**ParamaikAnthi’s svastivAcanam**

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The second verse in *mṛgārā* is:

यस्येदं प्राणन्निमिषद्यदेजति यस्य जातं जनमानञ्च केवलम्।

स्तौम्यग्निं नाथितो जोहवीमि सनो मुञ्चत्वहसः॥

yasyedaṁ prāṇannimiṣadyadejati yasya jātaṁ

janamānañca kevalam |

staumyagniṁ nāthito johavīmi sano muñcatvahasaḥ ||

Similar to the previous verse, this verse also is a poem that follows the meter upariṣṭātjyotirjagatī. This has the following 19 words (*padās*) as per the pada *pātā*.

(1)यस्य, (2) इदम्, (3) प्राणत्, (4) निमिषत्, (5) यत्, (6) एजति, (7) यस्य, (8) जातम्, (9) जनमानम्, (10) च, (11) केवलम्, (12) स्तौमि, (13) अग्निम्, (14) नाथितः, (15) जोहवीमि, (16) सः, (17) नः, (18) मुञ्चतु, (19) अहसः

(1) yasya, (2)idam, (3) prāṇat, (4) nimiṣat, (5) yat, (6) ejati, (7) yasya, (8) jātam, (9) janamānam, (10) ca, (11) kevalam, (12) staumi, (13) agnim, (14) nāthitaḥ, (15) johavīmi, (16) saḥ, (17) naḥ, (18) muñcatu, (19) ahasaḥ

The meaning given by Sri *Sāyaṇācaryar* for this is: prāṇat – Those which breathe, nimiṣat - Those which blink their eyes, yat idam - all these beings and ejati – those which move, yasya - are subordinates of **which** Agni, jātam - (on the same basis) which were born before, janamānam - which are being born, kevalam - without requiring any other evidence except the Vedas, yasya - are under the control of **which** Agni, agnim – to that Agni, staumi - I offer my praises, nāthitaḥ - I solicit his grace, johavīmi - I perform sacred fire ritual (homa) for him again and again. saḥ – He, naḥ - us, ahasaḥ - from the sins, muñcatu - relieve.

(I perform Homas for that Agni, soliciting His grace, to whom all those which breath, blink, move, were born before, are being born are subordinates. Let Him relieve us from our sins).

From this what can be inferred? As blessed by *Azwar* in the verses

enakkġ āṭ cey ekkālattum enu en

manakkġ vandu iḍaivīḍini mannit

tanakkġ āga enaikkoḻḻum īdġ

enakkġ kaṇṇanai yān koḻ siappġ

and

ekkālattu endaiyāy ennuḻ mannil mau

ekkālattilum yādonum vġṇḍġn

all the living and non living things are born to serve a person by name Agni. Let us praise that Agni. We will solicit his grace by repeatedly offering Oblations to Him. Let Him relieve us from our sins.

Only if we understand the phrase Agni as the Lord *Azagiya maṇavāḻan* or *Azagappirān* who blesses us in idol form in front of our eyes, all the other glories mentioned here will be appropriate for Him, He being the supreme soul. It need not be explained here that these glories will not be appropriate for the *devatā* Agni.

We can say that Swami Desika echoed this verse (*mantrā*) in the pradhānapratitantrādhikāram, where he quotes the following verse of Sri. Parasara Bhattar:

उपादत्ते सत्तास्थिति - नियमनाद्यैश्चिदचितौ

स्वम् उद्दिश्य श्रीमानिति वदति वागौपनिषदी।

upādatte sattāsthiti - niyamanādyaiścidacitau

svam uddiśya śrīmāniti vadati vāgaupaniṣadī |

All the phrases *Azwars* bless such as “the lotus eyed person who possesses all the worlds” are the explanations for this verse only.

Hence, we can say that no more explanation is required for this verse.

The phrase nāthitaḥ which occurs in this verse is interpreted by Sri *Sāyaṇācaryar* to mean the master who performs the *yajñā* representing himself as “I, who solicit the fruits or the benefits”. We, who relish Veda Purusha as *Vedattāzhwan*, interpreted on the same lines to mean “I, who solicit to please You by performing holy services”.

However, the word nāthitaḥ will not directly yield the meaning as “requestor”. Direct meaning for this phrase is “one who is being requested”. There is a convention to say bhuktāḥ brāhmaṇāḥ. This is said to mean that Brahmins have eaten. Here the direct translation of bhuktāḥ will yield the meaning as “were eaten”. However, since that meaning is not an appropriate one, we interpret this as “have eaten”. We convert the passive voice into active voice to understand. This has been accepted by most of the Sanskrit grammarians according to the grammar rule “*kartari ktah*”. The great poet *Kalidāsā* has also followed this and composed a phrase,

वनाय पीत - प्रतिबद्ध - वत्साम्

vanāya pīta - pratibaddha - vatsām

in the first poem of the second chapter of Raghuvamsam, that describes the cow Nandini which was shepherded by Emperor Dileepan as per the guidance of sage Vasishta. Here he assumes the meaning as “that Nandini who has a calf that was tied after it drank the milk” for the phrase pīta - pratibaddha – vatsām according to the dissolution as pītaśca pratibaddhaśca vatso yasyās sā. Here the phrase pītaḥ means “that which was drunk”. However, it has come in the meaning of “that which drank”. Sri *Sāyaṇācaryar* has explained the verse with the similar convention. Hence, I have also given the meaning on the same lines.

However, we, who enjoy Veda as *Vedattāzhwan* can interpret the phrase nāthitaḥ as one who has been requested by Emperuman to do something.

In the commentary preface of the “*īḍu*” (commentary on Tiruvaimozhi) for the Tiruvaimozhi “veetrirunda” it has been mentioned as follows: “Lord tells Azwar, ‘You are seeing that I am here without any decrease in My Lordship that extends sovereignty all over the seven worlds. All these Lordship will be seen if you can speak a word on this’, and the Azwar blesses the verse in accordance with this request”. On this basis only, the tradition has set in that the service has to be done only after the concurrence of the Lord. We normally observe in temple sannidhi-s that when arcaka-s says "*shrI vaiShNava-s aruLippADu*" (meaning they can now recite the sacred verses), the latter accept saying, "*nAyante nAyante*" and feeling blessed ("*nAthitan AyinEnE*"), chant vedams, prabandham-s, PurANa-s etc... *Vedattāzhwan* also follows this when he sings ”nāthito johavīmi”.

It seems that Tirumangai Azwar won’t sing the holy verse if not requested. There is an interesting anecdote for this.

After singing on the Lord of Tiruvallur, Azwar went to Tiruninravur. There the Lord Bhaktavatsala did not ask Azwar to sing the holy verse. Hence, Azwar also didn’t bless any verse. He went to Triplicane.

The Ninravur *Pirātti* asked the Lord – “Did Azwar sing about You?”

Lord – “No”.

*Pirātti* – “Did you request the Azwar to sing?”

Lord – “No”.

*Pirātti* – “That is the reason why Azwar did not sing on you. Please go and ask Azwar to sing on you. Since he is the last Azwar, if he does not sing about You, how will You become Divyadesa Emperuman?”

So, the Lord goes in search of the Azwar. At that time the Azwar was singing about Tirukkadal mallai Emperuman. Ninravur Bhakatavatasalan stood behind the Azwar to attract his attention to sing on Him. Hence Azwar sung about Him since he was requested. That’s why in the ‘*pārāyathu*’ Tirumozhi he sings about Tiruninravur also as,

pūṇḍavattam piarkkaḍaindu toṇḍu paṭṭup

poynnūlai meinnūl enum di

māṇḍu avattam pgātġ vammin endai

em vaṇaṅgappaḍuvānai gaṇaṅgaḻ ġttum

nīṇḍavattak karumukilai emmān tannai

ninavūr nittilattait tottār slaik

kāṇḍavattaik kanal eri vāyp peivittānaik

kaṇdatu nān kaḍalmallaittalasayanattġ

Lord Bhaktavatsala goes back to piratti and proudly narrated the incident of making Azwar as nāthitan and getting a song. *Pirātti* encouraged the Lord to get one more song from Kaliyan. Hence, Lord again went in search of the Azwar. Then, Azwar was singing about Tirukkannamangai Emperuman as per His request. Ninravur Lord requested the Azwar again and Azwar responded by singing the verse on both the Emperumans as:

ġnai imayattuḻ eḻ īsanai

immaiyai maumaikku marundinai

āalai aṇḍattu appuattu uyttiḍum

aiyanaik kaiyil āzhi onu ġndiya

kūinaik kuru mā maṇik kuninai

ninavūr nina nittilat tottinai

kāinaip punalaic cenu nāḍik

kaṇṇamaṅgaiyuḻ kaṇdu koṇḍġnġ

Thus, even the service to the Lord has to be performed as per His request. Even Adisesha feared that he exceeded the brief when he performed a service without Emperuman’s concurrence. When Madhu and kaidaba came to disturb the sleep of the supreme Lord, Adisesha killed both of them by spitting venom on them. Periyazwar describes this story as,

kāyndu iruḻai māik katir ilagu māmaṇigaḻ

ġynda paṇakkatirmġl vevvuyirppa – vāynda

madukaidavarum vayiu urugi māṇḍār

adu kġḍu avarkku iuti āṅgu

However, Adisesha felt ashamed that he did something without the order of the Lord and hence hung his heads down. Lord consoled him that he had done a good job. In this position we can still see him as “tirumeyya malaiyilġ ādisġṣanām”.

Unlike the above, it is shown through the phrase nāthita that one should do service only after receiving His order. It is appropriate to say - one does kaiMkaryam on being ordered. But, do not think of it this way - "the word nāthita would mean a devotee serves when emperumAn requests; this does not sound right". When emperumAn gives an order, it will sound like a request; that is what His nature is.

(To be cont’d…)