

Sri Ranganaatha Mahimai

(Vol.I)



Annotated Commentary In English By
SrI nrusimha sEva rasikan
Oppiliappan kOil Sri.VaradAchAri SaThakOpan



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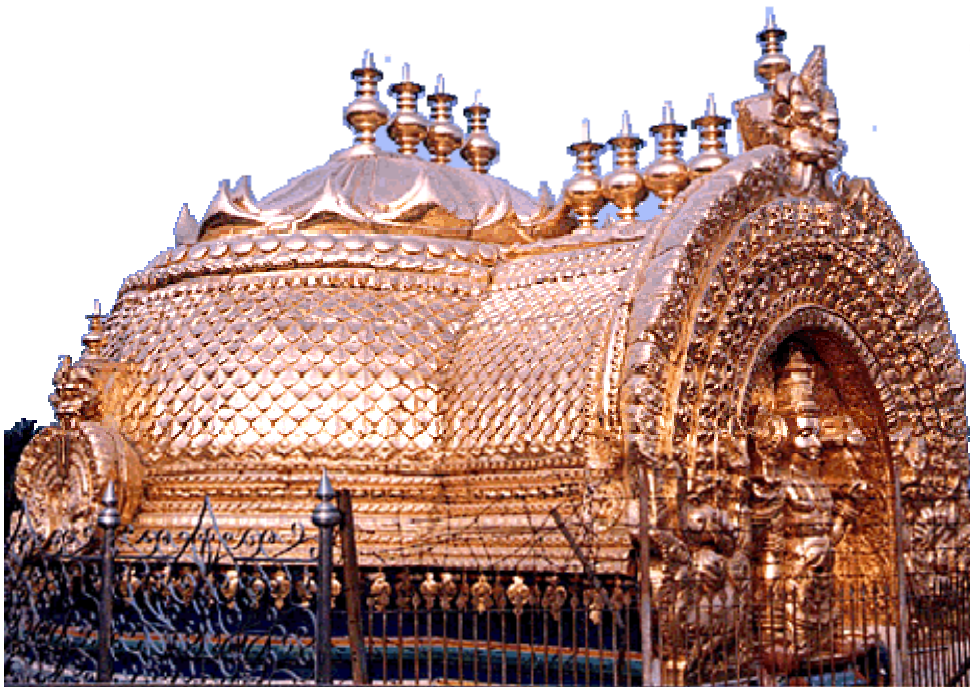
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PraNavAkAra Vimanam - Sri Rangam

Sri Ranganaatha Mahimai and History



NamperumAL



॥ श्रीः ॥

INTRODUCTION

DHYAANA SLOKAM OF SRI RANGANATHA

मुखे मन्दहासं नखे चन्द्रभासं

करे चारु चक्रं सुरेसापिवन्द्यं ।

भुजङ्गे शयनं भजे रङ्गनाथम्

हरेरन्यदैवं न मन्ये न मन्ये ॥

MukhE mandahAsam nakhE chandrabhAsam

karE chAru chakram surEsApivandyam |

bhujangE SayAnam bhajE RanganAtham

Hareranyadaivam na manyE na manyE ||

AZHWAAR ARULICCHEYALGAL

adiyEn will focus here on the 245 paasurams on Sri RanganAthA by the eleven AzhwArs. The individual AzhwAr's paasurams are as follows:

Poygai	Mudal ThiruvandhAthi	1
BhUtham	Second ThiruvandhAthi	4
PEy	Third ThiruvandhAthi	1
Thirumazhisai	Naanmukan ThiruvandhAthi	4
	Thirucchanda Viruttham	10
NammAzhwAr	Thiruviruttham	1

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	Thiruvaimozhi	11
PeriyAzhwAr	Periya Thirumozhi	35
ANdAL	NaacchiyAr Thirumozhi	10
ThiruppANar	AmalanAdhi pirAn	10
Kulasekarar	PerumAL Thirumozhi	31
Tondardipodi	ThirumAlai	45
	ThirupaLLIyezucchi	10
Thirumangai	Periya Thirumozhi	58
	ThirunedumthAndakam	8
	ThirukkurumthAndakam	4
	Siriya Thirumadal	1
	Periya Thirumadal	1

Thirumangai leads in the count of Pasurams with 72 to his credit followed by the Ranganatha Pathivrathai (Thondaradipodi) with 55 paasurams. PeriyAzhwAr and Kulasekarar take the third and fourth place in the count with 35 and 31 paasurams respectively. Rest of the seven AzhwArs share 52 paasurams between them. Each of the 245 paasurams brim however with beauty and deep devotion.

BHULOka VAIKUNTAM AND AZHAGIYA MANAVALAN

The object of the eulogy of the AzhwArs is the handsome bridegroom (Azhagiya maNavALan) or NamperumAL. He rests in the verdant island of Srirangam formed by the two branches of Cauveri River. He rests on the



timeless (Ananthan) AdisEshan under the shade of the VedaSrunga VimAnam with the shape of PraNavam. He is the ParavAsudEvan sung by the DevAs and worshipped by our AchAryAs for a very, very long time. He is anAthi. He descended on this earth in response to the prayers and penance of IshvAku dynasty kings; He is the kula dhanam of Surya Vamsam of Sri Ramachandra; In fact has been worshipped at AyOdhyA by Sri Ramachandra Himself with His consort SitA Devi.

After Sri Rama PattAbhishEkam, He was given as a present to VibhishaNa by Sri Ramachandra for permanent residence in Sri Lanka. During transit, Sri Ranganatha looked over the verdant island of Srirangam and decided to stay right there permanently to the disappointment of VibhishaNa.

Since, Lord RanganAtha prefers Srirangam as a place of residence over Sri Vaikuntam and the milky ocean, Srirangam is celebrated as His BhOga mANdALam.



NamPerumAL in Sesha Vahanam
(Image Courtesy: Sri.Murali Bhattar,
www.srirangapankajam.com)



ACHARYAS WHO RESIDED AT SRIRANGAM

Srirangam is one of the 8 svayamvyaktha (self-manifested) KshEthrams and is one of the most important among the 108 divya desams celebrated by the 12 AzhwArs. Naatha Muni, ALavandAr, Periya nampi, RaamAnujA, EmbAr, KurEsar, AmudanAr, Garuda Vaahana Pandithar, Parasara Bhattar, Namjeeyar, PiLLai LokAcchAr, Vadakku Thiruveethi piLLai, Vedantha Desikan, MaNavALa Maamuni, Adi VaNN SatakOpa Yattheendhra MahA Desikan and his Acharya paramparai, the two branches of Andavans and a great many SvayamAchArya PurushAs (TaataChArs et al) have spent a significant portion or all of their lives at Srirangam

GRANTHAMS THAT WERE BORN HERE

Here were born the immortal SaraNaagathi and the other two Gadhyams of Sri RaamnujA, Sri Sthavam of KurEsA, RangarAja Sthavam of ParAsara Bhattar and a host of other sacred granthams of Swami Desikan such as:

1. Sri PaadhukhA sahasram,
2. Sri Bhagavd DhyAna sOpAnam,
3. Sri Abheethi Sthavam,
4. DasAvathAra sthOthram,
5. tattva muktha kalApam,
6. SarvArtha Siddhi,
7. nyAya Parisuddhi,
8. nyAya Sidhanjanam,
9. nyAsa tilakam,
10. Satha DhUshaNi,
11. tattvaDeepikai,
12. Sankalpa SUryOdhayam,
13. YaadhavAbhudayam, and





14. Hamsa SandEsam.

That is why, Srirangam is known and revered as Periya Koil and the EmperumAn is known as Periya PerumAL . He inspired and blessed them all.

STHANA VIS ESA ADHIKARAM OF SRIRANGAM

In our Sri VaishNavite SampradhAyam, Koil, Thirumalai and PerumAL Koil are known for their highest sthAna VisEsha adhikArams (reputation and reverence as the highest among divya desams).

These three fit well with the three rahasya manthrAs dear to Sri VaishNavAs. Swami Desikan has therefore prayed for uninterrupted ArAdhanam for Sriman naarAyaNaa at these three special divya desams:

श्रीरङ्ग द्विरत वृषाद्रि पूर्वकेषु स्थानेषु स्तिर विभव भवत् सपर्या ।

आकल्पं वरद ! विधूत वैरि पक्षा भूश्य भवतनुकम्पयैव भूयात् ॥

Sriranga dvirata vrushAdri pUrvakEshu

sthAnEshu stira vibhavA bhavat saparyA |

aakalpam Varada ! vidhUta vairi pakshaa

bhUsyA bhavatanukampayaiva bhUyAt ||

Swami Desikan prays for the aarAdhanam and service (saparyA) from kalpam to kalpam without let at these three special divya desams.

In sthAna visEsha adhikAram, Srirangam is connected to ashtAksharam, Kanchipuram to Dhvayam and Thirumalai to Charama sLOkam. Therefore, Swami Desikan prays for UttarOtthara aarAdhanam without interruptions.

Here on the beautiful banks of Cauveri River, Lord RanganAtha rests in one of His panchAkruthis as KasthUri Rangan. The other four are CauvEri Rangan, KalyANa Rangan, Hema Rangan at Thirukkudanthai and Parimala Rangan at





Thiru IndaLur, where Cauveri joins her Lord, Samudra Raajan.

SRI RAAMANUJA'S RECOGNITION OF THE STHANA VISESHAM

Sri RaamAnuja, who was born close to Kanchi VaradarAjan's temple got instructions in Thirumalai from his uncle and spent most of his time until the end of his last moment on this earth at Srirangam. His physical body rests inside the temple of Srirangam even today as per the wish of Sri Ranganatha (athraiva SukhamAsva).

Sri BhashyakArar changed the ArAdhana protocols from VaikAnasam to PaancharAthram. He conducted KaalakshEpanam at the great temple of Srirangam. On a Panguni Uttaram day, he composed his three Gadhyams (Sriranga, SaraNaagathi and Sri Vaikunta Gadhyams) here and performed his SaraNaagathi at the feet of the divya dampathis on their annual day of being together on Ekapeetam. The extremely pleased divya dampathis broke their archAvathAra mounam and spoke to Sri RamAnuja and accepted his SaraNaagathi. They instructed Sri RamAnuja to stay right there at Srirangam until he shuffles his Mortal coils (yaavacch, sareerapaatham, athraiva SrirangE sukamAsva). They asked Sri RamAnuja to perform kaimkaryam for them and stay right next to them until his last moments and thereafter too! That is the glory of Sriranga KshEthram.



Acharya Raamaanujar - SrI Rangam

Thanks : Sri.Murali BaTTar





Sri RanganAtha recognized the contributions of one such AchAryan and gave him (Swami Desikan), the title of VedAnthAcchAryan. His consort was so proud of her child's (Swami Desikan's) accomplishments in many fields and hence recognized her son proudly as "Sarva Tantra Svatantrar".

Sri Ranganaatha attended the kaalakshEpam of another achAryan and recognized the outstanding services of this AchAryan (MaNavALa Maamunigal) and composed a Taniyan for him (Sri SailEsa DayApaathram---). Such is the sacredness of Sriranga KshEthram.

Sri Ranganaatha had special affection for the elder son of KurEsA, the precocious ParAsara Bhattar and made him His PurOhithA. He conversed with Bhattar and had a wonderful relationship with him.

PARASARA BHATTAR AND HIS UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP TO THE LORD

ParAsara Bhattar was born out of divine intervention of Sri RanganAthA as the son of KuratthAzhwAn and his wife ANdAL, an extraordinary woman. He was the elder of the twins born to KurEsA and his wife. AchArya RaamAnuja himself gave the name of ParAsara to the elder child and Veda VyAsA to the younger twin. Parasara Bhattar did not live long, but his immortal contributions to Sri VaishNavism are profound and could have happened only because of the special blessings of Sri RanganAtha and His divine consort, Sri RanganAyaki. The spiritual authority invested in him by AchArya RaamAnuja is a direct consequence of the Srirangam Divya Dampathi's wishes.



Sri Parasara Bhattar





The elated RaamAnuja thanked the Divya dampathis for their krupA and was immersed in an ocean of bliss. Out poured the incomparable eulogy of our AchAryA to the Lord in his Sriranga Gadhyam:

अपारकरुणाम्बुधे ! अनालोचितविशेष अशेषलोकशरण्य ! प्रणतार्तिहर !

आश्रितवात्सल्यैक महोदधे ! अनवरतविदित निखिलभूतजात याथात्म्य !

सत्यकाम ! सत्य सङ्कल्प ! आपत्सख ! काकुत्स्थ ! श्रीमन् ! नारायण !

पुरुषोत्तम ! श्रीरङ्ग नाथ ! मम नाथ ! नमाडेस्तु ते ॥

apAra karuNAmbudhE! anAlocita visEsha asEsha IOka SaraNya!
praNatArtihara! aasrita vAtsalya yEka mahOdadhE ! anavarata vidita nikila
bhUta jAta yAthAtmya ! satya kaama! satya sankalpa! Aapatsakha
kaakutstha! Sriman! naarAyaNa! purushOttama! SrI ranganaatha! mama
naatha! nama: asthu tE

AchArya RaamAnuja performed SaraNaagathi directly in SaraNaagathi Gadhyam and thanked the Lord for accepting his SaraNaagathi in Sriranga Gadhyam. After that, he wanted to remind people that it is SRI VAIKUNTANAATHA NATHAN Himself, who is present at Srirangam. For that purpose, he composed Sri Vaikunta Gadhyam. With his Jn~Ana dhristi (soul's eye), he witnessed the unparalleled beauty and the sacredness of Sri Vaikuntam. He received the bhAgyam of having the Lord's holy feet on his siras (head) and was immersed in the ocean of aanandham. Thereafter, he returned to BhUIOkam (Srirangam, the BhOga mANdALam) and was blessed to perform nithya kaimkaryam to the divya Dampathis of Srirangam. Such is the sacredness of Srirangam, where AchArya RaamAnuja's feet traveled.

Other AchAryAs who followed Sri RaamAnuja fertilized and maintained the vitality of the tree of VisishTadvaitam planted by him and made it yield abundant fruits.





PARASARA BHATTAR AND ASHTASLOKI

Parasara Bhattar in his own way paid tribute to the sthAnavisEshAdhikaarams of Srirangam, Kaanchi and Thirumalai in his illustrious work: AshtasLOki.

The first four verses deal with Srirangam (associated with ashtAksharam), the next two deal with dhvayam (Kaanchi) and the last two cover Charama sLOkam (Thirumalai). The three rahasyAs and their associations with the three sthAnams of the Lord are thus celebrated .

BHATTAR AND SRI BHAGAVAD GUÑADARPANA

At Srirangam was born this scholarly commentary on the thousand names of the Lord immortalized in Sri VishNu Sahasra Naamam. He celebrated the Tattva-Hitha-PurushArthams according to the VaishNavite darsanam. His commentary is a celebration of the SaguNa aspects of the Brahman that rests in the state of YoganidrA at Srirangam.

BHATTAR AND SRI GUÑARATHNA KOSAM

Through the 61 verses of this devotional poem, Bhattar pays exquisite tribute to Sri RanganAyaki and salutes the special relationship She has to erring jeevans from the intercession/mediacy (purushakAra) point of view as one of the SaraNya dampathis. The detailed commentary on Sri Guna Ratna Kosam can be accessed at : <http://www.sundarasimham.org/ebooks/ebook38.htm>

Bhattar relates Sri RanganAyaki to SitA pirAtti and visualizes her as an adolescent girl somewhere between the throes of childhood and brimming youthful state. The Lord has been celebrated as ILamkumaran or Nithya YuvA by AzhwArs (ThiruviNNagar Paasurams). Here, Bhattar salutes Sri RanganAyaki as Nithya Yuvathi.

Bhattar had a special claim to Sri RanganAtha, the MaapiLLai (Azhagiya MaNavALan), who married Sri RanganAyaki. He used to tell Sri RanganAtha





that he(Bhattar) is the Sri dhanam that came with His divine bride. He used to describe his special claim as "NaacchiyArkku nallavar yenru yennai ThiruvuLLam PaRRavum" This was his clever appeal to the beautiful son-in-law of Srirangam (Sundara JaamAthrA /Azhagiya MaNavALan).

BHATTAR'S TRIBUTE IN ABSENTIA FROM THIRUKKOTTIYUR

Bhattar according to hagiography had to exile himself from the sweet proximity of the Divya dampathis of Srirangam due to a disagreement with the then ChOLA ruler. He spent that voluntary exile at ThirukkOttiyUr dear to Sri RaamAnujA. From there, he pined for the darsanam of the divya dampathis and the daily life amidst Sri VaishNavAs at Srirangam and the holy waters of CauvEri.

The eight verses composed in a state of longing to be near his ishta Daivam are moving. Such is the haunting glory of the sacred city of the Lord to His bhakthAs and BhagavathAs. The eight sLOkams of "Sri RanganAtha SthOthram" are among the treasured kula Dhanams of Sri VaishNavAs far from the home of Srirangam.

Sri RaamAnujA's anguish, when he was away from his beloved Srirangam and Swami Desikan's sorrow during his own exile during the troubled times at Srirangam come to our mind when we read Bhattar's Sri RangarAja SthOthram.

BHATTAR AND SRIRANGARAJA STHAVAM

In this magnum opus containing 232 sLOkams on His ishta Daivam and the defense of Sri VaishNava darsanam over the others, Bhattar follows the path of his father, who composed the five Sthavams (athimAnusha, SundarabAhu, VaradarAja, Vaikunta and Sri SthavAs). Extraordinarily brilliant poetry in celebration of his ishta Daivam, the Chakravarthy of Srirangam, is used to critically establish the soundness of Sri VisishtAdvaitam as the great





darsanam that it is following the tradition of Sri RaamAnujA and his predecessors.

There are two SLOkAs of Sri Ranga Raaja Sthavam that aDiyEn would like to include here to illustrate the deep devotion of Bhattar to Sri RanganAthA.

पातु प्रणतरक्षायां विलम्बमसहन्निव ।

सदा पञ्चायुधीं बिभ्रत्स नः श्रीरङ्गनायकः ।

paathu praNata rakshAyAm vilambamahasanniva |

sadA pancAyudheem bibratsa na: SriranganAyaka: ||

--- Sri Rangarajsthvam, Poorva Satakam, SLOkam 12

MEANING:

May the Lord RanganAyaka , who always stands quite ready with five weapons on His person come to our rescue and grant us protection. He carries these panchAyudhams since He can not bear to have any delay in responding to the cries for help from His BhakthAs (Bhaktha Vaatsalya Rangan).

स्वं संस्कृतद्राविडवेदसूक्तैः भान्तं मदुक्तैर्मलिनीकराति ।

श्रीरङ्गकमः कलभं क एव स्नात्वाऽपि धूळिरसिकं निषेद्धा ॥

svam samskruta drAviDa vedasUktai:bhAntam maduktairmalineekarOti |

Srirangakrama: kalabham ka yEva snAtvApi dhULirasikam nishEddhA ||

--- Sri Rangarajsthvam, Poorva Satakam, SLOkam 16

MEANING:

The beautiful Lord of Srirangam was well adorned by the Sanskrit Veda Manthrams and the Tamizh paasurams of AzhwArs. When He is eulogized by the two VedAs (Tamizh and Sanskrit), he revels as one, who just had his





Thirumanjanam. If that is so, why would He like to tarnish His clean image by my praise? By the way, who can succeed in preventing the free-willed elephant? From pouring dirt and mud over its clean body after a fresh and cleansing bath in the river (Even today, The Lord of Srirangam hears PurushasUktham first during His thirumanjanam, then PeriyAzhwAr's neerAtta paasurams next and finally the Bhattar's 28 Thirumanjana slokams , which is a most interesting dialogue between Jivan and Parabhramam, where the latter is seeking the help of a referee to settle their argument in His favor). The family of Parasara Bhattar still recites these Thirumanjana slokams , which have been blessed with a MaNipravALA commentary by Bhattar himself. The commentary on these precious Kattiya slokams can be accessed at : <http://www.sundarasimham.org/ebooks/ebook52.htm>

Such is the greatness of Srirangam, where Parasara Bhattar's sacred feet hurried to the side of Sri RanganAtha daily to do his assigned PurOhitam (going ahead of the YajamAnA to assure hitham)

The Thiruvaimozhi (entire 1,000 plus verses) are considered by one pUrvAcchAryAr (NampiLLai) to be dedicated to Sri RanganAtha alone. The individual tens (paattus) for Thiruvencatamudayan and other archA mUrthys of other divya dEsams are considered as measured distributions by Periya PerumAl (namperumAL) Himself to His fellow archA mUrthys. What a sweet anubhavam by NampiLLai!

The thoughts about Sri RangEsa PurOhithA, Sri ParAsara Bhattar are still swirling in adiyEn's head and adiyEn will dwell some more on this extraordinary devotee of Sri RangarAja .

According to one anecdote, during the last moments of his life on earth at Srirangam, Bhattar was asked by one of his grief-stricken shishyAs, whether he would indeed like to go to Sri Vaikuntam. The great devotee of Sri RanganAtha replied with feeling: "Yes, I will first travel to Sri Vaikuntam and have the darsanam of Sri VaikuntanAthan there to satisfy my curiosity





whether he is as enthralling and captivating as our RanganAthA. If Sri VaikuntanAthAn does not match up, I will return right back to this bhUIOkam and continue to serve our Rangan. I do not really pay much attention to the SaasthrAs declaring that there is no return to this earth for one, who reaches Sri Vaikuntam". That speaks volumes about the devotion of Bhattar for Sri RanganAthA.

In a similar spirit, **ThiruppANa AzhwAr** declared that "**yenn amudhanaik-kanda kaNNgaL maRRonrinaik kANAvE**" (Amalanaathipiraan - <http://www.ibiblio.org/sadagopan/ahobilavalli/amalanathipiran.pdf>) in one of his ten paasurams. AzhwAr declared here that his eyes will not care to see any one or anything after soaking in the nectar of the beauty of Sri RanganAthAn.

It is pertinent to point out that Swami Desikan chose the title of Sri Bhagavadh DhyAna sOpAnam for a sthOthram he composed in honor of Sri RanganAthA. He did not name it, "Sri RanganAthA DhyAna sOpAnam" because he wanted to emphasize the nature of RanganAthA as the supreme BhagavAn with the six auspicious attributes.

Coming back to Parasara Bhattar's enjoyment of Azhagiya MaNavALan, the whole pUrva sathaka of Sri RangarAja sthavam of Bhattar instructs us about the blessings and grandeur of worshipping Sri RanganAthA at Srirangam. The kramam (sequence) is as follows: taking a sacred bath in Cauvery, entering the grand temple, taking another purificatory bath in chandra pushkariNi, worshipping the AzhwArs, offering salutation to Sri Ranga VimAnam, and then standing next to the special pillar inside the garbha graham known as KalyANA sthambham (MaNat-thUNN) and being lost in the bliss arising from the darsanam of the Sesha sAyee with His divine consorts.

Worshipping the AzhwArs and particularly NammAzhwAr through the recitation of his paasurams on Sri RanganAthA (Thiruvaimozhi 7.2) was very important to ParAsara Bhattar. In these paasurams, NammAzhwAr describes his pathetic state of existence resulting from his separation (visIEsham) from





his Lord. He cries out in viraha tApam as ParAnkusa Naayaki. According to traditional accounts, Bhattar was overcome by the depth of feelings of NammAzhwAr for "Her" nAyakan in these paasurams and used to say:

"We are not fit to appreciate the AzhwAr's intensity of love nor can we fathom his yearning and desire for the union with the Lord .We are simply reciting these paasurams without understanding even an iota of he AzhwAr's true feelings".

Sri RanganAtha eulogized by eleven AzhwArs (pathinmar paaDiya PerumAL) resides in "the aarAtha aruLamudham pothintha Koil" according to Swami Desikan's description in AdhikAra Sangraham. He listens to the thousand verses dedicated to Him by NammAzhwAr (vaan thihazhum solai mathiLarangar vaNN puhazh mEl aanRa Tamizh maRaigAL aayiram) and allocates that naivEdhyam to the archA mUrthys of other divya dEsams. The adopted child of Sri RanganAthan, Parasara Bhattar refers to this allocation of Thiruvaimozhi paasurms by Sri Rangapureesan.

Parasara Bhattar's nirvAhams (interpretations) of Thiruvaimozhi are famous. He was fond of quoting Thiruvaimozhi Paasuram relating to the Lord reclining on AdhisEshA:

பாம்பணையான் சீர் கலந்த சொல் நினைத்து போக்காரேல், சூழ் வினையின்

ஆழ் துயரை என் நினைந்து போக்குவார் இப்போது

PAmpanAyAn seer kalantha soll ninainthu pOkkArEl, soozh vinayin aazh thuyarai yen ninainthu pOkkuvar ippOthu

MEANING:

How are they (People) going to banish the sorrows of their samsAric afflictions, if not by reflecting on the words glorifying the anantha kalyANa guNAs of the Lord reclining on his serpent bed at Srirangam now?

That is why the AzhwAr/AchAryA's divya sUkthis are important for us to





recite instead of saying something on our own .The power of their anubhavam lasts even today and will last forever. The Lord relates to it, when we recite them.

One such divya sUkthi is the Sri RanganAtha SthOthram of Parasara Bhattar consisting of 6 main sLOkAs and two more stray verses. As a result of his displeasure over the BhAgavadh apacharam committed by the ruling king (Veera Sundara Bhramma rAyan) of Srirangam, Bhattar reluctantly left Srirangam and settled at GOshtipuram (ThirukkOttiyUr) for a short time. There, he missed the sevai of Sri RanganAthan and the nithyOthsavams at Srirangam. He pined for the darsanam of Sri RanganAthan and mentally invoked the Lord reclining on the five-headed Adhi sEshan in the middle of Cauveri and KoLLidam in the first sLOkam of his Sri RanganAtha sthOthram in an evocative manner:

सप्तप्राकारमध्ये सरसिज मुकुळोद्भासमाने विमाने

कावेरी मध्यदेशे मृदुतरफणिराड भोगपर्यङ्कभागे ।

निद्रामुद्राभिरामं कटिनिकटशिरः पार्श्वविन्यस्तहस्तं

पद्माधात्रीकराभ्यां परिचितचरणं रङ्गराजं भजेऽहम् ॥

sapta prAkAra madhyE sarasija-

mukuLodbhAsamAnE vimAnE

KaavEri madhya dEsE mridutaraphaNirAt-

bhOga paryanka bhAgE |

nidrA mudrAbhirAmam kaTinikaTa-

sira: pArsva vinyasta hastam

padmAdhAtree karAbhyAm paricita-

caraNam rangaraajam bhajEham ||



MEANING:

In the center of Ubhaya KaauvEri and in the middle of the seven ramparts (prAkArams) and under the Sriranga vimAnam resembling a giant lotus bud rests our beautiful Lord RanganAthA on His beautiful bed of Adhi SeshA in the state of Yoga NidhrA with His right hand close to His crown and the left hand on the left side pointing to His sacred feet. I pay my obeisance to that SaraNyan, Sri RangarAjan.



Cauvery river and SriRangam Vimanam alongwith the seven prakaarams

Courtesy:wikimapia.org

Now, Bhattar is overcome with sorrow over the thought of being separated from his Lord and pines for the darsana soubhAghyam of Sri RanganAthA in his second verse:

कस्तूरीकलितोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रतिलकं कर्णान्तलोलेक्षणं

मुग्धस्मेर मनोहराधरदळं मुक्ता किरीटोज्ज्वलम् ।



पश्यन्मानस पश्यतोहररुचिं पर्याय पङ्केरुहं

श्रीरङ्गाधिपतेः कदा नु वदनं सेवेय भूयोऽप्यहम् ॥

kastUree kalitOrdhva punDra-

tilakam karNAntalOIEkshaNam

mugdha smEra manOharAdharadaLam

muktA kireeTOjjvalam |

pasyan maanasa pasyatOhara-

rucim paryAyapankEruham

SrirangAdhipatE: kadA nu

vadanam sEvEya bhUyOpyaham ||

MEANING:

When am I going to have the blessings of enjoying the beautiful face of the mind-stealer (chitthApahAri), Sri RanganAtha adorned by the fragrant urdhva punDra tilakam made up of kasthUri parimaLam, possessing the steady eyes that extend up to His ears, having the lips enriched by the most natural captivating smile, the shining pearl crown and the face resembling in softness and beauty of a just-blossoming lotus?

In the third sLOkam, Bhattar laments about his durbhAgyam and asks the Lord, when he (Bhattar) is going to stand next to Him and sing about His names:

कदाऽहं कावेरीतटपरिसरे रङ्गनगरे

शयानं भोगीन्द्रे शतमखमणि श्यामळरुचिम् ।

उपासीनः क्रोशन् मधुमथन ! नारायण ! हरे !





मुरारे ! गोविन्देत्यनिशं अपनेष्यामि दिवसान् ॥

kadAham kaavEreetaTa parisarE RanganagarE
SayAnam bhOgeendrE SatamakhamaNi syAmaLa rucim |
upAseena: krOSan madhumathana! naarAyaNa! harE!
murArE! govindEtyaniSam apanEshyAmi divasAn ||

MEANING:

When am I going to have the bhAgyam of standing next to that Lord with the hue of Indra neela gem resting on Adhi SeshA and have his darsanam and sing rapturously His names, "Madhumathana naarAyaNa! HarE! MurArE! Govindha! " and spend the days of my life this way?"

Such longings continue and in the next sLOkam, Bhattar longs for the day of return to Srirangam and taking his purificatory bath in the sacred waters of KaavEri River:

कदाऽहं कावेरी विमलसलिले वीतकलुषो

भवेयं तत्तीरे श्रममुषि वसेयं घनवने ।

कदा वा तत् पुण्ये महति पुळिने मङ्गळगुणं

भजेयं रङ्गेशं कमलनयनं शेषशयनम् ॥

kadAham kaavEri vimala salilE veeta kalushO
bhavEyam tatteerE Sramamushi vasEyam ghanavanE |
kadA vaa tat puNyE mahati puLinE mangaLa guNam
bhajEyam rangEsam kamala nayanam SEsha Sayanam ||

MEANING:

When am I going to have the blessings of sevaa bhAgyam of the lotus-eyed





Lord, Sri RangEsan, resting on His soft and comfortable serpent bed? When am I going to be blessed to take my snAnam in the cool and sacred waters of KaavEri River and become sinless? When am I going to gain the boon of living in the verdant groves on the bank of this sacred river and worship my bewitching Rangan?

In the subsequent sOkam, Bhattar is deeply worried about his good fortune that would permit him to return to the kshEthram of his beloved Lord and he laments:

पूगीकण्ठद्वय ससरसस्निग्ध नीरोपकण्ठां

आविर्मोद स्तिमितशकुना नूदित ब्रह्मघोषाम् ।

मार्गे मार्गे पथिकनिवहैः उञ्छ्यमानापवर्गां

पश्येयं तां पुनरपि पुरीं श्रीमतीं रङ्गधाम्नः ॥

pUgee kaNTTha dvaya sasarasasnigdha neerOpakaNTThAm

aavirmOda stimita SakunA nUdita brahmaghOshAm |

maargE maargE pathika nivahai: uncyamAnApavargAm

pasyEyam taam punarapi pureem Srimateem RangadhAmna: ||

MEANING:

Will I ever have the soubhAgayam to return to the sacred Srirangam, where the waters of KaavEri flow up to the neck of the areca nut (kamuhu) trees with its sweet and pleasant waters? Will I ever have the darsana soubhAgyam of the happy birds (Saarika birds), which repeat the Veda manthrams in their state of Joy as residents of Srirangam and where the throngs of the bhAgyasAlis gather together the assembly of wealth (sampath Samriddhi) known as Moksham as a result of their visits? Will I ever have the good fortune to visit that KshEthram of Sri RanganAthA?





Like Kulasekara AzhwaR begged Sri VenkatEsA of Thirumalai to be born as anything on the sacred hills, Bhattar asks in the next sLOkam to be born even as a lowly dog in Srirangam. Here is his prayer:

न जातु पीतामृत मूर्छितानां नाकौकसां नन्दनवाटिकासु ।

रङ्गेश्वर ! त्वत्पुरमाश्रितानां रथ्याशुनामन्यतमो भवेयम् ॥

na jAtu peetAmruta mUrchitAnAm

nAkoukasAm nandanavATikAsu |

RangEsvara! tvat puram aasritAnAm

rathyaaSunAm anyatamO bhavEyam ||

MEANING:

Oh, RanganAthA! I will never want to be one of devAs, who drink nectar in the gardens of IndraA and feel inebriated with joy from that kind of experience. May I be blessed instead to be born as a dog in the streets of Your Sriranga KshEthram (to be near you and have your darsanam as you go around the streets of your rajadhAni during Your Uthsavams)!

With the above sLOkam, the Sri RanganAtha SthOthram is over. There is however two more stray verses (Mudhagams), which are always recited. These two might have been composed at another time by Bhattar. The first of the two has connections to the wish to be born as a lowly dog in Srirangam.

One morning, Bhattar was rushing to the temple to execute his duties as SrirangEsa PurOhithar. A devotee came out of the temple and told the passing Bhattar that a dog strayed into the Sannidhi and therefore a group of people were conducting Saanthi homam and puNyAhavAchanam to purify the inner precincts.

This devotee was somewhat skeptical about the motives of those performing





the homam and mentioned that the group was doing the homam for their own personal benefit. On hearing that, the amused Bhattar composed this sLOkam and placed it at the feet of His Lord:

असन्निकृष्टस्य निकृष्टजन्तोः मिथ्यापवादेन करोषि शान्तिम् ।

ततो निकृष्टे मयि सन्निकृष्टे कां निष्कृतिं रङ्गपते करोषि ॥

asannikrushTasya nikrushTajantO-mithyApavAdEna karOshi Saantim |

tatO nikrushTE mayi sannikrushTE kaam nishkrutim RangapatE karOshi? ||

MEANING:

Oh, RanganAthA! You are having the saanthi homam performed under the pretext of a dog that entered your sannidhi. That event however did not happen. What are you going to do now, when the lowliest of the lowliest, myself has arrived at your side? What kind of santhi homam are you going to get done to sanctify your sannidhi? This is the context of the origin of Bhattar's seventh sLOkam that we recite.

In the concluding sLOkam, Bhattar lists a number of Divya desams like Srirangam dear to AchAryA RaamAnujA's heart:

श्रीरङ्गं करिशैलमञ्जनगिरिं ताक्ष्याद्रि सिंहाचलौ

श्रीकूर्मं पुरुषोत्तमं च बदरिनारायणं नैमिशम् ।

श्रीमदद्वारवती प्रयागमथुरायोध्यागयाः पुष्करं

सालग्रामगिरिं निषेव्य रमतेरामानुजोऽयं मुनिः ॥

Srirangam kariSailam anjanagirim

†ArkshyAdri simhaacalou

SrI kUrmam purushOttamam ca





badareenArAyanam naimiSam |

Srimad dwAravatee prayAga-

mathurA ayOdhyA gayA: pushkaram

saaLagrAma girim nishEvya

ramatE raamAnujOyam muni: ||

MEANING:

Our great AchArya RaamAnuja had stayed with affection (uhandhu yezhunth-arulinAr) at Srirangam, Hasthigiri (Kaanchi), Thiru Venkatam, AhObilam, SimhAchalam, SreekUrmam, PurushOtthamam (pUri Jagannatham), BadrikAsramam, NaimisAraNyam, Srimad DwArakai, PrayAg, Vada Madhurai AyOddhi, Gaya, Pushkaram and SaalagrAmama giri. The greatness of the mukthi kshEhtrams is saluted here with Srirangam at the front end.

HISTORY OF THE SRIRANGAM TEMPLE

The history of the temple is very ancient one. One can split the history into the pre-historical and the historical period.

PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD

Under the pre-historic period come the avathAram of Sri RanganAthA under the Revathi constellation in response to Brahma's tapas as Svayam vyaktha mUrthy. King IkshvAku, the son of Vaivaswatha Manu performed an austere penance towards Brahma and as a result, he was blessed to have the Sriranga Vimanam housing Sri Ranganaathan move to a new home in AyOddhi, his capital. This became the family asset (Kula dhanam) of all of the Soorya Kula kings that followed IshvAku down to Sri RamachandraA.

After His coronation, Sri Ramachandran gave SriranganAthA with the Sriranga vimAnam as a gift to King VibheeshaNA and commanded latter to





perform ArAdhanam to Sri Ranganathan. On the way to LankhA, the Lord changed His mind about settling down in Lanka and decided to stay forever in the verdant island of Srirangam formed by the rivers CauvEri and KoLLidam.

THE HAND GESTURES OF THE LORD OF SRIRANGAM

Here at the puNya bhUmi of Srirangam, He rests on the five-headed AdhisEshan facing south towards LankhA. He is giving Darsanam to His votary, VibheeshaNA and is looking southwards at SrivilliputthUr, the place of birth of his dear consort, ANdAL.

In His reclining position, His right hand points to His crown to indicate that He is the Emperor and the origin of all chEthanAs and AchEthanAs. His left hand points to His charaNa kamalams (lotus feet) with the Divya MaNi PaadhukhAs saluted by Swami Desikan. He seems to suggest that His ThiruvadigaLs are the only refuge for those, who wish to cross the fearsome ocean of SamsAram.



Ranga! Ranga!

HISTORICAL PERIOD OF TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION

The ChOLA king, Dharma Varman built the temple and Mantapam around the vimAnam left behind by VibhishaNA. After his time, the sands from the floods





of Cauveri buried the VimAnam and PerumAL for quite some time. Another ChOLA king known as KiLLi ChOzhan was traveling by the banks of CauvEri and was wonder struck to hear the incessant warbling of two hymns on Sriman NaarAyaNA by a parrot perched on a tree near by. He dug the place and to his great surprise found the Sriranga VimAnam and BhagavAn resting on AdhisEshA under the sands. He carried out many renovations and maintained the worship of the Lord at His temple.

RAJA MAHENDRA AND NANDA CHOLA KINGS

The devout bhakthA of Sri RanganAthAn by the name of Raja MahEndra ChOLan followed and added many features to the temple including a PrAkAram named after him. That prAkAram stands even today.

Next, Nanda ChOLan, a descendant of Dharma Varman ruling over NisuLApuri (WorayUr) prayed to the Lord to bless him with progeny. The Lord answered his prayer and the king found a baby girl on the top of a giant lotus in the lotus pond. He named the child Kamalavalli and raised her as his own child. When Kamalavalli reached the age of marriage; she desired to marry only Sri Ranganathan. The Lord of Srirangam married her and she became WorayUr nAcchiyAr. The king became the father-in-law of the Lord and ceded his wealth to his son-in-law and built many mantapams and nandavanams.

KULASEKARA PERUMAL OF KOLLINADU

He ruled over the chEra, chOLa and PaandyA kingdoms and was a great bhakthA of the Lord of Srirangam. Like Nanda ChoLA, KulasEkharA PerumAL married his daughter, ChEra Kula Valli to Sri RanganAthAn and spent his last days at the feet of the Lord. ChEra Kula valli sits at the sacred feet of the Lord in the garbha gruham and on Sri Rama Navami days dear to Her father comes out with the Uthsavar and blesses us with Serthi sevai of Her own ;the arayar recited the PerumAL Thirumozhi Paasurams of Her father before Her and Her Lord .





FIFTH CENTURY A.D.

A king from Bengal came to visit Sri RanganAthA and brought with him enormous wealth to cede to the Lord for His ArAdhanam. The jealous administrators of the temple refused to accept the offered wealth. The king left the wealth that he brought with him at the threshold of one of the gates and posted some of his soldiers and Brahmins to protect it and returned home. The Lord was very pleased with the king's Bhakthi and instructed His temple adhikAris to accept the offered wealth. That gate, where the wealth of the king rested is known today as "Aryapadal Vaasal".

THIRUMANGAI MANNAN AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO TEMPLE EXPANSION

In the 9th century A.D., Thirumangai mannan built the ramparts around the temple, raised the height of the temple, created DasAvathAra Sannidhi and developed many nandavanams.

THE KAIMKARYAM OF THE CHOLAA AND PAANDYA KINGS

ChOLENdra Simman, Gangai ThEvan Singan, ThANda Naicker, AgaLangan alias Vikrama chOLan, Sundara Paandyan alias ponn vEyntha PerumAL, KulOthunga ChOLA were the next generation kings who presented the Lord with many AabharaNams, golden pUjA vessels and the gold covered dhvaja sthambham. Dr. A. Gopinath of Bishop Heber College, ThiruchirapaLLI has written a very informative article on the temple construction at Srirangam over the centuries.

SULTAN OF DELHI AND HIS DAUGHTER (TULUKKA NAACCHIYAR)

After the time of the above kings, the Delhi Sultan plundered the Srirangam temple and took with him the archA mUrthy, Sri RanganAthA. His daughter fell in love with the beauty of the Lord and kept the Lord in her bed chambers and adored Him. A group of scholars from Srirangam came to the sultan's court and appealed to the sultan to give them permission to take Sri





RanganAthA back to Srirangam. The Sultan agreed and the visitors to the court rushed back before the sultAni became aware of her loss. The next morning, the sultAni found about the travel of her beloved Lord back to Srirangam and she left Delhi immediately to join her Lord. She arrived at Srirangam with her father and could not find her beloved Lord. She died there heart broken. Her devotion has earned her a sannidhi for her .She is saluted as Tulukka NaacchiyAr. Her sannidhi is now at the King Raja MahEndran veethi (N.E.Thirunadai palace). Sri RanganAthAn partakes rhoti In the morning to show His links to Tulukka NaacchiyAr.



Tulukka nAcciyAr
(Courtesy: Sri.Murali
BhaTTar)

The sultan was very unhappy. He tried to locate the site, where the temple authorities had hidden Sri RanganAthAn and finally gave up his search and returned to his capital. Three kodavars guarded the image of the Lord at the foot of a waterfall in Thirumalai.

For nearly 60 years, the Lord stayed at Thirumalai and finally the word leaked that the Lord is kept at Thirumalai. GoppaNNa UdayAr, the minister of the VijayanagaraA king Harihara rAyar and Chenchi ruler came to Thirumalai and carried Sri RanganAthA and Sri RenganAyaki back to Srirangam. The year was 1293 AD (Tamil year ParithApi). In that Year, on May 17th, the two kings performed consecration ceremonies at Srirangam and installed Sri RanganAthA and Sri RanganAyaki in their ancient home.

A KING'S DOUBT AND THE BANISHMENT OF THAT DOUBT

There were some doubts in the mind of the then king Rajendra ChOLA whether the returned archA mUrthy was indeed the original Azhagiya MaNavALan. A dhObhi used to doing laundry kaimkaryam for the Lord partook





the Thirumanjana jalam wrung from the wet vasthram of the Lord and identified the authenticity of the returned Lord as the original Sri Ranganathan.

The Lord was pleased with the King's sevai and appeared in his dream and blessed him. He is the king, who created a sannidhi for Suratthani (Tulukka Naacchiyar), the daughter of the Delhi Sultan. This king also left endowments for offering bread, sweet dhal, Kicchadi and milk to Saanthu naacchiyar.

The divya dEsam of Srirangam is a 600 acre island town. The town of TiruchirAppalli located 5 kms from Srirangam has been the citadel of the early ChOLAs. It fell into the hands of Pallavas, who ruled from their capital of Kanchi. The Pallavas could not however retain control of this strategic city of TiruchirAppalli and the temple town of Srirangam. They (the Pallavas) lost them to the Paandiyas, who ruled from their nearby capital of Mathurai. The later ChOLA kings asserted their power around the 10th century and drove out the Paandya kings. They (ChOLAs) held Tirucchi, Malaikkottai (83 meter high rock fort) and Srirangam until the time of the peak period of Vijayanagara Kings.

POST-VIJAYANAGARAM PERIOD

The Vijayanagar Empire collapsed in 1565 A.D and the ensuing weakness of the power of those kings led to the control of the town of TiruchirAppalli and Srirangam divya desam under a succession of rulers such as the Nayaks of Mathurai, the MarAthas, the Nawabs of Carnatic, the French and finally the British. Our Lord Ranganatha has watched all of these empires come and go across milleneums. Countless kings have served Him and have been blessed by Him. A precious line of AchAryas have surrendered to Him and spread His message.

THE MANY GOPURAMS OF SRIRANGAM TEMPLE

There are no less than 22 gOpurams here built over the centuries by the





Kings, AzhwaAr and AchAryAs. The tallest of them is the 13-tiered Southern Gopuram (72 Meters high) built in 1987 by the 44th AhObila Mutt Jeeyar of blessed memory. He built that southern gOpuram eleven years ago and involved movie stars (ILayaRaaja), the two Andavans, Kanchi KaamakOti peetam AchArya, Sri VaishNavaas and BhakthAs of Sri RanganAthA from every corner of India. Sri RanganAthA appeared in the dream of the AchAryA and commanded him to complete the south gOpuram, which was a mottai gOpuram until then. It was only at the foundation level without any tier.

sadagopan.org



The many gopurams of Sri Ranganaatha Swamy Temple Complex

The blessed name of this AhObila Matam Jeeyar is SrivaNN SatakOpa Sri VedAnthA Desika Yattheendhra MahA Desikan. He involved every one in this Gopura nirmANa Kaimkaryam irrespective of their darsanam or AchArya Paramparai or status in society. The response to his call was universal .They poured in 108 lakhs of rupees to complete this kaimkaryam. Three thousand tons of concrete, 52 tons of iron bar and 115 lakhs of bricks were used to





realize this tallest tower in the whole of India to proclaim the glory of Sri RanganAthA. What was left incomplete by Achyutha DevarAya of Vijayanagaram line was completed by the 44th Jeeyar of AhObila Mutt.

THE PRANA PRATHISHTAI FOR THE SRI RANGANATHA VIGRAHAM

The Mahan from MukkUr, the 44th Jeeyar of blessed memory performed the life inculcation (PrANa prathishtai) to the Sri RanganAthA and Sri Maha Lakshmi Vigrahams that have taken their homes in the new temple at Pomona, NY.

This Prathishtai was done by him, two years after completing the construction of the Southern Gopuram for Sri RanganathA at Srirangam. Such is the origin of the power of these ArchA mUrthys, which have been worshipped by the great soul and then sent our way to North America.



Sri PraNavaakaara Vimaana SamprokshaNam - Pomona, New York

NAATHAMUNI, ALAVANTHAR AND RAAMANUJA'S TIME

Sri RanganAthA Muni from KaattumannAr Koil (Circa 824-924 A.D) had NammAzhwaR as his spiritual Guru; his sishyA was UyyakkondAr (826-931 A.D) the great dialectician; his sishyA was MaNakkAl Nambi (832-937 A.D) and





YaamunAchAryA alias ALavanthAr (916-1041 A.D) became the disciple of ManakkAl Nambi.

All of these AchAryAs had their residences in and around Srirangam and spent a significant portion of their lives serving Sri RanganAthA and refining the ArAdhana Kramams for the Lord.

Sri RamAnuja (1017-1137 A.D) was born near Kaanchipuram and was a great devotee of Sri VaradarAjan. After his sanyAsam, he settled down in Srirangam except for the times he was away in KarnAtaka, ThiruveLLarai and Digh Vijayam in North India. His devotion to Sri RanganAthA had no match.

He made many reforms in the temple administration. NazhI kEttAn Vaasal (where the clock run by the flow of water was used to mark the time for the various rituals of the temple) was created by AchArya RaamAnuja.

He converted the method of worship from VyKANasa to PaancharAthra Aagamam. KurEsA (1010-1116 A.D), KurukEsA (ThirukkurukaipirAn PiLLAn), the author of the 6000-Padi, Thiruvarangatthu AmudanAr (author of RaamAnusa NooRanthAthi), NadAdUr ALvAn (Sister's son and pupil of RaamAnuja) and the rest of the 74 simhAsanaadhipathis appointed by AchArya RaamAnuja lived at Srirangam and enriched the devotional service to Sri RanganAthA and Sri RanganAyaki immensely.

Paraasara Bhattar (born 1074 A.D) became the chief priest of the temple after RaamAnuja's time. His brother, VedavyAsa Bhattar took over the post of PurOhithar of Sri RanganAthA and read Saathvika PurANAS in the temple.

Nanjeeyar (born 1054 A.D), the author of the 9000 - padi, NampiLLai, Vadakku Thiruveethi PiLLai, Periya VaacchAN piLLai, MeganAdha Soori, Azhagiya MaNavALa Jeeyar (sishtya of Periya VaacchAn PiLLai) , PiLLai LOKAcchAr (Srivachana BhUshaNam, artha Panchakam fame), Sudarsana Soori lived at Srirangam and thrived from offering their services to the Divya-Dampathis of Srirangam temple.





SWAMI DESIKAN'S TIME (1268-1369 A.D) AND SRI RANGAM

Swami Desikan spent a significant portion of his life at Srirangam .His disciple and son, NayinAchArya (1316-1401A.D), the other well known disciple, Brahmatantra Svatantra Parakaala Yathi I (1286-1386 A.D), ANNan (PrathivAdhibhayankaram --1300 to1410 A.D) alternated between Srirangam and Kaanchipuram.

ManavAla Maamuni (1370-1444 A.D) was born a year after Swami Desikan ascended to paramapadham. He was an ardent devotee of SriranganAtha and was honored with a Taniyan by Sri RanganAtha for his pravachanam on Bhagavadh Vishayam. He lived a lot of his life in Srirangam. Wherever we look in Srirangam; we find the imprints of the holy feet of the above AchAryAs and their paramparai on the sacred soil of Srirangam, the home of Azhagiya MaNavALan. The great Utthama Nambi and his generations have served the Lord in an unbroken chain. That tradition is now carried over to Pomona, New York, when the divya dampathis took up their residence in the temple built by their BhakthA kotis (<http://www.ranganatha.org>) .

THE MANY SANNIDHIS AT SRIRANGAM

The big sannidhis in the big temple are that of Periya PerumAL and Sri RanganAyaki ThAyAr. There is a VilvA tree inside the ThAyAr sannidhi.

The other sannidhis are: KooratthAzhwAr Sannidhi, the small sannidhi for Sri Lakshmi Nrusimhan near by, and Naathamuni AzhwAr sannidhi to the left. Next to this sannidhi is the uL (உள்) ANdAL sannidhi to differentiate it from the VeLi (வெளி) ANdAL Sannidhi near the KavEri bank. The mULavars at the uL ANdAL sannidhi are Rama, SitA and LakshmaNA. Uthsavars are ANdAL in a seated post looking eastward, her father, PeriyAzhwAr and RaamAnuja (GOdhAgrajar). ANDAL is in bridal dress.

Vaahana Mandapa VeNugopalan and RukmiNi, KaaLinga narthana KrishNA, Amritha Kalasa Garudan have their own sannidhis. Inside the Amritha Kalasa





Garudan sannidhi, we have the darsanam of Thirumanjana ThirumEni Lakshmi Narasimhan.

To the right of the Ranga Vilasa Mantapam, we have the Veera HanumAn (Moolavar with the head of HanumAn and the body of BhimA) and ThiruppANazhwAr Sannidhi. Thondardipodi AzhwAr and Vittal KrishNa sannidhi are nearby.

Near ChokkapAnai HanumAn Sannidhi, we find the ChakkaratthAzhwAr Sannidhi. Moolavar has 16 arms and the uthsavar 8 arms. Lord NarasimhA is behind the mUrtham of ChakkaratthAzhwAr. The arch around the ChakkaratthAzhwAr bears 108 aksharams sacred to that mUrthy. Saturday is a special day of worship of this sacred Sudarsana-Narasimhan.

There is a Sannidhi for Sri RaamAnujA. During the adhyayanam festival, his uthsava mUrthy is taken in procession inside the temple. Nearby are the sannidhis for ParthasArathy and one for PiLLai LokAcchAr.

Garuda Mantapam housing the very tall mUlavar of painted Garudan in sitting posture is the place of visit for Sri RanganAtha during Mohini alankAram in Vaikunta EkAdasi day.

Separate sannidhis for PattAbhi Raaman, Mudhal AzhwArs, Theerthakarai VaasudEvar, and Dhanvanthri are also present in the Srirangam temple. Dhnavanthri sannidhi is near ThAyAr sannidhi and lak (arakku) is seen in the hand of Dhanvanthri symbolizing the use of Arakku in medicinal treatment in the olden days.

Before we enter the ThAyAr sannidhi, we come across the five pits and the three entrances. Desikar Sannidhi is opposite the ThAyAr Sannidhi and Mettu Azhagiya Singhar Sannidhi is opposite Kambhan Mantapam, where the poet read his Kambha RaamAyaNam and got the approval of the eight handed ugra Narasimhan. He is seated on top of twenty steps and has gotten the name of Mettu Azhagiyasingar. Nearby is the small and beautiful Chandra Pushkarini





and on its side is the KODhanda Raaman Sannidhi. Parama Padha Naathan sannadhi is nearby. Additional sannidhis for NammAzhwAr, Thirumangai and Mathurakavi are housed in one unit.



Sri ChakrathAzhwAr Sannidhi - Sri Rangan

ARADHANAM AND NAIVEDHYAM FOR SRI RANGANATHA

Periya PerumAl wakes up in the early morning to the sound of sacred VeeNA music and Thondardipodi's ThiruppaLLiyezucchi paasurams. At 8.30 AM, butter and milk are offered to the Lord. It is followed by VeNN pongal, Dosai, Sukku, Vellam, Kariamudhu, lime pickle, and Thirumal Vadai.

During the mid day pUjA, 18 padis of cooked rice, Saathamudhu, Kariamudhu, ThirukkaNNamudhu, athirasams are presented. During the evening ArAdhanam, KshirAnnam, milk pongal, vadai, appam, thEnkuzhal, kariyamudhu, dadhiyOdhanam are offered to the Lord. The night NaivEdhyam consists of Vadisil (plain rice), satti aravanai kariamudhu. This is around 9 P.M. Between 9:15 and 9:30 p.m., milk with camphor (pacchai karpooram), saffron, cardamom and brown sugar (naattu chakkarai) are presented and then the Lord rests for



the night.

Subamasthu! Sarva MangaLAni santhu ithi mahAntO anugraNNanthu!

Sri RanganAtha charanou SaraNam prapadhyE



sadagopan.org

Revathi
Sri Ranganaatha's Thirunakshatram



Namperumal - samvatsari 2007
(Thanks: Sri.Murali BhaTTar)

॥ श्रीः ॥

Revathi is associated with the Janma Nakshatram of Sri Ranganatha, just as Sravana Nakshatram is associated with Sri Venkatesa of Thirumalai as His birth star. Although it is odd to consider a particular nakshatram as the one associated with the Lord, who is never "born", traditionally, archa Murthys have been associated with a day in a Year that is particularly important to them. It so happens that Sri Ranganatha, the eternal one without an end or beginning has Panguni Revathi as HIS birth Star. Sri Ranganayaki has Panguni Uttaram as HER Star. This Panguni month is therefore doubly blessed for the devotees of Kasturi Rangan and His illustrious consort.



NamperumAl-thAyAr SErthi SEvai

adiyEn will share with you some of the thoughts on the Vedic Significance of the word Revathi, since Sri Ranganatha is the Veda Purushan saluted by all the VedAs .



The word Revati or association with the concept of Revati occurs in all of the four Veda Samhitaas.

The mantram 35 of Chapter 23 of the Yajur Vedam refers to the Raivati verses this way:

महानाम्नयो रेवत्यो विश्वा आशा प्रभूवरीः ।

मैघीर्विद्युतो वाचः सूचीभि शम्यन्तू त्वा ॥

mahaanaamnyO revathOh viswaa Aasaa prabhUvaree: |
maigheervidhyuthoh vaaccha: Sucheebhi: samyantuu tvaa ||

MEANING AT ONE LEVEL:

May the Mahaanaamni and Revati Vedic verses spread all the way upto the supreme regions, which appear like the lightning in the clouds and which are recited by the devoted subjects please the mighty Lord!

Revatis are the verses from which the Raivata Saaman of the Saama Veda is formed. This name as Raivata Saaman is connected to the Rg Vedic Verse (Canto I. 30.13), where the word Revati is used to symbolize Wealth, Opulence, Abundant Riches, Prosperity, Brilliance, Splendour, Beauty and other kalyana Gunaas of the Lord saluted through the Many names of Vishnu Sahasra Naamam.

In another mantram of Yajur Veda, We come across the reference to Revati again. This is the 21st mantram of Canto III:

रेवती रमध्वमस्मिन्योनावस्मिन्गोष्ठेस्मिंल्लोकेस्मिन्क्षये ।

इहैव स्त मापगात ॥

revathi ramadhvasminyonaavasmin goshtehsmimllokehsmin kshayeh |
ihaiva stha maapagaata ||





Here Revati is interpreted as the Sacred Vedic Speech. It is requested to remain in the Vedic altar, in the Yajna, in the spot of the Yajna and in the house, where the Yajna is being conducted. The prayer is "Oh, Revati! Do not go away from here! Remain Just here and go not thence" is the prayer. Satapatha Brahmana composed by Yajnavalkya explains the interpretation of Revati as Vedic Speech through his observation: "Vaagvai Revati". Lord Ranganatha is then the essence of Vedic Speech or the one pervading Vedic Speech or the utterances of the Vedas. This Veda Purusha is requested by another Yajur Mantram to ascend to the Zenith and bless us:

Urdvamaarooha --- Raivatheh Saamaani ---- (Yajur Vedam: X.14).

Before we focus on the Rg Veda Mantram that is behind the Raivata Saamans of the Saama Veda, Let us salute the atharva Vedic Verse referring to the Revati Principle. The Verse is found in the ninth Khaanda of atharva Veda in Hymn 7.3. The Mantram is as follows:

विद्युज्जिह्वा मरुतो दन्ता रेवतीर्ग्रीवाः कृत्तिका स्कन्धा धर्मो वहः ।

vidhyujjihvaa marutOh dantaa revatingreevaa: krittikaa skandhaa dharmOh vaha:

In this mantra conceptualizing the entire Universe as a Cow, Revati, one of the stars of the lunar mansion is equated to the neck of the Cosmic Cow. The Krittika star is recognized as the shoulder of this Cow. Symbolism of the neck is invoked here.

The central Mantra related to Revati is the Rg Vedic mantram (I.30.13). The entire thirtieth Chapter of Canto I of Rg Veda is a splendid tribute to the ananta Kalyana Gunaas of the Lord and a prayer for his blessings. There are 22 verses in this chapter.

All but the last three verses deal with the request for communion with the generous Lord. We will salute the 13th Rk first and then summarize the meaning of the rest of the related verses.





रेवतीर्नः सधमाद इन्द्रे सन्तु तुविवाजाः ।

क्षुमन्तो याभिमर्दिम ॥

revateer na: sadhamaada indrE santu tuvivaajaa: |
kshumanthO yaabhir madEma || (Rg vEdam : I.30.13)

MEANING:

O Resplendent God! May Thou share our spiritual Joy! May we have abundant nourishment, and May our Medha (Intellect) be unclouded and sharp, so that we are full of devotion for You! May we Live in a state of unalloyed Bliss in union with You!

A condensed summary (excerpts) of the other verses of I.30 of Rg Vedam is as follows:

VERSE 1:

Just as farmers dig a well and fill their fields with water, may our hearts be filled with devotion for you, the resplendent God!

VERSE 2:

May our sublime and pristine devotion for You flow in hundreds and thousands of streams towards You, the resplendent God, just as the river and its tributaries rush towards the Ocean.

VERSE 3:

May All our devout prayers, which are poured forth to please You be treasured in Your heart like water in the vast Ocean!

VERSE 6:

May we establish Communion with You for our guidance!





VERSE 7:

On every occasion, in every noble Kainkaryam, we invoke thee, the best among our friends for our protection and happiness.

VERSE 8:

When He listens to our invocations, He assuredly comes to us with thousands of generous bounties and benedictions. (This is an expression of the Maha Viswaasam of the supplicant.)

VERSE 9:

I too invoke thee, who created this Universe and the eternal elements. Our ancestors have also been invoking You .

VERSE 10:

Desirous of Communion with You, we invoke You as our best friend and we take refuge in You. Be gracious to us, your dedicated and loyal servants.

VERSE 12:

O Mighty God! O Dispeller of all of the miseries! We yearn for Your friendship and beseech You to respond to our love.

VERSE 18 AND 19:

O God! Destroyer of the Wicked! Your gift of body to us is like the gift of chariot with the immortal soul residing within it. It aspires to reach beyond this material world and travel across space to You.----- the spirit soars high in search of the immortal. Only You can take us to our desired destination (parama padaham).





As we reflect on the 247 verses of the Azhwaars, the echoes of the above Vedic pronouncements are heard again and again.

May we seek the protection of the Saranaagatha Rakshakaa every day and approach Him in the spirit of the above Revati Saamans and request Him to grant us the boon of unceasing memory of Him.

पादाम्भोजं स्पृशति भजते रङ्गनाथस्य जङ्घाम्

ऊरुद्वन्द्वे विलगति शनैरूर्ध्वमभ्येति नाभिम् ।

वक्षस्यास्ते वलति भुजयोर्मामिकेयं मनीषा

वक्त्राभिख्यां पिबति वहते वासनां मौलि बन्धे ॥

paadaambhojam spruSati bhajatE

ranganaathasya janghaam

UrudvandvE vilagati Sanai-

rUrdhvam abhyEti naabhim |

vakshasyaastE valati bhujayor-

maamikEyam maneeshaa

vaktraabhikhyaam pibati vahatE

vaasanaam mauLi bandhE ||

--Sri Vedantha Desika's Sri Bhagavad Dhyana Sobhaanam: SLOkam 10

With this prayer of Nigamaantha Maha Desikan celebrating his enjoyment of the beauty of all the limbs of Sri Ranganatha, adiyEn salutes Sri Revatisambhavan on HIS birth day, which fell on March 20 2007.



Sri Ranganaatha - Godhaa ThirukalyaaNam



Sri ANDAL and NamperumAL

(Image Courtesy : Sri B.Senthil Kumar & Sri.Murali Bhattar)



॥ श्रीः ।

adiyEn will perform the sankalpam first for the BhagavAn's Vivaaha MahOthsavam .

asmath gurubhuyo nama:

Hari: Om tath sri Govindha Govindha govindha asya
 sri bhagavadha:mahaapurushasya sri vishnoraj~nyaa
 pravarthamaanasya adhyabrahmana: dvidheeya paraarthe,
 sri svetha varaaha kalpe vaivasvatha manvanthre,
 kaliyughe, prathame paadhe, jambhu dhveepe,
 bhaaratha varshe, **amerikaa** kandhe, sahaabthe,
meror uttare paarsve, asmin varthamaane vyavahaarike
 prabhavaadhi shashti samvathsaraanaam madhye **bahudhaanya**
 naama samvathsare, **uttharaayane** **vasantha** ruthou **mesha** maase
krishna pakshe **bhouma** vaasara **visaaka** nakshthra yukhthaayaam,
 sri vishnuyoga sri vishnukarana subha yoga subha karana yevamguna
 viseshana visishtaayaam asyaam **dhvitheeyaam** subha tithou
 sri bhagavdaj~nyaa,sri bhagavdh preethyartham **vaathoola** gothraanaam,
sri srinivaasa raaghava SaThakOpa sarmaa naamaaham,
 sri godhaa devi--sri ranganaatha kalyaana mahothsavam karishye

ANDAL-Sri Ranganatha ThirukkalyANam will be based on ANDAL's own visualization of Her wedding. The archival source would therefore is Her "VaaraNamAyiram" paasurangals ([Naacchiyar Thirumozhi](#) 6.1).

In Sri VaishNavite weddings, during the occasion of "Pacchai poosuthal", these paasurangaLs are sung to confer ANDAL's and Sri RanganAthA's blessings on the newly wedded couple for long, happy, harmonious wedded life blessed with children having Brahma Jn~Anam and Saathveeka GuNa Sampath. ANDAL herself describes the fruits of reciting these paasurangaLs of Hers this way:





ஆயனுக்காக தான் கண்ட கனாவினை
வேயர் புகழ் வில்லிபுத்தூர்க்கோன் கோதை சொல்
தூய தமிழ்மாலை ஈரைந்தும் வல்லவர்
வாயு நன்மக்களைப் பெற்று மகிழ்வரே.

AayanukkAha thaan kanta kanaavinai
vEyar puhazh VilliputthUr kOn Godhai sol
thUya Tamizh maalai eerainthum vallavar
vaayu nanmakkaLaip peRRu makizhvArE.

ANDAL described here the auspicious boons that result from reciting the paasurams dealing with her dream of marrying Lord Krishna. NanmakkaL (Progeny of unimpeachable good conduct) are the anugrahams resulting from such recitations.

The wedding scenes that ANDAL describes are full of beauty. They are very high in imagination. They have the splendid fragrance of the Vedas (Veda maNam koNdavai). They are linked by the five parts of marriage that are celebrated by Rg Vedam.

Our purvAs have described succinctly those five parts this way:

vAg dhAnam ca pradhAnam ca varaNam paaNi peetanam |
saptapaateeti pancAnghO VivAha: parikeertita: ||

The sampradhAyic wedding according to the above sLOka has the following five angAs (parts):

1. Vaag DhAnam
2. KanyA dhAnam
3. Vara PrEkshaNam
4. PaaNigrahaNam and
5. saptha Pathi.





VAAG DHANAM AS A PRELUDE TO KANYAVARANAM

This first angam deals with the request for the hand of the bride by elders on behalf of the BrahmachAri, who wants to enter GrahasthAsramam at the end of his adhyaynam of the VedAs under a proper guru. The BrahmachAri requests the intercession of elders and asks them to approach the father of the girl to grant his wish to marry his daughter to follow the vEdic way.

Sri RanganAthA as the "BrahmachAri" seeking the hand of GOdhA piratti did some thing special. He appeared in the dream of PeriyAzhwAr, the father of GodhA PirAtti and suggested:

உமது புத்திரி கோதையை கொண்டு எம் திருமுற்றத்தே வாரீர்.
அவளுக்கு தகுதியாக நாமே பாணிக்ரஹணம் பண்ணுகிறோம்

Umathu putthiri Godhaiyai kondu yem ThirumuRRatthE vaareer. avaLakku
tahuthiyAha nAmE pANigrahaNam paNNUKiROm

(Please bring your daughter, GodhA, to our court. We will marry her in a superb manner befitting her special status)

Next thing, Sri RanganAthA did was to command His servants at Srirangam through a dream and told them:

நம் சத்ர சாமர தாலவ்ருந்தாதி பரிஜன பரிச்சேதங்களோடே
ஸ்ரீ வில்லிபுத்தூரேப் போய் ஆண்டாளை அழைத்துக் கொண்டு
வாருங்கோள்

Namm chatra chAmara taalavrunthAthi parijana paricchEthangalOdE
Sri VilliputthUrEp pOy ANDALai azhaitthukondu vArungOL

(Please go to Sri VilliputthUr and bring ANDAL here with all of the Koil maryaadahis: My Umbrella, Fans, Percussion Instruments, naathasvaram music and my liveried servants). The Koil sippandhis (purOhithAs and others) went to Sri VilliputthUr with all the insignias of Sri RanganAthA for requesting the



hand of ANDAL for their Lord. The Veda manthram that Sri RanganAthA recited and today's BrahmachAris recite is as follows:

प्रसुग्मन्ता धियसासनस्य सक्षणि वरेभिर्वरानभिषुप्रसीदत ।

अस्माकमिन्द्र उभयं जुजोषति यत्सौम्यस्याऽन्धसो बुबोधति ॥

pra sugmantA dhiyasAsanasya sakshaNi

varEbhir varAn abhishu praseedata |

asmAkam indhra ubhayam jujOshati

yat sOmyasyAndhasO bubOdhati ||

MEANING:

O Elders! Please proceed with haste to the house of the father of the Kannikai and have my interests in your minds! Please arrive there with a clear mind and sense of purpose about your mission. Please tell the father that Indran is waiting to partake off the Soma rasam of the Soma Yaagam that we plan to perform as husband and wife and wishes us well to engage in such pious activities. Please accomplish your mission on my behalf and return safe and successful!



ANDAL MaryAdai procession

Lord RanganAthA pleaded with the two Demi Gods, aryamA and Bhagan to make the path of the elders going to PeriyAzhwar's house free from thorns and sharp stones.

He asked them to unite Him with His dear love, ANDAL in the Vedic way resonant with harmony and happiness. The Veda manthram housing such



thoughts is as follows:

अनृक्षरा ऋजवस्सन्तु पन्था येभिस्सखायो यन्ति नो वरेयम् ।

समर्यमा संभगो नो निनीयात्संजास्पत्यः सुयममस्तु देवाः ॥

anruksharA rujava:santu panthA

yEbhi: sakhAyO yanti nO varEyam |

samaryamaa sam bhagO nO nineeyAtsam

jAspatyagum suyamamastu dEvA: ||

MEANING:

O Celestial ones! May the path that Our messengers travel to reach the house of the bride's father, be smooth and straight May the Lord of cosmic order (aryamA) and gracious Lord (Bhaga) conduct us, and may the union of wife and husband be easily accomplished.

PERIAZHWAR'S RESPONSE: KANYA VARANAM

PeriyAzhwAr responded positively to the request of the Lord sent through His kainkarya - parAs (elders) and declared: "DhanyOsmi (Blessed am I)".

He poured forth words in joy about his sowbhAgyam to realize the Lord as his son-in-law:

tribhuvanAtheesvarAya, akilAntakOti brahmAnda naayakAya,

tattvAtheethAya, Sakala nishkaLa svarUpAya, SurasurArchitha paadha

padhma yugaLAya, akilOnnatha pavithrAya, ArdhrathrANa pArAyaNAya,

paravyUha vibhavantharyAmyarchA-svarUpiNE, Chandra pushakaraNi

tatasthithAya, SaraNaagatha santhrANa tathparAya, Sri Ranganaathaaya

mama kanyA dhattham



MEANING:

To the Lord of the three worlds, to the Master of the entire universes and its crores of beings, to the one beyond all tattvAs, to the one of the form totally free from any blemish, to the One, whose pair of lotus feet are worshipped by the DevAs and the asurAs alike, to the supreme principle, which is the most sacred among the sacred, to the One supreme being which has taken the vow to come to the rescue of the distressed, to the one who is of the pentad forms (viz.), Para, VyUha, Vibhava, archA and antharyAmi, to the One who resides on the banks of Chandra PushkaraNi, the one whose vratham is to protect those, who seek refuge under His feet, to that Sri RanganAthA, my daughter ANDAL Is betrothed.



SRI RANGANATHA'S JOY OVER THE GOOD NEWS

When the koil servants returned to Srirangam and informed the Lord that His request was accepted by PeriyAzhwAr, the Lord was delighted. He rushed to SrivilliputthUr surrounded by thousands of His elephants and His other retinue. There at the city gates, He found PeriyAzhwAr standing to greet Him with pUrNakumbham along with the citizens of Sri VilliputthUr. ANDAL described this joyous scene to Her dear friend:





வாரணாமாயிரம் குழ வலம்செய்து
நாரண நம்பி நடக்கின்றானென்று எதிர்
பூரண பொற்குடம் வைத்துப் புறமெங்கும்
தோரணம் நாட்டக் கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழி நான்

vAraNam aayiram soozha valamcheythu

NaaraNa nambi natakkiRAnenRu yethir

pUraNa poRkudam vaitthup puRamenghum

thOraNam naatak kanAk kandEn thozhI naan. (NTM 6.1)

The whole town was decorated with banners and festoons for the forthcoming wedding. The bridegroom had arrived for the NiscchiyaArtham function. The wedding dais was decked with the areca nut saplings containing tender shoots.

Under that beautifully decorated wedding canopy, ANDAL saw Her beautiful Lord Narasimhan known also as Maadhavan, Govindhan and RanganAthan seated as a Youth brimming with sarva saamudhriKA lakshaNams:

நானை வதுவை மணமென்று நாளிட்டு
பானை கமுகு பரிசடைப் பந்தற்கீழ்
கோளரி மாதவன் கோவிந்தனென்பான், ஓர்
கானை புகுதக் கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழி நான்

naaLai vadhuvai maNamenRu naaLittu

paaLai kamuhu parisudaip panthaRkkeezh

kOLari Maadhavan Govindhan yenpAn, Or

kALai puhuthak kanAkkandEn thozhI naan (NTM 6.2)

SRI RANGANATHA'S DHOSHA-SANTHI MANTHRAM UTTERANCE

The Lord of Srirangam sat under the wedding canopy and recited the manthrAs for banishing any defects, imperfections in His bride-to-be and





concluded the niscchiyathArtham ceremony part of the VivAham. The mantrams recited by Him on that occasion and followed by us even today are from the dasama khAndam of Rg Vedam:

अघोर चक्षुरपतिघ्न्येधि शिवा पशुभ्यः सुमनाः सुवर्चाः ।

वीरसूर्देवकामा स्योना शंनो भव द्विपदे शं चतुष्पदे ॥

aghOra cakshurapatighnyEdhi SivA paSubhya: sumanA: suvarcA: |

veerasUr dEvakAmA syOnA Sam nO bhava dvipadE Sam catushpadE ||

-- Rg Vedam X.85.44

इमां त्वं इन्द्र मीद्वः सुपुत्रां सुभगां कृणु ।

दशास्यां पुत्राना धेहि पतिमेकादशं कृधि ॥

imAm tvam indra meeDhva: suputrAm subhagAm kruNu |

dasAsyAm putrAnA dEhi patimEkAdasam krudhi || -- Rg Vedam X.85.45

सम्राज्ञी श्वशुरे भव सम्राज्ञी श्वश्रवाम् भव ।

ननान्दरि सम्राज्ञी भव सम्राज्ञी अधि देवृषु ॥

samrAj~ni SvaSurE bhava samrAj~ni SvaSravAm bhava |

nanAndari samrAj~ni bhava samrAj~ni adhi dEvrushu ||

-- Rg Vedam X 85.46

समञ्जन्तु विश्वे देवाः समापो हृदयानि नौ ।

सं मातरिश्वा सं धाता समु देष्ट्री दधातु नौ ॥

samanjantu visvE dEvA: samApO hrudayAni nau |

sam maatariSvA sam dhAtA samu dEshtrI dadhAtu nau ||

-- Rg Vedam X 85.47





These four manthrams found in the X.85 canto of Rg vEdam are extraordinarily rich in meaning. The bridegrooms of today should recite them properly with the purOhithAs and invoke with understanding the spirit of these ancient manthrams. The bridegroom should slow down the VaadhyArs and ask them to instruct him to recite it, so they can repeat it properly.

These manthrams follow prayers housed in the previous two verses for abiding together and never to be separated. It prays for a household full of children and grand children. It prays for union until old age, free from all evils. It asks the bride to be the harbinger of prosperity to the bipeds and the quadrupeds.

THE MEANING OF THE ABOVE FOUR SPECIFIC MANTHRAMS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

RIG VEDA X.85.44:

Oh Bride! May you never cast an evil glance at your husband in your married life; never ever be hostile to him and pull the oars in the opposite way; be tender and kind to animals; may you ever be amiable and cheerful as you go about your duties as the yajamAni of the household; be the mother of brave children; adore the divine powers; be the source of happiness in the household; bring prosperity to our bipeds and quadrupeds.

RIG VEDA X.85.45:

O generous Lord! Make her blessed with the bounties of children and fortune! Give her ten sons; and then her husband becomes the eleventh one (**Dvitheeya saisavam**).

RIG VEDA X.85.46:

Oh Bride! Be a queen to your father-in-law! Be a queen to your mother-in-law! Be a queen to your husband's sister! Be a queen to your husband's brother! (The word chosen by Vedam is "samrAj~ni". What a respectful envisioning of her role in the household to keep harmony!).





RIG VEDA X.85.47 (THIS ONE IS A GREAT PRAYER!):

May the entire congregation of the guests invited and present at the wedding unite our hearts! May we be tranquil and united! May we be calm and united like the mixed waters (the waters of many rivers in the ocean unite without their individual identities)! May we be united like vital breaths! (PrANa vAyu in the body) may both of us be in unison like the creator and His creation! May we be one like the AchAryan and his sishyan! May we both be loving and loyal to each other throughout their lives!

Sri RanganAthan invoked these manthrAs to bless ANdAL and prepared Her for observing MangaLa snAnam and wearing of the new pudavai (koraai udutthal).

ANdAL describes the niscchithArtha manthraNa ceremony presided over by Her Lord in the midst of the assembled dEvAs this way in Her third paasuram of this decad:

இந்திரன் உள்ளிட்ட தேவர் குழாமெல்லாம்
வந்திருந்து என்னை மகட்பேசி மந்திரித்து
மந்திரக்கோடி உடுத்தி மணமாலை
அந்தரி சூட்ட கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழி நான்.

indiran uLLitta dEvar kuzhAm yellAm

vanthirunthu yennai mahatp pesi manthiritthu

manthirakkOdi udutthi maNa maalai

andhari sootak kanAk kanDEn thOzhi naan (NTM 6.3)

Here ANdAL refers to two events:

1. The niscchiyaithArtha manthrams recited by Sri RanganAthan and
2. The wearing of the koraai pudavai assisted by the sister (Durgai) of Her husband and wearing fragrant wedding garlands.





MANGALA SNANAM AND WEARING OF THE KOORAI PUDAVAI

After NiscchiyathArtham and reciting of the four manthrAs referred to above, Sri RanganAthA prepared ANDAL for the mangala snAnam and the wearing of the new wedding saree.

The five Veda manthrams used for the ritual bathing (mangala snAnam) of the bride are addressed to SavithA dEvan, Sooryan, VaruNan, dEvAs and holy waters.

Japam is made with these manthrams and the sanctified water resulting from that japam is used to bathe the bride.

THE FIRST MANTHRAM

हिरण्यवर्णाः शुचयः पावकाः

प्रचक्रमुर्हित्वाऽवद्यमापः ।

शतं पवित्रा वितताह्यासु

ताभिश्चादेवस्सविता पुनातु ॥

hiraNya varNA: Sucaya: paavakA:

pracakramurhitvA avadyamApa: |

Satam pavitrA vitatAhyAsu

tAbhishTvA dEvassavitA punAtu ||

Oh Bride! May the SavithA bhagavAn purify you with these waters that are golden in color and are pure. They remove the blemishes on contact and banish any dhoshams in the bride. Hundreds of sanctified and auspicious objects emanate in this world because of these sacred waters.





SECOND MANTHRAM

हिरण्यवर्णाः शुचयः पावकाः यासु जातः कश्यपो यास्वग्निः ।

या अग्निं गर्भं दधिरे सुवर्णास्तास्त आपश्शंस्योना भवन्तु ॥

hiraNyavarNA: Sucaya: paavakA:

yaasu jaata: kaSyapO yAsvagni: |

yaa agnim garbham dadhirE suvarNAs

taasta aapa: Sagum syOnA bhavantu ||

May those waters that hold inside them Agni, may those waters from which Sooryan emerges, may those waters from which Agni arises, may those sacred and golden waters confer on you sukham and concordant life with your bridegroom!

THIRD MANTHRAM

यासां राजा वरुणो याति मध्ये

सत्याऽनृते अवपश्यन्नानाम् ।

या अग्निं गर्भं दधिरे सुवर्णास्-

-तास्त आपश्शंस्योना भवन्तु ॥

yaasAgum rAjO varuNO yaati madhyE

satyAnruthE avapaSyan janAnAm |

yaa agnim garbham dadhirE suvarNAs

taasta aapa: Sagum SyOnA bhavantu ||

May VaruNA, the king of waters, who moves amidst people witnessing their good and bad deeds, may those fair colored waters associated with VaruNA





containing Agni inside them grant you sukham and auspicious union with your bridegroom.

FOURTH MANTHRAM

यासां देवा दिवि कृण्वन्ति भक्षं या अन्तरिक्षे बहुधा निविष्टाः ।

या अग्निं गर्भं दधिरे सुवर्णास्तास्त आपश्शंस्योना भवन्तु ॥

yaasAm dEvA divi kruNvanti bhaksham

yaa antarikshE bahudhA nivishTA |

yaa agnim garbham dadhirE suvarNAs

taasta aapa: Sagum SyOnA bhavantu ||

May those waters selected by the dEvAs containing Agni inside them for the consumption of the celestial beings and May those dEvAs positioned in the interspace between the earth and the sky bless you to realize sukham and happy union with your bridegroom.

FIFTH MANTHRAM

Oh bride! May these auspicious waters cast their benevolent glances in your direction! May they touch the skin covering your body with their auspicious forms! May these pure waters that soften ghee confer on you sukham and concordance with your beloved one.

WEARING OF KOORAI PUDAVAI AFTER MANGALA SNANAM

The bride now wears the new wedding sari to the accompaniment of the Rg vEda manthram (I.10.12):

परि त्वा गिर्वणो गिर इमा भवन्तु विश्वतः ।





वृद्धायुमनु वृद्धयो जुष्टा भवन्तु जुष्टयः ॥

pari tvA girvaNO gira imA bhavantu visvata: |

vruddhAyumanu vruddhayO jushTaa bhavantu jushTaya: ||

Oh Lord Indra! You are reached by auspicious sounds. Just as the new sari covers the body of this bride, may our salutations cover you intimately! May our praise couched in words with artha pushti reach you! May those words of praise become objects of your joy!

The Veda Manthrams have many layers of meanings. The very same manthram quoted above changes meaning, when they are addressed to the very same IndrA in another context:

May our eulogies and invocations spread far and wide! May they celebrate your glory all around and may your blessed devotees dedicate their lives to making the world happy and prosperous!





Koorai Pudavai for thAyAr

THE TYING OF THE WAIST OF THE BRIDE WITH DARBHA ROPE

After the bride came back to the wedding canopy then Sri RanganAthA repeated the manthrams recited by the purohithar, chathurmuka BrahmA:

आशाशाना सौमनसं प्रजासौभाग्यं तनूम् ।

अग्नेरनुव्रता भूत्वा सन्नह्ये सुकृताय कम् ॥

aasAsanA soumanasam prajAgum soubhAgyam tanUm |

agnEranuvratA bhootvA sat nahyE sukrutAya kam ||

MEANING:

This bride (GodhA Devi) stands in front of Agni with a pure mind and is praying for a blemishless mind, good children, the state of soumAngalyam and a disease - free body and is ready to follow her bridegroom (RanganAthA) to perform the agni samskaarams prescribed for gruhasthAs. I tie this dharbhA rope around her waist for the purpose of the auspicious ceremony of marriage.

SEATING OF THE BRIDE AND THE BRIDEGROOM IN FRONT OF THE AGNI



Next, Sri RanganAthA took the right hand of His bride and led her to the





western side of the sacred Agni KuNtam and seated her on a new mat (pattu paai) on the southern side and then seated Himself on the northern side of the mat. Now, the purOhithar recited the Rg vEda manthram (10.85-26) inviting GodhA piratti to be the head of the household of Sri RanganAthA:

पूषा त्वेतो नुयतु हस्तगृह्याऽश्विना त्वा प्र वहतां रथेन ।

गृहान् गच्छ गृहपती यथाऽसौ वशिनी त्वं विदथमावदासि ॥

pUshA tvEtO nayatu hasta gruhyAsvinA tvA pra vahatAm rathEna |

gruhAn gaccha gruhapatnee yathAsO vaSinI tvam vidathamA vadAsi ||

MEANING:

May pUshA (one of the 12 forms of SUryan) give you his hand and lead you by showing the way to your new house. May Thou be carried by the Asvini dEvAs in a covered wagon to the house of Sri RanganAthA.

May Thou become the queen of that household and become the aandu aaLum ANDAL and conduct all the auspicious rituals prescribed for gruhasthAs!

ANDAL'S OWN DESCRIPTION OF THE MANGALA SNANAM AND THE ENTRY TO THE WEDDING HALL:

BrahmA, PeriyAzhwAr, saptha rishis and the other assembled Veda sirOmaNis recited the udaga sAnthi manthrAs and sanctified the waters assembled from the four corners of Bharatha dEsam.

Then they sprinkled those sanctified waters on ANDAL's head and united Her hand with that of Her Lord with a kankaNam (Kaapu/RakshA Bhandham). ANDAL describes this beautiful scene in the next Paasuram:

நாற்றிசைத் தீர்த்தம் கொணர்ந்து நனிநல்கி

பார்ப்பனச் சிட்டர்கள் பல்லாரெடுத்தேத்தி

பூப்புனை கண்ணிப் புனிதனோடு என் தன்னை





காப்பு நாண் கட்டக் கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழீ நான்.

nARRisait theertham koNarnthu nani nalki

pArppanacchittargal pallAr yedutthEtthi

pUpunai kaNNip punithanOdu yen thannai

kAppu nANN kattak kanAk kanDEn thozhI naan. (NTM 6.4)

In Her Next Paasuram, ANDAL describes how she was led to the kalyANa mantapam by beautiful young damsels, some carrying auspicious lamps with luster equal to that of the rays of the Sun and others holding golden kalasams in their hands:

கதிரொளி தீபம் கலச முடனேந்தி

சதிரள மங்கையர் தாம் வந்து எதிர் கொள்ள

மதுரையார் மன்னன் அடிநிலை தொட்டு, எங்கும்

அதிரப் புகுதக் கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழீ நான்.

kathiroLi dheepam kalsamudan yEnthi

chathirLa mangayar taam vanthu yethir koLLa

mathurayAr mannan adi nilai thottu, yengum

athirappuhuthak kanAk kanDen thOzhi nAnn. (NTM 6.5)

MAANGALYA DHARANAM, PAANIGRAHANAM AND THE SEVEN STEPS AROUND THE FIRE

The Varan (Sri RanganAthA) and the VadhU (Sri ANDAL) arrived at the KalyANa mantapam. The high point of the vivAha MahOthsavam is about to take place. ANDAL describes this scene in two paasurams:

மத்தளம் கொட்ட வரிசங்கம் நின்றூத

முத்துடைத் தாமம் நிரைதாழ்ந்த பந்தற்கீழ்

மைத்துனன் நம்பி மதுகுதன் வந்து, என்னைக்

கைத்தலம் பற்ற கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழீ நான்.





matthaLam kotta vari sangham ninrUtha
 mutthudaitthAmam nirai thAzhntha pantharkkeezh
 maitthunan nambi MadhusUdhan venthennaik
 kaitthalam paRRak kanAk kantEn ThOzhI naan. (NTM:6.6)

வாய் நல்லார் நல்ல மறையோதி மந்திரத்தால்
 பாசிலை நாணல் படுத்துப் பரிதி வைத்து
 காய்சின மாகளிறு அன்னான் என் கைப்பற்றி
 தீவலம் செய்யக் கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழி நான்.

vaai nallAr nalla maRai Othi manthiratthAL
 paasilai nANal padutthup parithi vaitthuk
 kAicchina mAkaLRu annAn yenn kaippaRRit
 theevalam seyyak kanAk kantEn ThOzhi naan. (NTM: 6.7)

This is the time of Subha MUhUrtham; MangaLa vAdhyams are playing. Over those sounds arose a Manthram:

माङ्गल्यं तन्तुनानेन मम जीवन (लोक रक्षणा) हेतुना ।

कण्ठे बध्नामि सुभगे संजीव शरदश्सतम् (त्वं मे सुखम्) ॥

mAngalyam tantunAnEna mama

jeevana (loka rakshaNa) hEtunA |

kaNTE badhnAmi subaghE sanjeeva

Sarada: Satam (tvam mE sukham) ||

Sri RanganAthan tied the auspicious knots around the neck of ANDAL to the sound of ghetti mELam and said: "Oh ANdAL! This is the Mangala sUthram. I tie this Mangala sUthram around your neck for enhancing my good fortune. You are the light and purpose of my life. Oh, SoubhAgyavathi! May Thou be with me





eternally and grant the most glorious boons to our BhakthAs and protect them from any and every mishap". (adiyEn has changed the meanings some what, because praying for the life of 100 years as for us mortals does not make sense for the Lord. If we use the words mama Jeevana hethunA, it is even more poignant).



Thirumangalyam

PAANI GRAHANAM CEREMONY

After Maangalya DhAraNam, Sri RanganAthA recited the four manthrAs for PaaNigrahaNam under "the tutorship" of His purOhithA, Chathurmukha Brahma. During this occasion, He lifted His right hand and held inside it the right hand of ANDAL, which had been folded together like a kumudhA flower. This mudrA of ANDAL's hand is called "kuvinta Kumudham" or the lotus that had folded its petals into the form of a tight bud. This mudhrai refers to her heart lotus. Sri RanganAthA (and the modern day bridegroom) implied that your heart has now become my possession/responsibility. From here on, I will protect it with all the care and cherish it. This is the inner meaning of PaaNigrahaNam. The four Veda manthrams salute the soubhAghyams arising from that ceremony of PaaNigrahaNam and praise the glories of the new queen of the house.

The first of the four manthrams recited during this occasion is famous:





गृभ्णामि ते सौभगत्वाय हस्तं मया पत्या जरदृष्टिर्यथाऽसः ।

भगो अर्यमा सविता पुरन्धिर्मह्यं त्वादुर्गार्हपत्या देवाः ॥

grubhNAmi tE soubhagatvAya hastam

mayA patyA jaradashTir yathAsa: |

bhagO aryamA savitA puramdhir mahyam

tvAdur gArhapatyAya dEvA: || --Rg Vedam X.85.36

MEANING:

Oh My dear One! I accept your hand for good fortune! I pray that you attain old age with me as your husband. Our Bhagaa (Lord of Grace), aryamA (Lord of Cosmic orders), savithA-puramdhi (Lord of creation and wisdom) have given you to me so that I may be the master of the Household.

The second manthram starting with "tE ha purvE janAsO...." is another salutation to the Lord of DevAs, who presented the bride to the groom. Reference here is to Bhagan, Agni and SUryan. The manthram suggests that the best among them gave the bride to the groom.

The third manthram starts with a prayer to Sarasvati ("Sarasvati pradamEva...") by the groom on behalf of the couple to protect their marriage.

The fourth manthram is a salutation to Vaayu BhagavAN and starts with the words: "ya yEtI pradisAs sarvA disAnu pavamAna:" and ends with "hiraNya hasta iYrammas satvA manmanasam gruNOTu". In this prayer, the groom prays to PavamAnan (Vaayu bhagavAn), who through his passage purifies every nook and corner. The manthram visualizes Vaayu as having Gold in his hand and being associated with Agni dEvan. The groom prays here to the all powerful Vaayu and seeks his intercession to bless the bride to be devoted to him always undiminishing love and affection is prayed for here.





ANDAL fondly recalls this scene in her sixth paasuram of NaacchiyAr Thirumozhi (MatthaLam kotta --). She hears the auspicious sounds of MattaLams; she experiences the purifying, sacred sound of Vari Sankhus (praNava Naadham). Under the wedding canopy bent with the load of flowers decorating it, She (ANDAL) recalls the scene of the Lord (MadhusUdhana nambi) lifting her hand and covering it with the palm of His hand.



THE SEVEN STEPS AROUND THE SACRED FIRE

In the seventh paasuram, ANDAL recalls the SEVEN steps She took around the sacred wedding fire (vaai nallar -thee valam seyya kanak kanten ---).

The groom lifts the bride from the "silk mat / MaNai" she was sitting on by holding her right hand with his right hand tightly.

Then, the groom walks to the right side of the sacred fire and lifts gently the right foot of the bride with his right hand and helps her take a step. The bride makes seven steps (Saptha Pathee) with the help of her husband. This is the Agni Saakshi for the wedding.

With each of the seven steps, a particular manthram is recited. Let us examine these manthrams:

FIRST STEP:

एकमिषे विष्णुस्त्वान्वेतु





“yEkamishE VishNus tvAnvEtu” is the first manthram. This says: “O Dear girl!

O ANDAL! You made the first step as my wife. May Lord VishNu (Myself will) follow your step to make sure that you have undiminishing food all your life (prayer for subhishtam, Akshaya paathram)”

SECOND STEP:

द्वे ऊर्जे

“dhvE UrjE” - Here the groom prays once again to Lord VishNu. He says: “O Dear girl! You have now taken the second step with me as my wife. May Lord VishNu (Myself will) follow your step and bless you with pushti (strength) in your body (a prayer for disease-free life)”.

THIRD STEP:

त्रीणि व्रताय

“trINi vrataAya” - Here again, the prayer is for Lord VishNu to follow GodhA's third step and to grant the boon of vrathAnushtAnam (performance of yaj~nams assigned to GruhasthAs as Dharma pathnee) to her during her married life.

FOURTH STEP:

चत्वारि मायोभवाय

“catvAri maayObhavaaya” - This prayer once again is to MahA VishNu (Himself) to follow her during her fourth step and grant her the boon of conjugal happiness .

FIFTH STEP:

पञ्च पशुभ्यः





"panca paSubhya:" - The prayer is: "may Lord VishNu follow your fifth step with me and grow your wealth of cattle (cows, Horses, Elephants and Isvaryams related to the four-footed)".

SIXTH STEP:

षड ऋतुभ्यः

"shat rutubhya:" - Here MahA VishNu is beseeched to follow her sixth step (be behind her and support her) for all auspicious ruthus (six seasons) during her married life. Sri RanganAthA hints that He is going to be right next to Her and make sure that Vasantha Ruthu, Ghreeshma Ruthu and all the other four are going to make Her days with Him pleasant.

SEVENTH STEP:

सप्त सप्तभ्यो होत्राभ्यो विष्णुस्त्वाऽन्वेतु

This is the last of the seven steps. The prayer is: **"sapta saptabhyO hOtrAbhyO VishNus tvAn vetu"**. The Lord said: "aNi puthuvai paimkamalt-thaNteriyal Bhattar pirAn GOdhE! When you recited the seventh manthram and took the seventh step, I, MahA Vishnu, the former resident of Srirangam will follow you to help you perform OupAsanai, Agni HOthram and other Gruhastha Homams and Yaj~nams without deficiencies. You are the NaacchiyAr of My house now. Sri VilliputthUr is your MaaLikai (Palace). This is your place of birth. Therefore, you have more power than me here. I will hence follow you and bless you to have all SoubhAgyams by moving over to your birth place and stay in my father-in-law's place, your house. We guess that PeriyAzhwAr was mighty pleased with the decision of his Son-in-law so that he could have the aanandham of seeing his daughter and the Lord, Her husband right there in Sri VilliputthUr next to him. Even today; we see RanganammAr, ANDAL and PeriyAzhwAr (Garudan) on one peetam at Sri VilliputthUr.



AFTER SAPTHATHI CEREMONY

Sapthathi was followed by Agni PrathakshiNam. Then, the bridegroom looked at his new bride and recited three manthrams, whose meanings are as follows:

My dear one! With these seven steps that you took, you have become my dearest friend. We have cemented our friendship firmly with these seven steps. I seek closeness with you as my dearest beloved one. I will not stray away from this friendship ever. Please do not diminish the depth of your affection for me. Let us stay united always. Let us pledge to do together, what we have to follow as duties. May we have deep love, May we do things which please one another, May we have good intentions towards each other and enjoy food and strength in equal measure and partake of life's blessings equally together. Let our thoughts converge.



Sri ANDAL - RangamannAr

(Courtesy: divyadesamonline.com)

Let us perform the sanctioned vratham in unison. May our desires be united and not pull apart. I will be Saaman; Let Thou be Rg rk. I will be the upper lokam (Dhyou, the region between sky and earth); May Thou be the earth (pruthvee). I will be the suklam; May Thou be the bearer of Suklam. I will be the mind; Let Thou be vaak (speech). I will be Saaman; Let Thou be Rg rks. May Thou follow Me! O my dear One of sweet speech going to bless me with wealth and progeny! Please come .

---मनोहमस्मि वाक्त्वं सामाहमस्मि ऋग् त्वं सा मा मनुव्रता भव

पुंसे पुत्राय वेत्तवै श्रियै पुत्राय वेत्तवा एहि सूनृते

(--manOhamasmi Vaak tvam, saamaahamasmi rg tvam, saa maa manuvrathA bhava, pumsE putrAya vEttavai; sriyai putrAya vEttavA; Yehi



sUnrutE)".

PRADHANA HOMAM AND ITS SIXTEEN MANTHRAMS

After the seven steps and Agni pradhakshiNam, PradhAna Homam took place Ammi mithitthal (stepping on the grinding stone), Laaja Homam (placing parched rice into the fire), Graha PravEsam, Pravisya Homam, Sesha Homam, the holding of the child in the wife's lap, giving fruits to that child, Dhruvan-Arundhati nakshathra darsanams, PrAyscchittha Homams took place.

PRADHANA HOMAM

After Sapthapathi, the newly married dampathis sat on the western side of the sacred fire. ANDAL placed her right hand on the left thigh of Sri RangarAjan, while He performed the PradhAna homam. There are ten Homa manthrams and 16 AhUthis. At the end of each of the manthram ending with SvAhA, a ladle of ghee was poured into the sacred fire. Let us examine the 16 AhUthi manthrams:

FIRST MANTHRAM:

सोमाया जनिविदे स्वाहा

sOmAya janivitE svAhA

This ladle of ghee is offered to Agni BhagavAn for transmittal to Soman for his pleasure in recognition of his help to the Kannikai earlier.

SECOND MANTHRAM:

गन्धर्वाय जनिविदे स्वाहा

gandharvAya janivitE svAhA

This ladle of ghee /AhUthi is offered to Gandharvan via Agni to please him in



recognition of his blessings to the kannikai after Soman.

THIRD MANTHRAM:

अग्नये जनिविदे स्वाहा

agnayE janivitE svAhA

This particular ladle of Ghee is presented to Agni to recognize his anugraham to the kannikai after Gandharvan.

DEVATHA SAMBHANDHAM OF THE KANNIKAI REFERRED TO ABOVE

Before Maangalya DhAraNam, there are two manthrams that are recited, which describe the association of Soman, Gandharvan and Agni with the Kannikai prior to marrying a human being as her husband. That shows the daivAmsam of the Kannikai. Those manthrams are:

सोमः प्रथमो विविदे गन्धर्वो विविद उत्तरः ।

तृतीयो अग्निष्टे पतिस्तुरीयस्ते मनुष्यजाः ॥

soma: prathamO vividE gandharvO vivida uttara: |

truteeyO agnishTE pati: tureeyastE manushayajA: ||

सामोऽददद्गन्धर्वाय गन्धर्वोऽदददग्नये ।

रयिं च पुत्रांश्चादादग्निर्मह्यमथो इमाम् ॥

SomO (a)dat gandharvAya, gandharvO (a)dat agnayE |

rayinca puthrAgumsca adAt agnir mahyamathO imAm ||



MEANING:

Soman became her first husband. Gandharvan was her next husband. Agni was the third husband of this Kannikai .The one born as a human being is the fourth and final husband. Soman handed you over to Gandharvan; He in turn gave you to Agni. Latter blessed you with wealth and progeny and gave you finally to me for my sukham.

The inner meaning is that Chandran (Soman) gave you strength, Gandharvan blessed you with beauty and Agni gave you the boon of youth (Youvvanam) and then Agni BhagavAn gave you to me, the human being, as a present for my sukham. Thus, you have come to me as DaivAmsam.

The Kaanikai's glories are celebrated through these two manthrAs. The First three pradhAna Homa manthrams are connected to this conception. You might recall ALavanthAr's defeating the arrogant scholar at the royal court based on this Vedic reference.

FOURTH MANTHRAM

कन्यला पितृभ्यो यती पतिलोकमवदीक्षामदास्थ स्वाहा

kanyaLA pitrubhyO yatee patilOkam avadeekshAmaAstha svAhA

MEANING:

I pour this ladle of ghee in the Agni as Homam for the kannikai leaving behind the blemishes as she leaves her father's home to join her husband's home.

FIFTH MANTHRAM

प्रेतो मुञ्चाति नामुतस्सुबद्धाममुतस्करत् ।

यथेयमिन्द्र मीढवस्सुपुत्रा सुभगाऽसति ॥





prEto muncAti naamutas subaddhA mamu taskarat |
yathEyamindra meeDhvas suputrA subhagAsati ||

MEANING:

O Indra, who blesses us with rain! Please release this kannikai from her father's house. Please make sure that she does not leave her husband's house. Please bless her to have deep attachment to her husband's home. Please bless her to be attached to her new home. Please bless her to have auspicious progeny (suputrA:). Please bless her to have al soubhAgyams in her new home.

SIXTH MANTHRAM

इमां त्वमिन्द्र मीढवः सुपुत्रां सुभगां कुरु ।

दशास्यां पुत्रानाधेहि पतिमेकादशं कृधि ॥

imAm tvamindra meeDhva suputrAgum subhagAm kuru |
dasAsyAm putrAnAdhEhi patim EkAdasam krudhi ||

MEANING:

O Indra, the king of rains and Subhiksham! I pray to you to make this kannikai full of auspicious progeny and wealth. May she be blessed to bear ten sons and make me her eleventh one

SEVENTH MANTHRAM

अग्निरैतु प्रथमो देवतानां सोऽस्यै प्रजां मुञ्चतु मृत्युपाशात् ।

तदयं राजा वरुणोऽनुमन्यतां यथेयं स्त्रीः पौत्रमघं न रोऽदात् ॥

agni: yEtu prathamO devAnAgum sOsyai
prajAm muncatu mrtyupAsAt |





tadayagum raajA varuNO anumanyatAm

yathEyagum stree poutramagham na rOdAt ||

MEANING:

May the first among DevAs, Agni BhagavAn comes here! May he release her children? From the noose of Yama devA (akAla MaraNam). May Lord VaruNA do what is needful to make her not cry over her sons or daughters?

EIGHTH MANTHRAM

इमामग्निस्त्रायतां गार्हपत्यः प्रजामस्यै नयतु दीर्घमायुः ।

अशून्योपस्था जीवतामस्तु माता पौत्रमानन्दमभि प्रबुध्यतामियम् ॥

imAm agni: trAyatAm gArhapatya: prajAmasyai nayatu

deerghamAyu: |

asUnyOpasthA jeevatAmastu mAtA poutramAnandamapi

prabudhyatAmiyam ||

MEANING:

May Lord Agni closely associated with the Grahashtan protect her (kannikai). May he grant long life to her children! May she never be infertile and may she be the mother of live children! May she wake up to the joy of having children!

NINTH MANTHRAM

मा ते गृहे निशि घोष उत्थादन्यत्र त्वद्बुदत्यस्संविशन्तु ।

मा त्वं विकेश्युर आवधिष्टा जीवपत्नी पतिलोके विराज पश्यन्ती

प्रजांसुमनस्यमानाम् ॥

maa tE gruhE nisi ghOsha utthAdanyatra tvadrudatyas samvisantu |





maa tvam vikEsyura aavadhishTA jeevapatnee patilOkE

virAJa pasyantee prajAgum sumansyamAnAm ||

MEANING:

O KaanikE! May there not be any loud noises in your house at night! May any anger and sorrows behind those loud arguments go elsewhere! May thou not spread your hair in despair and beat your breasts in sorrow! May there be no occasion for such despair! May thou shine in your husband's house with good will and take good care of your children!

TENTH MANTHRAM

द्यौस्ते पृष्ठश्चक्षतु , वायुरूरु , अश्विनौ च स्तनं , धयन्तस्सविताऽभिरक्षतु ।

आवाससः परिधानाद्बृहस्पतिर्विश्वेदेवा अभिरक्षन्तु पश्चात् ॥

dyoustE prushThagum rakshatu, VaayurUrU, asvinou ca stanam,
dhayantagum savitAbhi rakshatu |

aavAsasa: paridhAnAd bruhaspatir visva dEvA abhirakshantu
pascchAt ||

MEANING:

May the AkAsa devathA (dhyou) protect your rear! May Vaayu dEvan protect your two thighs! May AsvinI dEvAs protect your chest region! May SavithA (sooryan) protect your baby nourished by your milk! May Brahaspathi protect you until you wear your pudavai. Afterwards, MayVisvEdEvAs protect you (This manthram is a kavacham for the protection of the kannikai's body).

ELEVENTH MANTHRAM

अप्रजस्तां पौत्रमृत्युं पाप्मानमुत वाऽघम् ।





शीर्ष्णाः स्रजमिवोन्मुच्य द्विषद्भ्यः प्रतिमुञ्चामि पाशम् ॥

aprajastAm poutramrutyum pApmAnamuta vAgham |

SeershNa: srajamivOnmucya dvishadbhya: pratimuncAmi paasam ||

MEANING:

I (the Kannikai) leave with my enemies amangalams like infertility, premature death of children, other sins and sorrows just as I take the used flower Garland from my tresses. This way I remove the noose of inauspiciousness of the above four kinds that may bind me.

TWELFTH MANTHRAM (PART OF SAAYAM SANDHYAVANDHANAM /YAJUR VEDAM)

इमं मे वरुण श्रुधी हवमद्या च मृडय । त्वामवस्युराचके

imam mE varuNa SrudheehavamadyA ca mruDayA | tvAmavasyurAcakE

MEANING:

Oh Lord VaruNA! Please hear my sthOthram and make me happy right away! I salute you with the intent of being protected by you!

THIRTEENTH MANTHRAM (SAAYAM SANDHYA VANDHANA MANTHRAMS)

तत्त्वा यामि ब्रह्मणा वन्दमास्तदाशास्ते यजमानो हविर्भिः ।

अहेडमानो वरुणेह बोध्युरुशः स मा न आयुः प्रमोषीः ॥

tattvA yAmi brahmaNA vandanAnastadASastE yajamAnO havirbhi: |

ahEDamAnO varuNEha bOdhi urusagum sa mA na aayu: pramOshi: ||





MEANING:

O VaruNA! O supreme Lord! I take refuge in your protection by singing your glory through recitation of Veda manthrams. It is for this type of protection by you, the kings make sacrificial offerings to Agni to reach you. Oh VaruNa dEva! Please grant the protection that I am seeking now without getting angry. Oh Lord of praise worthy attributes! Please do not snatch away my life with your VaruNa paasam in a mood of anger! Please spare my life!

FOURTEENTH MANTHRAM

त्वन्नो अग्ने वरुणस्य विद्वान् देवस्य हेडोऽवयासिषीष्ठाः

यजिष्ठो वह्नितमश्शोशुचानो विश्वा द्वेषांसि प्रमुमुग्ध्यस्मत् ॥

tvannO agnE varuNasya vidvAn devasya hEDO

avayAsi seeshThA: |

yajishThO vahnitama: sOsucAnO visvA dvEshAgumsi

pramumugdyasmat ||

MEANING:

O Agni DevA! May Thou as the omniscient one, intercede with the splendorous VaruNan and reduce his anger at us! O Agni DevA! You are the most praiseworthy and you carry all Havis to the DevAs from us in your resplendent form. May Thou remove all kinds of enmities between us fully!

FIFTEENTH MANTHRAM

सत्त्वन्नो अग्नेऽवमो भवोती नेदिष्ठो अस्या उषसोव्युष्टौ ।

अवयक्ष्व नो वरुणंरराणो वीहि मृडीकंसुहवो न एधि ॥





satvannO agnE avamO bhavOtee nEdishThO asyA ushasO vyushTou |
avayakshva nO varuNagum rarANO veehi mruDeekagum suhavO na yEdhi ||

MEANING:

O Lord Agni of above auspicious attributes! You stand in the front row of DevAs. Please come close to us to protect us at the time, when the dawn's rays have receded. Please stand next to us and save us from the anger of Lord VaruNA for our misdeeds. Please bless us with saamagriyAs and accept from us, what pleases you. Please be a supporter of our work in this world.

SIXTEENTH MANTHRAM

त्वमग्ने अयास्ययासन्मनसा हितः ।

अयासन् हव्यमूहिषेऽयानो धेहि भेषजम् ॥

tvamagnE ayAsyayAsan mansaa hita: |
ayAsann havya mUhishE ayAnO dhEhi bhEshajam ||

MEANING:

O Agni DevA! You have us as your servants! For us, you serve as the object of meditation and goal to attain. You are accessible to us and carry our Havis to the other DevAs and the Lord. Please grant us what is beneficial to us just as the appropriate medicine for a patient. With these manthrams, PradhAna (Primary) homam was completed by Sri RanganAthA as a bridegroom.

BRIDE STANDING ON TOP OF A PESTLE (AMMI)

The next ceremony was the ammi mithitthal. This ceremony with its accompanying manthram is performed to pray for the resoluteness of the bride to stand firmly against any upsets in married life.





Sri RanganAtha held the toe of the right foot of ANDAL and lifted her foot to rest on the ammi (grinding stone) placed on the right side of the sacred fire. He recited the following manthram at that time:

आतिष्ठेममश्मानमश्मेव त्वंस्थिरा भव ।

अभितिष्ठ पृतन्यतस्सहस्व पृतनायतः ॥

aatishThEmam asmAnam asmEva tvagum sthirA bhava |

abhitishTha prutanyata: sahasva prutanAyata: ||

MEANING:

My dear ANDAL! May Thou stand on this rock of a grinding stone firmly! In your married life, oppose those, who oppose you without flinching or wavering. May Thou bear with your enemy's! Oh my dear Wife! When the violent winds blow during our married life, please stand firmly like you are standing on this firm pestle and chase away those, who wish to cause harm to You. Please stand firm until these violent winds blow away. Have courage and patience to stand up to these unpleasant and disturbing events. Please bear with those, who commit aparAdhams to you.

ANDAL herself has sung about her experience of ammi Mitthitthal ceremony assisted by Sri RanganAthA. We come across it in the 8th verse of decad 6 of NaacchiyAr Thirumozhi:

இம்மைக்கும் ஏழேழ் பிறவிக்கும் பற்றாவான்
நம்மை யுடையவன் நாராயணன் நம்பி
செம்மையுடைய திருக்கையால் தாள்பற்றி
அம்மி மிதிக்கக் கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழி நான்.

immaikkum yEzhEzh piRavikkum paRRAvAn

nammai udayavan NaarAyaNan nambi

semmai udaya ThirukkaiyAl thALL paRRi





ammi mithikkak kanAk kantEn thOzhi naan. (NTM 6.8)

ANdAL housed this description as the 8th paasuram to celebrate the Lord of AshtAkshara Manthram (MUla manthram). This is a profound paasuram and is a grand summary of the relationship between sEshi and sEshan just as "chiRRam siru kAIE vanthunnai sEvitthu" paasuram of ThiruppAvai. There ANDAL declares majestically, "yeRRaikkum yEzhEzh piRavikkum unthannOdu uRROmE aavOm, unakKE naamAtcheyvOM, maRRai namm kaamangaL maRRelOr-empAvAI". In the Ammi mithitthal paasuram, she reminds us of the same profound and central truth (SaraNaagathi sAsthrAm) with almost the same words that are like echoes to her Thiruppaavai paasuram. Here she says: "immaikkum yEzhEzh piRavikkum, nammai udayavan naarAyaNan nambi paRRAvAn". The usage of "nammai udayavan" is another thundering revelation. We can now understand why Sri RanganAthA gave the title of "Udayavar" to Sri RaamAnuja.

ANdAL declares here that the relationship between naarAyaNan and us is "ozhikka ozhiyAthu" (a relationship that lasts forever and can not be broken by any means). In this world (immai) during the septads of births and also in the other world (MaRumai), he is the ONE to lean on as UpAyam and UpEyam to get MokshAnugraham. ANDAL reminded the sleeping Nanda GopAlan of His duties in this context (paarArthyam) in Her ThiruppAvai paasurams and woke Him up to perform those duties (EmperumAn NandagOpALA YezhunthirAi; umbar kOMAnE, urangAthezhundirAi).

ANdAL was born as the daughter of PeriyAzhwAr, who declared, "yEzhAtKAAlum PazhippilOm--ThirumAIE! naanumunakku PazhavadiyEn". She performed MangaLAsAsanam for Her Lord in the ammi mitthitthal paasuram (nammai udayavan naarAyaNa nambi) and reminded us that Sri RanganAthA is sarva lOKa SaraNyan and Sarva sEshi. That primary principle, Sri RanganAthA touched her toe with His lotus soft hands and lifted it along with the foot and placed it on the Ammi (semmai udaya thirukkaiyAl thALL paRRi ammi mithikka kanAk kantEn).





LAAJA HOMAM (OFFER OF PARCHED RICE TO AGNI)

The next ceremony is Laaja homam. This is the occasion, when ANDAL like other brides prays for the state of auspiciousness for Her Lord Sri RanganAthan and seeks Her Lord's aaseervAdhams.

In the ninth paasuram of VaraNamAyiram, ANDAL describes the Laaja homam ceremony:

---அரிமுகன் அச்சுதன் கைம்மேல் என் கை வைத்து

பொரிமுகந் தட்டக் கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழி நான்.

--- arimuhan achyuthan kaim mEl yennkai vaitthu

porimuham tattakk kanAk kantEn thOzhi naan

When the bride enacts LAja homam, she cups her hand and the brothers of the bride place a handful of parched rice (Pori). Then bridegroom adds few drops of ghee to that parched rice. The bride and bridegroom together perform then the laaja homam and throw the ghee-moistened popped rice into the fire as aahUthi with the following manthram:

इयं नार्युपब्रूते कुल्पान्यवपन्तिका ।

दीर्घायुरस्तु मे पतिर्जीवातु शरदश्शतम् ॥

iyam naaree upabrUtE kulpAnyavapantika |

deerghAyurastu mE patir jeevAtu SaradaSSatam ||

MEANING:

O Agni! My wife is praying for long life to me. She prays for me to have hundreds of years of life as her husband.

After the Laaja homam, the dampathis went around the fire thrice to the accompaniment of three more Veda manthrams. These manthrams house prayers for long married life, suprajAs and strength to bear with all





difficulties that one might come across in married life.

Another Ammi mitthithal and three Laaja homams are conducted with appropriate veda manthrams.

One of the Laaja homa manthram prays to Agni to release the wedded kannikai to be released from the grip of her household of birth and appeals for firm links to the house of the husband.

The other Laaja homa manthram is addressed to aryamA and prays for unison in thought and action among the dampathis in their married life.

RELEASE OF VARUNA PAASAM AS THE CONCLUDING ACT OF MARRIAGE

Now, the darbha rope tied around the bride's waist is removed with the recitation of two manthrAs. The meanings of these manthrAs are: "Oh My dear wife! I release you now from the paasam tied by Lord VaruNA of benevolent deposition. I will strive to create a happy home for you in the land, where puNyasaAlis live in this world created by BrahmaA.

The graha PravEsam ceremony follows and the bride travels to her husband's home to become the queen of that household. In the Rg vedam, there are elaborate manthrams of the dampathis traveling with HomAgni on a canopied cart to the groom's house. These are beautiful and powerful manthrams that seek auspiciousness in married life. We will include the tenth paasuram describing the happy state of mind of ANDAL, when she as the bride of Sri RanganAtha goes around the thiruveethis (streets) of Sri VilliputthUr on the back of a well caparisoned elephant and concludes her dream of marriage to Her Lord in the manner prescribed by the ancient VedAs:

குங்குமமப்பி குளிர்சாந்த மட்டித்து

மங்கல வீதி வலஞ்செய்து மணநீர்

அங்கு அவனோடும் உடன் சென்று அங்கு ஆனைமேல்

மஞ்சன மாட்ட கனாக்கண்டேன் தோழி நான்.





kumkumam appik kuLir sAntham mattitthu
mangala veethi valam seythu maNa neer
angavanOdumudan senRu angAnai mEl
manjanamAttak kanAk kantEn thOzhi naan

In Her phalasruthi paasuram, ANDAL informs us that those, who recite Her VaraNamAyiram paasurams dealing with her marriage to Sri RanganAthan with Bhakthi would have suprajAs in this world.

தூய தமிழ்மாலை ஈரைந்தும் வல்லவர்
வாயும் நன்மக்களைப் பெற்று மகிழ்வரே.

tUya Tamizh maalai eerainthum vallavar
vaayunan makkaLaip peRRu mahizhvarE.

At the end of NaacchiAr Thirumozhi, she points out that those, who recite her prabhandham with devotion, would get some thing superior to just getting suprajAs, (viz.) the refuge at the sacred feet of Her Lord Himself:

---கோதைசொல், மருந்தாமென்று தம் மனத்தே வைத்துக்
கொண்டு வாழ்வார்கள், பெருந் தாளுடைய பிரானடிக்கீழ்
பிரியாது என்றும் இருப்பாரே.

“---Godhai sol, marunthAmenru tamm manatthE vaitthuk konu
vAzhvArgaL, PerumthALudaya pirAnadik keezh piriyaAthu yenrum IruppArE”

ANDAL out of her love for us as her dear children reveals that Her Prabhandham is like “Marunthu” for us suffering from the disease of SamsAram (marunthAm yenru manatthE vaitthuk konu vAzhvArgaL). She elaborates further the fruits of such observance: “perumthALudaya PirAn adik keezh piriyaAthu YENRUM iruppArE”. The shade of the Lord's gigantic feet/ perumthAL (Thiruvadi Nizhal) is the fruit (phalan and prasAdham). ANDAL states that the BhaagyasAlis, who recite Her Prabhandham with Bhakthi, will remain united with the comforting shade of Her Lord Thirvikraman's sacred



feet and will never ever be separated from them (anthamil pErinbam adaivAr).

May the divya karuNA katAksham of the newly married divya dampathis (Nithya kalyANa mUrthys) of Srirangam fall on ALL of us!

seetha kalyaaNa vaibhogamE!

raamaa kalyANa vaibhogamE!



SrI ANDAL and Her Lord in nUthana Muthangi - Srivilliputhur





Sri Rangam Raaja Gopuram

Naama Kusumaas
of
Sri Ranganaathaa



NamperumAL with ubayanaccimArs - Panguni Uthiram - Sri Rangam
(Image Courtesy: Sri.Murali BaTTar
www.srirangapankajam.com)



॥ श्रीः ॥

Dear Ranganatha Bhakthaas:

Few months ago, adiyEn composed my own SaraNaagathi to Lord RanganAtha by creating a garland from the nAma Kusumaas from Acharyas and Vedic words. Please forgive adiyEn for unintended mistakes in this Sanskrit composition. adiyEn is privileged to share with Bhaktaas this personal Sri Ranganatha SaraNaagathi on this day of enormous significance (Panguni Utthiram) to all the Bhakthaas of Kasturi Rangan. This year , This blessed Serthi day , the day of the avathAram of the three gadhyams, falls on Sunday , April 1 , 2007.

SrI Ranganatha SaraNaagati

श्री रङ्गनायकि समेत श्रीरङ्गनाथाय नमः

1. Srirangasaayinam,
2. Sri Harim,
3. Sriya: pathim,
4. Srimad ashtaakshara mahaamnatra svaroopiNam,
5. Sri abeeshta varada swaaminam,
6. karunaa nidhim,
7. suddha satvamayam ,
8. svayam vyaktham,
9. sumukam,
10. chatur bhujam,
11. divya peethaambaralankrutham,
12. vanamaalinam,
13. tulasi maalaalankrutha kireeTa dEsam,
14. chaaruhaasam,

sadagopan.org





15. prasanna vadanam,
16. kasturi tilakaalankruta chandraananam,
17. divya candana-abhishincitaangam,
18. dwaja-vajra-angusaalakshya aravinda paada padmam,
19. divya maalyopasobhitam,
20. sarvaabharana bhooshitham,
21. Sanka chakra gadhaadaram,
22. jnaananda svaroopam,
23. sampooranam,
24. jaata vEdasam,
25. dadhikravNNoh akaarisham,
26. Sivatomorasam,
27. praNavaartha prakaasakam,
28. jyotirutthamam,
29. Sri bhooloka vaikuNTha kshEtra naayakam,
Sri Rangarajam SaraNmaham prapatyEh -----(1)
30. dayaa sindhum,
31. Purushottamamam,
32. Parama vaidheekam,
33. sarva SEshim,
34. Paravasudevam,
35. Parandhaamam,
36. Parama pavithram,
37. ubhaya DeviNA grihyamaaNa paada padmam,
38. naathEana muninaa labdha sowbhagya padaambhujam,
39. Sri Raamaanuja maanasa hamsam,





40. Sri vEdanta desikEna samyak namaskruta aravinda charaNa dwayam,
41. chEtanaachEtana yajamaana swaaminam,
42. praNathaarthi-hara prabhum,
43. parameshtim,
44. Jagannatham,
45. Maadhavam,
46. Saasvatam,
47. saarvabhavam,
48. sadhu hrudhaya vaasinam,
49. sakala bhuvana mangalakaram,
 bhoomyaa cha neeLayaa sahitam, Sri Ranganatham mama naatham
 SaraNamaham prapatyeh ---- (2)
50. anantham,
51. avyayam,
52. sanaatanam,
53. sarva mantra mUrthim,
54. ksheera sagara tanayaa: naayakam,
55. gOdha dEvi varam,
56. purNEndhu samaana mukha maNDalam,
57. puNDareekaksham,
58. sundara divya gaatram,
59. naaga bhoginam,
60. Sridharam,
61. Sri vaikuNTha naatham,
62. surya kula tilakam,
63. dasaratha nandhanam,
64. kaakutstham,





- 65.ravaNaathi dushta hanthaaram,
- 66.vasishThaadhi maharsheenaam sukhaavaham,
- 67.vaidEhi nayana santhushTam,
- 68.SaraNaagathi dharma samrakshanam,
- 69.aanandhamaya adhbhuta vigraham,
- 70.mahaa veeram,
- 71.chandra pushkariNi TaTastham,
- 72.Sri Rangapureesam,
- 73.jagadheesam,

SrI RanganAtham SaraNamaham prapatyeh ----- (3)

- 74.ksheerasaagara tarangaseekaraasaarataarakita charu moorthinam,
- 75.bhogi-bhoga-Sayaneeya Saayinam,
- 76.Sankha rathaanga kalpa dhwajaaravindhaankusa - vajralaanchanam,
- 77.AadisEsha vainadhEya sEnEsaadhi nitya suryaadhi samastha parivaara samanvitham,
- 78.surasundari praaNa naatham,
- 79.Pradhyumna aniruddha sankarshana paravasudEva rUpiNam,
- 80.Sri vaikuNTha divya lOkEh ratna maNdapa mahaa sowarNa simhaasanEh sthitham,

Sri Ranga nilayaachyutham Saranamaham prapatyeh --- (4)

- 81.nandakula nandanam,
- 82.navaneetha priyam,
- 83.paayasaana santhushtitham,
- 84.Gokhula rajaputram,
- 85.Govindham,
- 86.dhananjaya rathastha paramaachaaryam,





- 87.jayanthi sambhavam,
- 88.jagaddhaadhara sakthim,
- 89.akhila jagadhaadhaaraaya kurma rupam vahantham,
- 90.Charama sLOka mahamantra rishim,
91. asmath parama gurubhi: vandhita CharaNa kamalam,
- 92.ramaa kaantham,
- 93.satyam,
- 94.suprasaannam,
- 95.suryamaNDala madhyastham,
- 96.brahmmanaspathim,
- 97.yOgEswaram,
- 98.siddhi mokshaanurupam,
99. daivathaanaam daivatham,
- 100.chintaaaratnam,
- 101.vElaadhita sruthi parimalam,
- 102.vEdasaam mowli sevyam,
- 103.lakshmi bhoomyoh: kara sarasijai: laalitha paadhambhojam,

Sri Ranganaatham mama naatham SaraNamaham prapatyeh ---(5)

vaachika dhosham kshanthavya:



daasan

Oppiliappan Koil VaradAchAri SaThakOpan

Time: Panguni Uttaram day break at Sri Rangam, 2007

