshmi. Lakshmi was born of the Earth in the kingdom of king Janaka and was called Sita. When I went chasing Maaricha, my brother Lakshmana followed me, provoked by Sita. Raavana came in disguise as a beggar of alms to steal Sita from our residence. Agni learned Raavana's mind, and took away Sita to the underworld Paataala, left her under care of Swaaha, and brought Vedavati who was earlier touched by Raavana and burnt herself and was now reborn, to our cottage and left her there in the appearance of Sita. She was then stolen by Raavana, kept in Lanka, and again after the death of Raavana, entered fire (Agni). Then, Agni, the god of Fire brought Jaanaki to me from swaaha and said to me that as Vedavati was Sita's benefactor by virtue of her being prisoner in Lanka in the place of Sita, do wed her and give her happiness on par with Lakshmi. "Hearing his words, Sita said, "Vedavati is dear to me. She is divinely pious. You wed her and give her happiness." Then I Said, "I shall do so, my dear! But this shall happen only in the twenty-eighth Kaliyuga. Till then she will be in Brahmlokam, worshipped by the gods. Then she will be born on earth as the daughter of Akaasharaja. Vedavati who was so blessed by me and Lakshmi, now is born from the earth at Naaraayanapuram. While she and her friends gathered flowers, she was seen by me who went there ahunting. I cannot describe her form and grace of beauty. I cannot live unless I own her. Please go, see her and tell me if she will not be my suitable bride."

Vakulamaalika heard him and said, "right now go I to see her." And going to Naaraayanapuram, at the hermitage of Agastya, on the way, she saw the playmates of Padmaavati.

(Chapter 5, Varaahapuraanam)

### **15. The playmates of Padmaavati narrate to Vakulamaalika the story of Padmaavati.**

Then Vakulamaalika asked them, "Who are you? Where have you come from? On what business are you here?", and they replied, "We are employed in the innermost harem of king Aakaasaraaja. We are the playmates of his daughter Padmaavati. We went to the garden where, while we were collecting flowers, we saw a divine person who was black like a sapphire, had a smiling face, muscular large shoulders, and wore silken colthes, a golden crown and necklaces and shoulder-plates. Padmaavati was surprised by his mien and encouraged her followers to see him. While we were looking at him in amazement, he vanished. Our playmate swooned. We brought her to the palace and attended on her.

After her recovery, king Aakaasaraaja sent for the astrologer and asked him to read her planetary motions and their results. The astrologer said, "O king! Right now all the planets are favourable to her. Only the day's planet is a little adverse. But very soon she will get well. A noble man has seen your daughter. She has swooned on seeing him. But she will finally reach him. A woman sent by him will come here. She will speak for your good. Do as she advises you. I will tell you something that gives happiness to your daughter. Do so. Let brahmins anoint the phallus of pale yellow called agastyalingam." So advising, the brahmin went home. Aakaasaraaja sent for brahmins and asked them to anoint agastyalingam. We are commissioned to fetch the necessaries of anointing. So are we here. So Padmaavati

's friends told her and asked, "Who are you? Where are you from? Why are you here?" Vakulamaalika was happy and said, "I am from Venkataadri. I am Vakulamaalika. I have come to meet Dharanidevi. Is it possible for me to see her?" Hearing her, they asked her to join them and took her to the king's palace.

### **16. A Pulinda woman answers Dharanidevi's question.**

Then Dharanidvi was talking to a woman of Pulinda clan who could say the past, the present and the future. Dharanidevi asked her to read the future of her daughter Padmaavati. The Pulinda woman said, "my lady! I speak the truth. Listen. Your daughter has seen a young man and for him has thus thinned away. Amorus thoughts are heating her body. That young man is the God of gods. He has come down from Vaikuntham. Vishnu is wandering with Lakshmi in the forests situated on the banks of Swaami Pushkarini. On horse-back he has come to your garden, wandering, and has seen your daughter. Seeing her who is like Lakshmi in grace and beauty, he has fallen in love with her. He will send his friend to you. Like Lakshmi she will enjoy a happy long life with him." Dharanidevi sent away the Pulinda woman with gifts, went into the harem and seeing her amor-stricken daughter among her playmates, affectionately asked her, "My child! What is dear to your heart? What do you want?"

### **17. Padmaavati confides her wish to her mother.**

Padmaavati said, "I am in love with Vishnu who is the pleasure of all eyes in the world, who is the darling of the sages, whom Brahma and the like wish to see, who is omnipresent, who is the God of gods, and who is attainable to his devotees. My heart is in him. I do not wish to have any other than him. I think of Vishnu who is of black complexion. I utter his name. I live by him. Unite me with

him." And Dharanidevi began to think of how Vishnu would favour her. By then, the brahmins who were commissioned to anoint the agastya-lingam and the playmates of Padmaavati came there with Vakulamaalika. She honoured the brahmins with honorarium and obtained their blessings for the fulfilment of Padmaavati's heart's desire.

(Chapter6, Varaahapuraanam)

### **18. Vakulamaalika tells Dharanidevi the story of Srinivaasa.**

After the brahmins departed, Dharanidevi asked the playmates of Padmaavati, eyeing Vakulamaalika, "Who is this woman? Where did she meet you? Why has she come here?" Then they replied, "she comes to you on an errand. She has met us near the temple. When questioned, she said that she had wanted to see you and asked us whether we could obtain your presence for her in the palace. We told her that we were attendants on the Queen and that she could see Queen Dharanidevi if she would follow us. She has come with us. Your ladyship may directly ask her what her errand is." On hearing these words, Dharanidevi asked Vakulamaalika, "My dear, where have you come from? Tell me what you would have from me. I shall fulfill your desire." And Vakulamaalika replied thus to her, "I have come from Venkataadri. I am called Vakulamaalika. Our king Naaraayana is on Venkataadri. Once our king was passing on horse-back in the vicinity of Venkataadri when he saw some women picking up flowers. He saw in their midst a bewitchingly beautiful, golden-hued woman who looked like Lakshmi and learned by asking her friends that she is the daughter of King Aakaasha and rode back home fast and commanded me saying, "Vakulamaalika! Go to the palace of King Aakaasha, see Queen Dharanidevi and

woo the girl for me, after the routine courtesies." So commanded by my master, I am here. Discuss the matter with your daughter and the king and let me know your mind".

### **19. Wedding of Srinivaasa and Padmaavati arranged.**

Dharanidevi immediately sent for King Aakaasha and Padmaavati and told them what Vakulaavali had told her. King Aakaasha was overjoyed and said, "My daughter is not a woman-born, but a divine one; the bridegroom is the Lord of Venkataadri, the God of gods. It has taken so long for fulfilment of my heart's desire." Then he sent for Brihaspati and said, "I have decided to marry Padmaavati to Srinivaasa. I wish that you kindly fix up the auspicious time for the marriage. The star of the bride's birth is mrigasirsha; the star of the Bridegroom Srinivaasa's birth is Sraavana m. "Hearing him, Brihaspati said that the star Uttaraphalguni was auspicious for both of them. Let the marriage be performed in the month of Vaisakha when the star of Uttaraphalguni will be in full sway." The king Aakaasha said to Vakulaavali, "Mother! Go to the temple. In the month of Vaisakha, on the day Uttaraphalguni rules, the marriage will take place. You may make the necessary preparations and come ready for the marriage." So saying, he sent as ambassador, one called Suka who was dear to Padmaavati devi, along with Vakulaavali. He commissioned Vaayu, the Wind-god, to invite gods like Indra and Vishwakarma to decorate the city of the king.

Vakulaavali went to the temple of Srinivaasa along with Suka and nearing Srinivaasa who sat on a diamond studded throne, said, "My commission has been successful. Suka will present the auspicious message to you." Then Suka paid him homage and said, "Earth-born Padmaavati wishes to submit to you that she always meditated

on your names and form, and wore your signs on her and worshipped your devotees, all by the blessings of her father; She prays that she may kindly be accepted." Srihari, listening to Suka's heartening words, replied, "I am happy to wed you. I shall come in the company of the gods. So convey my words to Padmaavati ." Saying so, he took out his garland from his neck and sent it to Padmaavati through Suka who gave the garland to Padmaavati and informed her of Srinivaasa. Padmaavati , having taken the garland, adorned her head with it and awaited the Lord's arrival. King Aakaasha sent for Chandra, the Moon-god, and requested him to get prepared cooked milkrice, Paramaannam, and others the like of which are fit to be served to Vishnu as an offering in the marriage. He thus made all the preparations for the wedding rites, Aakaasharaja began to look forward along with his wife Dharanidevi to the arrival of the Lord, and the bride beautified with all ornaments.

(Chapter7, Varaahapuraanam)

## **20. Srinivaasa adorned as a bridegroom goes to Viyadraajapuram.**

Srinivaasa the God of gods asked Lakshmi to instruct her attendants to serve him in making him ready for the marriage. So instructed by Lakshmidivi, her attendants began to adorn Srinivaasa. Lakshmi helped him in taking a full bath with oil massaged over the body. Srinivaasa was bathed in the holy water of Aakaashaganga brought on elephant-backs with golden vessels. Lakshmi dried his hair with scented smoke and smeared his body with scents and dressed him in silks and adorned him with a crown and all ornaments. Indrani held the umbrella for him and Saraswati and Gauri fanned him. Jaya and Vijaya bore his insignia. Srinivaasa with Lakshmi, mounted on Garuda and attended by Brahma, Shiva, Indra, Varuna,

Yama and Kubera, and followed by yogis like Sanaka and sages like Vasishttha, set out for Naaraayanapuram, the city of Aakaasharaja. Divine choristers, the gandharvas, sang and divine dancers like apsaras danced. Divine drums were sounded. So the God of gods with orders of the gods, and retinue like Vishwaksena, and friends like Vakulamala, entered the city of Aakaasharaja which was grandly decorated.

## **21. The wedding of Padmaavati.**

Hearing that Srinivaasa was approaching, Aakaasharaja got Padmaavati mounted on the divine elephant Iraavatam and after going round the city, waited at the main entrance of the palace along with friends and relatives, for the arrival of the bridegroom Srinivaasa. In this way, exchange of garlands was done thrice and after that they got down their mounts and, sitting a while there on their specially arranged seats, they went to the dias meant for the marriage. There Lord Brahma led them through the marriage process of the ritual as ankuraarpanam, maangalyadhaaranam and laajahomam. On the fourth day was completed the ritual of marriage. Then Brahma convincing Aakaasharaja, made Hari mount his Garuda, sent him to Vrishabhadri accompanied by divine drums, and he himself in the company of the gods set out. Aakaashraja gifted Padmaavati with several golden vessels, thousands of pots of milk, rare fruit, sugar-filled pots, clothes interlaced with gold and gems, thousands of servants, hundreds of cows, horses of different colours in thousands, hundreds of elephants, and singers and dancers to entertain the harem.

Seeing all this, Srinivaasa was delighted and said to his father – in-law Aakaasaraaja, "I shall grant you a boon. Ask of me what you will." Then Aakaasharaja said, "give me the boon that I may incessantly serve you in this very manner. May my mind stay on

your lotus-feet. May I always be devoted to you.” “Let it be so!” said the Lord and gave leave to Aakaasharaja, Brahma and the other gods to set out for their domains. Later, he stayed with Lakshmi and Padmaavati, beeing worshipped, in the holy temple situated by Swaami Pushkarini thirtham where he used to stroll as ever.

(Chapter 8, Varaahapuraanam)

## **22. The Story of those who visited Srinivaasa in kaliyuga.**

A tribesman, nishaada, by name Vasuvu who was watchman of a field of grain called shyaamaaka, lived on Venkataadri. He was an inordinate devotee of the Lord. Every day he cooked shyaamaaka grain, mixed it with honey and offered it to the God of gods. He begot a noble son by name Veera by his wife called Chitraavati. One day Vasuvu with his wife going out to fetch honey from the forest, asked his son to take care of the shyaamaaka grain. Before his return, Veera cooked the shyaamaaka grain on fire, put it at the foot of the tree, offered it to Lord Vishnu and ate it. Vasuvu brought honey and saw that the shyaamaaka was eaten away by Veera. For his son’s misconduct Vasuvu flew into a rage and drew out his sword to slay his son. Sri Maha Vishnu incarnated at the foot of the tree and withheld his sword. Vasuvu saw behind the tree Sri Mahaavishnu holding sankham, chakram and gada. Vasuvu immediately left his sword, saluted him and said, “O lord! What is this?” Then Srinivaasa said, “Your son is deeply devoted to me. He is dearer to me than you are. Therefore I incarnate. For him I shall be everywhere. For you I am only on the banks of the pushkarini”. So saying he vanished.

One called Rangadaasa who was a devotee of Vishnu even from his childhood, came from the country of Paandyas to Naaraayanapuri. He heard that Srinivaasa was there and set out to

worship him. He crossed river Suvarnamukhi, saw the lotus-pond and bathed therein and worshipped Rama and Krishna who were on its banks and gradually neared Seshadri. Then he bathed in Chakra-thirtham which washed off sins and climbed up Venkataadri. On the hill he bathed devoutly in Swaami-Pushkarini, and saluted the Lord of lords at the foot of the tree on its banks. Then Srinivaasa with Sridevi and Bhoodevi, and sankham, chakram, gada and saarjnam, incarnated under the shadow of Garuda. Rangadaasa, surprised, prostrated before him and paid him homage. He built a temple for Srinivaasa, and, with the intention of worshipping him with flowers, cut down the forest-trees in the vicinity, built a lake and raised plants with that water. He gathered flowers and he himself made garlands of them and offered them to the Lord of lords. One day the king of gandharvas came there with his women and was playing with them in the lake-water of the flower-garden. Rangadaasa who was bringing garlands saw the gandhrava and was out of his wits and forgot service to the Lord with flowers and stood there stunned. When the gandharva stopped playing in the lake-waters with his women and went away in his aircraft, Rangadasa came to his senses and, bathing in the lake, came to the temple to make the flower-offering. As the time for worship was past the priest asked him why he was delayed. Rangadaasa stood ashamed and answerless. Then God incarnated and said, “O Daasa! Why are you ashamed? I wished to test you and kept you stunned. You have not yet conquered lust. You also will become a King on earth like the gandharva. Then you will enjoy all pleasures and, being devoted to me, You will build a temple and a rampart for me. I shall grant you liberation then. Stay here till your last breath and worship me. My devotees shall be liberated in this manner at the right time.” So saying, he vanished. Rangadaasa widened the temple-campus and worshipped God for a century and passed away.

In the moon-dynasty, one called Tondaman was born as son to King Suraveera and his wife Nandinidevi. He became a devotee of Vishnu in his fifth year. He was blessed with valor, prowess and amiability. He married Padmaavati devi, the daughter of the pandyan king and was living happily in Naaraayanapuram with a hundred wives, like Indra in Swarga. One day Tondaman, by leave of his father, went to the forest near Venkataadri on a hunting expedition. There when he was walking in the company of his men, he saw an elephant in a fury. He followed it with the intention of catching it. Thus he crossed river Suvarnamukhi, saw sage Suka and paid him homage, and passed through the forest to another. On his way he saw Renuka Devi who was in the form of an ant – hill and worshipped her. She was worshipped even by gods. Tondaman then went westward and saw a five coloured parrot. He followed it with the intention of catching it. It went on to Venkaatadri, crying ‘Srinivaasa’. He also followed it up the hill but could not find it. On the hill he saw the watchman of the shyaamaaka field and asked, “A five coloured parrot has come this way. Have you seen it?” The tribesman replied, “This five-coloured parrot is very dear to Srinivaasa. It always stays by his side. It is reared by Sridevi and Bhoodevi. None can catch it. All the day it freely wanders in the forest and spends the night in the presence of Srinivaasa. I am going to worship Srinivaasa. You may stay here in the company of my son till I am returned.” Then Tondaman asked him, “I will accompany you. Take me into the presence of Srinivaasa.” The tribesman agreed to take him along with him and, carrying honeyed rice of shyaamaka, went with him to Swaamipushkarini, bathed therein and showed the Lord at the foot of the bilwa-tree (known as bengal quince, *Aegle marunelos*) situated nearby. The king saw the Lord, became wide-eyed with wonder and was filled with joy. The tribesman offered the honeyed rice of

shyaamaaka to the Lord, gave half of it to the king and ate the rest of it. Then the king went back to the field of shyaamaaka, spent the night there, and at sum-rise the following day returned to his city followed by his men. Again he went to Devivanam and worshipped Renukadevi on the ninth day of the brighter half of the month chaitram. He offered rice cooked with milk, ghee, an oblation and hundred vessels of liquor. Devi was pleased and manifesting herself in the form of inspiration in a person, gave the king a boon. “O king! Listen. Your kingship will go without impediments. Your capital city rises here with your name. Near me you will be king for a long time. You will have the blessings of the God of gods also.” So saying, she vanished.

### **23. The greatness of Padmasarovaram.**

The king who was thus blessed by the goddess, saluted sage Suka and requested him to describe the greatness of Padmasarovaram and sage Suka described it in these words. In olden days, Vishnu left swargam in accordance with the curse of Sage Durvaasa and along with Lakshmi went to the lotus –lake, Padmasarovaram, and did penance for ten thousand divine years. Then Indra and the other gods set out in search of Vishnu and Sridevi. After a long search, at last, they found both of them in a golden lotus in Padmasarovaram. They bowed and prayed to the Mother of the Worlds, Lakshmidēvi who was pleased with his devotion and said, “Defeat your foes and go back to your locations. Men who have lost their locations, shall also regain them on devoutly praying to me. Those who worship me with these very hymns that you have prayed with, with the bilwa leaf, shall attain fulfilment of dharma, artha, kaama and moksham, the fourfold human mission on earth. Gods or men, whoever bathe in the waters of Padmasarovaram, uttering my praise, shall be blessed with wealth, a long life, knowledge, good children,

and all earthly pleasures and gain the final beatitude.” So blessing them with boons, Sridevi went to Vaikuntham along with Vishnu.

(Chapter 9, Varaahapuraanam)

Then Sage Srisuka said to Tondaman, “This lotus lake is dissolver of all sins. By singing its praise, by cherishing its memory and by bathing in it, one obtains all earthly splendor. Bathe in it and go to your father.” Tondman did as he was told and returned to his palace. Immediately his father crowned him heir apparent, and later, being pleased with his valor, prowess, ability, good conduct and pleasing manners, crowned him king and anointed him and went to the woods followed by his wife.

In this way gaining kingship, while Tondaman was ruling his kingdom, the Lord of lords in the guise of a boar in Vasuvu’s field, began to eat ripe shyaamaaka grain every day. Vasuvu saw foot-prints of the boar but not the boar every day. So, one day, intending to find out the boar, he kept awake with his bow and arrow. He saw the white boar, glowing like a thousand moon, wandering in the middle of the field of shyaamaaka grain. Then Vasuvu roared like a lion and hearing him, the boar went away from the field. The tribesman chased it. He ran all the night behind the boar and saw that it entered an ant-hill in the small hours of the morning. The tribesman in anger began to dig up the ant-hill. The boar was seen, but the tribesman swooned. His son prayed to him, and Srihari, being pleased, spoke through his father’s mouth thus: “I live here in the guise of this boar every day. On my behalf you do well to instruct the king to instal me here and worship me. If this ant-hill is washed with the milk of a black cow, I shall manifest my self in the form of a statue of stone. Install the statue and let King Tondaman worship me with various offerings”. So speaking, he left the tribesman who then became well. The boy explained what all had happened to his father who had got

well. The tribesman was surprised and went to inform the whole story to king Tondaman.

Tondaman honoured Vasuvu and asked him the purpose of his visit. The tribesman narrated the tale in detail of the boar he saw in the forest and informed him of the command of the God of gods. Tondaman was amazed to hear it and was much pleased. He decided to go to Venkaatadri, ordered his ministers to arrange the pilgrimage and to take with them cowherds and brown cows to Venkaatadri. He went to the harem, deciding to undertake the pilgrimage on the following day. He narrated the entire story to his wives and slept. In his dream, Srinivaasa appeared and showed him a cavern-path. From the city to the cavern-path gallants were positioned. The king woke up at sun-rise and informed his ministers and people of his dream. He also saw a gallant at his door. On an auspicious moment Tondaman set out on horse-back. Seeing the gallants, he approached the cavern-path along with them. He wondered on sight of the cavern and built a city and rampart so that the cavern will be enclosed with his harem. He resided therein, conquering all regions of the earth and ruling his Kingdom. In accordance with the command of the God of gods, he bathed the Lord in milk and began building the rampart. Then Srinivaasa ordered him: “Fell down all trees except this tamarind tree and this champaka or *Michelia champaca*. Protect these. This tamarind tree is my seat. This champka is Lakshmi’s seat. Both of them are fit to be honoured by all. Build for me a rampart with a doorway and domes. My temple will be built by Naaraayana of your dynasty. He will also be my devotee. He will build me a temple and adorn it with gold.” King Tondaman, as directed thus by him, built a rampart, installed the God of gods, and every day worshipped him, reaching there through the cavern-path, and ruled his kingdom as ordained by the holy scriptures.

During the time, a brahmin of the south country, Veerasarma by name, with his wife Lakshmi, set out for a holy bath in River Ganga. In the midst of their journey, the brahmin's wife, being pregnant, could not travel any further. Then Veerasharma, wishing to see the king Tondaman approached the palace door. The king, informed by the door-keeper, welcomed him and did him homage, and asked him the purpose of his visit. The brahmin said, "I am Veerasarma, a brahmin well-versed in Saamavedam. I set out with my wife on a pilgrimage to have a holy bath in the Ganga. On the way my wife became pregnant and is unable to travel any farther. So I desire to leave her in your palace and complete the proposed austerity. I pray you to arrange food for her and protection till my return. The king agreed and arranged food grains for six months towards her food and asked her to stay in the harem of his palace. Leaving her there, the brahmin went away for a holy bath in the Ganga. He bathed in the holy waters at Kashi, Prayaga and other pilgrim centres, went to Gaya and there performed obsequies to his forefathers, visited Ayodhya, Badarika and the like sacred places, and after two years began his homeward journey. On the eleventh day of the bright half of the month of chaitram he saw the king, gave him the holy water of the Ganga and asked him about the welfare of his wife. The king then remembered the so-long forgotten brahmin woman and went to his harem to find out how she fared. There he found her dead body, lean and worn. He did not tell the truth to the brahmin, but by the cavern-path he went to Lord Varaaha, saluted him and went to see Srinivaasa. Srinivaasa, seeing the king come at an unusual time, asked him why he came to him. The king, full of fear told him the story of the brahmin woman. Then Srinivaasa said: "Do not fear, O king! Mount her on a palanquin and, along with the women of your harem, take her to the asthi-sarovaram situated on

the western side of my temple on the twelfth day of the month and give her an ablution. She will come back alive and meet the brahmin. Go immediately and do so." When the king did so, the brahmin woman came alive and joined her husband. The king worshipped Hari, and made the brahmin happy by giving him money. The brahmin was surprised by the power of Srinivaasa, blessed the king and went to his native city. After the brahmin left, Srinivaasa said again to the king, "Every day come here after the food-offering at noon and worship me with golden lotus. Rule your people justly. All that you desire will be yours. Never come to me during the forbidden hours" The king said that he would follow the Lord's instruction and kept his word in action.

One day the king worshipped Srinivaasa and saw that the holy basil leaves were dirty and in surprise asked Srinivaasa, "Who worshipped you, O Lord, with dirty basil leaves?". Srinivaasa replied, "In Village Kurva there lives a devotee of mine who is a pot-maker. He is worshipping me in his house and I am accepting it." Hearing this, the king desired to see the pot-maker and went to his village. Seeing the king come to him, the pot-maker Bhima did reverence to him and stood before him. Then the king asked Bhima, "O Bhima! How are you worshipping Srinivaasa?" To him the pot-maker made reply, "I know nothing of worshipping Srinivaasa. Who told you that the pot-maker worships him?" The king replied that he was told by Srinivaasa himself. Hearing the words of the king and remembering the boon of Srinivaasa, he said, "Srinivaasa gave me a boon saying that I would be a liberated soul when my worship becomes known and when king Tondaman comes and speaks of it to you." Hardly had he finished when a divine aircraft manifested itself there. The pot-maker reverently saluted Srinivaasa who then incarnated there and with his wife left the body and, while the king

looked on, got onto the aircraft and, transformed into a divine being, went to Vaikuntha.

Seeing this miracle, the king went to his city and anointing his son, named Srinivaasa on the throne and instructing him to rule his people justly, he left for doing penance. Pleased with his penance, Srinivaasa mounted on Garuda along with Sridevi and Bhoodevi, incarnated and asked the king, “I am pleased with your penance. Ask of me what you will” Tondaman with cupped hands and tremulous voice prayed to him, “I desire to live in your world without old age and death. This is my wish. I pray, O Lord! Grant me this boon” and prostrated before him. Then Tondaman left his physical body and, getting into the divine aircraft, and being praised by the gandharvas, got a form similar to that of Vishnu and went to Vaikuntham which is a place of no sorrow, no old age, no death and no re-birth.

Listen! Whoever read with devotion  
This pious, perpetual story,  
They enjoy all fulfilled desires  
And, in the end, attain to Vishnu’s place.

## Chapter II

of Venkataachala-Maahaatmyam, The greatness of  
Venkataachalam, as spoken by Varaahapuraanam here attains  
completion

## Chapter III

### 1. The holy saints request Suta to describe the greatness of Venkataachalam.

“O Suta! You narrated the greatness of Karigiri and Jagaannatha in the past. Now we are enthusiastic to hear about the greatness of Lord Venkateswara. Please enlighten us”. So the sages praying, Suta said this to them: “I am glad you wish to hear from me the greatness of Venkateswara. I shall narrate to you now what I have heard from Vyaasa in the past. Listen!” So saying, he began to narrate the greatness of Venkataadri.

Hearing of Venkataadri and praising the greatness of Venkatagiri in this age of kali, shall destroy all sorrows. They bestow wealth on those who desire it; a son to those who want a son; good health to the sufferer from ill health, and Knowledge or jnaana to the inquisitive. In times of old Brahma got his position by hearing it; Neelakanttha became unaffected by the poison held in his throat and lived happily; Indra got his position in swargaloka. The guardian deities of the several worlds, by virtue of hearing it, got their positions. In short, hearing the greatness of Venkatesa showers on the hearers endless good fruit.

In the Age of krita Vrishadri is specified,  
Anjanaachala, in the Age of Treta;  
Seshasaila, in the Age of Dwaapara,  
But Sree Venkataachalam in the age of Kali:

The mountain gets different names in different ages.

### 2. How it got the name of Vrishaachalam in krita – yuga.

In Krita – yuga, a demon named Vrishaasura occupied Seshasailam and pestered the hermits. These hermits took refuge

under Srinivaasa who favoured his devotees, and prayed to him. Srinivaasa incarnated to them, told them that he would for sure remove their sufferings, and vanished. This Vrishaasura daily bathed in thumburu thirtham, worshipped Sree Nrisimha saalagraama, a sacred ammonite stone associated with Lord Vishnu, and after the worship cut off his head with his sword and offered it with a flower to the Lord. But he got back his head as usual in its place even as he cut it off. He worshipped God in this fashion for five thousand years. Then Srimannaaraayana appeared before him. The demon saluted him, praised him and said that he had no desire for liberation or Swargam or the Lord's own abode, but desired to fight him, the Lord himself. Srimannaraayaana accepted and war began between them. In the war, the demon assumed whatever form Srimannaraayaana assumed. He assumed Viswarupam when the Lord did so and the form of Garuda-vaahana when the Lord did so. Then Srimannaraayaana wielded his weapon sudarshana, and the demon, saluting him, said to the Lord, "I have heard of the efficacy of sudarshana as invincible. But I know that those killed by Sudarshana will live in your lordship's abode. Now where do I go, burnt by sudarshana?" So he prostrated to the Lord and prayed that the mountain may thereafter come to be known by his name. Srimannaaraayana embraced him, granted him his boon, and sent him to paramapadam or the Lord's own abode. So has this mountain come to be called Vrishabhaachalam.

### **3. How it came to be called Anjanaachalam in Tretaayuga.**

In Tretaayuga, Anjanaadevi, the wife of Kesari, went to sage Matanga, saluted him and, shedding tears, told him that the cause of her sorrow was that she had not begotten sons. The sage, hearing her, said, "There is Nrisimha-kshetram on the eastern side of lake Pampa at a distance of about four hundred miles. There is Naraayaanagiri to the south of it, and to the north of it is

Swaamipushkarani, four miles from which lies Aakaashaganga. If you go there and do penance in its vicinity for twelve years, you will beget a son by virtue of the penance." He consoled her with these words and sent her away. She went in accordance with the sage's instruction, bathed in Sreeswaamipushkarani, went round the aswatha or the holy fig tree in reverence, worshipped Sree Varaaha, went to Aakaashaganga, took the blessings of the sages there, got her husband's permission and, swearing to go without food, began to do penance. By the time her oath was rituously completed, the wind – god Vaayu, who was greatly strong, gave her a fruit which had great virtues. She ate it and was big with child. On completion of ten months, born to her was a son called Hanumaan who was as strong as Vaayu. As it was on this hill that Anjanaadevi did penance, the hill was renowned Anjanaadri.

### **4. How it got the name of Seshasailam in Dwaaparayuga.**

While Sreemannaaraayana was with Lakshmi in Vaikuntha and Sesha with his golden staff of authority in hand kept the doorway, Vaayu who was greatly strong, came hastily to see the Lord. Then the king of serpents, Sesha stretched his staff and prevented Vaayu from entering. Vaayu, having come to see the Lord on an errand, was angry for stopping him at the threshold and asked him why he should not see the Lord. Sesha then replied: "The Lord of Lakshmi is in the harem and I am here, carrying out the Lord's orders." Listening to this reply, Sesha rejoined him again saying: "Don't you know that in olden times the gate – keepers of the Lord, Jaya and Vijaya became Raavana and Kumbhakarna under a curse from holy sages like Sanaka for similarly hindering them from seeing the Lord?" This way there was a prolonged, querrulous argument between the two. Then, prompted by Goddess Lakshmi, Vishnu said to Vaayu, "Why do you quarrel with this proud one?" and appeased him when

Vaayu was pacified and saluted the Lord. Then Sesha did not keep his peace but boasted that he was strong beyond measure and that he is unparalleled by any. To him Vishnu said, “No use of boastful words. You should show it all in deed. There is in the north a mountain called Aananda who was an off-spring of mount Meru. Coil your body around this mountain with all your strength and keep it immovable while Vaayu tries to move it. If Vaayu can move it, he is the stronger of you. And if he cannot, you are the stronger of the two.” Then Sesha went and held Aanandaadri strongly in the grip of his coils. Vaayu began to blow with all his strength to move it. All the worlds were pestered with the speed of Vaayu. But the hill did not move an inch. Vaayu was in black rage and mustered all his strength of speed to blow it off. The gods like Indra requested him to refrain from his attempt, but he did not. Then they prayed to Sesha to loosen his grip. Honouring their request, and also guessing it the will of God, Sesha loosened his grip just a little when the mountain began to fly. By virtue of Vaayu’s strength the mountain began to fly. By virtue of Vaayu’s strength the mountain flew southward a hundred miles when mount Meru, agitated by this predicament of his son Aananda, prayed Vaayu to save his son. Vaayu then left the mountain Aananda with Sesha coiled around it, on the northern banks of river Suvarnamukhi. Then the gods said to Vaayu, “This mountain Aananda is filled with the virtues of Sesha. It was born for Hari’s residence, by Hari’s own will. It is brought over to the banks of Suvarnamukhi under the plea of your controversy. God has created this illusory feeling in you for this purpose. You have done wrong to Sesha who is the confidante of the Lord. Pray for his favour.” Vaayu then praised Sesha and beseeched him to pardon his obstinacy. Then this mountain got the name of Sesaachalam as it had the virtues of Sesha.

### **5. How it got the name of Venkataachalam in Kaliyuga.**

In olden days, there was an orthodox brahmin called Purandar who had the honor of performing the Soma-sacrifice, in the village of kaalahasti. For a long time he was not blessed with a son, but begot one in his old age by dint of his accumulated virtues and named him Maadhava who in due course became an erudite scholar in the vedas and vedaangas and all the other kinds of learning. Young Maadhava was married to Chandralekha of the pandyan country. His wife was devoted to him, pleasing him by all kinds of timely service. One day in broad daylight the brahmin became love-sick and invited his wife to cooperate with him. To her husband who was thus untimely love – sick during daylight, Chandralekha said, “Sir! Copulation itself is rejected by the god-minded. Copulation during day-time is especially prohibited. In our home, your parents reside with us and there is the sacrificial fire as well. The sun who is the witness of all, shines bright. Please, think of dharma and leave this desire for copulation by day, abiding by dharma.” Maadhava brushed her words aside saying, “My dear! My lustful desire is insurmountable. You must fulfill my desire. You will beget a good son. You will obtain pati-lokam after this life. “So Maadhava began to force her. Then, unable to dishonor her husband’s words, Chandralekha gave him an advice. “I shall go to the tank for water with a pot. Follow me to fetch Kusa the sacred grass. You may have your desire fulfilled in the woods there.” As thought, so they went out to the wood of banyan trees situated beyond the tank. There Maadhava saw another woman who was handsome by well proportioned limbs and the brahmin was infatuated with her and said to his wife, “My dear! I am pleased with your devotion to me as your husband. I am not for going against dharam Please, go home.” Chandralekha was happy to hear this and returned home as her husband wished. Seeing his

wife gone, Maadhava neared this other woman. But she said to him, “O hermit! Don’t come to me: I am an untouchable.” To this he asked her, “O handsome lady! who are you? Who are your parents? Where do you live?” She replied, “Why are you curious about knowing of me? I am named Kuntala, born of untouchables. My occupation is prostitution. I take liquor and meat. I belong to the middle country. You are avowed to a life of vedic prescription, a vedic scholar. You ought not to see me, and touch me. Why do you wish to make love to me?” Maadhava answered her again, “Brahma who created you so very handsome in all the limbs, must have been blind to make you an untouchable. Your beauty is wasted like moonlight on the forest. My mind would not turn away from you. Brahma himself made me fall in love with you. So accept me and save my life.” To him again Kuntala said, “Dharma-shaastras teach us that the ancestors of a person that makes love to a fallen woman, will be condemned for hundred generations. So, turn away from this sinful act.” Maadhava, hearing her, brushed away the shaastra and, goaded by fate, said to her, “Are not diamonds accepted though they are born in salty seas? So are you acceptable to me by your beauty though you are an untouchable. I must have you though I with my ancestors shall be thrown in Hell for that reason.” So saying, in spite of protests from Kuntala, the brahmin tried to touch her when she ran away. But the brahmin chased her and caught her and made love to her by force. After the love-making ended, Kuntala said to him, “O brahmin! From this moment you have become my husband; you have become an untouchable. Remove your sacred thread, yajnopaveetam, and live with me in my house on liquor and meat.” Maadhava agreed and lived with her in her house as an untouchable. Past twelve years, the woman died. Maadhava, maddened by her death, roamed in sorrow through planes and

woods. At this juncture some kings of north-country, on pilgrimage to Venkataadri, happened to be seen by him. Maadhava reached Venkataadri in their company, eating the left-outs of their food. There the kings got their heads clean-shaved and bathed in the holy waters. Maadhava also got his head clean-shaved along with them and bathed in the holy waters. With this, Maadhava’s sins were washed off. As the kings offered rice-balls to their manes, so did Maadhava to his ancestors offer earthen balls. Now his ancestors were liberated.

Indescribable is the power of virtue  
Of Vishnu’s kshetram and thirtham:  
By offering earthen balls to his manes  
He and his manes are liberated from sins:  
Such is Vishnu’s kindly reign.

The following morning all the kings climbed up Venkataadri and Maadhava with them, resting with them at places. At the touch of Venkataadri, all his sins began to tremble. By the efficacy of this mountain, fire born of his limbs burnt away his sins. The gods came there to see the marvel and from their spacecrafts showered flowers, praising the greatness of Venkataadri. Brahma came down his spacecraft to the brahmin and, touching his head, said to him, “O Maadhava ! You are sinless. Go to Swaami-pushkarini, bathe in it, worship Lord Varaaha and leave your mortal coil. Be born again in the lineage of the daughter’s sons of Paandavas, be a king and rule the kingdom with reputation. Be born as Sudharmas’s son and be known as Aakaasaraaja in the south, in the domain of the thondas, and rule the county from Naaraayanapuram. The Mother Goddess of the worlds will be born daughter to you and the Father-God will be your son-in-law. Later you will obtain Vaikuntham.” So Brahma blessed him and also named the mountain Venkataadri “Vem” means

“sins”, and “Kata” means “burning”. So “Venkataadri” means the hill that burns sins.

Whoever at sunrise thinks of Venkataadri, obtains the good fruit of a thousand pilgrimages from river Ganga to the shores of the southern sea, the Indian Ocean.

(Chapter1, Bhavishyottarapuraanam.)

### **6. How the Lord left Vaikuntham and reached Venkataadri.**

In times of old, sages like Kashyap were performing a holy sacrifice on the banks of River Ganga. There came Naarada, the brahmarshi and asked those sages, “O sages! Why are you performing this holy sacrifice? Who would enjoy the good fruit of this sacrifice? Who is worshipping of all the gods?” Hearing him, the sages were hesitant to answer and, after some deliberation, asked sage Bhrigu to clarify. Bhrigu first went to the world of Brahma that he may decide the truth as an eye-witness. There he saw Brahma with faces on all four sides chanting vedic hymns, who was served by Saraswati and who was praising Naarayana along with the rulers of all the quarters of the Earth. He prostrated to him and stood up. Brahma saw Bhrigu but said nothing. So Bhrigu thought that Brahma was ignorant and therefore not fit to be worshipped. Then he left the world of Brahma and went to Kailaasam. There he found Shiva lustfully engaged with paarvati and did not take notice of him. Paarvati, seeing the sage, was abashed and, informing her husband of Bhrigu’s arrival, asked him to leave her. Hearing her words, Shiva let Paarvati go and in anger tried to kill the sage. But Bhrigu prevented him, cursed him and went away. Then from thence he went to Vaikuntha to see Vishnu. There he saw Vishnu lying on the bed of Sessa together with Lakshmi. Bhrigu was angry and kicked Vishnu on the chest. Then Vishnu embraced him and said, “O sage of sages! You have touched with your tender foot my chest hard like the diamond, but

why? Your soft foot must have had a lot of pain for that.” So saying he washed the sages’s feet with water and sprinkled that water on his own head. On account of this, he decided that Vishnu was, of all the gods, the most venerable and, going back to the sages, declared his decision to them in the assembly.

Hari is the best and Lakshmi his heart,  
After them are Brahma and Saraswati  
And after them are Shiva and the rest.

Thus he taught the sages who was best, who better and who good of the gods. The sages were glad then and decided that Hari was the Lord of all and offered the sacrifice or yajna to him.

Later Lakshmi in privacy with Vishnu, said to him, “Your body is all the universe and your chest was struck by the sage. The place which has been my abode was touched by his foot. So, O Lord! I leave your chest and go out to live in Karaveerapuram. At the onset of kaliyuga, Vishnu, thinking of how and where he could pacify Lakshmi, left Vaikuntha and reached Venkataadri which was at a distance of three hundred Yojanas or two thousand four hundred miles south of River Ganga and eight miles north of River Suvarnamukhi. The mountain was twenty four miles of width and two hundred and forty miles of length, bearing Venkatagiri on its crest, with Nrisimhaadri and Srisailam at the centre. Thereon he found an ant-hill at the foot of a tamarind tree south of Swaamipushkarini and considered it fit place for him and stayed there in the ant-hill.

(Chater2, Bhavishyottarapuraanam)

### **7. A cow giving milk to Srinivaasa in the ant-hill.**

Srinivaasa stayed in that ant-hill for a thousand years. At the end of dwaapara, chola-kindom was ruled by a noble king. Under

the rule of this noble king who abided by dharma, milch cows were full of milk. There were rains in season and crops were full. All people were happy. During this time Brahma took the form of milch cow and Rudra, a calf. Goddess Lakshmi, in the form of milkmaid, sold the cow and the calf to the chola king and went back to her place. The chola king bought this cow and her calf so that his own baby son might have his fill of milk. This cow also joined the other cows of the king and, grazing, wandered in search of Srinivaasa. In the course of time, she sensed Srinivaasa in the ant-hill on the banks of Swaami-pushkarini. She was overjoyed and filled the ant-hill with milk flowing from her udder. From this day onwards the cow came every day along with the other cows and devoutly filled the ant-hill with milk. Srinivaasa was pleased with this. The wife of the chola-king, finding no milk in the cow's udder for her own child, asked the cowherd why the cow had no milk: "Oh you! Cowherd! How is it that the cow has no milk for my child? Have you drunk the milk or has the calf?" The cowherd pleading innocence, the queen punished him.

### **8. The cowherd beats Srinivaasa with an axe.**

The following day the cowherd unroped the cow to graze and followed it with the intention of finding out what was happening to the cow's milk. As usual the cow went to the ant-hill and drained her udder of all the milk into the ant-hill. The cowherd was angry with the cow that had caused the queen to punish him and lifted his axe to strike the cow with. Then Srinivaasa, who stayed in the ant-hill came between the cowherd's axe and the cow that daily gave him milk and thus with affection for the cow received the blow on his head from which blood sprang up to the height of seven palm trees. Seeing this ghastly sight, the cowherd fell dead on the spot. On the death of the cowherd, the cow went to the king's palace and

began to roll on the ground for sorrow in front of the king. To find out what made the cow so sad as to leave the herd and, to unite her with the herd, the king sent a spy behind the cow. The spy went with the cow to Venkataadri and saw the cowherd's corpse near the ant-hill and the stream of blood, seven palm tree long. He ran back to the king and reported the death of the cowherd and the stream of blood.

### **9. Srinivaasa curses the chola-king.**

The king was amazed to hear it and, in a chair carried by men, left immediately to go up Venkataadri and reaching the ant-hill, said, "What misfortune is this?! Which wicked man killed the cow-herd? The ant-hill is wet with blood. It is a wonder that the cow has borne the news to me!" Srinivaasa, hearing these words of the king, came out tearing the ant-hill open and standing on the hill by Swaamipushkarini, said, "You are a sinner of wicked ways, proud of kingship. You have struck me with a sharp axe, considering no whit that I have none to look after me, a poor wanderer without father, mother, brother or relative. You have caused much suffering to me. This cowherd injured my head. If the manager of a house is not thoughtful, the misdeeds of his wife and children he must reap. Be a demon for causing me this pain." So he cursed the king who got transformed into a demon instantly.

(Chapter3, Bhavishyottarapuranam)

### **10. Srinivaasa grants a boon to the chola king.**

The king who was transformed into a demon, was sad at his plight and said to Srinivaasa, "O Lord! Why have you cursed me the innocent? Is it just that you do so without giving a thought? I am totally innocent. Why have you created this misfortune for me?" To him Srinivaasa made reply. "I love my devotees and cannot bear to

see them suffer. My curse does not go amiss. You will be demon till kaliyuga draws to a close. Then you will be born the king called Aakaasharaja and marry your daughter Padmaavati to me and present me with a diamond studded golden crown as bridegroom's dower. I shall wear it on the evening of Friday." So he granted him a boon.

(Chapter4, Bhavishyottarapuranam)

### **11. Sri Varaahaswaami gives room to Srinivaasa to stay on Venkataadri.**

One day Sri Varaahaswaami, returning after destroying Vrishabhaasura, saw at sunrise Srinivaasa who was strolling on Venkataachalam. Roaring at him Varaahaswami moved towards him. Srinivaasa immediately disappeared into the ant-hill. Then Varaahaswami recognised Srinivaasa as Srimahaavishnu and spoke softly to him. Srinivaasa also recognised Varaahaswaami as Vishnu and stood before him and spoke. The gods seeing the two manifestations of the one Lord, were happy and showered flowers on them.

After the gods left for Swarga-lokam, Varaahaswaami asked Srinivaasa why he had to leave Vaikuntham and come down there. Srinivaasa said, Lakshmi left my chest as it had been dishonored by the kicking foot of sage Bhrigu, and went to Kolhapur. In this sorrow I left Vaikuuntham and made this ant-hill here south of you, my abode. A cowherd struck me on the head with an axe. I have seen you while I am searching for an antidote to the pain of my head-injury. I have a desire to stay here till the end of kaliyuga. Then Varaahaswaami asked him to pay for it and have it. To him Srinivaasa replied," I have no money on me. But if you give me room here, I shall repay your debt by causing you to be worshipped and offered

food before me, first, in lieu of money. Consider it as proper payment and give me room here." Varaahaswaami accepted it and gave him an extent of land measuring a hundred feet. This way this identical twain of Varaaha and Srinivaasa made some good-humored play-acting for the fructification of the devotion of the devotees and for illusioning the non-devotees. Since then Varaahaswaami offered his cook Vakulamaalika to serve Srinivaasa. Every day through her he sent to Srinivaasa cooked grain of Shyaamaka and wine. She served Srinivaasa by giving him food, drink and medicine and by massaging his tender feet.

In the past, Yasodaadevi reared Vishnu in the incarnated form of Krishna and, not fully satisfied by seeing his presence, desired to have it prolonged for sometime longer. He granted her wish in a boon saying that in another incarnation he would fulfill her wish. In accordance with this boon Vishnu in the form of Srinivaasa was now making her happy. Yashodaadevi, born as Vakulamala, enjoyed his presence while serving him.

In kali, to save the souls of sinful wrong-doers,  
Vishnu, the Lord of Lakshmi, play-acts an earthly role.  
Seeing a kshetram is an accrued good fortune  
Of several births, especially liberating is Venkatagiri.

(Chapter 5, Bhavishyottarapuranam)

### **12. How Aakaasaraaja was blessed with a child.**

At the end of dwaapara, after the war of Mahaabhaarata and after the demise of kings like Vikramaarka, in Kaliyugam was born Sumeera, a king of chandra dynasty. He had a son by name Sudharma who had two sons named Aakaasha and Tondamaan. Both of them were duty-bound and devoted to Naaraayana. Tondaland was like a heaven under the reign of Aakaasaraaja who was the elder of the

two. But he had no children for quite a long time. He was worried on that account and prayed his preceptor to teach him the right means of begetting a son and he was advised to perform yajnam or sacrificial offering to the gods. As advised by his preceptor, he was cleaning and ploughing the land where the sacrificial worship was to be offered, he found a lotus with a thousand petals made of gold. Even as he wondered at it, he found an extraordinarily beautiful female child with her body well-built and limbs well proportioned. The king, in joy, took the child in his hands when the divine unbodied voice said, "O king! She is your daughter now. Protect her. She shall bring good fame to you." The king was happy to hear it and gave the baby to his wife and asked her to bring up the god-given child as she would bring up a child born of her womb. As the child was born in a lotus or Padmam, she was named Padmaavati.

On the auspicious moment of the girl's arrival in the palace, the king's wife became pregnant. The king got all the traditionally ordained ritualistic festivals like pumsavaneeya and seemanta performed as prescribed. After the completion of nine months, in the tenth month, the queen delivered a fair baby boy. The king was so happy that he gave away in charity all his wealth excepting his royal parasol and chaamaram or royal fan. On the twelfth day the boy was named Vasudaata. The king, seeing his son and daughter growing up steadily, had his cup of joy full. As time fled by, Padmaavati attained to youth, and the king began to think of finding a fit bridegroom for her.

### **13. Naarada foretells Padmaavati of happiness to come.**

When things were at this pass, one day in the spring season, Padmaavati went to the flower garden with her friends to collect flowers. Picking flowers, Padmaavati sat at the foot of a tree. In disguise as an old hermit Naarada came to her. Padmaavati was

agitated on seeing him and Naarada reassuringly told her, "I am your family preceptor. Consider me an equal to your father. Show me your hand and let me read your future happiness." Naarada examined her palm and predicted that the Lord of the worlds, Vishnu himself shall be her husband, and vanished.

(chapter 6, Bhavishyottarapuranam.)

### **14. Srinivaasa appears to Padmaavati and speaks to her.**

That day Srinivaasa, mounting a horse, went down Venkataadri into the neighbouring forest on a hunt and killed many wild and ferocious animals. Then, seeing a large elephant, chased to kill it. It took him a twelve mile away to the garden of Padmaavati and, turning back, lifted its trunk and trumpeted and saluted Srinivaasa and went into the garden. As the elephant disappeared, Srinivaasa saw Padmaavati. Then Padmaavati with her playmates hid behind a tree, frightened by the trumpeting elephant. Seeing them, Srinivaasa went to them. Seeing Srinivaasa come to them, Padmaavati asked her playmates to learn about him. As he neared them, her playmates asked him, "Sir, who are you? Why are you coming here? What's your business? This place is closed for men. So go away immediately." Srinivaasa replied, "I want to meet the princess." The playmates of Padmaavati asked again, "What have you to do with her?, tell us. Tell us where you live and what your good name is and who your parents are and who your brothers are and what your caste and family are." Srinivaasa made them reply: "I come in particular for your princess. Therefore I shall tell her what my errand is." And again he said to Padmaavati: "My elders tell me I belong to the family of Sindhuputra. My father is Vasudeva and mother, Devaki. My brother is Balaraama and sister, subhadra. My friend is Arjuna. Paandavas are our relatives. As I was born on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the

darker fortnight of the month and also as I am black of complexion, people call me Krishna. This is my story. Now I wish to hear yours.” Then Padmaavati said: “I am daughter to Aakaasaraaja. I am called Padmaavati. I belong to chandravamsham. My family is of Atri. Now you leave immediately.” As Padmavati spoke some what harshly, Srinivaasa said to her again, “Why do you speak harsh? And why not speak soft to me? I come wooing you. I am suitable for you. Therefore you do well to offer yourself to me and thereby live a heavenly joyous life. Do not be harsh in vain.” Hearing him, Padmaavati with eyes reddened with anger, retorted: “You speak unutterable things. You don’t seem to wish to live. If Aakaasaraaja sees you, you will be killed. Go home before he sees you.” Srinivaasa said to her again: “For all those that are born, death is immanent as per his past actions. I love you, taking for granted death. I hear that Aakaasaraaja abides by dharama. How can he kill me if he does not sin? You are virgin and I love you. What is unjust in this?” So saying, Srinivaasa moved towards her. Then Padmaavati said again, “Why do you vainly die, leaving all your people?” But he brushed her words aside saying, “None can surpass fate’s writ. Victory or defeat, come what may, I must have you.” So saying, as he tried to near her, Padmaavati with her friends, pelted stones at him and drove him away. Srinivaasa went back to his ant-hill and being sick, was bed-ridden.

(Chapter7, Bhavishyottarapuranam)

### **15. Srinivaasa speaks of his desire to Vakulamaala.**

Vakulamaala came to do service to Srinivaasa, bringing with her six varieties of cooked rice and dal, cakes of pulses and soup for sauces. Seeing Srinivaasa lying on the bed silent with heavy sighs and tears, Vakulamaala said to him, “Govinda! Get up. You are not

in the habit of sleeping during day-time. And I have not seen you till now in tears. Why are you sad today? Tell me what is on your mind. I have brought rice cooked with milk and sugared, for you. Do eat your fill.” Seeing that Srinivaasa was silent and did not respond, Vakulamaala said again, “Have you seen anything in the forest? You are wont to be ever pleasant. What is the cause of your sorrow today? Tell me what you desire. I am pained to see you. Did you see any woman in the forest? Who is that fortunate one who has attracted you so much? Tell me. I shall fulfil your heart’s desire in an instant.” Thus prayed by her, Srinivaasa spoke in broken words, slowly and in sadness, “Today in the forest I have seen a fair lady called Padmaavati. I am drawn to her in love. She is the daughter of Aakaasaraaja. Unite her with me. Or I won’t live. When I neared her, she pelted me with stones and drove me away. Win her for me. If you see her, you aslo will agree that she is a deserving companion to me.”

### **16. The story of Padmaavati’s earlier birth.**

Learning of Srinivaasa’s desire, Vakulamaala asked him, “Where is the girl you saw? Tell me how I can reach her. I shall go immediately. Who she was earlier, and why she was born here now, tell me all about her.” So asked by Vakulamaala, Srinivaasa told her mutteringly, “I will tell you of her earlier birth. Listen. In times of old, in tretaayuga, incarnated as Rama, I went to forest Dandaka in accordance with my father’s command, along with Sita and Lakshmana. In those days, when Lakshmana and I were away, Demon Raavana came and tried to take away Sita to Lanka. Then hearing the wailings of Sita for help, fire-god Agni materialised on the scene and said to Raavana with the intention of saving Sita, the daughter of Janaka, “For fear of you Raama has hid Sita, the real one, in my custody. Because I am your friend, I will help you: I will

give you Sita the real". So saying, he took away Sita, left her with Swahaadevi, and brought with him in Sita's guise, Vedavati who in the past vowed in revenge to kill Raavana and got burnt in fire and was now waiting for an opportune moment. Agni brought her to Raavana and said, "This is real Sita. Take her away." And Raavana did so and put her in the wood of ashoka trees. Later Raama went to Lanka, killed Raavana, and made Sita enter the flames to prove her piety. At that juncture Agni brought real Sita and there were therefore two Sitas before Raama who asked, "Who is this second Sita?" Sita then told him thus: "She is Vedavati. She has experienced all my sorrow for no reason. So marry her according to vedic ritual." Then Raama said, "I am now avowed to one wife as principle. You know so much. So I cannot now accept her as wife. In dwaaparayuga I shall marry her as you wish. Till then let her stay in brahma-loka." It is she who is now born Padmaavati. I must marry her now. My word must not go false." Vakulamaala was delighted to hear the past-life story of Padmaavati and said that she would go see Padmaavati in the palace of Aakaasharaja. Srinivaasa was happy ate the food brought by Vakulamaala and was at peace, beautifying himself.

### **17. Vakulamaala meets the playmates of Padmaavati.**

Vakulamaala set out on horse-back and reached agastyaashramam, crossing river Suvarnamukhi. In the temple of Lord Siva there she met the playmates of Padmaavati. Being asked who they were, they answered: "We are the maids of king Aakaasaraaja's court." Then Vakulamaala, desiring to learn about Padmaavati, asked them, "please tell me about you. I wish to hear all about you." Then they replied, "Yesterday we went to the flower garden with Padmaavati to pluck flowers. While we were collecting flowers, there came a cupid-like young man riding a strange horse.

He was dressed like a huntsman. Seeing Padmaavati, he began to talk unutterable words, Padmaavati was angered and fell out with him. She made stones pelted at him. He left his horse there and went away northward. After his exit, Padmaavati swooned. We put her in the car and took her to the palace of the king. The king was worried and sent for Brihaspati in order to find out the cause of her sorrow. The preceptor, understanding her plight, said to him, "O king! Listen. This girl who went for flowers to the garden, saw a young man there and was frightened. I shall indicate the appeasement for it. Listen to me: arrange for ablution of Lord Shiva in agastyaashramam to be performed by eleven brahmins. She will be happy." Hearing his words, the king commissioned the brahmins to perform the sacred ablution. We have come along with the brahmins, carrying the necessaries. This is about us. Now tell us about yourself." So being told by the playmates of Padmaavati, Vakulamaala said, "I am servant to Hari. I am known as Vakula. I have come on an errand from Venkatesha. I purpose to meet Queen Dharanidevi. You must help me in this." They said to her, "We go back to Dharanidevi soon after this sacred ablution here. If you wait here till then, we will take you to Dharanidevi." And Vakulamaala agreed and waited there for them.

### **18. Srinivaasa disguised as an erukala –woman goes to Naaraayanapuram.**

Though Vakulamala had gone about with the business Srinivaasa doubted whether or not she would be able to achieve the purposed goal, and therefore put on the guise of a woman of the erukla sect with the intention of fortifying his cause. In his disguised appearance he wore a pot-belly and loose, long ears, and was adorned with necklaces of red beads and conches. He fastened on his back a child of seven months and carried a bamboo basket of

grain, and, walking with a stick in hand, came to Naaraayanapuram. She began to shout in the streets that she would make predictions. Hearing her cries, the women of the harem went to Dharanidevi and informed her of this woman. They, with the consent of the queen, called this erukala woman to the palace. But she refused to enter the place, complaining that they were only interested in making fun of her. Then Dharanidevi herself came down and invited her. The erukala woman came into the harem and said, "Lady! My husband is Naaraayaana Swaamy. This boy was born to him. I come under his orders. I can see and predict all about the past, the present and the future. My words are always true. If they prove to the contrary, cut off my tongue and banish me from the kingdom." Hearing these words, Dharanidevi took her in and made her sit comfortably. Then the erukala woman asked Dharanidevi to humour her with a gift. Accordingly, Dharanidevi made her the offering of cakes etc. in a golden winnowing basket and asked her to say truly when her sorrow would end. The erukala woman said, "I will tell you but give food for my boy" Dharanidevi gave sumptuous food and as the boy did not eat it, she herself ate it and asked for betel leaves. Then Dharanidevi gave her betel leaves with cardamom, cloves, camphor and betel-nut. She ate it and began to speak the oracle, with her baby boy in her lap.

(chapter8, Bhavishyottarapuramam)

### **19. The erukala woman explains the cause of Padmaavati's illness.**

"Padmaavati is suffering from a fever of love for the cupid-like youth who was seen on horseback yesterday. Padmaavati longs to be the wife of Srinivaasa who is the lord of Venkataadri. Yesterday the youth who came on horseback was Srinivaasa himself. She will

be free from this suffering when she gets married to Srinivaasa who is Lord Sreehari of Vaikuntha. It was his horse that your daughter pelted with stones. He turned away, Pardoning her, because of his respect for the princess. She shall be blissful if married to him, or she will be unhappy. If she is not united with him in three days, she may even die. Do not hesitate that you are not requested for her hand in marriage. In about three hours an old woman shall come to you asking for Padmaavati's hand on his behalf. Believe me and encourage your husband and his brother Tondaman to seal the love of Padmaavati with wedlock to Srinivaasa. Padmaavati lives then, for sure." So saying, the erukala woman went back to her home.

### **20. Padmaavati tells Dharanidevi of her love for Srinivaasa.**

On the exit of the erukala woman, Dharanidevi went in to Padmaavati and said to her, "What do you want? Tell me the desire of your heart. I shall fulfil it. If you do not tell me your mind, I shall take poison and die." Padmaavati replied, "I hesitate to speak out. But as you press me to say, I tell you my mind. With your permission yesterday I went to the garden to collect flowers. There I saw the manliest man. I was drawn to this lotus-eyed youth. If I cannot get to share my life with him, I cannot live. This is the truth. He is Purushothama who wields sankham, chakram and gada. Kaustubham shines from his neck. He is the cause of my suffering." Then Padmaavati consoled her and conveyed to Aakaasaraaja all that was said about Padmaavati by the erukala woman's oracle.

### **21. Vakulamaala with Padmaavati's friends comes to Dharanidevi.**

On completion of Lord Shiva's ablution in agastyaashramam the playmates of Padmaavati along with the brahmins returned to Naaraayanapuram, carrying the things of the ritual on their heads.

Along with them Vakulamala came to see Dharanidevi. Honouring the brahmins and obtaining their blessings for Padmaavati and later, eating the offerings of God, prasadam, the playmates of Padmaavati said to Dharanidevi, "This woman here lives in Venkataachalam. She is servant of Srinivaasa, she is called Vakulamaala. She desires to speak to your ladyship. If you ask her, she herself will tell you what she purposes with you." Hearing this, Dharnidevi made her sit and asked her, "What is your wish? Tell me and I shall satisfy you." Then Vakuladevi said to her, "I come to ask the hand of your daughter in marriage." To her Dharanidevi said, "We also want a bridegroom, But tell me who the bridegroom is, where he lives, what his family name is and to which caste he belongs." Then Vakulamaala told her, "His mother is Devaki and father, Vasudeva. He belongs to the chandra dynasty. His name is Krishna. He is of Vasishttha gotram. His star is Sravanam. He lives on Venkataadri. He is well-educated, wealthy, strong and has good conduct. He is twenty five years of age." Dharanidevi was pleased to hear this and said, "your words put a doubt in me. The doubt is this: If he is, as you say, of noble birth, wealthy, good, strong and youthful, why is it that he is not married for so long a time?" To her Vakulamaala made answer: "He was married in boyhood itself. But as he is not blessed with children, he wants to marry again. That's all. He has no other defect." Dharanidevi, hearing this, was satisfied and approaching Aakaasaraaja, said to him, "Vakulamaala from Venkataadri has come asking our girl's hand. Send for the priests, get the astral compatability of both our girl and the young man compared, and fix up the time of marriage. Padmaavati aslo is for marrying him." Hearing his wife's words, Aakaasaraaja said to her, "It is my earned virtue that this auspicious proposal has come to me. Today are my manes set at liberty. I am very happy." So saying, \_\_\_\_\_

## **22. Aakaasaraaja sends for Brihaspati and sage Suka and deliberates with them.**

"I shall marry my daughter to Srinivaasa. Do not you worry", so consoling her, Aakaasharsaja sent his son to swargaloka for Brihaspati. And as Brihaspati came to him, he said to him, "If you sanction it, I wish to arrange for the marriage of my daughter with Srinivaasa. The pious woman Vakulamaala has come asking for the bride's hand. We are fully informed of the bridegroom's name and family merits. I await your blessings." To him Brihaspati said, "O king! I am only an occasional visitor to the earth, not a resident here. Therefore I do not know much about Srinivaasa. Sage Suka is an earth-dweller. He must be knowing all about Srinvasa. He can advise you rightly. So send for him without delay." The king then sent his borther Tondaman for sage Suka. He went and said to sage Suka, "Revered sage Suka! My brother has sent me to tell you this: Padmaavati has come of marriageable age. The king desires to mary his daughter to Srinivaasa. To deliberate on the wisdom of the proposal, Brihaspati is sent for. Your presence is also prayed there for the very purpose. I beseech you, find time to join us there." Hearing him, sage Suka was very happy and , soon completing his mid-noon rituals, went with him to Naaraayanapuram. As soon as he arrived, Aakaasaraaja honoured sage Suka with the prescribed ritual of reception, like water to wash hais feet and fresh drinking water, and said to him, "O sage! I desire to marry Padmaavati to Srinivaasa. If you approve the proposal, I shall unhesitatingly proceed towards fulfilment." Then sage Suka said to the king, "O king! You need have no boubts about this marriage. You will be blessed by this deed. Your lineage will be sanctified. Your manes will be blessed with Swarga. Your accrued merits of past births are great wherefore Srinivaasa himself will be your son-in-law now. Who shall be more

fortunate than you? Do not delay but proceed. We, even after denouncing all and living only on herbal roots, and doing penance, are not able to see Srinivaasa. We will be able to see him face to face on your account. Your friendship is desirable for us because of this.”

### **23. Aakaasaraaja swears that Padmaavati would be married to Srinivaasa.**

The king was pleased to hear his words and prayed him to consider if the lineages and stars are matchable and the positions of the planets are favourable to the bride and the bridegroom and all concerned. He added that his was atri-lineage and Padmaavati’s star was mrigasira. Vakulamaala told him that Srinivaasa descends from Vasishththa-lineage and Sraavanam was his star. Brihaspati, hearing them, calculated their yogas and, said delighted, “nadi-kuta, yonikuta, sutrakuta, are all favourable. All planets are in auspicious positions. So discuss the convenience with your near and dear, and perform the marriage.” The king was glad to hear it. He sent for his friends and relatives, discussed with them, performed punyahvachana, and in their presence, broad shouldered, he declared that he would offer Padmaavati to Srinivaasa in marriage.

### **24. Aakaasaraaja sends wedding invitation to Srinivaasa.**

Being asked by Aakaasaraaja what should be done next, Brihaspati advised him to write an auspicious letter and send it through a brahmin to Srinivaasa. And as the king asked him for the format and matter of the letter, Brihaspati told him of its draft. As advised by the preceptor, the king wrote: “Blessings to Srinivaasa, resident of Venkataachalam, from King Aakaasa. I wish to convey to you my welfare along with the welfare of my relatives all by your grace. I wish that you keep writing to me about your welfare as

often as you can make it. This letter is being written on the thirteenth day of the bright half of the month of chaitram. I intend to offer my daughter Padmaavati to you in marriage. I desire that she be accepted as your bride. Brihaspati and sage Suka have known my mind. The tenth day of the bright half of the month of vaisakha, a Thursday, is auspicious for the purpose. I pray and invite you to come here on the said day along with your relatives and marry my daughter. There is nothing more for me to write. Do as advised by sage Suka.” Aakaasaraaja accompanied sage Suka for two miles, prayed him to win the heart of Srinivaasa in favour of the marriage, and returned.

Suka reached Venkataadri at noon. Seeing him, Srinivaasa asked him whether his plea was accepted or not. Suka told him that his suit was accepted, and fell prostrate before him, doing homage. Srinivaasa, pleased, embraced the sage and asked what he brought keeping under his axilla. Sage Suka said that it was a letter from Aakaasaraaja and handed it over to him. Reading the letter, and being pleased with it, Srinivaasa said that he would write a letter in reply and wrote: “With due reverence to the king of kings, son of Sudharma, king Aakaasha, I purpose to write that I am glad to read your letter. As you wish, on the tenth day of the bright half of the month of Vaisakham, it being a Thursday, I shall take the hand of your daughter in wedlock. As Saagara of old gained good reputation by giving me his daughter in marriage, so will you be renowned now by marrying your daughter to me. By this you will be known for uplifting your manes and your lineage in future. You are quite well informed and I need not write much to you in this regard.” He wrote this letter and sent it to King Aakaasha through sage Suka who went back to the palace of Aakaasaraaja, cherishing the joy of seeing Srinivaasa.

**25. Vakulamala tells Srinivaasa of his wedding Padmaavati.**

After Sage Suka left, Srinivaasa asked Vakulamala, "Mother! Why is all this so much delayed? Tell me what had passed in the court of king Aakaasha." She said, "I have achieved this with much effort. Luckily, Dharanidevi came from Naaraayanapuram. She said that the virgin lady is a good match for you. The girl herself professed her love for you and rejected another suitor. The king listened to their words and agreed to offer the girl's hand to you in marriage. He also declared in the hearing of all the assembly that he would marry her to you." Srinivaasa was happy to hear these words.

(Chapter 9, Bhavishyottarapuramam)

**26. On Srinivaasa's command Sesha and Garuda go to invite Brahma and others.**

Srinivaasa thought that it would be improper to go alone, without being accompanied by friends and relatives, to the house of Aakaasaraaja, who had a good number of friends and relatives, for the wedding ceremony, and therefore he sent Sesha and Garuda with letters of invitation to Brahma the four-faced and Rudra to attend the marriage with families and friends. Garuda went to satyalokam and handed over Srinivaasa's invitation to Brahma who unfolded the leaf and read, "Blessing my four-faced son with long life, Srinivaasa has good words to say: At the beginning of Kaliyuga King Aakaasha desires to offer his daughter Padmaavaati in marriage to me. You are invited to come and join us with your family accompanied by the custodians of all the worlds of the universe, nagas, gandharvas and the rest of the gods for the auspicious occasion." Brahma was delighted with the letter and, calling his door-keepers, gave orders that all his troops and his subjects must get ready to go see Srinivaasa's marriage on Sessaachalam in India on

earth. He asked them to cause the drums and trumpets sound declaring his intention.

**27. Four-faced Brahma comes to Sessaachalam.**

The four-faced Brahma went to Sessaachalam on his mount of a Swan or hamsa, adorned with all ornaments and clothes accompanied by Saraswati, Saavitri, Gaayatri and other gods. In advance emissaries informed Srinivaasa of the arrival of the four-faced Brahma. Srinivaasa, in affection for his son, went out to receive him half way. Brahma, alighting his mount, made homage by prostrating to him. Srinivaasa lifted him up and embraced him in affection. They spent sometime in inquiries of welfare. Then Srinivaasa told him his story of how towards the end of dwaaparayuga when he was relaxing on Seshatalpa in Vaikuntham, Bhrgu, the great sage, kicked him on his chest wherefore Lakshmi got angry and went to Kolhapur and how he himself left Vaikuntham in sorrow and began to live in an ant-hill when a servant of the chola king, punished by the queen, struck him with an axe and how Vakulamala protected him. He added how one day he went on a hunting expedition and there entered near Padma-thirtham a garden where he saw Padmaavati, daughter of Aakaasaraaja, with whom he fell in love and requested Vakulamala to unite him with Padmaavati in wedlock and how the marriage was arranged.

**28. Rudra and others come to Seshadri.**

In the meanwhile, Sankara with Paarvati and Shanmukha and groups of Pramathas arrived at Venkataadri. Sankara saluted to Srinivaasa and Brahma. Srinivaasa embraced Sankara and offered a suitable seat to him. Later kubera arrived with his wife, relatives and yakshas. After him came Agni on his goat-mount with Swaahaa. And later came Varuna, Indra, Vaayu, Chandra, Surya, and the other

gods one after another. In the mean time hermits and sages like Kashyapa, Bharadwaaja, Vaamadeva, Gautma, Viswaamitra, Vasishttha, Vaalmiki, Parashuraama, Pulastya, Dadheechi, Shunahshyepha, and Gaalva, all came to Venkataadri. Srinivaasa offered each of them seats suitable.

### **29. Viswakarma builds the wedding city.**

Srinivaasa then looked at Indra and asked him to get a city raised for the purpose of the wedding. By command of Indra Viswakarma raised a city beautiful, four hundred miles wide and two hundred and forty miles long, adorned with strange decorations. Then Indra, by the consent of Srinivaasa, went with Maya to the palace of Aakaasaraaja and Viswakarma raised there a marriage-hall and a marriage pandal decorated with garlands of pearl and pillars of gems. He raised palaces beautified with pendants of gems and domes furnished with wells, horses and elephants.

### **30. Srinivaasa appoints the gods and saints in the Management of wedding duties.**

Then Srinivaasa looked at the gods and said, "King Aakaasha has a daughter called Padmaavati whom I desire to marry. If you accept my proposal, I shall take her to wife." Hearing these words, the gods with Brahma in the lead said, "We are all your servants. We have come here to see the celebration and feel its joyousness, by your grace." Thus learning of their acceptance, Srinivaasa commissioned them with various duties at the marriage. Sankara was put in charge of receiving the gods and hermits that came as wedding guests. Kumaraswaami was to invite and welcome the guests; Agni was to be the cook; Varuna was to supply water; Vaayu was to distribute perfumes; Kubera to distribute money and clothes; Chandra was in charge of lighting arrangements; the Vasus were

engaged in cleaning the vessels; and Yama was to look into law and order problems. All the gods, by leave of Srinivaasa, went to take charge of the various portfolios allotted to them.

### **31. Ramaa invited from Karaveerapuram for the wedding.**

Then Brahma neared Srinivaasa and said, "Punyahvachanam, worship of the wanted God, installation of the family deity etc., as a prologue to the marriage, have to be performed. Therefore you have to get ready to take an auspicious bath." Then Srinivaasa sorrowed in the memories of Lakshmidēvi now in Karaveerapuram. "Without Ramaa the occasion will go lusterless. You and I and all the gods go dim and dull like the stars without the moon. How can I be happy without Lakshmi who always stays with me even at the time of the great dissolution of the worlds when I lie on the banyan leaf? How can I marry without her?" Then Brahma said, "Why didn't you tell us this earlier? Why do you now worry like an earthly being? If she is to be invited, what should she be told? How will she believe my words?" Then Srinivaasa said to him, "I will tell you how. If you tell her that Srinivaasa lay motionless ever since she left him and that he is wailing, thinking of when again he may see her and that he is very weakened and seems to be in doubt of living, she will certainly follow you here." Listening to him, Surya asked, "She is all-knowing. She knows what is in the heart of hearts of every one. How may she believe my words? This apart, how can I call you sick and diseased when you are hale and healthy?" Srinivaasa assured him saying, "She believes you as she is bound by my maayaa. So, go bring her."

Lakshmidēvi believed Surya and came on his car directly to Venkataadri in haste. Srinivaasa, like one too weak to walk to receive her, walked slowly to her with one hand on Brahma's shoulder and another on Sankara's. Seeing him in that plight, Lakshmidēvi alighted

the car, sprinkled flowers on his feet and hugged him in devotion. Srinivaasa became well in her embrace and inquired after her welfare. She also inquired after his welfare. Later, Lakshmidēvi said, "I came under the sway of your maayaa. But what am I? when Brahma, Rudra and all the gods are bound by your mayaa. Let it be. Now tell me why I am called here." Srinivaasa replied, "O Devi! Remember what you told me during my incarnation as Raama. Now is the time for marrying Vedavati. During this kaliyuga, I intend to marry her according to your wish. What do you think of it?" Then, re-calling the past, she prayed to him, "Marry her and fulfill my desire." Srinivaasa made her happy by honoring her word.

(Chapter 10, Bhavishyottarapuraanam)

### **32. Padmaalayaa gives the auspicious bath to Srinivaasa.**

Then Srinivaasa looked at Brahma and asked him to proceed with the routine arrangements of the event. He called for Garuda and some others and asked them to keep ready the vessels of water for bathing. Then with the help of Varuna and Vaayu they got ready vessels filled with perfumed water. Saraswati, Saavitri, Paarvati and Arundhati began to sing joyful, auspicious songs. When they asked Srinivaasa to be seated on the stool for bathing, he, with a woe-begone face, said shedding tears, "O Brahma! Alas! I have neither parents nor brothers nor sisters nor any relatives. Who would bathe me, giving auspicious blessings in affection? The life of one devoid of near and dear relatives, is indeed a void of nihility." So saying, Srinivaasa began to weep like an ordinary human being. Hearing his words, Brahma said, comforting Srinivaasa, "O lord! Why do you sorrow? Are you not yourself Paramapurusha? And is not your wife herself Mother of all the worlds? The entire universe is your family. It being so, why do you wail playfully?" So saying, he signalled to

Lakshmidēvi to bathe Srinivaasa. Then Lakshmi approaching Srinivaasa, said to him, "O Venkatesha! I guess your thoughts. Don't worry but get up: I shall give you an oil bath. Come and be seated on this bathing stool." Srinivaasa, being pleased with these words, prayed to Vasishththa and the like sages, for permission.

As they said, "Be it so!" women came and led him to the bathing stool. Then Lakshmidēvi, the daughter of Sindhu, took a vessel filled with oil and anointed him with oil and rubbed his body with perfumed oil, and massaged him with turmeric powder mixed with musk and civet, and bathed him top to toe with the sacred water brought in golden pots, and finally again with clean water brought by four pious women. Then his body was dried with a clean towel brought by Saavitri, and with the perfumed powder smoked his body. Rati and Shachi fanned him. Saraswati held the parasol. Ganga gave him foot-water. He then sat on the special bridegroom's seat on the banks of Swaamipushkarini and wore on his forehead the vertical Vaishnava mark, while gods like Brahma, rulers of the worlds like Indra, sages like Kashyapa, saints like Vasishththa, Yogis like Sanaka, hermits like Bhrigu, manes like Aryama, singers like Tumbura, and dancers like Rambha served him. Later, Lakshmi adorned him with the jewellery offered by Kubera. Then Srinivaasa attended to the ordained rituals of every day like Sandhya-Vandanam and saluted the sage Kashyapa, and asked Vasishththa to proceed on with the customary rituals: The sage made a platform of pearls and, as ordained by the Veda, performed punyahvachanam.

### **33. Srinivaasa plants green gram as his family deity as part of the wedding rites.**

After performing the rites ordained by the Veda, Vasishththa asked Srinivaasa who his family deity was, because, according to

tradition, he had to worship this deity. Srinivaasa told him that the green gram tree or Shamee was his family deity and asked him where this tree could be seen. Agastya told him that Shamee was to be found near Kumaaradhaara, and Srinivaasa went there, did appropriate worship, and brought with him a twig of it broken from the tree. Srinivaasa asked where the twig should be planted, and Naarada asked him to plant it near Varaahaswaami. Then Srinivaasa went to Varaahaswaami, took his leave and planted the twig of Shamee near him.

### **34. Srinivaasa borrows money for his wedding from Kubera.**

Srinivaasa told Brahma to see that every one gets ready to set out on the way to Naaraayanapuram of King Aakaasha, and Brahma said, "I think we should not make a move with empty stomachs after performing punyahvachanam. Children, old people and the others are looking forward to have their food." Then Srinivaasa said to him, "I am a have-not. All my wealth is gone. How can I feed all these people?!" and Brahma was silent. But Shankar said, "Proceedings of a wedding and of building a house, being started, should not be stopped unfulfilled. It is wrong to leave preparations half done. If shortage of money is the problem, money should be borrowed to complete the event. Leaving it unfinished destroys good reputation." Hearing Shankara's words, Srinivaasa said, "You speak in this assemblage unhesitatingly, sounding harsh. But who would lend me money enough to arrange everything perfectly for this marriage? A man puts forth manly efforts. There is no use of big talk." So replying Shankara, he said to Kubera, "O Kubera! Come aside. I have work with you." So saying he took Kubera away from the assembly, to the foot of the green gram tree on the banks of Pushkarini to speak to him privately. He took with him Brahma and Rudra. There he spoke to Kubera in confidence, "You should finance

me and allow the proceedings of my marriage to fruition at the beginning of Kaliyuga. When I incarnate, I do not bring any wealth, nor do I take back from here the wealth earned here. I manage my incarnations in accordance with the tenets of the Yuga, and time. Therefore, in accordance with the Yuga, the land, and my age, lend me the money satisfying the demands of time and space. And I shall repay you according to the yuga-dharma." To him said Kubera, "Just as one borrower does to the lender, if you also given me in writing about the mode of your repayment, I shall lend you money." Srinivaasa accepted the condition and asked Brahma to draft the document. Brahma wrote the document in the following way: "In Kaliyuga, on the seventh day of the brighter half of the month of Vaishaakha in the year Vilambi, Srinivaasa has borrowed from Kubera an amount of fourteen hundred thousand nishakas bearing the impression of Raama, for interest, towards the expenses of his marriage. Beginning from the year of his marriage, within a thousand years, the loan will be repaid. This is written under witness of Brahma, for one and Shankara, for another, and the green gram tree, ashwatha tree, for the third. Thus Srinivaasa drafted the document and gave it to Kubera and borrowed money from him.

### **35. Srinivaasa feasts the gods and saints that have come to Venkataadri.**

Srinivaasa gave Kubera the money he had borrowed and asked him to arrange everything for the feast, rice, black gram, green gram, jaggery, oil, honey, milk, sugar, ghee, curds and all the others needed for the feast; clothes and upper cloth, and vestments; betel leaves, betel nut, cloves, camphor and the like spices; and the necessaries of the wedding, maangalyam, the thread, the toe-rings and the like other ornaments. As all these were arranged for, Shanmukha was sent for Agni and preparation of food items without delay was

commissioned. When Agni said, “But how can the cooking be done? There is not even a single vessel for the purpose,” Venkateswara replied, “In your houses, for any festive occasion, you have a number of cooking vessels. For my wedding feast to cook, there is not even one vessel. This is my fortune. But let me advise you: Swaamipushkarini shall be your vessel for cooking rice; Paapanaashana-thirtham, your vessel for dal; Aakaashaganga, your vessel for milk-rice; Devathirtham, your curry vessel; Tumburuthirtham, your vessel for lemon-rice; Kumaara dhaarikaathirtham, your sweetmeat vessel; Paandu-thirtham, your vessel for tamarind soup; the rest of the thirthams, your condiment vessels. So manage your cooking.” Agni said, “Be it so!” and cooked all sauces, all dishes as required and asked Srinivaasa to invite the gods, brahmins, and sages for the feast, and Srinivaasa sent Shanmukha to invite them. On the arrival of all those invited, they were all made to sit in lines from Paandu-thirtham to Srisailam. Then Srinivaasa asked Brahma to offer all the food items prepared to Sri Nrisimhaswaami of Ahobilam, as food unoffered to God should not be served or eaten. Brahma did so and made them all eat their food. Srinivaasa said humbly to them that they accept with good satisfaction even though it was little that he could offer them. Then all of them unanimously said in praise, “The food you have given us is like nectar, it is instrumental to finding the path of liberty. We are pleased.” After food, betel leaves and betel nut together with gifts were distributed to all. When all else had eaten, Srinivaasa with wife and children ate. At sunset all of them rested.

### **36. Srinivaasa with his train goes to Aakaasaraaja’s residence.**

The following morning, Srinivaasa woke up early, and asked Garauda to go to Brahma and tell him that ample preparations must be made for them to leave to Naaraayanapuram. Brahma gathered

the fourfold army and nearing Srinivaasa, said “All our men are gathered. Your lordship mounting Garuda, we may make a move.” Srinivaasa, on Garuda set out. Brahma in front, Rudra on the right and Vaayu on the left, and Kumaaraswaami in the rear, followed him. Lakshmidēvi got into a golden car. Vakula Started on a celestial chariot. As Srinivaasa set out with this retinue, Sēsha held the white parasol and Vaayu began to fan him and Vishwakṣena held the royal insignia. With sounds of drum and trumpet and musical instruments, and with actors and dancers leading the way, Srinivaasa set out. The way was filled with the gods, the sages, gandharvas and cows. The way from Sēshaachalam to Naaraayanapuram was so filled with them that there was no room even for a gingili seed. Srinivaasa’s retinue was moving to the city of King Aakaasha via Padma thirtham.

### **37. Sri Suka hosts Srinivaasa.**

When Srinivaasa reached Padmathirtham, Sri Suka prostrated to him and said, “Lord! After so long a time my penance has fructified because I have the good fortune of seeing you directly face to face while your presence is unapproachable to Brahma and Rudra. I am indeed greatly fortunate to see you in the midst of all your children, friends, rulers of the worlds and Sēsha and Lakshmi. How blessed am I! Kindly allow me to play your host and accept the herbs and roots I offer and favour me.” Hearing Shuka’s prayer, Srinivaasa said, “You are a celibate who has denounced all and mostly fasting. We are men of the world and many. Therefore I wish take no pains. We intend to eat at Naaraayanapuram.” To him Sri Suka said, “It is true I am a have-nothing. But if you eat, it is as the entire world has eaten. Therefore do accept my prayer.” Vakulamala also joined him, and Srinivaasa accepted Srishuka’s request and entered

his hermitage. Srisuka bathed in Padmathirtham and devoutly cooked rice, curry and sauce. He spread lotus leaves and served on them all the preparations and prayed prostrate that he should be blessed by eating. Pleased with his devotion, Srinivaasa ate the food that is fit for hermits. On his advice, Srimahaalakshmi and Vakulamala also ate. As Srinivaasa ate, the hermits were angry and began to rail at him and to pacify and satisfy the hermits, he belched. The air passing out of Srinivaasa's mouth satisfied all the hermits who then joyously praised Sri Shuka. Srinivaasa stayed there for a day and on the following morning, mounting Garuda, set out to Naaraayanapuram.

### **38. Aakaasaraaja with his people welcomes Srinivaasa.**

That evening, Aakaasaraaja got Padmaavati bathed, decorated, got her mounted on the elephant, and with her and with his son, along with priests, went to meet Srinivaasa, army following to meet Srinivaasa half way. His brother Tondaman also joined him. Seeing Srinivaasa mounted on Garuda, Aakaasaraaja alighted his chariot, and walking behind Padmaavathi and priest, and approaching Srinivaasa, humbly said to him, "Now is my desire fulfilled. The road to swarga is now open to me." Then he honoured Srinivaasa with clothes and ornaments, sandal paste and garlands. Padmaavati and Srinivaasa exchanged looks of love. Then Padmaavati and Srinivaasa were taken through roads beautified, as musical instruments sounded, and got them entered in a building decorated with diamonds of the sky. It was night then, past four hours. Then Srinivaasa said to Tondaman, "I, my Lakshmi, my mother Vakulamala, my son and all those who joined us for the marriage, are hungry. So let arrangements be made and let us be fed without delay. My food may be sent to my camphouse." Immediately Tondaman made arrangements and fed the hungry brahmins, hermits, and gods, and satisfied them. Different kinds of special rice and

sweetmeats were sent to Srinivaasa. He went in person and surveyed Srinivaasa's eating, and honoured him with clothes etc. and returned home, taking leave of him. Srinivaasa rested during the night with all his retinue.

### **39. Aakaasaraaja goes to Srinivaasa's residence to invite him to the wedding.**

Early in the morning of the following day, Srinivaasa woke up and said to Vasishttha, "I, Lakshmi, Brahma, my mother and our priest, the five of us should go without food today. In the palace of Aakaasaraaja, the king and his queen, the bride, her brother and their priest, all the five should fast. See that this is carried on." Then he called Kubera and said to him, "Go to the palace of the king and tell him that the auspicious time for the marriage is five hours past nightfall. It would be unpractical to think of feeding the brahmins then. So let them be feasted earlier." As Kubera told him so, Aakaasaraaja feasted the brahmins at an early hour and satisfied them with gifts and betel leaves and betel nut.

That evening, with the army walking in front, the king set out with Vaasudas, Tondaman and the priest, bringing with them a beautified great elephant, and reached Srinivaasa's palace to invite him for the marriage. Then Srinivaasa was sitting with the gods and the sages in the court-hall. Seeing Aakaasaraaja, Srinivaasa got up, met the king half way and, embracing him, said, "You are an aged man. Why must you take pains to meet me. Your son Vasudaasa could well have been sent." Then Aakaashraaja asked Vasishttha to get varapooja or honououring of the bridegroom, going. Vasishttha asked Dharanidevi to perform varapooja with the help of Arundhati. She was happy and worshipped Srinivaasa with sandal paste, betel leaves, betel nut and camphor. She offered him clothes and gems

and ornaments. Then the king got Srinivaasa mounted on the elephant and led him to his palace decorated with lights and festoons of gems, the gods and sages with auspicious music leading them. At the threshold of the palace Tondaman's wife showed camphor-light to Srinivaasa. Aakaasaraaja led Srinivaasa into his palace and made him sit on the diamond-studded throne on the diamond-studded platform supported by four pillars. The gods, the sages and the rest of them sat around Srinivaasa with Brahma, enthusiastic of watching the proceedings of the festive occasion.

#### **40. The wedding of Padmaavati and Srinivaasa.**

Dharanidevi bathed and adorned herself, and going with a brahmin to Swaamipushkarini, brought holy water in a pot of gold from the thirtham. Immediately the priest chanted sankalpam and gave madhuparkam. Then Aakaasaraaja washed the feet of Srinivaasa with the water made available by Dharanidevi and sprinkled the very water on himself and his family and palace and considered himself blessed by this act and his manes appeased.

As the auspicious time was up, Aakaasaraaja offered Srinivaasa ten million nishkams as gift. He also presented him with a crown weighing a hundred tolas and a necklace of similar weight and another of half of its weight and yet another of half of the weight of the second necklace, and seven valuable medals and one pearl necklace, and two ornaments for the shoulders, and two ornaments of pearl for the ears, and bracelets studded with diamonds, rubies and lapis lazuli, all weighing thirtytwo tolas, and ten rings and ornaments for his arms, and a golden waist-belt inlaid with diamonds, and footwear to Srinivaasa. In addition, he offered a dinner-plate weighing sixty tolas, two tumblers for drinking water and sixty-four blankets. Along

with these Padmaavati was given away to wife : Wetting his hand with the water of Swaamipushkarini sanctified by holy chantings, he gave Padmaavati into the right hand of Srinivaasa. After both of them wore the kankana or holy thread around the wrist as a token of dedication to the proposed act of marriage, Srinivaasa fastened the auspicious thread around Padmavati's neck as women sang auspicious songs. Then the priest made Srinivaasa offer fried grain to Agni as a ritual, as the fried grain was poured from Padmaavati's cupped palms into Srinivaasa's. After that, the entire ritualistic proceedings of marriage according to yajurveda tradition were conducted by the priest. Then the gods and the hermits blessed Srinivaasa in accordance with vedic tenets. Then Aakaasaraaja gave large gifts to all the brahmins. After the marriage, the priest, Srinivaasa, Lakshmi, Brahma, Vakulamala, Aakaasaraaja, his wife, Vasudaasa and the rest who did not eat earlier, did all have their food. The following morning women made Srinivaasa and Padmaavati bathe mutually. Aakaasharaja feasted all those sumptuously who were wedding guests, for four days. On the fifth day, naakabali was performed and Aakaasaraaja honoured the bride and the bridegroom with new clothes and ornaments, as they were seated on a diamond throne.

#### **41. Srinivaasa sets out with Padmaavati to Seshaachalam.**

After the marriage, Aakaasaraja gave Padmaavati under the care of Srinivaasa, mounted them on airavatham and sent them to the building where Srinivaasa was lodged as bridegroom. Later Srinivaasa went to the palace of Aakaasaraaja to tell him that he intended to leave for Seshaachalam along with Padmaavati on his mount Garuda. Aakaasaraaja requested him to stay there for a month before he left for Seshaachalam. But Srinivaasa decided to leave

immediately, saying that he had work to attend without delay. Aakaasaraaja and his wife Dharanidevi, blessing Padmaavati and Srinivaasa, arranged for their journey.

Behind them, Aakaasaraaja went with his family, carrying large, munificent dowry, and presented it to Srinivaasa. This is what it is: food –grain of a hundred garises or granaries; green gram of thirty granaries; heaps of jaggery, tamarind fruit; milk of a thousand pots; curds of a hundred pots; ghee of five hundred vessels; sugar of two hundred vessels; lots and lots of mustard, asafoetida, salt, and vegetables like brinjal, cacurbita pepo, plantain and roots and herbs; liquor of two hundred drums; ten thousand horses, a thousand elephants, five hundred cows, a hundred sheep, two hundred maids, three hundred grooms, several clothes, a diamond-studded couch, and so on and so forth.

Seeing all this dowry brought by Aakaasaraaja, Srinivaasa said to him, “O king! Why have you taken the trouble of following me thus far? You could have sent them with your son as well. I am pleased well by the marriage. Do not hesitate but ask me what you heartily desire.” Then Aakaasaraaja said, “By your grace, we have all the blessed things. There is nothing more that I desire. Grant me this that I with all my family shall ever be devoted to you unswervingly.” Then Srinivaasa blessed him with saayujyam or intimate union of beatitude. He blessed his brother-in-law with clothes etc. King Aakaasha consoled his son who was in sorrow and went back to his city.

#### **42. Srinivaasa decides to stay for six months at sage Agastya’s hermitage.**

Along with Brahma and Rudra, Srinivaasa reached the vicinity of river Suvarnamukhi. Being under the wedding vow, Srinivaasa

could not go up hill for the six months following. Therefore he decided to stay the six months at agasthyaashramam or the hermitage of Agasthya. He gifted clothes etc. to gods like Brahma and gave them leave to return to their places and they did so. Srimahalakshmi returned again to Karaveerapuram.

The Gods like Brahma, Eesha and noble saints,  
All having enjoyed all this out of delusion,  
Have all gone back to their several homes,  
Praising in affection all the kingly proceedings.

(Chapter 11, Bhavishyottarapuramam)

#### **43. Aakaasaraaja’s demise.**

While Srinivaasa and Padmaavati lived at Agastyaashramam, a messenger from Naaraayanapuram conveyed to them the message that Aakaasaraaja was on death-bed. Hearing the news, Srinivaasa, followed by Padmaavati and Vakulamaala and Sage Agastya, went to Naaraayanapuram. By evening he reached there and straight away entered the king’s palace and saw that Aakaasaraaja was breathing heavily. Aakaasaraaja could not speak to Srinivaasa and Agastya, however much they tried to make him speak. Srinivaasa was very much worried and began to weep like an earthly human. Then Aakaasaraaja, returning to his lights a little, said to Srinivaasa, “My son and his brother are bound to you. Protect them.” So he said and keeping their hands in Srinivaasa’s hand, giving leave to his wife for Sahagamanam, king Aakaasaraaja breathed his last. Immediately came a divine space-craft in which the king and his queen left for swarga-lokam. Vasudaasa cremated their bodies and performed obsequies in the order of brahma-medha. When all the obsequial rites were completed, Srinivaasa went back to Agastyaashram and lived there happily with Padmaavati.

**44. Tondamaan and Vasudaana quarrel for the kingdom.**

After the death of Aakaasaraaja, as Srinivaasa left for Agastyaashramam, there arose a feud between Tondaman and Vasudaana for kingship. Tondaman argued that kingship must fall to the younger brother of the dead king, and Vasudaana held that he must be heir to the throne hard-earned by the valour of his dead father. At the end of the feud, they came to a mutual agreement. According to the agreement, they would wage a war between them and the winner wins the throne while the other refrains from all protests. Both of them recruited armies and approached Srinivaasa for help. Srinivaasa could not decide whose cause to support, for he loved both of them. So he asked Padmaavathi's opinion. Padmaavati said to him, "My dear! Do not you know what is right to do? Why ask me about it? You should do the right, as the elders say. Don't you think that it would be proper to protect the younger one who is also an orphan?" Hearing her opinion, Srinivaasa, deciding to support Vasudaasa, gave his conch and chakram to Tondaman and went on horse-back to help Vasudaasa. The battle between Tondaman and Vasudaasa began and, like the war between the Kurus and Paandavas, rose to fearful proportions. After some time, Tondaman beat Srinivaasa with the chakram. Srinivaasa swooned with the blow and like a human, fell to the ground. At the time Padmaavati was watching the battle from atop the rampart and said to sage Agastya, "O sage! Look, Srinivaasa swoons. What plight has befallen him! What should I do? Advise me, sir!" To her sage Agastya said, "All the kings on the battleground are engaged in their duties. There's none to take care of your husband. Kshatriyas on the field are possessed by the warring spree. Therefore their focus lies only on the living bodies. None looks at the motionless. So, you do well to go to the battle field and pull your husband out of the

scene. It is your duty as his wife. Whoever wins the battle, be it your brother, be it your uncle, it makes no difference for you. Therefore go and help your husband. It seems to me that a truce would be better." Taking his advice Padmaavati went to the battle-field on a palanquin and did first aid to Srinivaasa, making him regain his senses. Srinivaasa got up as from a sleep, saw Padmaavati and twitching his eyebrows in anger asked her, "What has a woman to do on a fearful warfield?" and turning to Agastya, said to him, "Let her withdraw from this field forthwith." To him Agastya said, "O lord! Make truce between the two. Padmaavati comes here to pray you to make truce between her uncle and her brother." Still Srinivaasa's anger was not calmed but he said again, "O sage! It is not meet that women foot the battle-ground. I shall now destroy Tondaman and his son and crown Vasudaasa King." Hearing his words, Padmaavati cupped her hands before her and again prayed, "O life of my life! O kind and compassionate! Be merciful. Do you intend to destroy the world? Both of them are rightful claimants to the kingdom. So divide the domain and treasury equally between them. Let the worlds be at peace. Stop this war." Srinivaasa did not accept her advice but said again, "you know nothing of kingliness. Go out of the battle-field. I shall now slay Tondaman and give the kingdom to Vasudaasa. Or, I shall fall flat lifeless in the war for the sake of Vasudaasa." Hearing this, Padmaavati was shaken top to toe and prayed Agastya to wean Srinivaasa from war. Agastya, as she desired, said to Srinivaasa, "O Lord! Make peace between Tondaman and Vasudaasa and bring about a truce. Divide the domain and treasury equally between them." Srinivaasa agreed and asked Tondaman, "What is your wish?" and Tondaman replied, "Lord! Your word is law. I shall do as you say." Then Srinivaasa asked Vasudaasa, "your sister is for a truce. What do you say?" Vasudaasa replied, "I never transgressed your order.

Do as you judge right.” Srinivaasa Knew that both of them were not averse to peace and made peace between them. The domain, the treasury and the fortresses were all equally divided. Srinivaasa said to them, “It is just that you part with a sixteenth of your legacies either to me who came ready to lay by my life or to Padmaavati. They agreed and gave thirty-two villages to Srinivaasa. Then Srinivaasa installed Tondaman in his Tonda Kingdom and Vasudaasa in Naaraayanapuram, boarded in each house for a day and returned to agastyaashramam with Padmaavati.

(Chapter 12, Bhavishyottarapuranam)

#### **45. Srinivaasa instigates Tondaman to build the divine temple.**

One day Tondaman came to see Venkatesha who was delighted to see him and, embracing him, enquired of the business on which he came. Tondaman said, “I come to see you. I have no special purpose. Great sages and noble men say that you are the noblest of all described by the Vedas. Hearing this, I come to worship you.” Hearing him, Srinivaasa expressed his sorrow over the death of Aakaasaraaja and said to him, “I am made a family man by your brother, King Aakaasha, but I have no building to live in. I cannot bear the common talk that the son-in-law of King Aakaasha resides in another’s house. Dependence is woeful. Therefore build for me a house. In all the three worlds I do not find another person suitable to be remembered for such an act.” Hearing Srinivaasa’s desire, Tondaman promised him to build for him a living house. Srinivaasa climbed up Sessaachalam along with Padmaavati on an auspicious day ruled by an auspicious star. On permission from Varaahaswami, the land for building the house was settled to be south of Swaamipushkarini. He was told to build the temple facing east. The temple should have two domes, three compounds, seven doorways

and a main mast. The temple should be complete with aasthanamandapam, yaagamandapam, cattle-shed, granary, flower house, a house for clothes, one for oil, one for ghee, one for eatables, one for ornaments and one for camphor and others such. It should be beautified with copper coverings and gold. Then Srinivaasa added, “In the past you had got good reputation for building Sreethirtham and Bhoothirtham. Now build a stone building for me and prosper.”

#### **46. History of Tondaman’s past life.**

Hearing Srinivaasa’s words, Tondaman in wonder asked him, “O lord! How did I make water wells in the past? How did I manage it, in what form? Enlighten me.” Prayed by Tondaman in this fashion, Srinivaasa began to tell him of his past life.

“In the past, a hermit called Vaikhaanasa heard the story of the incarnation of Krishna and, desiring to see Krishna’s form physically materialized, made very hard penance. God, being pleased with his penance, incarnated before him in the form of a cowherd or Gopaala. Then the hermit said that he would worship God Krishna’s form. And to him God replied, “You should not worship Krishna’s form. You should worship the form of Srinivaasa. Go to Sessaachalam. There in an ant-hill dwells Srinivaasa. Worship him. On your way, one called Rangadaas meets you. He shall help you in your worship.” Having heard these words, the hermit Vaikhaanasa set out on his journey to Venkataadri. On the way, Rangadaas met him. With him he reached Venkataadri and worshipped Srinivaasa who was dwelling in the ant-hill. Rangadaas fetched flowers for his worship. Rangadaas dug a well to water the flower-garden he intended to raise. One day in the spring season, a gandharva was engaged in amusing himself along with his wives in the waters of Swaamipushkarini. Rangadaas was watching them while the time

for the worship passed by and flowers were delayed. The hermit was angry for the delay. But seeing the repentant Rangadaas, the hermit said again, "Do not fear, o Rangadaas! You came under an illusion by my will. As you are repentant, all will be well with you. You leave this mortal coil here on the banks of this sacred Swaamipushkarini and get another birth as a son of Sudharma, by name Tondaman and rule the domain called Tondamndalam with great reputation. You will be devoted to me. Therefore leave this body of yours here and now." Obeying the Lord's command, he left his body. You are that very Rangadaas. Then, as Rangadaas, you dug a waterwell for my flower garden. Now build a temple for me and be renowned."

#### **47. Srinivaasa enters the temple built by Tondaman.**

Tondaman, hearing his earlier birth's story from Srinivaasa, cleaned the water well he dug in his earlier birth and built a structure high and diamond-studded, with the idols of the four deities and Garuda, and with a golden pot atop. He also laid a way with stairs for the convenience of the devotees who visited the place, for a length of eight miles. He provided roofed shelters and water wells along the way for pilgrims to rest and quench their thirst. When all this was done, Tondaman approached Srinivaasa and submitted to him saying, "Lord! As you wished, the temple is ready. Kindly enter your temple." Srinivaasa in reply said to him, "I am pleased with your devotion. I am right now following you." So saying, Srinivaasa followed him to the temple with gods like Indra, great hemits, vedic chantings and music of instruments and Padmaavati, all following him. Tondaman led the way and entered the Lord into the temple. Srinivaasa made this Aananda-nilayam to built by Thondaman, his residence. As it creates Aananda the people, it is reputed as Aananda-nilayam.

Srinivaasa took Lakshmi who was seated in a lotus, into his own heart. Srinivaasa dwells in Aananda-nilayam with his left hand on his waist and his right showing his lotus-feet, but devoid his sankham and chakram. The posture indicates that this worldly life is but waist-deep for those who surrender themselves at his feet.

(Chapter 13, Bhavishyottarapuranaam)

#### **48. Brahma causes lamp-lighting celebrations.**

Brahma offered two lamps to Srinivaasa for the welfare and prosperity of all things in the world and prayed him for the boon that Srinivaasa should live on earth incarnate till the end of Kaliyuga, so long as the two lamps stay lighted bright and so long as the temple stays uncollapsed. Srinivaasa said "Be it as you wish" and told him that a celebration should be got up beginning with dhwajaarohanam or erecting the main mast and ending with rathaarohanam or ascending the chariot, with all the several mounts scheduled within the time span. Srinivaasa also asked him to arrange for his Kalyaanam or marriage to be ceremoniously performed with offering of several kinds of rare sauces and dishes and with the chantings of the vedic scholars. Brahma said that he would do as he was told and commissioned Tondaman to get ready for Srinivaasa mounts of several kinds and a chariot of wood. He Suggested that the mounts, the parasols, the fans and staffs of authority may be made by Viswakarma who attended to the orders of Brhama and got every thing ready immediately.

Then Srinivaasa said to Brahma and the king, "A celebration is said to be the noblest when people from all places gather to celebrate it. Therefore, invite the kings of the different domains to attend the celebrations." In accordance with Srinivaasa's instructions

Tondaman sent messengers to all the kingdoms. The following kings attended the celebrations complying with Tondaman's invitation: anga, vanga, kalinga, pauganda, kaashi, kaambhoja, kerala, viraata, kuru, jangala, Barbara, pandya, cheri, matsya and sindhu. All the four castes of people, braahmana, kshatriya, vaishya and shudra, and forest-dwelling tribes, all participated in the celebrations. All that came offered to Srinivaasa their moneys, clothes, ornaments, bodies, lives and pleasures. Brahma honoured as fit the kings and the sages and, on the second day of kanyaamaasam, made a beginning with dhwaja-arohanam conducted by Vaikhaanasa, and took out a diamond-studded human-chariot to Srinivaasa and asked him to go round the holy place on the chariot.

#### **49. On command of the Lord, Brahma creates the four idols of the Lord.**

But Srinivaasa asked Brahma to mould four images or idols of Srinivaasa representing the four Vedas. As instructed by him, Brahma made four idols and named them: The first was the small one, taken out in festive procession, called utsava-moorti; the second was the fierce moorti called ugra Srinivaasa moorti; the third was sarvaadhipa Srinivaasa moorti; and the fourth was lekhaka Srinivaasa moorti. To all these four idols the source or primary idol was Srinivaasa the Lord of Venkata. Brahma created abhimaana devatas or deities of patronage. Utsav Srinivaasa was under vow for processions of the celebrations. The six types of cooked rice, namely jaggery rice, gingili rice, milk rice, green gram rice, black gram rice, curds rice; and sweetmeats like fried sweet-cakes of jaggery, gingili cakes, black gram cakes and modakas; and many different sauces to be offered to God in worship and brahmotsavams, were all got prepared by Brahma.

#### **50. The order of the celebrations got up by Brahma.**

Brahma caused the celebrations of street processions preceded by erecting the main mast or dhwajaarohanam in devotion to Lord Srinivaasa. The day before dhwajaarohanam, in the evening, accompanied by Anantha, Garuda, Brahma, the hermits and Vishwakshena, the earth dug out from the ant-hill situated outside the city was brought on an elephant and the celebrations were initiated. The following morning dhwajaarohanam was consecrated. Thus begun, the celebrations for Srinivaasa was caused to be performed in full with vedic rites, covering avabritam and pushapayaagam. On the first day of the celebrations, the day of dhwajarohanam, manushyaandolika or human swing was the Lord's mount. On the night Sesa-vaahanam was used as mount. The second night, hamsa-vaahanam or swan-mount was used. On the third, Simha-vaahanam or lion-mount was the first and during the night the second mount was mauktika-mandapam or pearl-pavilion. On the fourth day, at dawn, the mount of kalpavriksham or the tree of plenty was used. On the night, sarva-bhoopaala-vaahanam or the mount of all kings was used as the second mount. On the fifth day the Lord wore the guise of Mohini and the palanquin was his mount. On that night the Lord was in the form of Srinivaasa and Garuda was his mount. On the sixth day the first mount was Hanuman and the second was Mangalagiri-mount when he went with Padmaavati to attend the Vasantotsavam or celebration of spring and the third, during the night, was airavatam the divine elephant. On the morning of the seventh day the mount was surya mandalam or the orb of the sun, and in the evening when he went out to stroll in the flowergarden with his queens, the mount of Mangalagiri and at night the third was chandramandalavahanam or the mount of the orb of the moon. On the eighth day, the first mount was a chariot decorated fully well in

the morning, and horse mount at night. On the ninth day, first in the morning was the palanquin, and then Mangalagiri-vaahanam when the lord went for avabhrittha-bath for the ritual of the wedding. He was taken round Swaamipushkarini with vedic chantings before the bath, anointed with auspicious powders on the Mangalagiri-vaahanam. Avabhrittha-snaanam was performed on the day of the avatar conjoined with the star Sraavanam. At night during the dhwajaarohanam celebrations Mangalagirivaahanam was used again. The next day pushpayagotsavam was performed. After that, all the kings from the other countries were honoured and they left for their respective places. All the gods, witnessing the celebrations of the Lord, went back to their places. Brahma, doing homage to Srinivaasa, left for his own world. Tondaman completed the celebrations and, paying due salutations to Srinivaas, took his leave, left for his city and, installing Venkatesha in his own palace, worshipped him. He ruled the earth with truth. Upholding dharma, himself tranquil and unimpassioned, he went through the cave-way path to Srinivaasa and worshipped him.

### **51. The story of the brahmin called Kurma.**

As the month of kaartikam set in, a brahmin of vasishttha-gotram called Kurma took the remnant bones of his father and, on his way to Kaashi for a holy bath in river Ganga along with his wife and children, visited Tondaman's palace, having heard of his reputation. He left his wife Mahaalakshmi and son Raaghava outside the city and saw Tondaman enthroned, blessed him with vedic chantings and said to him "O king! I have heard your reputation and therefore have I come to you." Then the king asked him on what purpose he came to see him and Kurma replied, "My father passed away. I am on my way to Kaashi to submerge my father's ash and bones in the

waters of river Ganga. On the way my wife has become pregnant. Moreover, my five-year old son is unable to walk the way. So if you protect these two here, I shall go to Kaashi, perform the obsequial rites and return to take them away home with me." Hearing him, the king said "Let it be so", gave the brahmin money and sent him off. The wife and son of the brahmin bade him farewell, expressing their wish for his quick return, and went to live under the roof of the queen. After the brahmin left, the king put his wife and son in a separate house with provisions and the other necessaries sufficient for six months, locked the house with chains and arranged strict vigilance for two miles around to ward off any possible intruding mischief-mongers. Thus insuring their safety, the king was engaged in his kingly duties. Because of administrative tensions he had no opportunity to think of them again. Two years passed by when the brahmin Kurma returned to Tondaman carrying on his shoulders Kaashi-kaavadi or a yoke with a sling on either side, having bathed in river Ganga at Kaashi and performed obsequies in Gaya. He said, "O king! By your kindness I have completed the religious ritual at Gaya. I have brought with me the holy water of river Ganga. Bathe in it and be free from sins." Hearing him, the king remembered the brahmin's wife and son and became perturbed and petrified thinking about their safety. After some time, he gathered himself and calmed his mind. The brahmin saw the king's condition and was sad, but seeing him regain his normalcy, asked him whether he was well. He said to him, "I left my pregnant wife here. Has she delivered a child? I am worried as I am still in the dark about her welfare. My son used to take interest in playing in water-tanks. Is he safe? My wife has not come till now to see me. Day in and day out, they have been on my mind always. I fear for them. Where are they?" Hearing his words, Tondaman, collecting his heart, said to him, "O noble

brahmin! Do not fear. Your son's safe and your wife gave birth to a female child. I saw a number of women but never saw your wife. I shall tell you about her. As it was a Friday yesterday it was the day of Venkatesha's abhishekam or holy ritual of bathing. All my women went to see the Lord on this occasion. Your wife also went with them in the company of her son and daughter to Venkataadri. Today or tomorrow or the day after your wife shall come to you." So he consoled the brahmin and, secretly sent for his son and told him, "Go to the house where the wife of this brahmin was lodged and, breaking the chains and unlocking the door, see her and bring her along with her son to me immediately." When the prince went there and saw it was only a bundle of bones that he saw there. The prince thought that, because of this calamity the continuity of his dynasty will be cut off, and said to his father, "Sire! Our royal dynasty has fallen on evil days; The wife of the brahmin Kurma along with her son is dead. Only their bones remain. All this has so happened as we have forgotten to think of providing them food." The king supplied the brahmin with provisions of food and, when he left to the water-tank for a bath, he took his son with him and went to Venkataadri to seek protection of Lord Srinivaasa. He fell on the feet of Srinivaasa and wept. Seeing him, Srinivaasa asked him, "O king! Why have you come here at the wrong hour? And why do you weep? You are known for composure and archery. What makes you weep in spite of these virtues?" But the king made no reply but kept on weeping and Srinivaasa, reading his thoughts, said to him "O king! I know your mind. You have sinned and it amounts to my sinning. What should I do? Go back home. You did what you ought not to have done. I have become a sinful wicked one of never-ending sorrow. I should either pay it with my untimely death or be condemned to hell, but my devotee should not become accursed. My devotee should

not fall on adversity, for you are not lacking in devotion to me. You perpetrated a cruel sin. What shall I do? Where shall I turn? I shall bring the dead back to life, for the affection I bear you. May I be known in kaliyuga as the one who freed his devotee from a great sin. Send your son and fetch the bones of the dead." As instructed, the king sent his son for the bones of the dead. Going speedily for them and grabbing the bones, bundled them in a piece of cloth and he handed them over to his father safely and said to Srinivaasa that the bones were brought and prayed that the dead brahmins may now be brought to life. Srinivaasa then took the bundle of bones, went to paandu-thirtham which was on the eastern side of swaamipushkarini and in a holy water ditch there called Devakhaatam stood in neck-deep water and sprinkled water with his cupped hands on the bones which he placed outside water on a stone. No sooner did he do so than the brahmin woman and her children took shape and came to life. On that thirtham there was a rain of flowers. All who looked on were puzzled. As the bones took normal shapes and came alive in that thirtham, it came to be known as asthi-thirtham. The gods then promised that all those dead who were in hell would go to heaven if their bones were submerged in this thirtham. Thus bringing to life the brahmin woman along with her son and handing them over to the king, Srinivaasa said, "As your brother was my benefactor, I have paid back your help a hundred fold. From now onwards I shall remain mute. I shall not speak with any one but the one who is totally alone. In this kaliyuga, hereafter, I shall speak only through another person. O king! Go back to your city. Give the brahmin his wife and son and rule your kingdom without restraint. Then, by his leave, Tondaman went back and united the brahmin with his wife and child, and told him all that had happened. Then the brahmin Kurma asked his wife even in the presence of the king

where she had been so long. Then she replied, “What shall I speak of the Lord’s maaya! I have seen a strange expansion of the worlds in the stomach of Srinivaasa. I have seen Brahma and the other gods. I have seen all the worlds, all the seven seas, mountains, forests and trees.” The brahmin was struck with a sense of shame on hearing her words and said, “What good is my birth? Of what value is my vedic scholarship? What use is my penance? Your life has been meaningful. You have seen such scenes in the stomach of Naaraayana as may not be seen even by the three-eyed Shiva. “Tondaman also wondered how virtuous the woman must be to see the cosmic sights she had. The brahmin Kurma applauded the great power of Tondaman’s devotion and left the place for his native village with pleasure.

### **52. Tondaman offers worship of thousand names to Srinivaasa.**

After the Brahmin left, Tondaman thought of Srinivaasa’s might with wonder and also realized that Srinivaas was angry with him and asked sages like Angirasa what he should do to please Srinivaasa. To him said Angirasa, “To please Srinivaasa, worship him with holy basil leaves uttering his thousand names. Tulasi or holy basil is dear to him. If you do so, Srinivaasa will incarnate before you.” As instructed by Angirasa the king worshipped Srinivaasa with golden holy basil, uttering the Lord’s thousand names. Even though he worshipped him every day in this way for three months, Srinivaasa’s anger was not pacified. Then Tondaman was very much upset and prayed Srinivaasa like this : “Virtuous and kind ones like you ignore the misdeeds of their devotees. O Purushottama! Pardon the wickedness of this devotee of yours. Are you not the noblest of all those that grant boons! Be merciful to me, your devotee.” To this prayer Srinivaasa spoke with an unbodied voice. “Many devotees have I, but none like you. How do you expect to escape from the

terrible sin of causing the death of the brahmin woman and her son? I gave them a new lease of life, considering your brother’s services to me.” Hearing this, the king was out of his wits, but regaining his senses, he said, “O Hari! Helpers do not talk about their deeds. Even a stupid does not talk about the services he has done. I am the best of your devotees. Who is better than me or like me in all the three worlds?” Hearing this boast, Srinivaasa kept quiet. Again Srinivaasa was worshipped with golden holy basil leaves.

While the worship continued like this, one day Tondaman saw on one of the golden holy basil leaves earthen basil flowers. On another day Tondaman saw the golden holy basil leaves thrown away and the earthen holy basil-flowers on the feet of the worshipped Lord. From this Tondaman understood that Srinivaasa’s anger was not pacified and, weeping aloud, said, “O God! Why do you ignore this wicked and unprotected me? Which noblest devotee’s offerings are earthen holy basil flowers that you are accepting?” Prayed by Tondaman like this, Srinivaasa told him in the following manner.

### **53. The story of pot-maker Bhima.**

“I have many devotees. One of them, the pot-maker called Bhima lives at a distance of eight miles north of this place. He worships me day after day very devoutly, in the form of a wooden piece in a hole in an earthen wall. Every day, after attending to the calls of nature, in a tranquil mood he bathes and worships me in an ordained ritualistic manner with holy basil leaves made of mud. Being pleased with his devotion, I accept his worship. Go there daily and see him and his wife and learn that my devotees are many and of manifold ways and realize that your words declaring yourself the noblest of my devotees, are but egotistic.” Hearing these words, the king immediately left the sacred place of worship and without his formal

royal insignia went on foot enquiring after the pot-maker's house and reached there. As soon as he reached the threshold of the potmaker's house, the king fell unconscious. Hearing of this, the pot-maker ran out crying, "What hardship is this! The king has swooned! What misdeeds have I done!? I have always been law-abiding!". As the potmaker wailed in this way, the king regained consciousness and said piteously, "Where is potmaker Bhima? O where!? He is a great devotee of Vishnu. I am ever saluting his venerable feet. "When the king said this, the Lord incarnated before the potmaker who in an ecstasy praised the Lord. The Lord in all compassion asked Garuda to bring the potmaker to him. When Garuda did so, the potmaker devoutly said to the Lord of gods, "O soul of all souls! Why have you come to the house of this shudra? I am not a jnaanin or a knowledgeable person like Vidura and Sabari and Gajendra and Uddhava and Vibheeshana, am I? What have I in my house that is a fit offering for you?" Hearing him speak so, his wife Tamaalini said, "O Govinda! My mind is awake in you. I have no knowledge of any mantram or holy chants. I have not performed noble deeds. For the likes of us born of a heinous caste, vedic learning is unthinkable and penance, unpractical. Be pleased, for the devotion of my husband and of me, to accept the food I have cooked as offering and eat it as pleases your heart." As she spoke, the Lord was pleased with her devotion and kindly said to her, "O Tamaalini! I shall eat the food you offer in devotion." So saying, the Lord together with Lakshmi ate the food served by the potmaker and his wife and granted them the final bliss of beatitude. All the gods praised Srinivaasa. Drum-beats of the gods were heard. There was shower of flowers. A spacecraft from above descended. Srinivaasa gave his crown, sankham, chakram, kaustubham, peetambaram and all ornaments to the potmaker.

Lakshmi gave hers to Tamaalini. In all this splendour bestowed on them by Srimahaavishnu, the potmaker and his wife mounted the divine spacecraft and went to Vaikuntham, as king Tondaman looked on.

#### **54. Srinivaasa blesses Tondaman with liberation.**

Seeing the potmaker and his wife gone to Vaikuntham, Tondaman in shame for himself said to Srinivaasa, "O God! You have granted final bliss to a potmaker of my kingdom who has ever involved himself in common activities of life, not above sin. What is in store for me who am your relative?" Srinivaasa replied, "Leave this fleshly body of thine and own another. Then worship me and win Vaikuntham." Told so by Srinivaasa, Tondaman bathed in Swaamipushkarini, left his mortal frame, got another body, worshipped God Srinivaasa as instructed and became liberated.

Thus Vishnu accompanied by Lakshmi,  
By his miraculous acts on the hill,  
Bestowed on saints and sages their hearts' desires  
And ruled the world applauded by the gods.

(Chapter 14, Bhavishyottarapuranam)

Whoever listens to this story that fulfills desires, shall on this earth  
have all pleasures and beatitude thereafter.

The end of the third chapter

The End

Of Venkataachala-maahaatmyam as told in  
Bhavishyottarapuranam

Glory be to the Lord of Venkataadri , Lakshmi's Lord,  
A treasure-Trove of graces, Giver of the desires:  
May he bless us with prosperity eternal!

THE END of the English version of Venkataachala-mahaatmyam  
translated by Chintagunta Subbarao from the Telugu text  
composed by Paravastu Venkata Ramanuja Swamy from the  
Sanskrit texts of Bhavishyottarapuraanam and Varaahapuraanam.

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