

Adiyongal Thirumadal

ISSUE 14

A SYDNEY ANDAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

JUL 2016

Welcome to the **FOURTEENTH** issue of Adiyongal Thirumadal !

To celebrate Emperumaanaar's 1000th year, Sydney Andal Group is planning to organize music, dance and upanyasams. Devotees may please send their suggestions to us.

Regular monthly chanting for July will be on the 9th July at 3 pm sharp

The chanting programme is

Podhu Thanians,
Thiru Pallandu.
Kanninum Siru Thambu
Aazhi Ezha Pasuram
Periyathiruvandahi
Thiruvezhukoottrikai
Periya Thirumadal
Ramanuja Nootrandadi

Devotees may please note that regular Eramanusa Nootranadhi chanting is going on every Tiruvadirai day of each month on Skype. If any devotee is interested to take part in it, you may please send us an email to **sydney.andal@gmail.com** and we will send you the skype invite.

Regular monthly chanting of Thiruvoimozhi to celebrate Nammalvar Thirunakshatram, Visakam is taking place at bhaagavatha's thirumaaligai. If any devotee is interested to host at their place, please contact us through the above email ID.

Please send us your feedback or comments to
Sydney.andal@gmail.com

Please visit our website **www.sriandalsydney.org** for latest updates.



Note the date in Jul

Periaazhwar – 13 Jul



minnAr thadamadhiL sUzh
villipuththUr enRorukAl sonnAr
kazhaR kamalam sUdinOm –
munnaL kizhiyaRuththAn
enRuraiththOm klzhmaiYiniR sERum
vazhiyaRuththOm nenjchamE!
vandhu

pANdiyan koNdAdap battar pirAn
vandhAn enRu INdiya sangkam
eduththUdha - vENdiya
vEdhangkaLOdhi viraindhu
kizhiyaRuththAn pAdhangal
yAmudaiya patRu

Introduction

We covered the fifth pasuram in the last session. Let us continue with the sixth pasuram.

Andal's thirty songs contain the cardinal principles of Vaishnava dharma. These songs are sung to bring peace, prosperity and Divine Grace. Andal appears intent upon performing a particular religious vow to marry the Lord, thereby obtain His everlasting company, and inviting all her friends to join her.

Overview

In the **first** pasuram of Tiruppavai, Andal focussed on the "Ashtakshara" mantram and celebrated it. In the **second** pasuram, she shifts her attention to the Dwaya mantram (Mantra Rathnam) and points out who qualifies for such anushtanams (observance) and the code of life after Saranagati. In the **third** pasuram, she elaborates on the powerful message of Charama SIOkam of GeethAchAryan. In the **fourth** pasuram, Godha and Her friends sing in praise of "God VaruNA, the God of rains" and request Him to bless them with copious rains for the Margazhi vratham observance. In the **fifth** pasuram, it is explained that all our sins will vanish like a blade of grass thrown into fire when we sing in praise of Krishna and worship Him.

From the **sixth** to the **fifteenth** paasuram, Bhaagaavtha ThirupaLLiyezucchi (awakening of the devotees of Lord Krishna) are covered. Ten important bhakthais deeply involved with KrishNa anubhavam are woken up to participate in the Paavai nOnbhu. Each of the Ten important devotees of KrishNa are awakened with one paasuram (6-15). In this sixth paasuram, the first one to be awakened is a young Gopi who is a novice in devotion to and love for KrishNa.

Pasuram 6 – Pullum Silambinakaan

Raga: Sankarabharanam Talam: Misra Chapu

pullum silambina kân pullaraiyan köyil
vellai vili sangin përaravam keppilaiyö*
pillây! ezundirây pëymulai natjunđu*
kalla ccagaðam kalakkaziya kkälöcci*
vellattaravil tuyil amarnda vittinai*
ullattu kkoñđu munivargalum yöggilalum*
meÿla ezundari enra përaravam*
ullam pugundu kulirndëlör embävây (6)*

புள்ளும் சிலம்பின காண் புள்ளரையன் கோயில்*
வெள்ளை விளி சங்கின் பேரரவம் கேட்டினலேவோ*
பிள்ளாய! எழுந்திராய பேவமுனை நஞ்சுண்டு*
களாச் சகடம் கலக்கழிவக் காலோச்சி*
வெள்ளத்தரவில் துயில் அமர்ந்த வித்தினை*
உள்ளத்துக் கொண்டு முனிவர்களும் யோக்களும்*
மெள்ள எழுந்தரி என்ற பேரரவம்*
உள்ளம் புகுந்து குளிர்ந்தேலோர் எம்பாவாய் (6)

ಪುಳುಂ ಶಿಲಮ್ಪಿನ ಕಾಣ್ ಪುಳುರೈಯ್ ಕೋಯಿಲ್ *
 ವೆಳ್ಳೈ ಮಳಿ ಶಂಗಿ ಪೇರರವಂ ಕೇಟ್ಟಲೈಯೋ *
 ಪಿಳ್ಳಾಯ್ ! ಎಯಿಂದಿರಾಯ್ ಪೇಯ್ಕುಲೈ ನಂಬುಂಡು *
 ಕಳ್ಳ ಬ್ಬಗದಂ ಕಲಕ್ಕುಯ್ ಕ್ಕಾಲೋಟ್ಟಿ *
 ವೆಳ್ಳತ್ತರಮಿಲ್ ತುಯಿಲ್ ಆಮರಾಂದ ಮಿತ್ತಿನೈ *
 ಉಳ್ಳತ್ತು ಕ್ಕೊಂಡು ಮುನಿವರ್ಗಳಂ ಯೋಗಿಗಳುಂ *
 ಮೆಳ್ಳ ಎಯಿಂದಿ ಎನ್ನ ಪೇರರವಂ *
 ಉಳ್ಳಂ ಪುಗುಂದು ಕುಳಿರಂದೇಲೋರ್ ಎಮ್ಮಾವಾಯ್ (೬)

ಪುಳುಂ ಶಿಲಮ್ಪಿನ ಕಾಣ್ ಪುಳುರೈಯ್ ಕೋಯಿಲ್ *
 ವೆಳ್ಳೈ ಮಳಿ ಶಂಗಿ ಪೇರರವಂ ಕೇಟ್ಟಲೈಯೋ *
 ಪಿಳ್ಳಾಯ್ ! ಎಳುಂದಿರಾಯ್ ಪೇಯ್ಕುಲೈ ನಂಬುಂಡು *
 ಕಳ್ಳ ಬ್ಬಗದಂ ಕಲಕ್ಕುಯ್ ಕ್ಕಾಲೋಟ್ಟಿ *
 ವೆಳ್ಳತ್ತರಮಿಲ್ ತುಯಿಲ್ ಆಮರಂದ ಮಿತ್ತಿನೈ *
 ಉಳ್ಳತ್ತು ಕ್ಕೊಂಡು ಮುನಿವರ್ಗಳಂ ಯೋಗಿಗಳುಂ *
 ಮೆಳ್ಳ ಎಳುಂದಿ ಎನ್ನ ಪೇರರವಂ *
 ಉಳ್ಳಂ ಪುಗುಂದು ಕುಳಿರಂದೇಲೋರ್ ಎಮ್ಮಾವಾಯ್ (6)



<http://gayasikrishna.blogspot.com.au/2011/03/thiruppavai-pasuram6.html>

Awaken, Oh Young girl! Even the birds have woken up and are chirping about the arrival of the morning. Don't you hear the loud and sacred sound from the white conch being blown at the temple of our Lord, who rides on the divine Garuda? Oh Young girl! Wake up!. The Yogis and Sages with minds known for uninterrupted contemplation of our great Lord celebrated for His adbhutha leelais. He (Our Lord) is the primal cause of the whole Universe. He sleeps on AdhisEshan in Yoga NidhrA at the milky ocean. The Yogis and sages have now come out of their meditation slowly and are reciting the name of Lord Hari loudly for seven times. The crescendo of that Hari Naama UccharaNam resounds like thunder and enters into our hearts and pleases us. Does'nt that aravam enter your heart too? Oh Young girl! Please Awaken and join us in the nOnbhu!

Commentary (Swapadesam) - Inner Meaning

PuLLum Silampina KaaNN: The Lord who took HamsAvathAram and the bird like AchAryAs (Parama HamsAs) who have received His anugraham , are performing upadEsam for us now.PuLLarayan Koil: For us like Pakshis (little birds) and Pasus (helpless Janthus), that one(white conch) present in the ashtAkshara roopa temple of the Lord (is blowing)

VeLLai ViLI Sankham: That one (Sankham), which is the embodiment of sathva guNam and which instructs us on all the rahasyArthams (is sounding).

pEr aravam kEttilayO? : Haven't you heard of that majestic naatham of the white conch? Its sound delivers the following message to us :
(1) Bhagavan is Sarva-Seshi, the Supreme Lord (Swami) of us all
(2) We, the chEthanams, are His seshans (eternal servants).

PiLLai YezhunthirAi: Please discard your childish attitude that the Supreme Lord and You are one and the same and gain true knowledge about Your Master-servant relationship with Him and awaken !

pEy mulai nanjunDu: Of those (AchAryAs), who destroy the avidhyai named Poothanai, which is the cause of ahankAram and mamakAram in us

kaLLa chakatam kalakka azhiya kaal Occhi : Of those (AchAryAs), who control and prevent our body (cart) drawn by the indriyAs from running in destructive directions thru their intervention

VeLLattharavil Thyuil amarntha: Of those (AchAryAs), who do not have any desire of swimming in the samsAra saagaram full of fierce snakes (Taapams)

Vitthinai: Of those great (AchAryAs) who set us on our journey in the Moksha margam (path) by being the seed of AchAram & anushtAnam

uLLatthil koNDu MunivarkaLum YogikaLum mella Yezhunthu: meditating on them (on those AchAryAs), the two kinds of prapannAs recognize clearly their insufficiencies to practise Bhakthi Yogam (One kind of prapannan is known for Bhagavath guNANubhavan and the other known for Kainkarya anubhavam or Karma yOga nishtai).

Hari YenRa pEraravam: approach the Lord and loudly request Him to eliminate the Paapams and PuNyams which are the seeds of SamsAric afflictions (approach AchAryan as Moksha bheeja BhUthan)

uLLam Puhunthu: That aartha naatham (sufferer's loud cry) of the PrapannAs entered through the Lord's (AchAryA's) ears and reached His (their) heart(s).

KuLirnthu: That sound reaching the Lord's heart made Him happy and contented; That anubhavam of the Lord (Achaaryan) made Him PrasAdha-Visishtan for us. Hearing this uplifting message and its effect on our Lord (AchAryan), Oh Girl, please awaken and join in the Nonbhu !

Special Comments on salient phrases in the pasuram:

(1) PuLLarayan Koil= Thirumanthram (AshtAksharam), the place of preferred residence (Koil) of the Lord.

(2) Sanghu = The Conch there (at that temple) is PraNavam.

(3) Inn (ViLi Sankhu+inn) = Iniya (Sweet) sound of NaarAyaNa padham in AshtAksharam.

(4) VeLLai= Sathva guNam.

(5) "VeLLai ViLi sankhin Peraravam KettilayO?" = Haven't you heard yet the rahasyArthams of the sweetest manthram arising from the sankha dhvani?

(6) pEy mulai najunDu= pEy is Moola prakruthi; its mulai (breasts) are bhuddhi and ahamkAram;

(7) nanju = the dhOshams arising from them. (8) KaLLa sakatam kalakkazhiya KaalOcchi= Sakatam is manOratham (abhilAshai); That sakatam unless directed towards the Lord is stealthy and defective.

(9) VeLLattharavu = SamsAra BhOga pravAham.

(8) Thuyil amarndha = directing the mind away from those dhukkham causing Bhogams.

(9) Vithtinai ULLatthu kONdu = by treasuring that Koota-sthAna AchAryan/Bhagavaan deep in mind and meditating with preethi.

"ULLatthuk KoNDu": When we get up, we utter the name of Hari, when we start travel, we say Kesava, when we eat we say GovindhA and when we are about to sleep, we say MadhavA. Lord is kept in the heart and meditated upon by Munis and Yogis.

(10) meLLa Yezhunthu: Hari yenRa pEraravam = arising slowly with the recitation of the name of Hari. That Hari naama sankIrthanam has swelled up to a loud ghOsham.

In the previous Tiruppavai pasuram, Andal and Her fellow gopis referred to and paid obeisance to the five forms of Sriman Narayana, such as Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Archai and Haardam. In this seventh Pasuram, Andal pays tribute to Sriman NarAyaNan as the one and only Supreme One.

Previous Articles

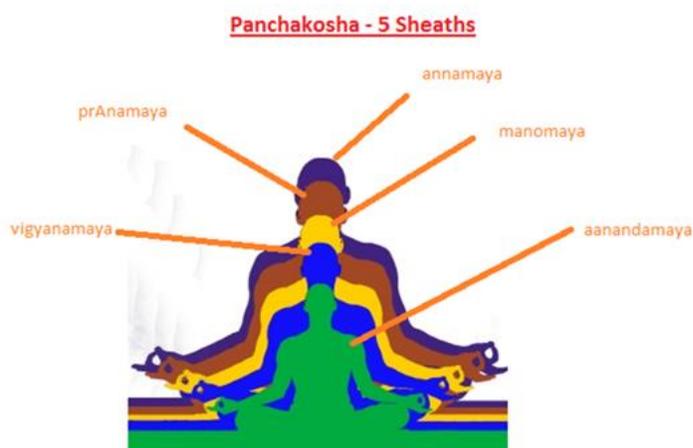
<http://sriandalsydney.org/index.php/literature/43-tiruppavai>

Brahmaananda is enjoyment in a relationship with the Brahman – Sriman Narayana. Sri Vaishnavargal seek Brahmaanandam through acharya kataksham. The intention of this article is to elaborate on the construction of human body as per Taittiriya upanishad. This article neither discusses moksha margam nor addresses a philosophical topic. The analysis presented here is objective to the upanishad on panchakosha which describes the construction of human body on physical, biological and psychological levels. Brahmaananda valli commences with phala

arthavaada meaning that the knower of Brahman (Sriman Narayana) attains the supreme “brahma vid apnoti param”. Arthavaadam provided in the beginning is to motivate the seeker to the goal. The following verse defines Brahman as satyam (unchanging universal truth), gyanam (all pervading consciousness) & anantam (without end). Sri Vaishnava Brahmaanandam begins having received acharya kataksham through pancha samskaram. The ceremony embeds the awareness of panchakosha with elements of the ceremony elaborating on physical, biological and psychological system, the panchakosha. Prior to providing the tApam (chakram and shankam), the acharyan guides the vidhyarthi (student) through meditation to prepare the mind for the journey. The acharyan may impart the knowledge of panchakosha prior to providing the tApam as a secret teaching. Acharyan expects that the vidhyArthi will continue meditation on perumal until unified with Brahman. Having set the context, let us begin with understanding a very high level design and formation of human from the Upanishad:

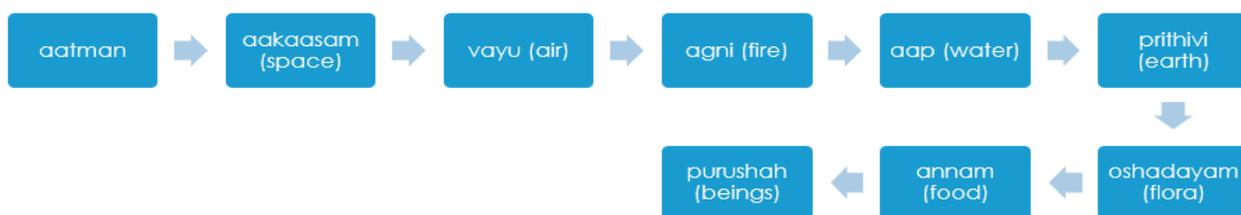
The first layer is made of food – our physical body as we see in the mirror. The body formed of the annam is called annamayakosha – the gross body. Since, all beings are sustained by annam and become annam, food is hence regarded by the upanishad as the eldest of all beings. It is declared that those who respects annam as Brahman attain all annam – sarva vai te annamaapnuvanti, yen annam brahmopasate.

Moving to invisible layers, subtler than the physical body is the body made of prana, the pranamayakosha. The pranasakti pervades the whole body and controls all bodily functions. The pranamayakosha takes the shape of annamayakosha just as water taking shape of the vessel holding it. Thus, annamayakosha is filled with pranamayakosha. Modern science has analysed human body and confirms that the body is ultimately made up of billions of atoms. These atoms contain electrons, protons and neutrons. It is also confirmed that there is space (aakaasham), air (vaayu) and gravity/attraction (shakti) within and between atoms. Thus the vaakyam is also verified. The upanishad suggests that those worshiping prana as Brahman attain fullness of life.



BrahmAnanda Valli – contd

Subtler than pranamayakosha is the layer of mind – manomayakosha. The Shruti suggests that the Brahman is beyond all speech and thought. For a baddha (saamaanya manushya –human being in leelavibhuti), manas being clouded with various thoughts is unable to access Brahman within - Sriman Narayana. At the same time, it also says 'na vibheti kadachaneti' meaning once the Brahman is known (not refer to an intellectual understanding) the cloud being removed, all bhaya (fears) cease. Thus, the upanishad provides an excellent tool to verify if a seeker knows Brahman. The measuring yardstick is 'fear'. As long as there is presence of fear in the mind, it can be confirmed that the seeker does not know Brahman yet.



Manomayakosha has a subtler sheath inside it known as the layer of vigyanamayakosha – thought-faculty (consciousness/wisdom). Sa vaa esha purusha vida eva – the shape of our vigyanamayakosha is as our annamayakosha (gross body) in a subtler form than previous layers. The Shruti describes that the thought faculty is made up of shradda (entire belief system of the being), rtam (order/discipline and honesty), satyam (truth), yoga (joining/unification) and mahat (The first born – referred to as Brahma (chaturmukha) and not to be confused with Brahman (Sriman Narayana) - the universal ego). Upanishad declares that the one who regards this wisdom as Brahman and does not sway from it attains all desires and leaves all paapam having left the body.

Vigyanamakosha is pervaded by aanandamayakosha which is also of the form of the being. Aanandamayakosha consists of priyam (pleasantness / kindness), moda (joy/delight), pramoda (excessive joy/delight) and the touch of Brahman (paramatma).

Each layer and what is contained within the layers represent our manifested forms of living experiences e.g. belief systems in vigyanamayakosha or bliss (joys we experience) within our aanandamayakosha as bhagavad Ramanujar said – are all real but temporary forms of experiences. Thus the first portion of Brahmaananda valli articulates on the physical, biological and psychological formation of human.

Bhagavad Ramanujar emphasised a lot on meditation within his works to understand our sheshatvam. Hence, Bhagavad aaradhana is extremely pertinent and meditation is also embedded into it. Archa aaraadhana/pooja is a guided meditation technique with practical application of knowledge, where paramAtma within the panchakosha is invoked onto the icon (known as bimba which means reflection)– through prana prathishta in order to ease the visualisation and meditation process.

The author pays his obeisance to Oppiliappan Koil Shri Varadachari Sathakopan, Shri U,Ve. Velukkudi Krishnan Swamy and Shri K.M.Sudarshan who have influenced this article by their incomparable works and commentary on Desika Prabandham including Adaikkalapatthu.

**seeronRu thUppul thiruvEngadamudaiyAn
pAronRach sonna pazhamozhiyuL OronRu
thAnE amaiyAdhO thAraNiyil vAzhvARku
vAnErap pOmaLavum vAzhvu**

Pasuram 9

**surithininai vivaiyaRiyun thuNivudaiyAr thUmozhiKaL
parithimathi yAsiriyar pAsuransErn tharukkaNangaL
karuthiyoru theLivALAR kalakkamaRuth thaththikirip
parithimathi nayanamudai paramanadi paNinthEnE.**

This pasuram can be literally translated as:

From the holy words of those great people who knew,

The Vedas and the Smruthis, from the holy pasurams,

And from the words great ones having brain as bright as the Sun,

I cut off my confusions and attained clarity of thought,

And surrendered at the feet of the God who had sun and moon as his eyes.

Meaning

Swamy Desikan says that As a prapannaa, adiyEn worships always the Lotus feet of PeraruLaaLan with a tranquil mind calmed by the clear understanding of the meanings (karuthiyoru theLivALAR kalakkamaRuth) of Sruthis, Smruthis (surithininai vivaiyaRiyun thuNivudaiyAr thUmozhiKaL), AzhwAr's Sri Sookthis (pAsuransErn tharukkaNangaL), Achaaryaa's (who had brains as bright as the Sun) Sri Sookthis (parithimathi yAsiriyar) that deal with the sookshmaarthams of Vedaanthams. Familiarizing oneself with Vedams, Smruthis, Azhwaar aruLiccheyalkaLs, Achaarya's sacred works and developing an understanding the subtle meanings of Vedaantham based on such Jnaanam, one develops clear Jnaanam, banish mental confusions and worship Lord Varadaraajan's sacred feet.

Swamy Desikan states that with a clear mind based on the understanding of the subtle meanings of Vedams, Smruthis and other sacred lore, he has chased away his ajnaanam and offered his saraNaagathy to Atthi Giri AruLaaLa Perumaan, who has the Sun and the Moon as His eyes (Parithi Mathi nayanam udai Paraman adi paNinthEnE).

Pasuram 10

**thirumakaLun thiruvadivun thiruvaruLun theLLarivu
marumaiyilA maiyumuRavu maLappariya vadiyarasunG
karumamazhip paLippamaippunG kalakkamila vakaininRa
aruL varathar nilaiyilakki lampenanA namizhnthEnE**

In this pasuram, Swamy Desikan extolls the virtues of Varadan, the Lord of Hastigiri and talks about the Angi of prapatti, viz. Athma SamarpaNam. Swamy Desikan says, adiyEn has joined without fail the majestic and glorious feet of the Lord, who is never separated from His beloved consort. He has the most bewitching beauty. He is an ocean of mercy. His dayaa for His devotees is unmatched. He is omniscient. He is easy of access to His devotees. He has the chEthanams and achEthanams as His body. He is the supreme Lord of all this universe. He is the one, who creates, protects and destroys all of this world and its beings. These auspicious attributes will never part company with the Lord. adiyEn has now arrived at the sacred feet of PeraruLaaLan of such anantha kalyaaNa guNa vaibhavam just as a clearly aimed arrow reaches its intended target without fail. Swamy Desikan states that he has indissolubly blended with the sacred feet of Lord Varadhan of such ananatha KalayaaNa guNams through the performance of Prapatthi.

Swamy Desikan describes the greatness and glories of Lord Varadaraajan with chiseled words:

He has Mahaa Lakshmi (ThirumahaL), who never leaves Him; He has the most enchanting body (Thiru Vadivu); He has apaara karuNai for those, who sought His refuge (ThiruvaruL); He has clear Jn~aanam and is Omniscient (teLL aRivu); He is bhaktha sulabhan (arumai ilaamai); He has the chEthanams and achEthanams as His body (uRavu/Sambhandham); He has the matchless ancient Kingdom (aLappu ariya adi arasu); He is the One, who creates, protects and dissolves everything as the Supreme Being (amaippu /creation, aLippu/ protection and azhippu/destruction). He is changeless (kalakkam ilaavahai ninRavan). He stays as the boon granting Varadhar (aruL Varadhar). He is a steady target (nilai ilakku) for the Mumukshus to offer their Prapatthi. adiyEn has arrived at this target like an arrow shot by a skilled archer and have united with those sacred feet (AruL Varadhar nilai ilakkil ambhu yena nAnn amizhnthEn).

Pasuram 11 (PHALA SRUTHI)

**ARupayan vERilla vadiyavarka Lanaivarkku
mARumathan payanumivai yorukAlum palakAlu
mARupaya nenavEkaN daruLALa radiyiNaimER
kURiyanaR kuNavurika Livaipaththung kOthilavE**

Swamy Desikan sums up Adaikkalappathu prabandham in this pasuram

Meaning

These ten verses dealing with adiyEn's SaraNaagathi at the sacred feet of the Lord of Kaanchi will shine without any faults forever. Swamy Desikan says, Bhagavathaas seek the Lord as upaayam and Phalan. They observe prapatthi once at His feet. The fruits of the one-time prapatthi, however last forever and are most enjoyable. Understanding the above truths and the significance of such a prapatthi, adiyEn has performed my own prapatthi and sung about them in a manner matching the blemishless anushTaanam of aathma samarpaNam.

Arul varadar



Adaikkalappathu urai sampoornam
kavithArkika simhAya kalyANa guNa Saline
Srimathe vEnkateSAya vEdhAntha guravE namaha
Sri PerumdEvi thaayaar sametha Sri Varadharaaja parabrahmaNE namaha
Swami Desikan thiruvadigale SaraNam

Varththai 13

13. ஆராய்ந்து விட்டேனோ திருமழிசையார் போலே

13. ArAyndhu vittEnO thirumazhisaiAr pOIE

Thirumazhisai Azhvar was born to Bhargava maharishi and Kanakangi a divine damsel in the kshetram of Thirumazhisai on the way to Tirumala from Chennai. He was abandoned by his mother as soon as he was born and was picked up by a low caste person and was brought up as his own son. Due to the grace of Lord Jagannatha of Thirumazhisai and being the son of a great rishi, he grew up with great knowledge of the sastras. He began to join and analyze various sampradhayams and eventually settled in Shaivism. At that time, Peyazhvar met him and through debate won him back into the Srivaishnava sampradhayam. He gained fame as a great devotee of the Lord and after much yatra settled in the divyadesam of Thirukkudandhai, from where he attained the Lord's divine feet. Lord Himself listened to him in two instances 1. moved away from Kanchi to another village along with His bed Sri Adhishesha and returned when Azhvar asked Him to come back 2. He asked Sri Aaravamudha Perumal why is he lying down when he has come to pray to HIM and when the Lord tried to get up and before he could sit up Azhvar asked Him to rest so He stays in half lying and half getting up posture still. He describes his journey into various religions and eventually reaching Srivaishnavam in his own words:

sAkkiyam kaRROm samaN kaRROm sankaranAr
Akkkiya Agama nUl ArAyndhOm - bAkkiyaththAl
sengatkariyAnaich sErndhOm yAm thldhilamE
engatkariyadhonRil

In Nanmugan Thiruvandhadhi, he talks about how he examined various religions and concluded that Sriman Narayana is the supreme Lord.

Remembering the greatness of this azhvar Penpillai asks "Did I analyze other religions and gave them up as false like Thirumazhisai Piran did?"

Varththai 14

14. நான் (அவன்) சிறியன் என்றேனோ ஆழ்வாரைப் போலே

14. nAn (avan) siRiyan enREnO AzhvAraip pOIE

In this sentence the word Azhvar refers to Swami Nammazhvar. In spite of being given the flawless knowledge ("mayaRvaRa madhinalam") by the Sriman Narayana Himself, in many of his pasurams Azhvar expresses his lowliness to Him.

Thirukkolor Ammal is asking "Did I understood my true nature and practice naichyanusandhanam like Azhvar did?"

In Periya Thiruvandhadhi 75, Azhvar says:

puvium iruvisumbum nin agaththa nl en
seviyin vazhi pugundhu ennuLLAy - avivinRi
yAn periyAn nl periyai enbadhanai yAr aRivAr?
Un parugu nEmiyAy! uLLu

In this pasuram, he shows the Lord to be the owner of everything - this world and paramapadham. After acknowledging Sriman Narayana to be so big he then expresses his amazement that this Lord is inside him. Since HE resides within Azhvar , he asks the question, 'who knows if You are big or if I am big'.

This is also broken a little differently. It could also be said that Azhvar is saying 'yAn periyAn'; 'nl periyai enbadhanai yAr aRivAr?' – that is, 'I am big, who knows if you are big?' The unsaid is that 'He is small'.

He is amazed that One who swallowed everything has allowed Himself to be inside Azhvar forever. This only shows His greatness. Because of this pasuram, Azhvar is called by the name 'periyAn' in Azhvar Thirunagari. It is also said that this pasuram is the reason why this work is called Periya Thiruvandhadhi, even though it is made of only 87 pasurams, unlike other Andhadhis in the 4000 divya prabandham.

Thirukkolor Ammal may also be asking "Am I capable of speaking like Azhvar did?"

Straightening of fingers

Alavandar sent Periya Nambi to Kanchi with the intention that Peria Nambi collaborating with divine Ramanuja will bring a big boost for the Vaishnavite world. Periya Nambi walked for four days taking rest only during nights and reached Kanchi on the fourth day evening. He met Thirukachi Nambi and paid his respects. He then stayed with Thirukachi Nambi and discussed with him till late in the night. He also said what Alavandar told him. The next day, both walked towards the temple.

At that time, Ramanuja was carrying water in a pitcher and walking towards the temple. Thirukachi Nambi told Periya Nambi to meet Ramanuja and took leave for doing his service at the temple. Periya Nambi was struck by Ramanuja's handsome and divine form and started to mumble Alavandar's composition (Vasuvanthaya Gunavaan Ruju:) and other slokas. These songs encapsulates the traits of Narayana like possessing everything, giving away every thing, filled with compassion, soft and sweet disposition, capable of doing everything etc. Hearing all these, Ramanuja approached Periya Nammbi with reverence and asked as to whose composition these were. He further said that he became pure just listening to these compositions.

Periya Nambi said these compositions were that of his Guru, Reverent Alavandar. Hearing his, Ramanuja wanted to know more about Alavandar and also enquired about his health. Periya Nambi said that Alavandar was frail but was fine till he left four days ago. Ramanuja enquired about the purpose of Periya Nambi's visit and invited him to come to his house to have food and take rest.



Periya Nambi said that his Acharyan, Alavandar was thinking about Ramanuja and had specifically sent him to invite and bring Ramanuja to meet Alavandar. He further said that Alavandar would have come personally, if he was well. Hearing this, Ramanuja was humbled and asked if he was meaningful enough to occupy the thought of the great Acharya Alavandar. He immediately said that he will deliver the water in the temple and start for Srirangam. Periya Nambi said that it will be a long stay in Srirangam and asked Ramanuja to make arrangements at home. Ramanuja said that God's order and Acharya's order have to be fulfilled immediately. He went and delivered water in the temple and prayed to Lord Varadaraja and was ready to start.

Ramanuja's Life and Teachings - contd

Periya Nambi was struck by Ramanuja's devotion towards Alavandar and his humility. Both of them started eagerly to meet Alavandar. They walked quickly and reached Trichy in four days. They crossed Cauvery and reached Srirangam. They observed that people were standing in groups and looked sad.

On enquiry, they found Alavandar had shed his mortal coil and left for heavenly abode. Ramanuja and Periya Nambi were inconsolable. They then went to see the body of Alavandar. The place where Alavandar's body was kept was charged with emotion and nobody spoke. Ramanuja looked at Alavandar and found the three fingers in his right hand were folded. He asked Alavandar's disciples, if the fingers were folded all the time. They said it has not been like this before and this is a recent happening. Hearing this, Ramanuja realised that there must be three things on his mind to be fulfilled.



Ramanuja declared that he will remain firmly within the fold of Vaishnavism and bring those in the dark (involved in worldly things) under the refuge of Sriman Narayana by investing them with Pancha samskara and teaching the Tamil Veda (Divya Prapandam). At this declaration, one finger straightened.

He then declared that for the benefit of the world, he would write a succinct commentary for the Sri Basya from the stand point of Vaisnavite philosophy, to bring out the truth and benefits to this world. At this declaration, Alavandar's second finger straightened.

He further declared that as a mark of respect for the sage Parasara Bhattar who wrote the crown jewel of the puranas, Vishnu Purana to uplift the world, He shall name a prominent Srivaishnava with his name. At this, his last finger also straightened.

(to be continued...)