

Adiyongal Thirumadal

ISSUE 36

SRI SYDNEY ANDAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

May 2018

Welcome to the **THIRTY SIXTH** issue of Adiyongal Thirumadal!

We are in the 5th month of our regular Skype chanting of **Swami Vedaantha Deskiar's** stothrams and prabandhams to mark swami's **750th Thirunakshathra year**. If any devotee is interested to take part in it, please send us an email to sydney.andal@gmail.com and we will send you the skype invite.

Next, on **4th June**, we will chant **Mahaveeravaibhavam, Gopala Vimsathi, Dhehalisstuthi** from **Desika Sthothraani** and **Geetharthasangragam, Mummanikovai, Navamani malai** from **Desika Prabandham**.

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.

Our regular monthly Naamadwar chanting will be on the third Sunday 20th May and the chanting details will be shared soon.

Please note since we are having Thiruvaimozhi chanting for Vaikasi Visakam at SVT, there will be no regular monthly chanting on 12th May.



Photos from Udayavar Thirunakshathiram 2018

Please send us your feedback or comments to sydney.andal@gmail.com. Please visit our website www.sriandalsydney.org for latest updates.

Answers to Quiz on Pages 8

1 – A, 2 – B, 3 – B, 4 – C, 5 – C, 6 – A, 7 – B, 8 – A



Prabandham

28th – Vaikasi Visaakam
Nammazhwar
Thirunakshathram

**SVT Chanting program for
Nammazhvar
Thirunakshathiram**

26th Sat 3pm – 6pm

Thiruvaimozhi 1/10 to 6/10
followed by Sattrumarai.

27th Sun – 10.30am – 12 noon.

Thiruvaimozhi 7/10 to 9/10

28th Mon 9.30am*

Thiruvaimozhi 10/10 followed
by Sattrumarai*

*timing TBC

108 Divyadesham (SriVaishnava Divyakshetram) - Sri Madhusudan Tatachar

This is the foremost of the 108 shrines glorified by the Alvars; all of the Alvars with the exception of Madhurakavi Alvar have sung of its glory. It is the one of the greatest centers of the Sri Vaishnava religion and among the most visited pilgrimage centers in India. Undoubtedly the largest temple in India, and one among the grandest, it is a treasure house of art featuring various architectural styles over a period of time. It boasts of the tallest temple tower in India. Referred to as heaven on earth it is an ancient center of worship - vibrant with tradition and festivals. The **Pancharanga Kshetrams** along the course of the Kaveri are Srirangapatnam (Karnataka), Srirangam, **Koyiladi (Anbil)** and Kumbhakonam and Indalur (Mayiladuturai).



Srirangam is very closely associated with Sri Ramanujacharya, the beacon of the Sri Vaishnava tradition of Hinduism. Tiruvanaikka or Jambukeswaram, one of the Pancha Bhoota Stalams (associated with the primary element water) of Shiva, is located in the vicinity. Srirangam is located near Tiruchirappalli in Tamilnadu.

Deities: Ranganathar is enshrined in a reclining posture (facing the South); while Namperumaal the festival deity in a standing posture is also housed in the main sanctum.

There is a shrine in the fourth prakaram, housing Ranganayaki Taayaar.

Traditions: Araiyaar Sevai, one of the ancient devotional art traditions of Tamilnadu, involving the expressive recitation of the Divya Prabandams, using movement, and music originated here under the auspices of Nadamuni (10th century CE). Araiyaar sevai is performed also at Srivilliputtur, Alwar Tirunagari and Melkote (Karnataka). The famous tamil literary work Kamba Ramayanam premiered here at Srirangam.

The Temple: This temple enshrines Ranganathar in the central sanctum, crowned with a gold plated Pranava Vimanam or Paravasudeva Vimanam. A total of 7 concentric prakarams surround this shrine, housing several mandapams, tanks and shrines. The area enclosed



108 Divyadesham (SriVaishnava Divyakshetram) (contd.)

by the outermost wall is over a hundred acres. Gopurams on the south and east of the 4th prakaram are the most impressive. A total of 21 towers adorn the temple.

The Srirangam temple tradition is an ancient one. The Silappadikaaram of the Sangam period refers to Srirangam. All of the Alvars (with the exception of Madhurakavi) have sung in praise of Srirangam. The first (surviving) stone inscription dates back to the period of Parantaka Chola (924 CE).

The pillars here go back to the Chola period (13th century CE). The 1000 pillared hall is also the product of the late Chola period, and is also in the 4th prakaram; its entrance is in the south. It is here where the adhyayanotsavam (involving the recitation of the Tamil Prabandam hymns) is held. At the southern edge of the huge open courtyard, the Vijayanagara rulers added the hall with 8 pillars with huge horses. The Krishna Venugopala shrine on the southern side is also of great beauty. The Garuda mandapam is located in the third prakaram. Its pillars go back to the Nayaks of 17th century Madurai. The Chandra and Surya Pushkarini tanks are located in the 3rd prakaram.

Legends: Legend has it that the deity Sri Ranganatha worshipped here, was originally worshipped by the clan of the Ishwakus, and it passed on to Rama. Rama upon his victorious return from Lanka, handed over to Vibhishana, who then proceeded to Lanka. Circumstances caused him to place it on the banks of the Kaveri, where Srirangam is now. A disappointed Vibhishana returned to Sri Lanka with the consolation that Sri Ranganatha would always face south - in the direction of Lanka. A Chola monarch by name Dharmavaraman is said to have created a temple here. Legend also has it that the original temple was flooded by the Kaveri and was rediscovered by a later Chola emperor.

History: Temple life at Srirangam evolved after Nadamuni (923 - 1023 CE) compiled the hymns of the Alvars and gave them a musical form. During Ramanuja's time (12th century CE), Srirangam was a well-established institution. The Pandya rulers, from the 13th century onwards gave the temple, immeasurable support; the gold plating of the vimanam being first of their endowments. The Hoysala kings, who set up a military base outside Srirangam also made contributions. The temple was desecrated by the Delhi armies in 1313, and was closed for 60 years. From the end of the 14th century, the temple came back to life, and much of what is seen today is a result of the rebuilding activity which happened during the time of the Vijayanagar rulers.

Festivals: An elaborate protocol of worship services is offered here throughout the day. On about 120 days, the Utsavamurthy is taken out in procession out of the inner sanctum. Aadi bhrammotsavam is celebrated in Panguni. The grand Adhyayanotsavam is celebrated in the month of Margazhi, involving the recitation of the Prabandham hymns or Alwar Pasurams in the thousand pillared hall.

Also in Srirangam is the Dasavataram temple, the only one of its kind, enshrining the ten incarnations of Vishnu along with Lakshmi Narasimhar and Vishwaksenar. This temple was built by Tirumangai Alvar and is now under the administration of the Ahobila Mutt.. The Tirumangaimannan festival is celebrated here.

Acknowledgment: Templenet

Varththai 53

53. காட்டுக்குப் போனேனோ பெருமானைப் போலே

53. kAttukkup pOnEnO perumALaip pOIE



After Dasaratha decided to coronate Rama as the king, he informed the good news to everyone in his kingdom and with the consultation of his gurus he set a date for the same. The night before the coronation ceremony, Rama performed a vratam along with Sita and prayed to Lord Ranganatha. However, due to the ill advice of Mantara, Kaikeyi had a change of heart and demanded two boons that she had from Dasaratha. With those boons, she asked that her son Bharatha be crowned the king instead of Rama and that Rama should go to the forest for 14 years. Hearing that Dasaratha was extremely sad and fainted. When Rama came to the palace of

Kaikeyi, she told Him about the two boons and that it was a royal decree that He go to the forest. Rama immediately accepted it and with great pleasure prepared to go to the forest.

Penpillai asked "Did I show steadiness in my heart and mind like Rama showed in following His father's word and give up the kingdom and go to the forest?"

Varththai 54

54. கண்டு வந்தேன் என்றேனோ திருவடியைப் போலே

54. kaNdu vandhEn enREnO thiruvadiyaip pOIE

When Rama and Lakshmana went in search of the abducted Sita, on the way they met Kabandha and killed him thereby liberating him of his curse. Before dying, Kabandha told them that they should meet with Sugreeva and make friendship with him and that he would help them in their search of Sita. They did the same and helped Sugreeva become the king of the vanara kingdom. Sugreeva then sent the vanaras in the four directions to find the place where Sita had been kept. In the southern direction went Angada, Jambavan and Hanuman (thiruvadi). Knowing that it would be Hanuman that would find Sita, Rama gave him a ring to show to Her to prove that he is indeed the messenger of Rama.

Learning from Jatayu's brother Sambhati, that Sita was kept in Lanka, Hanuman was selected by the vanaras to leap across the ocean to meet with Her. Meeting Sita in Lanka, Hanuman showed Her the ring from Rama, gave His message and made Her feel better. Returning to Rama, he told Him that he had seen Sita ("drushTA sItA"). He also gave Rama the head ornament from Sita that She had given him. Seeing the ornament and hearing the message, Rama became very pleased and embraced Hanuman tightly.

This selfless service by Hanuman is greatly praised by our acharyas. Pen Pillai recalls this and asked Ramanuja "Did I do service to the Lord like Hanuman did?" Showing the importance of kaimkaryam

Sri Vasihanava Way of Divine Life - Srinivasan Tatachar

We are conversant with the words "Divine", "Life" and "Srivaishnava". Blending them into a concept, leading us to lead the most practical and easy way to attain the same is the purport of this little essay.

Whenever we stumble upon the word "Divine", we often take it as something other worldly or unworldly; That is – "Paralowkika" or "apraapanchika" respectively. This will leave in an eternal dichotomy between our life/world and Divine/God. Therefore, in the ordinary course we often tend to assume that to be Divine is not to be worldly and to be worldly is totally undivine. As a matter of correction of this subtle illusion in understanding or interpreting our ancient lore – that is; The Vedas, Upanishads, Brahma Sootras and the Bhagavadgeetha, Azhwars and acharyas in Srivaishnava guru parampara have laid down certain basic tenets which are to be followed by each srivaishnava in order to understand that the Divine and the world are not opposites.

Now, to understand this, tattva or reality is three in kind. They are: Achit, the insentient being; Chith/Jeevataman, the sentient being and Eeshwara/Paramatman, the God. Bhagavadgeetha very clearly in the opening verses of the 7th adhyaya says, Panchabhootas, mind, buddhi and ahankara form the apara prakrthi and the Jeevatman himself forms the Para prakrthi of the



Paramatman. This easily can be digested as Paramatman is having two layers or shareeras to manifest Himself. The relationship of predicate and subject; Quality and the qualified; though may come very near to the relationship of shareera and shareeri, it is very unique and subtle as well. The shareera is defined as that which exists for only its atma and moves by only its atma's direction – it has no other purpose for itself. Therefore, according to Bhagavadgeetha both

the insentient beings or Prakrthi and the sentient beings or the Jeevatmas are shareera of the Paramatman. This again has been amplified by Bhagavadgeetha in 13th adhyaya as Kshetra; Kshetragnya and Sarva Kshetragnya. We have thus deduced, that this triune of Paramatma – Jeevatma and Prakrthi, exists for the sole purpose of Paramatma who is eternally manifesting though in a veil through his shareeras.

In order that His will/purpose to manifest fully flows uninterruptedly, the shareera comprising of the Chith/Jeevatman with its attached Achit/Prakrthi should only co-operate (not operate independently). This cooperation is an integral one assimilating action (Karma), gnana (Knowledge), Bhakthi (Devotion with Love), culminating in surrender of the individual wills (sankalpa) or purposes. Such a surrender or sharanagathi as has been propounded in the Srivaishnava literature is the only way of cooperation. To cite an analogy, though every part has a uniquely different function, they have to function with the only aim of the utility of the whole.

Sri Vasihanava Way of Divine Life (contd)

This can be elaborated as each instrument in an orchestra though uniquely different contributes for the wholesome performance. Further, we can observe, the same to the function of our bodily structure where all organs with different functions, function in a coordinated way for the overall welfare of the body. So sharanagathi or total surrender is the only way for such a coordinated cooperation. This can be achieved by eternally remembering that we are shareera of the Paramatma existing only for His purpose rendering our Swarooma or substance as being a sesha. This can be practically practised by being true to spirit in our daily sankalpam as "*Sri Bhagavadaagnyaya, Sriman Narayana Preethyartham*". We undertake the above sankalpam in any religious functions. But the real intention of our acharyas, azhwars is that the spirit behind the sankalpam shall be eternally accompanied in all our deeds, thoughts and feelings (Trikaranas).

This can be easily professed than practiced. That is why, sharanagathi or in practical terms prapatthi is developed into a great shastra for a better lucid analysis and understanding. Sharanagathi or prapatthi is not only a physical act but an action of the spirit with its mind, life and body vibrating with this central purpose of cooperating with God's Will.

Analysis by swami Deshikan into parts as:

1. Aanukoolyasya sankalpam (Will to cooperate with the God)
2. Praathikoolyasya varjanam (desist from the opposite)
3. Rakshishyattheethi Vishwasaha (Deep faith in God)
4. Goptriva VaraNam (Having no secrets)
5. Kaarpanyam (Feeling helpless otherwise) has rendered an opportunity for us to verify as to where we are failing.

Therefore, leading an unfailing prapanna's way of life as has been deduced above and as has been widely spelt through the granthas of our acharyas and prabandhams of our azhwars will definitely bring Paramatma, who is the atma of ourselves and the Prakrthi into the whole existence ushering the Divine way of life which is none other than a truly Srivaishnava way of Divine life



Picture courtesy: ramauja.org, vedantadesika blog, bhagavathgita blog

Whatsapp Vishayangal

Srimate Ramanujaya Nama: Kaakamum Kachiyum (காகமும் கச்சியும்)
Swami Desikan's adaikalapathu starts with this paasuram:

***Pathi mudhalaam mavathil , pathi yenakku koodamal,
Yethisayum uzhandru odi ilaithu vizhum kaakam pol,
Muthi tharum nagar ezhil mukkiyamaam kachi thannil,
Athigiri arul aalarkku, adaikaalam naan pugundhene.***

(Since I am powerless and also could not find any place to perform karma, gnana and bhakthi yogam, I like the demon of crow (kakasuran) who ran all directions but could not protect himself through other means and ultimately surrendered at Sri Rama's feet, I also take refuge at the mercy Lord of Hasthagiri at Kanchi, this being the important mukthi granting place.)

Kakasuran did the cruel apacharam of tasting the blood of Sita piraati when Sri Rama was sleeping in Her lap. Drops of blood fell on Sri Rama's face which awoke Him. Realised what was happened, Rama shot his arrow on Kakasuran. Kakasuran ran helter skelter, approached every other demi-god in order to save himself. But none can protect him and a weary Kakasuran fell at the feet of Sitapathi asking for rescue.

Now, from all the other asuraas, why did Swami Desikan chose Kakasuran?

Amongst all, Kakasuran is the no.1 criminal. He did the heinous crime of cruelty to Piraati. Yet at the end, it is the Sarveshwaran as Sriyapathi (together with Piraati sambandam) rescued Kakasuran. When Sriyapathi can rescue even Kakasuran who ranks top amongst the antagonist (prathikoolar), the chances of rescuing us from this cruel samsara looks much brighter. Here Swami Desikan compares himself in the exact manner in which Kakasuran surrendered at the feet of Sri Rama (kaakam pol). Hence Swami Desikan chose Kakasuran as example to highlight the quality of rakshakathvam (saviour) of Sriyapathi.

From all the mukthi kshetras, why did Swami Desikan choose Kanchi, saying it as most important? There are seven mukthi kshetras. They are Ayodhya, Mathura, Maaya, Kaasi, Kanchi , Ujjain and Dwaraka. Swami Desikan could have performed prapathi in any of the above kshetras. But he choose Kanchi, stating its the "most important" kshethram (muthi tharum nagar ezhil mukkiyamaam kachi thannil) amongst the seven.

The presiding deity of Kachi Perumal Koil is Sri Varadarajan, whose famous six sentences through Thirukachi Nambi to Swami Ramanuja, proves the importance of Kachi amongst the seven in terms of prapathi and the grant of mukthi.

His first sentence,

Ahameva param tatvam. अहमेव परम तत्त्वं ।

I am the Ultimate Supreme.

His third sentence,

Upayeti prapathisyaadh. उपायेती प्रपत्तिस्याद ।

Ultimate surrender or prapathi is the means to reach me

His fifth sentence,

Dehavasane muktisyaadh. देहावसाने मुक्तिस्याद ।

Moksham will be granted in this birth itself after casting off the body after death.

Since Sri Varadarajan authoritatively pronounced these statements on His Supremacy, prapathi and granting mukthi in this divya kshatram, Swami Desikan choose Kanchi to perform prapathi through this adaikalapathu prabandham, stating this kshethram as the most important amongst the seven to do so. **Srimathe Vedantha Guravae Nama:**

Junior Madal - Quiz on Nrsimhavataram

- 1) What is the form of Lord Narasimha?
 - A. Half lion and half human
 - B. Human with a boar face
 - C. A fish

- 2) Narasimha was the _____ incarnation in the Dasavatar(10 avatars) of Lord Hari
 - A. First
 - B. Fourth
 - C. Tenth

- 3) Lord Narasimha appeared from _____
 - A. The ceiling of the palace
 - B. A pillar
 - C. A tree in the palace garden

- 4) Name the deity who gave Hiranyakashipu the boon that made him very powerful:
 - A. Lord Indra
 - B. Lord Shiva
 - C. Lord Brahma

- 5) During which part of the day did Lord Narasimha kill Hiranyakashipu?
 - A. Dawn
 - B. Night
 - C. Dusk

- 6) Name the star in which Lord Narasimha's incarnation took place
 - A. Swathi
 - B. Rohini
 - C. Pushya

- 7) Which little boy did Lord Narasimha crown as the king of all bhaktas?
 - A. Dhruva
 - B. Prahlada
 - C. Sudama

- 8) What name of God did this little boy chant always?
 - A. Narayana
 - B. Shiva
 - C. Vasudeva

Udayavar Thirunakshathiram Celebrations – Thirumanjanam Photos

