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**SRI VENKATESWARA SWAMY
AVATARAM
(MANIFESTATION OF LORD VENKATESWARA)**

English Rendering

A. Krishna

Telugu Original

Dr. Samudrala Lakshmanaiah



Published by

**Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati.
2017**

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Preface

**Venkatadrisamam Sthanam Brahmande Nasti
Kinchana;
Venkatesasamo Devo Na Bhuto Na
Bhavishyati.**

**There never existed a God equal to Him in the
past nor will exist in future.**

Sri Venkateswara is the presiding deity, self-manifested on *Venkatadri* radiating His benign blessings on millions of devotees visiting Him.

As part of the propagation of the glory of *Kshetram*, series of books have been brought-out by TTD under '*Tirumala Kshetra Darshini*' series.

Professionals with outstanding merit have been entrusted with the job of bringing-out series of books on the Glories of *Lord*, Sports (*Leela*) of the *Lord*, holy *Theerthas*, rituals in daily worship (*Nityarchana*) etc.

Dr. Samudrala Lakshmanaiah has authored a book in Telugu entitled '*Sri Venkateswara Swami Avataram*' duly narrating the course of events that lead to *Lord's* arrival to the earth. This is translated into English with the title '*Sri Venkateswara Swami Avataram*' by Sri A.Krishna, a reputed Scholar in English.

This book is handy and contains very valuable information on the *Lord* and provides an insightful

reading to all those who desire to know the self-manifest *Lord* on the *Seven* Hills. I earnestly hope that this will enhance the understanding and knowledge of *Lord* and thus help appreciate the true spirit and meaning of this *Avatara* by the common readers.

In the Service of Lord Venkateswara



Executive Officer,
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,
Tirupati.

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* * *

Chapter - I

THE MANIFESTATION OF SRI VENKATESWARA SWAMY

**Yadaa yadaa hi dharmasya glaanirbhavati
Bhaarata |
Abhyutthaanamadharmasya tadaatmaanam
srujaamyaham ||
Paritraanaaya saadhuunaam vinaasaaya cha
dushkrutaam |
Dharmasansthaa panaarthaaya
sambhavaami yuge yuge||**

“Whenever righteousness is at stake and unrighteousness raises its head, I take My birth in this world to protect the virtuous, punish the vicious wicked and restore righteousness” said Sri Krishna in Gita.

Whatever form the Lord assumes is called Manifestation or incarnation. The term ‘incarnation’ has several meanings. They are descent, harbour and pond. When the omni present Lord assumes a concrete form and descends into this world, it is called the incarnation.

Ten incarnations

The Puranic literature eulogizes the ten incarnations of the Lord. The following verse proves that the Lord has assumed ten incarnations to help this world.

**“Paropakruti kaivalye tulayitvaa Jagadguruh |
gurveem chopakrutim matvaa Avataaraan
Dasaagraheet ||”**

Sreemannarayana, the master of this world once doubted - “Is it good to spend time with My consort Sri Devi taking services from Her or Is it good to help suffering people by driving away their sufferings?”

When He was in a dilemma what to choose, His intellect tilted towards the latter. He made up His mind to help the mankind and assumed ten incarnations. He punished the vicious wicked, protected the virtuous and established righteousness.

The ten puranic incarnations were Matsya, Kuurma, Varaaha, Narasimha, Vaamana, Parasuraama, Sri Raama, Bala Raama (Krishna), Buddha and Kalki. In addition to these, there is a reference about the incarnations of Suyagna, Kapila, Dattaatreya, Sanakaadulu, Naranaaraayanulu, Dhruva, Pruthuvu, Vrishabha, Sugreeva, Hamsa, Manuvu, Dhanvantari and Vyaasa in Bhaagavat including the countless leela avatars (pretence manifestations).

Dharanirenuvula nayina ganutimpa nalavi yagun gaani yammahatmuni leelavataradbhuta kar mambulu lekkapetta nevvavari nasakyam by yundu.

(Bhagavatam - 2 - 199)

The incarnations of Vishnu were well spoken of in Puranas. But some questions arise - “Aren’t there the incarnations for Lord Siva?” Even the incarnations of Lord Siva were spoken of in Siva Puranas. As the responsibility in protecting this world lies more on Vishnu than on Siva, the incarnations of Vishnu have become famous in Puranas.

Annamacharya, cleverly spoke about the incarnations that were intermingled with righteousness as well as unrighteousness.

**“Adari dharmamu sedi - adharmamainaa melu
Vedagu munulu vinna - vinturu neeku,
Tadavi dharmamu nilpa - dharani buttudu
veevu
Badi ninnu sevinchi - bradukudu mapude”
(2-161)**

The incarnations of God speak of the qualities such as prosperity, righteousness, glory, beauty, knowledge and renunciation which He bears.

The puranic literature speaks of five incarnations like Matsya, Kuurma, Varaaha, Narasimha and Vaamana of Krutayuga, two incarnations like Parasurama and Sri Rama of Tretayuga and two incarnations like Balarama and Sri Krishna of Dwaparayuga, and two incarnations like Buddha and Kalki of Kaliyuga. But the incarnation of Kalki is yet to take place.

Some questions rise as to why should the Lord assume five incarnations in Krutayuga when righteousness was in full form. Perhaps the Lord might have assumed five forms not to cause harm to righteousness.

There are different opinions in the case of Buddhavatara. Some say that the puranic Buddha was the real one and others say that the historical Buddha was the real one. Those who regard Bala Rama and Krishna as different incarnations do not agree with the incarnation of Buddha.

There are many different forms in the case of incarnations. They are 1) Amsavataralu 2) Purnavataralu 3) Kalavataralu 4) Leelavataralu 5) Divyavataralu 6) Bhoomavataralu 7) Archavataralu 8) Antaryamyavataralu 9) Vibhavaravataralu 10) Kalyanagunavataralu, etc.

Five forms

There are five forms of the Lord. They are 1) Para swarupam 2) Vyuha swarupam 3) Vibhava swarupam 4) Antaryami swarupam 5) Archa swarupam. Among these five, the Archa swarupam is said to be the last one.

1. Para swarupam is the form of Sreemannarayana lying on the bed of Adishesha with His two consorts Sri Devi and Bhu Devi in Vaikuntha while Nityasurulu and Muktapurushulu pay service to Him.
2. Vyuha swarupam is the form of Sreemannarayana who is the cause for Generation, Protection and Destruction and the bestower of grace on the devotees. This form is in the form of Vishnu, Purusha, Satya, Achyuta and Aniruddha as per Vaikhasana Agamam.
3. Vibhava swarupam is the form of Sreemannarayana who descends into this world to protect the virtuous and punish the vicious/wicked.
4. Antaryami swarupam is the form of Sreemannarayana who dwells in the hearts of all living beings visible only to a gnani.

5. Archa swarupam is the form of Sreemannarayana, idols made of metals or stones in temples and houses without the restrictions of time and space.

Significance of Archavatara

Archa swarupam has become dear to the devotees with all the qualities of chastity, affection and Lordship.

This form is of four kinds. They are self-manifested, self-existent, divine, readymade, and human forms.

The self-manifested Archamurti is called self-existent form. The murtis' installed by angels are called Divine forms. The murtis' installed by yogis, siddha purushas are called Saiddhas. The murtis' installed by human beings as per Agama Sastras are called Manushas. The murtis' installed by the sages come under the third category.

Archavataram of Sri Venkateswara

The devotees believe that the Archamurti of Sreenivasa installed on Venkatachalam in Kaliyuga is a self-existent one. This murti is attracting countless devotees from the four corners of the world.

**Venkataadrisamam sthaanam brahmaande
naasti kinchana |
Venkatesasamo devo na bhuuto na
bhavishyati ||**

As per the puranas, there is no more sacred place than Venkatadri and there is no God equivalent to Lord Venkateswara hither to and here after.

Some interpret that the following incantation from Rig Veda ‘Araayi kane vikate girim gaccha sadanve’, speaks about the glory and greatness of Venkatagiri. “Go to Venkatagiri whereon Sreenivasa is installed, whenever you are entangled by unfavourable circumstances.” The verse from Bhavishyottara puranam speaks the same thing.

**“Araayi kaane vikate girim gaccheti tam
viduh|
yevam vedamayah saakshaadgireendrah
Pannagaachalah||”¹**

Sri Venkateswara Swamy, the rescuer, the saviour, the Lord of Seven hills, is the perceptible God in Kaliyuga. God at our beck and call is protecting the devotees by showering His abundant grace from Tirumalagiri.

He entered Ananda Nilayam, the Sanctum Sanctorum on Thursday of Padyami paired with Ashwini star (when the star Ashwini was in ascendance) in the year vikruti¹. Keeping His left hand on His waist, He shows the devotees that the ocean of samsara is only knee-deep. His right hand showing towards His right foot indicates as if He is suggesting that Salvation is at their finger tips to those who surrender to Him.

* * *

1. See - Sri Venkataachala Maahaatmyam - 5-293

Chapter - II

SRI VENKATESWARA SWAMY DIVYAVATARAM

Let us know in brief the history relating to the Divyavatara of Sri Venkateswara Swamy as described in the puranas.

Narada’s Question

It was Naimisaranyam. There the saints like Sounaka were attentively listening to the puranic stories told by the sage Suta. In the course of his story-telling Suta revealed the story of Varaha puranam wherein a mention is made about Sri Venkatachalam.

Then the saints asked Suta “In which age did Venkatadri become famous on earth?” In reply to the question of the saints, Suta said, “Listen! I will narrate the story of how Sri Venkateswara Swamy was installed on the hill and how Venkatachalam became famous.”

Once Narada Maharshi, (Manasa putra of Brahma, the imaginary son of Brahma) came to the banks of Ganges on earth. There the sages like Kasyapa were performing the rituals. They duly received him and honoured him. They said that they were happy at his arrival.

Then Narada Muneendra asked, “O Sages! you are performing the rituals so attentively on this sacred soil. You have to submit the fruit of the ritual to the deserving person. To whom are you going to submit the fruit of the ritual?”

Unable to decide the receiver of the offering the saints like Bhrugu looked at one another and kept Silent.

Singing the incantation of Ashtakshari on the strings of his lute Narada said, “You have increased the people’s progeny by performing rituals. It’s good doing so. Please enquire thoroughly and decide yourselves who is bestower of Salvation among the Trinity and submit the fruit of the ritual”, and then made his exit striking his lute Mahati.

Test for the Trinity

On hearing the words of Narada, the saints decided to test the Trinity and know who is the bestower of Salvation. They thought that Bhrugu was the right person to conduct the test. So they asked him to go, conduct the test and come back knowing the bestower of Salvation.

The Sage Bhrugu agreed and at first went to Satyaloka the Abode of Brahma. There he saw Brahma and saluted to him. The sage sat before Brahma and then asked Brahma to sit. Brahma grew angry and kept silent without talking to him. Thinking that Brahma was of Rajasi nature, he thought that he was not fit to be the bestower of Salvation. Bhrugu cursed him “Let not be there a temple for Brahma on earth” and went towards Kailasam.

By the time he reached Kailasam, Lord Siva was playing with His consort Parvati. She felt shy of herself

at seeing the saint. “Can anybody come in, when the couple are alone”, Sankara grew angry with the saint for his interference and kept silent.

Thinking that Siva was of tamasi nature and unfit to be the bestower of Salvation, He cursed like this - “Let there be only linga puja but not angapuja for you.”

From there, Bhrugu went to Vaikuntham and saw Sreenivasa lying on the bed of Adishesha with His consort Ramaa. Without thinking of Pros and cons, he struck Sreenivasa’s Chest with his leg. Immediately Sri Hari got up and prayed Him as per Agama Sastra. He took the foot of the sage, kept it on His thigh, pressed it and said with a smile -

“Muneendra! I was lying on the bed and did not notice you. Show mercy on Me tolerating My disobedience. How painful would be your foot that has struck My strong chest. I have no pain at all because you touched with the fresh tender leaf of your foot”. Saying so, He silently followed the sage obediently.

Bhrugu felt happy for this. He felt shy of himself for his mistake. Bending his head he said, “O Deva! You are the permanent reality and the most noble Deity.” He glorified Sree Hari and decided Him to be the bestower of Salvation.

Afterwards the sage Bhrugu went to the shore of Ganges and met the sage Kasyapa and others and said,

“Sri Hari alone is the pure Sattvic divine being and is fit for granting Salvation. Accepting the words of Bhrugu, all the sages offered the fruit of rituals to Lord Vishnu.

Lakshmi left Vaikuntham

When Bhrugu struck the Chest of Vishnu, Lakshmi Devi was seated there itself, She grew very angry towards the sage. Then She said to Vishnu, “I am on Thy Chest. The other person has come and struck Thee. Though You feel happy for it, I am not, I am angry. If I say anything against the saint, You don’t agree. So I will not stay here any more. I am going to perform penance. Grant Me the knowledge of performing penance with keen concentration on Thy Feet”.

Thus saying, She left Vaikuntham and was about to go somewhere else. Vishnu Bhagavan tried to follow Her in many ways. But She was not pacified. All His trials in preventing Her from going away became all in vain. Then He remained silent.

Lakshmi Devi left Vaikuntham and reached Kolhapuram. There the people looked after Her and worshipped Her. The conflict between Lakshmi and Narayana changed Her residence from Vaikuntham to Kolhapuram.

Hearing the story told by Suta, Sounaka muni asked like this -

“When Lakshmi was away from Sreemannarayana, did He stay happily in Vaikuntha with the love concentrated on Bhudevi and Neela devi? Or did He feel miserable thinking of Lakshmi alone?”

Then Suta replied in this manner, “Vishnu Bhagavan could not tolerate the estrangement of Lakshmi.” Out of Love Sickness He thought like this -

“What a Surprise! Has an estrangement occurred to Me with Ramaa. Nobody can overcome the inexorable fate. Where ever She is, She dwells in My Heart. She won’t go away leaving Me alone. I will keep Her in My heart and save this world. As per the nature’s law, I cannot but search for Her or else the people will call Me Merciless one.

Lord Vishnu reached Venkatachalam

Thinking thus, Sri Hari entrusted the responsibility of protecting Vaikuntham to His beloved ones and kept Bhudevi and Neeladevi in their care. He told them that He would get back Lakshmi. He left Vaikuntham and reached Venkatagiri on earth.

There was a tamarind tree on the southern side of Varaha Swamy and Pushkarini. In front of the tree, there was an ant-hill. He entered into the ant-hill and remained there for ten thousand years unnoticed by anybody.

Meanwhile twenty eight dwapara yugas elapsed and Kaliyuga started its era. The Chola king was ruling the kingdom righteously.

Brahma and Rudra in the guise of Cow and Calf

Lakshmi at Kolhapuram came to know that Sri Hari had come to Venkatadri and stayed in an ant-hill in front of the tintrini tree. She was worried about His welfare. But She decided not to slacken Her perseverance. She took pity on Her husband and went to Chola nagari in the guise of cowherdess and reached Manimandiram, the residential palace of the queen.

Thinking that Lakshmi was worrying about Sri Hari, Brahma and Rudra reached Lakshmi in the guise of Cow and Calf. She looked after them well and wandered there announcing 'I am selling the Cow and Calf.'

Hearing the announcement, the queen by paying due amount purchased them to feed her child. Believing that the cow and calf took care of Sri Hari, She left for Kolhapuram happily.

Brahma in the guise of cow became one among the cattle flock of Chola king. Everyday he was going to the hill along with the cattle and offered milk to swamy who was inside the ant-hill. Maha Vishnu appreciated both Brahma and Rudra. With the milk offered by Brahma, His appetite was appeased.

The cow without milk

The queen tried to milk the cow from it's udders to feed her child. But there was no milk. "What a surprise? The udder is like a pot. But there is no milk in it, what's the reason?" She was surprised.

Immediately she called for the shepherd, showed the cow and reprimanded him. "There is no milk in its udder. Are you drinking?"

"Mother? I don't know anything. I have not drunk the milk. Perhaps the calf might have drunk", said the cowherd.

"The calf is at home. How can it drink?". Saying so, she rebuked him and sent him away punishing.

Death of shepherd

The next day the shepherd followed the cow carefully. He saw the cow pouring milk into the ant-hill. Growing angry, he raised his axe and was about to strike.

Meanwhile Govinda came out of the ant-hill to save the cow and put His head on the head of the cow. The stroke of the shepherd fell on the head of swamy. The blood gushed out to the height of seven palmyra trees and fell down. Seeing this, the shepherd lost his life out of fear.

The cow got down the hill and went straight way to the court of the king. It rolled on the ground, shed its tears. While it was leaving that place the king sent the spies along with it. The cow reached Venkatadri and stood at the ant-hill.

Seeing the scene of blood gushing out from the ant-hill, the spies got frightened. They rushed to the king and narrated everything.

The king got up suddenly and came to Venkatadri. Seeing the incident, he too got frightened. He asked the ministers what would be the reason for the bloodshed, the death of the shepherd and reason for the sorrow of the cow.

Curse to the king

The blood-stained Sreenivasa came out of the ant-hill wearing the conch and disc, looked at the king and said, “you wretched fellow! When I hid in this ant-hill, this shepherd came here and tried to beat the cow when it was feeding Me with milk. He has wounded Me. As a result of his evil act he died. I am a stranger. I do not have guardians. I am spending My time staying in this ant-hill. Your cow has saved My life, feeding Me with milk. The shepherd who tried to kill the cow experienced and reaped the consequences of his sin. This fellow is yours. You too reap the consequence of the sin for beating Me. Thou shalt take a low birth and become a devil.”

Hearing it the king fell on the ground and fainted. After sometime he regained consciousness and prostrated before Sri Venkateswara Swamy. Then he pleaded humbly -

“O Lord! I have not committed this sin knowingly. You have grown angry and cursed me. I am praying You. Show mercy on me and tell me the way to ward off this curse.”

In reply to the king, Sreenivasa said, “O king! My curse won’t go vain. As long as Kaliyuga stands, so

long you have to suffer from this curse. The time comes when I marry padmavati, the daughter of Akasa Raju. Then he will keep the crown on My head and I will wear the crown on every Friday. You will at that time enjoy happiness.”

Thus the cursed king made his exit from there. Again Sreenivasa entered the ant-hill. Unable to bear the headache, He called upon Bruhaspati and revealed the entire story to him, happened hither to -

“This untoward incident happened due to timely actions and planetary movements. Please get the suitable medicine for it,” He prayed.

In reply to Sreenivasa, Bruhaspati said, “Oh Lord! Do You also have timely actions and planetary movements? You are asking me for the suitable medicine. Your headache will disappear if You apply the extract of fig with the cotton of calotropis (jilledu)”. He then went away.

Tamarind Tree - Ant hill

Hearing this, Sounaka asked, “O sage suta! Please give us the particulars relating to the Tamarind Tree and ant-hill”. Suta in reply, said this -

“In Tretayuga, Kausalya and Dasaratha left their bodies with the Parental love on Sri Rama in their last moments. As a result of the bond of their debt, Brahma transformed the splendour of Dasaratha into Tintrini and that of Kausalya into an ant-hill to be the shelter for Sreenivasa.

In Dwapara yuga, Devaki and Vasudeva left their bodies with their parental love on Sri Krishna. As per the direction of Brahma, the splendour of Vasudeva and that of Devaki took the shape of Tamarind Tree and ant-hill respectively. That's why Sreenivasa stayed in the ant-hill for ten thousand years.

In Tretayuga, Dasaratha was none other than Tamarind Tree, Kausalya the ant-hill, Lakshmana the Seshachalam, Ayodhya the forest on the hill, Sarayu river as Swamy pushkarini and Sree Rama as Sreenivasa.

In Dwaparayuga, Vasudeva was none other than Tamarind Tree, Devaki the ant-hill, Bala Rama the Seshadri, Madhura the Venkatanagari, river yamuna the Swami Pushkarini and Sri Krishna, the Sreenivasa respectively.

Hearing this, Sounaka saints were greatly surprised. Roumaharshana began to narrate the remaining story like this -

Meeting Varaha Swamy

As per the direction of Bruhaspati, one day early in the morning, Sreenivasa was moving here and there in the forest searching for the medicinal plants to be applied on His wound. Then Sri Varaha Swamy saw Narayana in human form, took Him for a devil and grunted. Sreenivasa, in fear hid in a bower. Varaha Swamy did not leave Sreenivasa. It dashed into the bower. Sreenivasa stood at a distance from Varaha.

Meanwhile Varaha Swamy came to know that Sreenivasa was none other than Sreemannarayana. Varaha Swamy went to Him and questioned.

“Why have You come here leaving Vaikuntha? There is no Lakshmi on Your Chest. What's the reason? Why are You in human form? How did You get the wound on Your head?”

Sreenivasa explained to Varaha Murthy what had happened. Like this, they met in the forest. Afterwards Sreenivasa pleaded him to show a place for His stay till the end of Kaliyuga. Varaha Swamy told Him that he would show a place on payment of a price. Then Sreenivasa said -

“There is no Lakshmi with Me. She has reached Kolhapuram. Who will offer Me money? This earth is under your control. Kindly allot Me a bit of land. I will stay there pretending like a human being. I will get the human beings here. I will arrange a bath for you with panchamrutam which will last till the end of the yuga. I will see that the devotees will at first visit you and submit their offerings. After serving food offering to you, I will take My food.”

Varaha Swamy agreed for it. He gave Sree Hari the mountain Seshadri to stay on and appointed His cook Vakula Malika to render all kinds of services. She looked after Sree Hari very well by offering food and medicine.

Brahma and Rudra who were in the form of cow and calf returned to their abodes after fulfilling their responsibility.

Sreenivasa stayed on with Vakula Malika like a son to a mother on Venkatadri bestowing blessings to the devotees and frightening the devils and demons. With the cure of the wound on the head, He started wandering on Venkatadri.

Vakula Malika

Then the saints like sounaka asked, “Who is Vakulamata? What is her story?” Suta said to them -

“In Dwapara yuga she left, her physical body. Lord Brahma made her take the birth of Vakula Malika as a result of the bond of debt. She was with Bhuvvaraha Swamy. So he asked her to be the guardian to Sreenivasa. Like a mother she brought Him up, cured His wound by applying medicine. That Sreenivasa married the most beautiful princess.” After hearing her story the saints again asked Suta to narrate the marriage.

Akasaraju and Tondamanudu

“So many kings became the rulers of the earth in the beginning of Kaliyuga after the end of twenty eighth Dwapara yuga. One among them was Suveera born in the clan of Pandavas belonging to lunar dynasty. His son was Sudharma. The eldest son of Sudharma was Akasaraju. His wife was Dharani Devi.

One day Sudharma went to the forest for hunting. There he saw a nymph (Nagakanya) in a pond and fell in love with her. He wanted to marry her. But she objected and said, “I am a nymph (Nagakanya) and you are a king. How can the marriage take place between you and me?” Despite her objection he did not slacken his love on her.

Afterwards he revealed to her, his caste and clan and promised that he would give half the kingdom to the son born to them. Then she agreed him as her husband. Her son was Tondaman. Like this Akasaraju and Tondaman became half brothers.

Birth of Padmavati

Akasaraju had no children. He asked Bruhaspati a clue for the possession of children. Bruhaspati said, “If you perform Putrakameshti, the sacrificial, you will be blessed with children.”

The king agreed to observe Putrakameshti and took up to till the land for sacrificial rite with a golden plough. While tilling the land, there appeared a thousand petalled flower. With surprise, he looked at the flower and found a resplendent girl in it. All the people looked at Her surprisingly. Then some divination (Akasavani) from the sky said, “ Oh King! you bring up this child. It will be good to you.”

The king picked up the child and gave it to his wife Dharani Devi. Out of happiness they conducted

grand celebrations in the city and brought up the child though not born of blood, but very affectionately.

After securing the girl, Dharani Devi became pregnant and delivered a son with all the virtues in tenth month.

The king was very much rejoiced and offered gifts of charity. He named his daughter Padmavati and his son Vasudas. They grew up like Lakshmi and moon born from the ocean of milk, trained in all the arts and became experts.

When Padmavati came to marriageable age, the king was worried whether a suitable groom would be available for Her. He expressed his anguish before his master. The master consoled him saying that the suitable groom would have definitely born on this earth.

Padmavati rambling (Vanaviharam)

Padmavati entered into adolescence and coincidentally the spring season set in. All the woods and groves with the buds and flowers gave a feast to the eyes. One day Padmavati with Her attendants rambled in the public garden plucking off the flowers. She played in the waters of Kamalakaram pond. Afterwards She sat on the flower-bed in Srungara vanam.

Then came the sage Narada there. Padmavati got up and saluted the sage with devotion. He studied the hand of Padmavati and said - "Sreemannarayana will become Your husband" and went away from there.

Sreenivasa on Hunt - Darshan of Padmavati

On the same day, Sreenivasa started from Venkatachalam on horse-back for hunting. He rode on the hills and in the forest without any obstruction. Then an elephant in rut attacked him. He chased the elephant to kill it. Getting down the hill it ran away. After running for half a youjana it entered the garden of Padmavati and grunted.

Hearing the sound of grunt the attendants of Padmavati got frightened. When they were trying to save Padmavati, Sreenivasa came there on horse's back. The lady attendants looked at Sreenivasa in fear.

Unable to see further, the elephant raised its trunk and saluted him. Pitying it He let it off alive.

Sreenivasa saw Padmavati and Her attendants and hid behind the bowers. On the disappearance of the elephant, horse and the man the lady attendants talked in many ways.

Hearing their words She smiled and tried to play chess with them. From behind the bowers Sreenivasa looked at Her. Her beauty disturbed His mind. He slowly came to Her and cast His glances at Her.

Observing the behaviour of Sreenivasa, Padmavati said to the lady attendants, "You tell Him that men should not come to the places of the Princess. Ask Him to go away." As per the princess order, they asked Him to go away from there at once.

Then Sreenivasa told them, “I have come here to talk to Your princess in privacy. You yourselves go away.” Then She badged Her attendants to know His whereabouts and lineage. Accordingly they asked Him about His Parents and His lineage.

“Ours is chandravamsam (Lunar dynasty). Gotram is Vasishta, My mother is Devaki and father Vasudeva. My Brother is Bala Rama and My sister is Subhadra”, Sreenivasa told about Himself and asked to tell Him Her lineage and dynasty.

“Her father is Akasaraju belonging to Lunar dynasty and Her Gotram is Atri”, said the lady attendants. Then Sreenivasa told them “I have come to marry Her, tell Her and convince Her.”

Hearing His words, Padmavati grew angry and rebuked, “You tribal fellow go away from here.” But Sreenivasa stood there without expression. She threw stones at Him. For the stones blow the horse fell to ground. Sreenivasa ran away towards the north direction, reached the hill and entered into His ant-hill.

Padmavati's anguish

Padmavati went back to Her palace with Her attendants. Lying down on the flower bed, She pondered over the incident. There, Sreenivasa went anguished with the estrangement of Padmavati. Vakulamalika tried to talk to Him but He remained silent. She got frightened at seeing the wounds on His

body. Immediately she offered medical aid to Him and asked to relate what happened.

Pitying His mother Vakula, Sreenivasa related what had happened. He said about Padmavati's parentage and lineage and His love for Padmavati. He requested His mother Vakulamalika to celebrate His marriage with Padmavati by any means.

The story of Vedavati

Then Vakulamalika asked, “Dear Son! What is the reason of Her being born in a thousand petalled flower?” Answering Vakula, He said like this -

“Mother! In Tretayuga I was born as the son of Dasaratha Maharaju. I married Janaki. I went to the forest obeying the word of My father. Ravana, the demon king kidnapped Her. She wept for Me.

Hearing Her weeping, the God of fire said to Ravana, “Dear Ravana! The woman you kidnapped is not Sita. Rama has left Sita under my care and kept a brahmin lady here. As a friend I am revealing this secret to you”. He showed Vedavati in the guise of Sita. He hid the real Sita in Himself.

The foolish Ravana believed the words of God of fire. Leaving Sita, He carried Vedavati with Him. The lady under Ashoka tree in Lanka nagar was none other than Vedavati.

“I have crossed the ocean, reached Lanka and killed Ravana and others. To please the people I have

asked Sita (Vedavati) to enter the fire or else I won't accept You." Then she entered the fire. The God of fire entrusted Me Sita and hid Vedavati in Him. Then Sita requested Me to marry Vedavati. I said to Her, "In this birth I am a monogamist. In the next birth I will take Her as My wife. Till then She will remain in the abode of Brahma. When I come down (descend) on Venkatadri, Vedavati will also take Her birth on earth. Then I will marry Her."

This secret was not known to anybody except Me and the God of fire. Afterwards I was born as the son of Vasudeva in Dwapara yuga. Now I took birth in an ant-hill."

Hearing this, Vakulamalika felt happy and asked Him to relate the story of Vedavati. Sreenivasa revealed it in this manner.

"In Her previous birth, Vedavati was a brahmin girl. She performed penance to marry Me. Ravana was attracted by Her and thus tried to seduce Her. She said to Ravana, "I will get you killed by Sri Hari", and entered the fire. The God of fire hid Her in him and saved Her.

When Ravana came to kidnap Sita, Agni Deva changed Vedavati into Sita and gave Her to Ravana. He kept Her with Swaha Devi. As She wished, She made Me kill Ravana and like this, She kept up Her vow. She played a key role in the abode of Brahma. There She performed penance for sometime.

Afterwards She entered a flower and was born as Padmavati."

Thus Sreenivasa related the story of Padmavati to Vakulamalika and asked her to celebrate His wedding with Padmavati.

Then Vakulamalika questioned Him, "What is the native city of Padmavati?" In reply, Sreenivasa said like this: The city is Venkatadri which is down the hill and is flourishing like Amaravati. It is also called 'Narayana Puram'.

Akasaraju is ruling it righteously. His brother is Tondaman. His son is Vasudan. Akasaraju's wife is Dharani Devi and his daughter is Padmavati", Sreenivasa revealed the glory of Akasaraju and the fame of his kingdom. He asked her to try for His marriage with Padmavati by saying how to reach Narayana Puram.

Then Vakula asked, "What shall I say if they ask about You?"

"Mother! My parents are Devaki and Vasudeva and we belong to lunar dynasty. My brother is Bala Rama and My sister is Subhadra. My gotram is vasishta. My star is Sravanam and I am the suitable bride-groom for the beautiful Padmavati", said Sreenivasa about His lineage.

Vakulamata's departure to Narayanapuram

Mounting a mysterious horse, Vakula got down the hill happily. There she bathed in Kapileswara

Pushkarini and offered salutations to Kapilesvara Swamy, Suka yogi and Agastya. She reached Narayana Puram and worshipped Lord Siva there.

She called one of the girls in the temple and asked, “Dear daughter! who are you?” She said, “I am the attendant to the daughter of Akasaraju!”

Again Vakula asked, “It seems you are in a sorrowful mood. Why is your face looking dejected?” The girl replied -

“Mother! what shall I say? Yesterday we went for rambling along with Padmavati. A Sabara Kumara the son of Sabara came here. He looked very handsome. He came on horse back and tried to say some words to the princess. She grew angry and threw stones at Him. For the stone blows the horse fell dead and He ran towards the north. Afterwards She reached Her chamber. Perhaps His vision might have fallen on Her. She became sick of love. Her parents are greatly worried. They invited Bruhaspati, showed Her and asked him to give medicine to cure Her sickness.”

Bruhaspati advised like this -

“O King! There is no threat for Her life, you need not worry. Perform Rudrabhishekam now itself. Everything will set right on its own.”

“The King made necessary arrangements for Rudrabhishekam. He sent suitable brahmins to this temple. He asked us to get the fruits and flowers here.”

Thus saying the lady attendant asked Vakula, “who are you? On what errand have you come here?”

“Dear Daughter! Listen. I am the maid-servant of Sri Venkateswara. I have come here in the morning on a work. I must go to privy chamber and say a good word to Dharani Devi”, replied Vakula.

Then the attendant said, “You stay here till the completion of Rudrabhishekam. Afterwards I will take you there.” Agreeing, Vakula stood there awaiting.

There, Sreenivasa though a hero, went into sorrowful mood, out of love-sickness (Viraha).

* * *

Chapter - III

SREENIVASA AS SOOTHSAYER

After Vakulamalika got down from Venkatachalam, Sreenivasa longed to see Padmavati. He wanted to reach Her by any means. Hiding His Divine form, wearing torn clothes, He assumed the form of a sooth sayer. Like an old woman, He started walking rising and falling. He tied Brahma as a seven months boy on His back. He took a cane, kept the basket on His head and went to Narayana Puram. Looking at the ladies He walked through the streets of the city shouting “Yerukoyamma yeruka.”

Some ladies came to Her and asked to forecast their future. Meanwhile the attendants of the queen came and asked what type of sooth saying She would tell. The lady sooth-sayer said, “My Sooth saying does good to all. I will tell those who want to know the truth. I don’t forecast everyone’s future.”

The lady attendants went back to the queen and told Her about the sooth sayer. She asked them to get the sooth-sayer to the palace. They went and invited Her to the privy-chamber. Following them the lady sooth-sayer came to the queen.

The queen paid due respects to Her and asked, “What is your place? what is your name? where is your house?” “Mother! Do we have houses? We roam about the places. There is no specific residence for

us. I have come here to tell the people of this city, the sooth-saying”, replied the lady sooth-sayer.

Sooth-saying of yerukata/the lady sooth-sayer

As per the wish of the lady sooth-sayer, the queen offered a potful of pearls and asked Her to predict the future. Praying many Gods, The sooth-sayer said, “O grandma! your thought does good to you. You are asking about your daughter. She has seen a blackman and loved Him in the flower-garden. He is on the golden hill glittering with hoods. He is not a simple human being. He is Sreemannarayana. Both of them are in love. If you give your daughter in marriage to Him, She will be happy. Within a few minutes an old lady sent by Venkateswara will come here to set the alliance. My words won’t go in vain. This is true indeed.” Thus saying the lady sooth-sayer got up and went away and reached Venkatadri in the form of Sreenivasa.

The queen was surprised to hear the words of the sooth-sayer. She went to her daughter and asked, “Dear daughter! why are You so sorrowful? What is the reason for Your sorrow? It is known that You got attracted by a handsome boy. Don’t we get ill-fame from the world?”

Padmavati replied, “Mother! you need not worry about the ill-fame. The person by whom I am attracted is not an ordinary man. He is Purushottama, Omniscient and Omnipotent. My mind stays on Him. What is to happen will happen. Don’t worry.”

Meanwhile the brahmins, the lady-attendants of Padmavati and Vakulamalika came there, after the completion of Rudrabhishekam. The brahmins sprinkled the holy waters of Rudrabhishekam on Padmavati.

Conversation between Vakulamalika and Dharani Devi

The queen Dharani Devi duly paid respects to Vakulamalika and asked, “Where have you come from? Whom are you related to?”

Then Vakulamalika said, “Mother! I have come from Seshadri. I am the maid-servant of Sri Venkateswara Swamy. At the instance of Sri Venkateswara, I have come for matrimonial alliance. You give your daughter Padmavati to Sri Venkateswara and celebrate the marriage.”

In reply to her, Dharani Devi asked, “Mother, Ramaa is with Madhava. Why does He long for my daughter?”

“Mother! Now Lakshmi is not with Sri Hari. She has reached Kolhapuram and is gracing the devotees there. That’s why Madhava has loved your daughter. Do agree for this marriage,” said Vakulamalika.

She revealed the particulars of Lakshmi’s reaching Kolhapuram and also about Vedavati. Knowing everything from the queen, the king felt happy and paid due respects to Vakulamalika. The king agreed to

celebrate the marriage of Padmaksha and Padmavati. He revealed this matter to his daughter and made Her feel happy.

Then the king offered prayers to Bruhaspati. Bruhaspati too felt happy on knowing this. As per the word of Bruhaspati, the king invited Suka yogi who was staying five miles away from the city in the north. When Bruhaspati related the matter to Suka yogi, he too agreed for the celebration of the marriage of Padmavati and Sreenivasa.

Wedding invitation card of Padmavati and Sreenivasa

Aferwards, both Bruhaspati and Suka yogi studied the horoscopes of the bride and the groom. They fixed the time (sumuhurtam) for marriage. The wedding card was also prepared. As per the suggestion of Bruhaspati, Suka yogi took the wedding card and went to Venkatadri. He handed over the wedding card to Sreenivasa. He read the card and felt happy. He wrote a reply card that He would attend the marriage with all His kith and kin on Friday the tenth day (Dasami) of the first fortnight (sukla paksha) of Vaisakha month. He gave it to Suka yogi. Suka yogi returned to Narayana Puram with the card and gave it to Akasaraju. Receiving due honour from the king, Suka yogi reached his hermitage. Even Bruhaspati too reached Amaravati. Dharani Devi honoured Vakula with clothes and jewellery. She started from there, reached Seshadri and detailed to Sreenivasa what had happened.

Then Sreenivasa said to Vakula, “You have conducted the matrimonial alliance very well. You have succeeded in your trial. But where from will you get necessary money for the marriage? Is it not a tough task?”

Vakulamalika replied, “Ask Lakshmi to come here. She will provide enough money.” But He did not like her idea.

“When I am prepared for the second marriage, will She give money? Is it justifiable to ask Her money?” He said in a worry.

Then she suggested Him to get the money from Varaha Murthy. Sreenivasa agreed for it. With His permission Vakula went to Varaha Swamy, revealed the matter and requested to give money. He replied, “There is no deficit of money for Sreenivasa. You need not worry about it. All the deities like Brahma will come down and celebrate the marriage.”

Vakula returned to Sreenivasa and revealed the opinion of Varaha swamy.

Afterwards, Sreenivasa asked Adishesha and Garuda to come and meet Him. Immediately they came and offered Salutations to Sreenivasa. He wrote a wedding card and sent it to Brahma through Garuda and sent another letter to Lord Siva through Adishesha.

Arrival of Brahma and Rudra

Soon after receiving the wedding card, Brahma conveyed the news to all and invited them for the

wedding. He mounted the swan and came to Venkatachalam along with His consort Saraswati. Sreenivasa duly respected him and revealed the matter in detail.

Lord Siva also came to Vrushagiri along with His consort Parvati mounting the ox, on receiving the wedding card from Adishesha. Sreenivasa duly honoured him and revealed the matter. Meanwhile the other deities like Indra came with their retinue and occupied their respective seats. Sri Hari revealed to all the guests about His marriage. All felt happy.

Inspired by Indra, Viswakarma reached Narayana Puram and built a golden building festooned with precious stones like gems and pearls. Entrusting all marriage works to the right people, Vakula prepared everything for the marriage.

Brahma invited Sreenivasa for head bath. But Sreenivasa looked sad and said, “Virinchi! Lakshmi is now in Kolhapur. How can I come for head bath without Her. I cannot get married with happiness in the absence of Lakshmi.

All the guests thought that it was their responsibility to invite Lakshmi for the wedding. They sent the sun to get Her with him.

Arrival of Lakshmi

Immediately the sun went to Kolhapuram and said to Lakshmi, “Mother! The enfeebled Padmanabha is now in miserable condition. He wants to see You.”

On hearing the sun's words, Lakshmi mounted the chariot and reached Seshachalam by aerial route. There, all the angels offered salutations to Her. Sreenivasa honoured Her. He told Her a few words secretly. He elaborated all the events happened from the day of leaving Vaikuntha. Sreenivasa said to Lakshmi - "I need Your permission for My marriage with Padmavati. If You are not interested, this wedding will not take place." She agreed for their marriage after understanding the situation. Auspicious customs like head bath for the bride and groom continued. Lakshmi also took part in the head bath celebration. Punyahavachanam was conducted as per the Vaikhanasa Sutra of yajurveda. Sreenivasa paced round the household deity tree (Sami vruksham) and worshipped it.

Afterwards Sreenivasa invited Bhuvaraha swamy and his consort Bhudevi for the marriage. Bhuvaraha swamy told Him that he would send Vakula in his place.

Promissory note

Sreenivasa thought that it would not be good if He asked Lakshmi to provide money for the marriage. He called Kubera and requested him to give money for the marriage.

"I will write a promissory note. Every year I will pay the interest regularly. At the end of Kaliyuga, I will pay the principal amount along with the interest. Brahma and Rudra will be witnesses for it", said Sreenivasa.

"I don't want any interest. I will give You sufficient money", said Kubera.

"I will not take money from you as a charity. I will pay you the interest", said Sreenivasa.

Looking at Brahma and Siva, Sreenivasa said, "Till the end of Kaliyuga, I will stay on the hill and bless the devotees. I will take money as gift from them and clear Kubera's debt. Both of you and this peepul tree are the witnesses." Sreenivasa wrote a promissory note and gave it to Kubera. Kubera gave fourteen lakhs of Rama tenki coins to Sreenivasa as a debt. All the guests were served delicious dishes.

It was evening time. The sun entrusted the work of emitting light to the moon and sank in the west. The moon rose. The whole world rejoiced under the moon light. The night elapsed and it dawned in the east. The sun stepped on Udayagiri. All the guests as usual completed their traditional rituals in the Pushkarini.

Afterwards they mounted their Vehicles, got down the hill and started for Narayana Puram via Kapilateertham. The musical instruments were played. They went through Sukasramam and reached Narayana Puram in the evening of Navami (Ninth) day.

Akasaaraju duly received them and rendered due services. Navagraha yajnam and other rituals relating to marriage were conducted as per Sastra. The guests rested happily that night in the allotted house.

The next day when it dawned, all the guests completed their traditional rituals. Some observed fasting. That evening Akasaraju with his wife Dharani Devi went to the residence of the bride-groom and honoured Sreenivasa as per the tradition.

The wedding of Padmavati and Sreenivasa

Afterwards Sreenivasa with Lakshmi mounted Iravatam (white elephant), and entered the city of Narayana Puram accompanied by the angels, Brahma and other deities while the melodious musical instruments were being played. Bhupati stood at the entrance of the building.

Meanwhile the wife of Tondaman accompanied by the other women came happily and gave wave offerings to Sri Hari and Siri.

Those who gave wave-offerings were given silk clothes and gifts (Dakshina) by Kubera on behalf of Sreenivasa as per tradition. Afterwards they entered the privy-chamber and occupied the golden seats.

The lady saints like Anasuya duly adorned the bride Padmavati. Later, Padmavati worshipped Gowri. Dharani Devi accompanied by other ladies reached marriage pandal with her daughter.

The sage Vasishta performed the wedding function. Akasaraju entrusted the most beautiful Padmavati be-decked with the jewellery to Sreenivasa. The marriage rites such as Mangalya dharana performance of homam, tracing seven foot-steps

(Saptapadi), darshan of Arundhati were conducted successfully. The people who attended the marriage were given fruits, Dakshina (gifts) and Tambulam (Pan).

The marriage of Padmavati and Sreenivasa at Narayana Puram in the house of Akasaraju was grandly celebrated.

The next day early in the morning, Sreenivasa asked Akasaraju to send Padmavati with Him.

“You stay here itself atleast for a month,” said Akasaraju.

“There are so many works over there. It is not possible to stay here”, replied Sreenivasa. Lakshmi Devi told Akasaraju to send Padmavati with Sreenivasa as Vakula would look after Her like a mother there.

The king gave the silk clothes and jewellery to his daughter and son-in-law. As the king requested Sreenivasa to take care of Padmavathi well, the king shed tears.

“Uncle! you need not worry about your daughter”, saying so, Sreenivasa with Padmavati started for Venkatadri mounting His Garuda (eagle).

Accompanied by the angels like Brahma, Sreenivasa reached Agastyasramam and stayed there for a day. The next day Brahma and others went to their abodes after taking the permission of Sreenivasa. Lakshmi somehow convinced Sree Hari and went back to Kolhapuram.

Stay at Agastyasramam

After a day's stay, Sreenivasa said to the sage Agastya, "Muneendra! we will now start for Venkatadri." Then Agastya said, "Sreenivasa! It is not fair for the newly wedded couple to climb Venkatadri for six months. Till then You stay here itself."

Obeying the words of Agastya, Sreenivasa stayed there for six months along with His wife.

After the marriage of Padmavati and Sreenivasa, Akasaraju left his body after sometime. Vasudana performed the last rites to his father. Hearing this news, Sreenivasa went to Narayana Puram from Agastyasramam and consoled both Vasudana and Tondaman. Again He returned to Agastyasramam and consoled Padmavati who was in grief on the death of Her father.

The Sounaka saints who heard the story of Sreenivasa till now, asked Suta, "After the death of Akasaraju, who among the two brothers ascended the throne?" Suta began to say.

Battle of Vasudana and Tondaman

"Beloved Saints! After Akasaraju the two brothers began to quarrel with each other for the kingdom. "Whoever wins the battle, the kingdom is theirs", said Tondaman. Vasudana agreed. Both of them collected their forces for the battle.

"Beloved Saints! After the death of Akasaraju Tondaman said that it was his kingdom. Vasudana also said the same (That it was his kingdom). Thus they began to quarrel with each other."

Whoever succeeds in the battle, the kingdom would be his. Tondaman said and got prepared for the battle. Vasudana also was prepared for the battle. Both of them collected their forces.

Tondaman, the devotee of Sreenivasa went to Him and told Him about the dispute with Vasudana, and asked Sreenivasa to help in the battle.

"If I help Tondaman in the battle, Padmavati will grow angry. If I join the side of Vasudana, She feels happy, but Tondaman is My ardent devotee. Under these circumstances, I don't like to reject them. What can I do now?" Sreenivasa pondered over the issue.

Sreenivasa assured Tondaman that he will win the battle. Sreenivasa gave him His disc for his help.

Afterwards Vasudana came and pleaded to help him. As per Vasudana's wish, He went to Narayana Puram along with him. There He played the war drum on His brother-in-law's behalf.

The war took place fiercely. When the war reached its peak, Tondaman sent the disc of Sri Hari on Vasudana. When Sreenivasa came across, the disc struck him. Fainting, He fell down from the chariot.

Both Tondaman and Vasudana stopped the war and began to serve Sreenivasa. He sat up after recovery. Tondaman saluted and said, “Hari! You have fainted because of the touching of the disc I have used. I have committed a sin by doing harm to You. For the remission of sin, I would like to go to Kasi. Permit me to go. Let Vasudana take the kingdom. I don’t want the kingdom. Present me renunciation.”

Then Sri Hari looked at Vasudana and asked, “What is your desire? Vasudana replied, “Hari! The disc has touched You when You came across to protect me. That sin has stuck me. For the remission of sin, I would like to go to Rameswaram. This kingdom belongs to my uncle.”

Hearing this, Sreenivasa called for Sukayogi, revealed the matter and asked, “What is our duty?” The sage Sukayogi gave the judgement “You need not go to Kasi or Rameswaram. It is good if half the kingdom to Vasudana and the other half to Tondaman be given.”

As per the word of Sukayogi, Sreenivasa divided the kingdom into two parts and gave one to each of them. They agreed and Sreenivasa went back to Padmavati.

After obtaining half kingdom, Tondaman developed devotion towards Sreenivasa leaving his interest on worldly matters. He realised the truth that He is ‘Sreemannarayana’ in human form.

Viswarupa Darshanam

One day Tondaman came to Agastyasramam and saluted to Sreenivasa. Pleased with his devotion Sreenivasa showed him His Viswarupa. Seeing it, Tondaman prayed the divine form of Sreenivasa in many ways.

Construction of the temple

Afterwards, Sreenivasa asked Tondaman to construct a gem like golden temple for Him on Venkatadri. Sreenivasa told him that Tondaman was Rangadas in his former life and related that he served swamy on Tirumala.

Astonished on hearing about his past life, the king Tondaman called Viswakarma and went with him to Venkatachalam. As per the science of Sculpture, Viswakarma built a beautiful temple with three compound walls, two towers, seven doors, the court-hall and the main-hall, cow-shed, store-room and a kitchen with all the facilities.

After the completion of the temple, he came down the hill and said to Sri Hari, “The temple construction is over. Come there with Your wife. As a servant I will offer my services to You.”

Stepping into Ananda Nilayam

Afterwards, accompanied by Brahma, Sukayogi, and Agastya, Sreenivasa with His consort Padmavati climbed up the hill. While the musical instruments were

being played, He entered Ananda Nilayam in the year Vikruti on Thursday when the star Ashwini was with Guru, after the completion of the rites of Punyahavachana. All the angels including Brahma showered flowers and praised Sreenivasa.

Keeping the gate keepers at the doors, Vaikhanasa Brahmins worshipped Sri Hari as usual. He kept His Feet on the base of the flower and stood up. He kept His left hand on the waist. He showed His right foot with His right hand and said to Brahma and others that it is 'Paramapadam'.

Then Brahma lighted two lamps in the presence of Sreenivasa and said, "They will last till the end of Kaliyuga. As long as the two lamps last, this divine vehicle also lasts. At the end of Kaliyuga the lamps will be put off and the vehicle falls to the ground. Then Sri Venkateswara will reach Vaikuntham and again the Krutayugam will start. The Lord was in Vaikuntham for three aeons, now He stands on Seshadri in Kaliyuga."

Afterwards, Sreenivasa said to Brahma, "Parameshti! You conduct the procession of the chariot here."

Immediately Brahma arranged the services like Ankurarpanam, Dhawajrohanam, various vehicle services, procession of the chariot. These services were rendered through Tondaman. He also arranged

various kinds of food-offerings and said, "Sarvam Srinivasarpanam." Sri Venkateswara Swamy felt happy.

Then Brahma sent all the angels to their abodes and he too reached his abode 'Satyalokam'.

Tondaman was ruling the kingdom successfully by arranging all kinds of celebrations. Everyday he went and worshipped with golden flowers.

Granting Salvation (Sayujyam) to Bheema

Life existed normally at Narayana Puram. During this time, there was a potter nearby Narayana Puram. He was a staunch devotee and was offering earthen flowers daily to the wooden idol Venkateswara Swamy which was at his house. Those flowers were reaching Swamy up on the hills. Sree Hari was hiding those flowers in Himself without being noticed by Tondaman.

Sreenivasa thought that the worship performed by the king with golden flowers was rajasiz. One day while the king was worshiping Swamy, Sreenivasa showed him the earthen flowers. Tondaman asked Swamy, "What are these flowers? who is the person who kept these earthen flowers setting aside the golden flowers submitted by me?"

Then the Lord replied, "There is a village called 'Kurvaka' just two and a half miles away from here. There is a potter called Bheema. He is a poor man. He is leading his life by making pots. Now and then while making pots, he makes earthen flowers with the mud

stuck to his hands and offers them to the idol (Me), installed in his house. Everyday he offers them with devotion.”

Hearing this the king was surprised. He quickly completed his worship and went to Bheema. Looking at the king with surprise Bheema said, “My Lord! what is the reason for your coming here? Is it not a surprise?” In reply to Bheema the king said, “Bheema! Bhagawan has appreciated your devotion. What secret is there in it? tell me.”

The potter replied in this way - “Maharaja! I am a Sudra, and a dullard. What can I tell you anything about the concept of Vishnu?”

In the meantime, Sreenivasa came there on Garuda. Looking at Bheema He said, ‘O virtuous person! come here. I am giving you salvation (Sayujyam), saying so He blessed Bheema. Hearing it, Bheema saluted to Swamy and took up Salvation (Sayujyam) along with his wife.

Then the king asked Swamy, “Kamalaksha! while I was talking to Bheema Your devotee, You granted him Salvation (Sayujyam). When will You bless me?”

Sri Hari exhaled a gentle smile and said, “Bheema’s devotion is Sattvic in nature. Accepting his devotion I have granted Salvation (Parama Padam). Long before, he begged Me to grant Salvation. I told him that I will grant Sayujyam to you and your wife when the king

comes to your house and when your worship is known to the others. I have done it now.”

Again he said, “You need not worry. Entrust the kingdom to your Son. Have devotion and get renunciation. Meditate on Me in loneliness. I will grant you Sayujyam”. There after Tondaman went back to his kingdom. He installed his son Sreenivasa on the throne. Serving the Feet of Sri Venkateswara Swamy, he always conducted the celebrations. He improved devotion and knowledge and became a great renunciate. He observed Dhyana yogam in loneliness.

Granting Salvation (Saroopyam) to Tondaman

After sometime, Sri Hari took pity on Tondaman and went to him. The king worshipped Sri Hari with all devotion.

Blessing Tondaman, Swamy said, “Oh king? you have become a staunch devotee. I will definitely grant you salvation. Do you want it now itself or do you want sometime else?” The king asked Him to grant salvation immediately and surrendered himself to Swamy.

Bhagawan blessed him. Meanwhile an aerial vehicle came down from the sky. Bhagawan granted him salvation and sent him to Vaikuntham in the aerial vehicle. Afterwards Swamy reached Ananda Nilayam.

The son of Tondaman performed after life-rites to his father and entrusted the kingdom to the Feet of Sri

Venkateswara. With the help of Vasudana, he conducted daily celebrations, Fortnightly celebrations, Monthly celebrations and Annual celebrations.

Archa Vighraha Murthy : Form of idol worship

Sreemannarayana shone grandly in the form of a statue. He blessed both vasudana and his son Sreenivasa. He was in silent posture. With His consort Padmavati, He fulfilled the desires of His devotees. Taking the gifts from them, He became the gem of Seshadri Sikharam.

Even today, the grace of Sreenivasa is showering on the devotees. The fame and glory of Sri Venkateswara Swamy spread far and wide. Taking money from the devotees, and paying interest to Kubera He kept up His word. The supremely charming playful actions of Swamy are numerous. Lakhs of devotees are worshiping Swamy the perceptible deity of Kaliyuga. Tirumala has become Kaliyuga Vaikuntham.”

The saints felt happy hearing to what Suta said. They praised Him in many ways.

When they asked him why Swamy had become a statue, Suta said like this -

“O virtuous saints! Sreenivasa won’t show His real form to all. That’s why Swamy exhibits His insignia with kindness to all kinds of people for Darshan and for Salvation. He graces the devotees in different idol forms made of copper, stone, earthen and wood. He

is also prayed by different names receiving worships from them.

All the idol forms are symbols of Sri Hari Himself. The idols we see with our naked eye appear to our mind’s eye. They remove the impurities of the mind to those who visit Him. The worship idols are the main instruments for granting Salvation to all the devotees. While worshiping the idols we must experience that Swamy is Omnipresent. We should meditate on Rama and Krishna, the Vibhava Avatars, and obtain the qualities of those great beings. Later, we must feel the strategy influence of Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Sankarshana and Vasudeva, and then meditate on them. The Archarupas/worship forms are the main causes for the attainment of the other world.

In order to protect all the people, Sreenivasa got installed in self-manifested worship form. May His welfare be forever.”

Hearing the words of Suta, the saints started praising Sreenivasa and continued good conversation with him.

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Chapter - IV**SREENIVASA'S WORSHIP FORM**

Hearing the history of Sreenivasa's worship-form, the saints like Sounaka were very much satisfied and looked at Suta and said, "Suta! The history of Sreenivasa Swamy which we have heard is insatiable. After Sreenivasa's marriage with Padmavati, Mahalakshmi again has reached Kolhapuram. Has He kept Her in His mind or forgotten? Has He kept Her on His Chest or not? Please explain this matter."

Hearing to their question, Roumaharshani exhaled a gentle smile immediated on Vyasa and said in reply to them:

"Just as you asked me, long ago Devala questioned Devadarshan, about this matter. Whatever he explained, I will relate it to you. Please Listen."

Venkateswara's worry about Lakshmi

Though Sri Venkateswara was with Padmavati, He did not forget Lakshmi. Many a times He thought of Her. A few years elapsed like this. He thought it's not fair on His part to keep away Lakshmi from Him.

Padmavati studied the mind of Sreenivasa. One day She said to Her husband, "Swamy? when I see Your face I feel that You are worried about something. May I know the reason for Your anxiety?"

Sreenivasa had no option but to speak out. He said to Her like this, "Padmavati! Prior to the time of

creation, I was in absolute reality. Then Lakshmi came to Me and made Me feel happy. Only because of Her I became the cause for this creation. My glory is the result of Her grace. The worry of Her estrangement is the reason for My anxiety. The main reason was the touch of Brhugu's foot on to My Chest. From the day of Her separation, I faced many difficulties and became a victim to many sufferings. The debt for the marriage is not yet cleared."

Then Padmavati said, "Dear husband! It is not good on Your part to be away from Lakshmi, who is the cause for Your greatness. Somehow convince Her and get Her here. If She comes, I will be fortunate enough in serving both of You. Let us go and get Her here."

"Padmavati! now You are happy with Your married life. If Lakshmi comes and settles on My Chest, will You be able to tolerate?" Sreenivasa questioned Her.

Then Padmavati said like this, "Swamy! If Ramaadevi settles on Your Chest, what will I lose? When She was Sita, She asked You to marry Me. By any means we must get Her Here. I will convince Her and get Her here."

Hearing Her words Swamy said, "I feel happy by Your words. You be with Vakula. I myself will go and get Ramaadevi here."

Lakshmi reaching Patalam (underneath the earth)

Lakshmi at Kolhapuram came to know of the conversation between Padmavati and Her husband by Her imaginative power. “Now Swamy comes here and asks Me to go with Him. I cannot say no. If I go there, Padmavati will get worried. Why should I intervene?” Thinking of Padmavati’s welfare, She left Kolhapur for Patala. The sage Kapila duly honoured Her.

Meanwhile Sri Hari reached Kolhapuram. There He searched for Lakshmi. He felt sad when He came to know that She was not there. The separation of Lakshmi pained Him very much.

Installing Lakshmi in worship-form, He performed penance for ten years. One day the words of aerial message (Akasavani) reached His ears.

The words of Akasavani (Aerial message)

“Oh Lord! Ramaadevi doesn’t appear here. You go from here to Suvarnamukhi, the river flowing by Seshachalam. You perform penance on the north side of Suvarnamukhi. You get a golden flower from heaven and instal it there. If You instal the sun on the east, that flower will remain bloomed forever without drooping. If You concentrate on the flower and worship, She will appear before You. If You chant Lakshmi incantation silently, for twelve years, She will appear. Then you take Her on to Your Chest,” said Akasavani.

Hearing the words, He opened His eyes and understood that they were the words of Akasavani. Immediately mounting garuda, He reached Seshadri. From there He reached Siddhasthalam on the east of Agastyasramam nearby Seshadri.

Sri Venkateswara’s penance

Worshiping the God of wind, (Vayudeva) Sreenivasa got a thousand petalled flower from heaven taking the help of the God of wind. With pickaxe He dug a pit. In it He planted the pistil of the flower. On the east He installed the sun. On the west of the flower pond seated cross-legged (Padmasanam), He concentrated on the flower. Chanting Lakshmi incantation, He worshipped Her whole heartedly.

Not knowing that the penancer was none other than Vishnu, Indra sent the angels like Rambha and others to disturb His penance. Their facial expressions didnot disturb His concentration. To teach them a lesson, Swamy created a world beauty. Looking at her, Rambha and others felt shy of themselves, understood the real form of Swamy, went back and revealed the matter to Indra. Indra realised his folly and repented.

By the time Sri Hari left Padmavati, twenty two years had elapsed. She became worried. She expressed Her worry before Vakulamalika. Vakulamalika consoled Padmavati by her soothing words.

Lakshmi who was in the hermitage of Kapila came to know of Her husband's penance and asked him thus -

“Muneendra! Sreenivasa took up the hand of Padmavati. He left Her on the hill and is performing penance down the hill for My sake. What shall I do now?”

She also told him that the touch of Bhrugu's foot was the route cause for Her separation from Her husband.

Advice of Kapila Muni

Kapila said to Her, “Isn't Bhrugu Your grandson! Has Your husband not said about it? Is it good for You to go to Kolhapuram leaving Your husband by turning a deaf ear to His words? Why don't You accept the foot of Bhrugu when Your husband could accept it. What is the fault of Bhrugu? He came to test the qualifications of the Trinity. To prove that Vishnu is greater than Brahma and Rudra, he behaved like this. You Yourself have committed a fault leaving Your husband and throwing blame on Him.”

Again he said, “If He comes to call You out of pity, is this trick feeling good for You? Is there any morality not known to You? Is it good for a chaste woman to do like this? Is it good on Your part to leave Sri Hari for twenty two years. Now start from here and stand on the flower through the pistil of the flower planted by Your husband. All the angels will come there. Then You settle on the chest of Your husband.”

The words of Kapila Maharshi were agreeable to Lakshmidēvi. She realised Her folly. She decided to enter the flower with some other body but not with the fowl-body. She told Her decision to the saint.

“O Mother of this world! You are the ever protector of Sri Hari. You too have taken up the same number of incarnations as many incarnations as Sri Hari took. You are the primordial couple. You are the creators of all the three worlds. As there is some significant work, the separation has occurred between You two. Don't show anger for pointing out Your mistake. I have told You What I know.” Said Kapila muni.

Then Lakshmi said, “Muneendra! It is good on your part letting Me to know the facts. The thought of hostility in Me has disappeared. How can I settle on the chest of Sri Hari who is with Padmavati? with this thought I have deceived Sri Hari and have come to Your hermitage.”

In reply to Her the sage said, “Chandra Mukhi! when Vishnu became Krishna, He appeared in numerous forms to the thousands of ladies (Gopikas). Is it not true? Have You abandoned Him then? You have come here to sanctify My hermitage. From now onwards You stay on Seshadri without leaving Your husband.”

She felt happy after listening to the words of the saint. She kept Her former body in the hermitage in

deep penance/austerity. She assumed a divine body separately.

Birth of Vyuhalakshmi

She entered into the Pistil of the flower in the flower pond. Piercing through the pistil, She seated Herself on the base of the flower. It appeared as if all the lightnings gathered and got concentrated at one place.

Bhagawan Vishnu looked at Her and felt utmost delighted. She saw the face of Sri Hari and bent Her head out of shyness. Seeing the renunciate body of Sri Hari with matted hair and He looking like a penancer for Her sake, pained Her very much.

Studying the mind of Lakshmi, Sreenivasa appeared before Her, bedecked with all the jewellery and armed with conch and disc in Super Human personality with dark complexion. When Sri Devi was looking at Him with extreme love, He bent His head and remained silent.

Meanwhile, Brahma and Rudra mounting their Vehicles came to Padmasarovaram. They played the drums and other musical instruments. They showered flowers.

They chanted many verses in praise of Sri Devi and Sri Hari and saluted to them. Looking at Lakshmi on the base of the flower they prayed to Her, “Mother! Ramaadevi! stand on the chest of Your Swamy and on Seshadri and grace us.”

Lakshmi reaches the Bosom of Vishnu

“To-day is an auspicious day. The week day is Friday. The star is uttarashada. Tithi is panchami of the first fortnight, and the month is karteeka. On this auspicious day, You settle on the chest of Vishnu. Why delay?”

Without saying a word, Lakshmi Devi remained silent. Brahma winked at Bhrgu. Then Bhrgu came to Lakshmi folding his hands and prayed, “Mother! excuse me for my mistake. Please consider me as your son and stand on the chest of Hari.”

Then She honoured him and said with utmost happiness and with Her normal gesture -

“Muneendra! I appreciate you for your ardent devotion and matchless courage. Ignoring the Sattvic quality of My husband I went away from Him. With the impact of Rajasiz nature and of the future times, I became a stranger, after leaving My husband. I have made Him perform penance. Nobody can over come the inexorable fate. This fault is neither your’s nor mine. The magic show of His cosmiz play and of His pranks (leelas) is known only to Him.”

Saying thus, She bade farewell to Bhrgu and concentrated on the Feet of Her husband. With love and devotion She remained in the golden flower like a golden doll. She thought that Jagannatha Himself would pick Her up and place Her on His chest.

Then Brahma and Rudra studied Her mind looking at Her. They saluted and prayed, “Jagadeeswara! please look at the daughter of ocean and take Her to Your chest.”

In reply to them Sri Hari said, “ Please ask Her to be on My chest forever, the abode of Her’s.”

Then they said, “Devi! Now You stay on the chest of Your husband. This is an auspicious moment (Lagnam). Don’t delay.”

Then the fragrance of flower from the bedecked body of Lakshmi spread far and wide. She came out from the flower and stood by Her husband just as She came out of ocean previously. She smeared the chest of Hari, Her abode with sandal. Making sounds with the bangles of Her hands She adorned the neck of Hari with a big garland.

Sri Hari looked at Lakshmi, felt happy, hugged Her with His two arms and took Her to His chest. There was a floral rain from the sky. Drums were played. The angels like Indra saluted Him. The angels danced to the divine music. Gandharvas sang. The saints like Kashyapa eulogized Sri Hari with the verses of Nigamanta Sukta (Vedas). Parvati and Saraswati gave Her wave offerings and Sprinkled Seshalu (Akshintalu). Siva and Brahma with the other saints recited Vedas. Feeling happy, Vishnu mounted garuda with His consort Sri Kaanta.

Then Brahma and Rudra announced loudly like this - “Those who take bath in this flower-pond (padmasarassu) where Maha Lakshmi springed up, will all be blessed with prosperity. They will also attain Salvation.” All the guests praised the greatness of that teertham. They sprinkled the waters of the teertha on their heads. Afterwards mounting their vehicles they got ready for their return journey.

Lakshmi Venkateswara in Ananda Nilayam

Lakshmi Narayana along with them reached Venkatadri with the permission of Varaha swamy. They entered their residence. Then Padmavati bedecked with all the jewellery, came to Ananda Nilayam and saluted both Hari and Siri. Padmalaya duly respected Padmavati. Afterwards She arranged a grand dinner for all and distributed clothes and jewels. Feeling satisfied, they went back to their abodes with the permission of Lakshmi and Narayana.

Amusing conversation of Lakshmi and Venkateswara

Sri Venkateswara with His consorts Lakshmi and Padmavati stayed on Venkatadri very happily. One day He said to Lakshmi, “Devi! Your arrival made Me happy. The debt I have taken from Kubera is not yet cleared. Suggest Me a plan to clear off the debt.”

“Swamy! When I came to attend the wedding, You could have asked Me and I would have given You

the money required. What is the necessity to take the debt from anyone else?" Lakshmi said in reply to Her husband.

"How can I ask You when You left Me and were worried about Yourself," said Govinda.

"What is to happen has happened. I will give You sufficient money, clear Your debt," said Lakshmi.

Then Sree Hari said, "Don't I know Your greatness? Don't give Me money now. I will pay the interest regularly and will clear off the debt by the end of Kaliyuga. Afterwards I will reach Vaikuntha. Till then, I will stay on Seshachalam and rule the people and purge their sins. There are so many works to be attended to. There is no need to clear the debt right now."

Again He said, "The people in Kaliyuga commit sins and become patients. Then they cry out for My help. I have to save them. I do attract their evil deeds upon their earnings. I dispel their difficulties and take money from them and give it to My devotees. The money I take from the virtuous will be given to Kubera in the form of interest."

"Ramaa! You give money to all the people. I will attract that money. Giving it to the needy I will continue My rule. It must take place till the end of Kaliyuga. I wrote a promissory note to Kubera that I would clear his debt keeping the end of Kaliyuga a peripheral line.

There upon Lakshmi said like this, "You are denying the money that I want to give to You. You are asking Me to give it to the people. What is it's secret? The people in Kaliyuga are hard-hearted people. They don't do good works of charity and righteousness. That's why they suffer with poverty. How can I give money to such kind of people? Whatever amount You want, I will give You, and You give it to them for Yourself."

As a reply Swamy said like this - "Lakshmi! It's My liking to bestow Salvation to the deserving and protect the Virtuous by giving the result of their virtues. You are a friend of prosperity. It's Your duty to present property and prosperity to the people. My duty is to take money from them, dispel their difficulties, offer boons like presenting progeny and feel happy for Myself."

Then Lakshmi asked, "The people won't do charitable deeds. Why should I give them wealth? Why should they give it to You? when they gain wealth, they cultivate the evil qualities like pride, vanity. Do they give money to You?"

Swamy replied, "Lakshmi! what You said is true. There is a secret in it. The people commit mistakes and become patients. Then they recollect Me. I appear in their dreams and ask them to submit vow-offerings. Increasing interest for them, I will try to make them come to Venkatadri. The money they give, will be

divided and distributed to both good and evil people. I will make them take up charitable works.

Hence You give them plenty of grain and wealth even if their charity is meagre. I will grant them boons and make them take up charities. Though the offering is little, it becomes doubled. If we don't observe this secret, Kalipurusha will destroy all kinds of good deeds and cause sufferings. That's why I request You to grant wealth to the people. If I clear the debt, now itself, I may have to remain here empty hand" said Sreenivasa.

Then Lakshmi replied, "O immortal soul! Let Me tell You the truth. Those who take up charitable works and offer money to You, will be booned with both grain and wealth. I will destroy the sinners money."

Sri Venkateswara Swamy agreed for this. All people came to Venkatadri, submitted heaps of money and obtained Swamy's grace.

When Devadarshan said like this, Devala asked Him, "you said that Lakshmi stayed at Kapilasramam performing penance with Her former body. When did She come to the earth? please tell me."

Stay of Veeralakshmi at Sukasramam

Then Devadarshan replied like this -

"Possessing good character, keeping Her concentration on Swamy, leaving body consciousness, Lakshmi devi felt that the whole world is filled with

Vishnu's form and She continued Her penance. Some years elapsed.

One day Venkateswara Swamy thought like this - "As I performed penance to secure Her, She is now performing penance to procure Me at Kapilasramam. I do have a plan to get Her to the earth."

Thinking like this, Swamy yielded His form from the heart of Veera Lakshmi and Her meditation got disturbed. When She opened Her eyes, She could nowhere find Vishnu. Worried about Her plight She went to Kapila.

Looking at Her Kapila said, "Padmakshi! Your unflickering penance has borne fruit. You need not stay here. You reach the flower-pond at the base of Seshadri. There the son of Sukamuni will worship You as per pancharatragama."

As per the advise of Kapila, Lakshmi mounted the divine chariot, broke the earth and reached the flower pond situated on the north of Swarnamukhi, that was present in the southern side of Seshadri. 108 divine souls were worshipping Her when She was emerging from the Patala. She landed on the lotus. Seeing Lakshmi in the middle of the pond, the angels offered Parijatam and hailed Her.

The rays of Her divine body spread in the whole world. Seeing this, Sreenivasa came there mounting on His garuda. Brahma and Rudra came there at the sametime.

Significance of Padmateertham

That day was Bhruvaluvaram. The tithi was Suddha Panchami and the month was karteeka. That day Vyuha Lakshmi at first appeared in front of Sri Hari. On the same day, after sometime, Veera Lakshmi also appeared. Brahma and others thought it as an important day. They said to swamy, “Oh God! In this sacred pond rose Vyuha Lakshmi and Veera Lakshmi. Padmateertham is the appropriate name for it. On this day those who take bath in this pond will be freed from sins and will enjoy peace and prosperity.”

There upon some bathed in the pond. On the south-east of this teertham viswakarma was ordered to build a divine temple. They prayed to Veera Lakshmi, took Her with them and installed there. They asked chayasuka to perform worships as per pancharatragama.

Sreenivasa took away the garland from His neck and adorned it in the neck of Veera Lakshmi. Making Sukasrama into an Agrahara, Sreenivasa entrusted it to chayasuka. He duly honoured all the people and bid farewell to them.

Afterwards Swamy said to Veera Lakshmi - “Lakshmi! I have seen Your former body, You can come with Vyuhalakshmi and stay on Venkatadri with Me, come there.”

Then She saluted Sreenivasa and said, “Swamy! This is the most sacred place as You have performed

panance to procure Me. This is Sukakshetram. I will stay here itself. You be in My heart and keep Vyuhalakshmi on Your chest. Save Me by keeping Me here itself. I like this place very much. Your grace is enough, You need not worry that I am not coming along with You. In the form of Vyuha Lakshmi, I will stay on Your chest. What impalement is there for You? Take care of Padmavati and offer boons to the devotees who come to the hill. You send a flower garland as a gift along with Your lovely cloth on the day of Karteeka Suddha Panchami. Accepting all the celebrations taking place here I will intun submit them to You. Be on Seshadri forever.” Saying thus She saluted to His feet.

Accepting Her words, and after bidding farewell to Veera Lakshmi, Sri Venkateswara Swamy came to Seshadri along with Vyuha Lakshmi. He played with Padmavati and Vyuha Lakshmi.

Chayasuka conducted the celebrations for Veera Lakshmi with great devotion. She stayed there providing the people peace and prosperity and is also receiving worships from them.

(This book is written based on the religious story depicted by Matrusri Tarigonda Vengamamba in her book ‘Sri Venkatachala Maahaatmyam.’)

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