

SIVAPURANAM

by

Manickavasagar

N B S B A B U J I

(inspired by Sri Paramahansa Yogananda)

Sivapurānam by Manickavasagar

Life of the author (Maanicka Vaasagar)

Maanicka Vaasagar belongs to 3rd century. He was born in a place, ThiruVaadha Voor. He hailed from Brahmin community. He had been very pious and intelligent. He was very serious about attaining salvation; so he kept on searching for a spiritual master. The king Arimardhana Pandian comes to know about the noble virtues and merits of Maanicka Vaasagar invites him to his court to serve as the chief minister of Paandiya Naadu. Maanicka Vaasagar accepts the king's invitation. He used to worship Lord Sundareswarar and Goddess Meenakshi everyday in Madurai, the capital of Paandiya Naadu. Maanicka Vaasagar's truthfulness, devotion and sincerity made him a reputed and trusted personality. The king and the people were greatly benefited by his service.

In the mean time, the king decides to send Maanicka Vaasagar to purchase new horses for his military force, as the existing ones got older and sicker. The king hands over a lump sum amount to Maanicka Vaasagar and asks him to buy new horses for the country.

Maanicka Vaasagar leaves Madurai for buying healthy horses. As ever, he is looking for his spiritual master all along the way. In a place called Thirupperum Thurai, he sees a Siva Yogi with his disciples. Maanicka Vaasagar is attracted by the sage's grandeur. He becomes a disciple of the Siva Yogi and takes Upadesa Dheeksha from him. After giving the spiritual initiation, the sage disappears. As far as Maanicka Vaasagar is concerned,

the sage is none other than God Himself. Out of spiritual bliss and opulence, he started to sing devotional songs on the Lord of the universe. It is in this place that Maanicka Vaasagar recited Siva Puranam. The godly minister spends all the money that the king had handed over to him in devotional activities. He built a temple in Thirupperum Thurai. The king came to know about this unpermitted expenditure done by the minister. He sends persons to bring Maanicka Vaasagar to the courtyard. Maanicka Vaasagar asks for God's mercy. He is given answer by God that the horses will come on the Moola Nakshatra day of the Tamil Aavani month. Then Maanicka Vaasagar goes to Madhurai and tells the king that the horses would come to the city on so and so date. The 'horses' came on a little latter day. The king was happy about it. But, during the mid hour of the night all the horses had become foxes and had run away to the forest.

The chief minister was taken for a toll. He was mercilessly tortured by the king over the 'misdeed' done by him. To rescue Maanicka Vaasagar, God sends heavy rain falls and the river Vaigai gets flooded. The mud walls in the river side break up and the water gushed into the Madurai city. The king orders his citizens to employ themselves in patching the damaged shore of the river. One resident of each home should work in the repair works – this is the order of the king. An aged lonely lady by name Vandhi employs a Coolie to accomplish the repair work allotted for her. But the servant was lazy and adamant. The king saw the obdurate servant and gave a beat on his back through his (king's) stick. Everyone, including the king experienced that beat. The servant disappeared and the Asareeri voiced, 'Release Maanicka Vaasagar and indulge yourself in service activities.' Then the king releases the minister and begs

for pardon. He requests Maanicka Vaasagar to continue his chief ministerial services. But Maanicka Vaasagar refuses, leaves Madurai and starts visiting holy places.

He visits and praises the Lord in Uthira Kosa Mangai, Thiruvannamalai and Thirukkazhukundram. Then he comes to Chidambaram and settles down in penance. During his stay in Chidambaram, the king of Ezha (in the border of Sri Lanka) with his Buddhist monks, comes to South India to destroy Saivism and to spread Buddhism. Maanicka Vaasagar wins them in debate and makes a dumb girl speak. The Saivism got stabilized again in the south through Maanicka Vaasagar.

He sings Thirukkoviayar in Thillai and places the palm leaves in Pon Ambalam of the temple. (There are five Ambalams (stages) for Lord Nataraja in Tamil Nadu. The one in Chidambaram is made up of gold. The stage in Madurai temple is made up of silver. The stage is Thiruvaalangaadu is made of Rathinam (gems). The dancing stage in the temple of Nallayappar is made of copper. The stage in Kuttraalam is made up of wood paintings.) The priests of the temple, after reading the hymns, request maanicka Vaasagar to explain the meaning therein. Maanicka Vaasagar replies pointing to the idol of the Cosmic Dancer (Lord Natarajar), 'He is the meaning of these verses'. Then he gets absorbed in the Light and becomes one with the Lord.

Namasivaya vazhga

‘Glory to Namasivaya.’

Na, ma, si, va, ya – these syllables are called Panchakshari. Each syllable represents an aspect of the unexplainable Lord. These syllables either singly or together give multi dimensional assertions.

Each syllable represents one of five natural elements.

Na – Earth

Ma – Water

Si – Fire

Va – Air

Ya – Sky or Space.

These syllables also denotes the five ‘Leelas’ (The works that do not bind Him in any way) of the Lord. Creation, preservation, destruction, hiding and granting mercy – these are the five Leelas of the Almighty. He creates the universe, preserves it and destroys it at His will. He also hides Himself from this universe, though He is inherent in every particle of His universe. He hides the ignorant souls in many bodies, based on the past actions of those souls. He reveals Himself and grants salvation to the souls when the veil of ignorance is gone. Such realized souls won’t experience creation, preservation and destruction any more. Others get bonded to these cycles.

These syllables also denotes the awakening of four spiritual centers in our astral body.

Na – awakens Mooladharam

Ma – activates Swadhishtanam

Si – triggers Manipurakam

Vaya – stimulates Anahatham

By praising ‘Namasivaya’, the devotee praises the Lord who is inside and outside.

Naadhan Thaal vaazhga

‘Glory to the lotus feet of the Potent’

Nadhan means The Potent, The Lover, The Leader. Glory to His Lotus feet. Advanced devotees praise the lotus feet of Lord. As a newborn baby searches and reaches the breast of its mother to appease its hunger, the dear devotees of Lord find solace only at the lotus feet of the Lord. The lotus feet also denotes to the astral point in the body, by touching which God grants salvation to the matured devotees.

Imaipozhudum en nenjil neengaadhaan thal vaazhga

‘Glory to the Holy Feet of the Lord who never gets away from my heart, even for the period of a blink of eyes’

This stanza discloses many things. The heart is the abode of Lord. But it is not the physical one, it refers to the spiritual heart which is said to be present in the center portion of our astral trunk. This truth is disclosed in Katopanishad and also in other spiritual scriptures. Only advanced devotees feel God here. If once God is felt here, then He never goes away – not even for a moment of the blink of the eyes. In other words, the true devotees of Lord have nothing in their heart except the Lord. Glory to the Lotus Feet of the Lord who continuously dwells in the heart of the true devotees.

Gowkazhi aanda Gurumani than Thaal vaazhga

‘Glory to the lotus feet of the precious Master who removed my worldly bondage’

‘Gow’ means cow. From devotional aspect, cow is auspicious and holy, embodiment of all Devathas, worth to be worshipped. In philosophical point of view, cow (known as ‘pasu’ in Tamil) represents the bonded soul or the diluted, passionate soul that is caught in the multi colored delusion (known as ‘pasam’ in Tamil). God (referred as ‘padhi’ in Tamil saivaite scriptures) releases the bonded soul from delusion and grants salvation.

Lord appears to Manickavasagar in human form, as a spiritual Master, and removes the bonds of the latter and takes possession of the latter. This stanza praises the supremacy of the spiritual master who comes in a human form. God appears to the author under a ‘kurundha’ tree in Thirupperunthurai and renders upadesa diksha (spiritual initiation) to him. After upadesa, God disappears. This ardent devotee remembers and praises the lotus feet of his Mighty Master, the Lord.

Agamam aagi ninru annippaan Thaal vaazhga

‘Glory to the Lord who stand as Agamaas and still beyond’

Agamam is the study that details the procedures involved in external worship and how they are related to one’s inner spiritual evolution. The author says that God Himself stands as Agamas – the steps that talk about God and the methods of worshipping/feeling God. Agamaas do not talk the whole of God. It is not possible for any scripture. Even whatever little has been said in the authentic scriptures – God justifies His

presence in them. He also stands beyond the contents of these spiritual and ceremonial literatures, which simply means God is both the road and the end destination. Glory to this Lord.

Egan Anegan Iraivanadi vaazhga

‘God is one, still He is many, glory to His lotus feet’

The Ganges is one. When it is caught in different containers, it assumes different names and appears to be several in numbers. Both are true. Similarly, though the omnipresent God is one, He is filled in many ‘containers’ which are again His own possessions and assumes many names and appears to be numerous in numbers.

Vegam keduthaanda vendhan adi velga

‘Victory to the lotus feet of the Emperor who eradicated the bewilderment and won me’

The one who is trapped in the delusion seems restless. He is driven hither and thither. He never stays calm. His condition is that of the wandering waves in the sea shore. God destroys this restlessness of His devotees and grants perennial peace. Such a devotee’s status is similar to the stable deep sea where waves of desires and related emotions are absent. When the restlessness is gone, the being becomes the possession of God. In this stanza, God is referred the Emperor.

Pirapparukkum Pinjagan than pei kazhgal velga

‘Victory to the ornamented lotus feet of the Beautiful Lord who cuts off future births of His sincere devotees’

In the path of devotion, God is personified, still accepting His impersonal attributes. That’s why we come across the names of many ornaments and symbols and words like beautiful, valorous, etc. in devotional

scriptures. These symbols too hold philosophical meanings and interpretations. So, they are not just symbols – but the vibrant representations of God Himself. This devotee thinks of Lord in the manifested form of Saivaites and hails the ornamented lotus feet of the ever Youthful Lord.

Isavaasyopanishad says: ‘The one who worships God without a form goes to a dark world and suffers; the one who worships God through a form goes to a still darker world and suffers.’

It’s very hard for an ordinary human to love a being or thing which doesn’t have any form and attributes. Only matured souls can do this. If a man with no determination tries to do this, it’s like shooting arrows in the empty sky. It wouldn’t hit anything. Hence, the efforts go waste and one becomes tired of the futile efforts. But, when a target is set, the aspirant ‘learns’ to hit the target. Later, through his determination and experience, he can also understand the formless spirit that exists beyond the form or target. This is the way.

That’s why it is said that the one who tries to worship God in a formless base, without maturity and determination, goes to a dark world and suffers. The one who worships God through a form should evolve in the understanding that it is the same God that is worshipped in many forms across many religions. He should also accept the formless ways of worshipping. If he gets stuck in the forms and doesn’t go any further, then he goes to a still darker world and suffers. That’s why both the types of worships are supported in Hinduism.

Purathaarku seyon than pun kazhalgal velga.

‘Victory to the lotus feet of the Lord who is far to the knowledge of the extroverts’.

Though God is everywhere, all people do not perceive Him in the same manner. Some do not feel Him at all. It is not that God is absent in them. They are just ignorant of the ultimate Truth. They spend all the time in perishable external pursuits - in search of money, recognition, sensual gratification and such other material things. God is 'far' to such people. They might know everything under the sky but they still lack the feeling of the inherent being that makes them learn all other things. That's why the author says that God is 'far' to the extrovert people.

Karam kuvivaar ul magizhum kon kazhalgal Velga

'Victory to lotus feet of the King who experiences bliss within the heart of the hands folded devotees.'

Hands are folded for many reasons. Here it refers to the posture in which the devotee prays the Almighty. When a devotee offers prayers, God is happy about it. Even when no prayers are made, He is ever happy. But when a prayer is made, He feels happiness within the heart of the devotee, which means God makes the devotee happy.

Siram kuvivaar onguvikkum seeron kazhal velga

'Victory to the lotus feet of the Perfect One who uplifts the bowed (surrendered) devotees.'

Bowing here refers to the bending of one's head in front of God as an expression of surrendering or paying homage. God just doesn't stop with giving refuge to the surrendering devotees. He uplifts them to new heights. It is God who takes one to new heights - let it be socially or otherwise. But here, the heights do not refer to the social achievements. Here, it refers to the heights of realization of one's own self.

Isan adi potri.

‘Salutations to the lotus feet of Iswara (the Lord)’.

Isan means the one who fills everything, the one who owns everything – in the creation and beyond the creation. Salutations to His feet.

Endhai adi potri.

‘Salutations to the lotus feet of my Father’.

God is our Father. We all hold His Spirit within ourselves, that’s why we stay alive in this body. But, we think that we are this body; we think that we born, grow and die along with the body. We call Him ‘Father’ – not for that we know the relationship of God but for that everyone call Him so. The one who has the realization and guts to say, ‘I stay alive even after the Spirit leaves the body’ is the dear son of God, because he knows the relationship of God and he knows that he imbibes the very basic nature of God which is eternity. This stanza proves the spiritual maturity of the author.

Desan adi potri.

‘Salutations to the lotus feet of God who is in the form of Light’.

‘Desu’ means Light, luminous. Luminescence is the very nature of God where darkness or shadow is completely absent. These terms - light, darkness and shadow hold different meanings in spiritual perspective, they are not related to the physical cosmos.

Sivan Sevadi potri.

‘Salutations to the luminous lotus feet of Lord Siva (God)’.

The author once again reminds the luminescence of the Lord.

Neyathe ninra nimalan adi potri.

‘Neyam’ means natural affection, the love that comes spontaneously – without any expectations. If affection comes between blood relations, it is quiet common. We can see such affection even among animals. But, if friendly affection comes spontaneously towards all living beings, then we call it ‘Neyam’. God stands by this affection. ‘Nimalan’ means the one without any impurities. God is ever pure; He cannot be contaminated by anything. Where there is pure love, there is God.

Maaya pirapparukkum mannan adi potri.

‘Salutations to the lotus feet of the King who cuts off delusive births.’

The King or the Commander (here it refers to God) cuts off the painful delusive future births of His beloved devotees. The author refers the birth as delusive, tricky. The society sees the birth of a human (or any other creature) as a happy event. In reality, it is not so. We do not know the painful history behind each birth. Gnanis say that the event of birth is more excruciating than the event of death. They mention that death offers relief, of course temporarily, to the suffering soul. It releases one from the clutches of diseases and decaying of the body, and other sorrows. (Here, we are referring to the natural deaths)

Only God can cut off the future births of souls. He does this to the deserving soul, to the soul which is full of love and self realization. If there is no birth, there would be no death. In essence, God gives freedom to the realized souls from the painful experience of delusive births and deaths.

Seeraar Perunthurai nam dhevan adi potri.

‘Salutations to our Lord in the virtuous Perunthurai.’

The author sees God in Thirupperunthurai in human form. He receives Upadesa from Him. He also builds a temple for God in Thirupperunthurai. It is only at this place he recited Siva Puranam. He thinks of this holy place and the mercy of God and offers prayers through this stanza. By saying 'our Lord', he is sharing the joy of devotion with all devotees.

Aaraadha inbam arulum malai potri.

'Salutations to the Mountain that renders unceasing Bliss.'

The happiness that ordinary people experience is unstable. It comes and goes as it depends on the ever changing moods and means. The over indulgence in worldly pleasures often lead to pain and frustrations. They are dependent on the perishable body and short term relationships. So, the worldly pleasures too are perishable.

But the joy of devotees is stable - eternal, since they get this bliss from the eternity and they experience this bliss in eternity.

***Sivan avan en sindhayul ninra adhanal
avan arulaale avan thaal vanangi
sindhai magizha Siva puranam thannai
mundhai vinai muzhudhum oya uraippan yaan***

These four stanzas reveal what made the author to recite this devotional scripture, how de does it and why he does it.

"It is because that Lord Siva (God) stands in my Sitha (intelligence, the well guided will power, we can also mean 'heart' here since it is a devotional literature), I am made to bow His lotus feet through His Kindness. I recite Siva puranam through the bliss in my Sitha (the

heart which is already occupied by the Lord). As I recite Siva puranam my past karmas completely vanish.

By saying this, the author discloses the truth that, by reading this devotional literature, the effects of one's past actions will dissolve. But it has to be done attentively, humbly and with proper understanding. He says this in another place of this scripture.

The following truth is derived through the above stanzas:

One can love God only through His Grace. If we are able to feel love for God, it means God is kind enough to let us feel that love in our hearts. We wouldn't feel His love, of our own merits, if there are any. We can never say 'I love God'. It is God who makes us love Him. If we are able to love God, it means God lets us feel His presence in our hearts; it is His presence that makes us love Him. Once one is able to express one's love for God, two things happen – Sitham or the spiritual heart is filled with bliss and the past karmas of the devotee dissolve completely. The author says, '...so out of overwhelming joy in my heart effected through His graceful presence, I utter Siva Puranam (this devotional literature) to eradicate my past karma.'

***Kannudhalaan than karunaikkan kaatta vandheidhi
ennudharku ettaa ezhilaar kazhal irainji***

'The One who has eye in the center of forehead, the One who has come down to this earth to show His eye of compassion, the One whose beauty and exquisiteness is beyond our imagination – to His lotus feet I bow.'

As per Saivaites' philosophy, God has a third eye in the center of His forehead. In the path of devotion, in most occasions, God is personified in human form. This is to remind the truth that God is in all humans, in all

beings in fact. To say about the third eye, it practically applies to all humans. All humans do have third eye in the forehead, in Agna chakra – but not in the physical body; it is in our astral body. The sincere devotees, Yogis and the compassionate beings feel this eye. The unfathomable formless God comes down to this world through ‘awakened beings’ (whose third eye is open) to express His compassion. In Tamil spiritual scriptures, this place of the third eye, forehead (known as ‘nudhal’ in Tamil) is referred as the lotus feet of God. All devotees pray God to place His lotus feet on their forehead. We find this reference in many devotional Tamil scriptures related to Saivam and also to Vainavam, Saktam and Koumaram.

The devotees, who had found God’s lotus feet within themselves, had become the centers of soul compassion and realization. This status is beyond ordinary human’s comprehension and experience. The devotees cannot explain this to others. (Anyway, the fellow beings come to know a little about the realized beings’ intimacy with God, through some unbelievable occurrences that take place around the devotees, quiet naturally.)

***vinn niraindhu mann niraindhu, mikkaai vilangoliyaa
ennirandhu ellai ilaadhaane nin perum seer
polla vinayen pugazhum aaru onrariyen***

The author feels God’s luminescence is filled all over the skies, all over the earth and still beyond these. He finds that God is unfathomable and limitless.

This devotee says that he doesn’t know ‘the means’ to express God’s excellence, since he is of a lower cadre being with ‘vicious’ deeds. The world knows him (the author of Siva puranam) as a virtuous devotee. But he puts himself down. He says this not to claim that he is

very polite. He truly feels that he is unfit to talk of God's might.

This is the place where the true devotees differ from ordinary devotees. The ordinary people think that they have all qualities to claim God's Grace, though the truth may be something else. They think that God is just waiting to listen to their worldly prayers and to grant boons instantly. In reality these shallow people do not know where God is and to whom they are making their grievances.

God listens to all types of prayers; but He is close to those who ask nothing but Himself. And these true devotees are polite in nature and they see all beings in high regard as they see God in all beings. They see themselves so simple and meager as they had melted their ego in the thoughts of God.

***Pullaagip poodaai puzhuvaai maramaagip
palvirugamaagip paravaiyaaip paambaagik
kallaai manidharaaip peyaaik ganangalaai
vallasuraraagi munivaraaith dhevaraaiich
chellaa ninra ith dhaavara sangamathul
ellaap pirappum pirandhilaithen emperumaan***

Through these lines Manicka vasagar thinks of his past spiritual journey.

'I had taken births as grass, as useless small plants, as worms, as trees, as different types of animals, as birds, as serpents, as stones, as humans, as ghosts, as super natural warriors, as demons, as sages, as angels – virtually I had taken birth in all wombs in this changeless universe and I am tired and am very weak now.'

The author calls this universe 'changeless'. He is not referring to the physical movements. He knows that it is

ever moving. He is referring to this continuous changes of this universe as 'changeless'. Once a soul is caught up in this delusive universe, it has to keep on changing its body. The universe or the creation will not let the soul free. This is the nature of this universe. It remains unchanged throughout its existence.

This devotee thinks of the pain and agony of the soul which experiences so many births and deaths. The author sighs, 'I am tired of these births'.

The concept of reincarnation is an accepted and proven 'fact' in India. As far as Indians are concerned, reincarnation is not a concept but a reality. Even western sciences too had to accept this through the proof of several case studies. The Journals of scientific exploration, Dr. Brian Weiss's book 'Messages from the Masters', Adrian Finkelstein's book 'Your Past Lives And The Healing Process' and many other case studies all over the world proved reincarnation.

The soul takes birth in different bodies in different occasions – some are of lower cadre (as the author of Siva Puranam mentions - the births of grass, small plants, worms, animals, ghosts, demons, etc.), some are of higher cadre (as mentioned in the above stanzas – the births of sages, super natural warriors, angels, etc.). Here a fact is revealed. Both lower cadre lives and upper cadre lives are binding the soul. As exemplified by the ancient masters, the lower cadre life is the iron chain, the upper cadre life is the golden chain – they both are obstacles to the bonded soul. To get freedom, one has to break all the chains, let it be of iron or of gold. Well. Why the same soul is tossed in different types of bodies which are quite contrasting with each other?

Here comes the concept of 'the cause and effect'. The soul takes birth based on the deeds performed

by it in its previous life. If the soul performs noble deeds, it takes noble birth; if it performs mean actions, it takes mean births. Even it may have to 'born' as a stone. Stones too have life – but they don't have consciousness. This is what modern sciences say. (I am not referring idol worship here – they are altogether a different study, related to heart and sentiments, when performed correctly would yield the desired result – Grace of God). If one has a store of unjust, cataleptic actions behind him, he may have to lay as a stone in his next life without any consciousness. By listing the diversified names of things in which a soul may take birth, the author emphasizes the seriousness of 'cause and effect'. There is no skeptical or irrational belief here. It is simple: As you sow, so shall you reap.

A question may arise here. 'You say that God is everywhere, within everyone. Our being is unaffected by anything – birth or death. But here you say that, the soul suffers so much through many births and deaths. Which one is correct?'

To understand the answer for this question, one needs to know the difference between a soul and the Spirit. There is no specific definition in any religious literatures in the world (except Upanishads) regarding soul (Jeeva) and Spirit (Atma, the individualized Spirit of God or Paramatma).

Here, I would like to repeat an upanishad story given in this layman's another book 'India'.

'There are two birds in a tree. One is on the upper branch, sitting silently and watching everything. The other one is in a lower branch, eating the fruits and enjoying the taste. Some fruits are sweet and some are bitter. The second bird gets tired of the changing shows and wants to enjoy the eternal bliss. It looks up and

admires at the undisturbed happy bird in the upper branch. It goes up to meet the first bird. When it is on the top most branch, it finds that there is no other bird except itself.

The bird sitting in the lower branch is the soul. It is this soul with a body that experiences pains and pleasures – through the ‘biting’ of different ‘fruits’. The bird in the upper branch is the Spirit, a mere watcher. It doesn’t get affected by the actions and experiences of the soul, though it stays in the same tree. As a matter of truth, it is in all trees - it’s simply everywhere.

The bird in lower branch experiences hundreds of thousands of births and deaths as a result of its past good and bad actions. When it gets tired of the experiences, when it feels the urge of freedom, when it thinks of the bird that stays cool above its head, when it prays from the core for freedom - then it goes up and joins the bird in the upper branch. But, there are not two birds now, there is only one bird – which is the Spirit. The soul realizes that there had been only one bird all the time. The individualized Spirit is the soul. The realized soul is the Spirit.

Meyye un ponnadigal kandinru veeduttren

‘O, the Truth, having seen your golden feet, I am home’

The realized author says this in joy: “Oh, the eternal Truth, today I reached Home through the vision of Your golden luminous lotus feet”. The vision happens within himself. To continue from the interpretation from the previous stanza, he had the vision of the bird in the upper branch.

The devotees call it ‘the Vision’; the Gnanis call it ‘the Realisation’. Ordinary people might know about

these terms through texts. But it doesn't mean that they know what 'the vision' or 'the realisation' is. It is like reading about Mount Everest. Reaching Mount Everest is something different which the devotees and Gnanis do.

All these days, he had no clues of his Home; he had been flying in the lower branches. Upon having had the vision of God's lotus feet, he identifies his Home and says in confidence that he reached Home. He emphatically mentions God as 'The Truth'. As he found his Home, he found the ultimate Truth as well. He wouldn't waver again in delusion.

***Uyya en ullathul ongaaramaai ninra
meyyaa vimalaa vidaippaagaa....***

Here the devotee mentions about the sound or vibratory aspect of God - 'Om'. Upanishads say more about this sacred sound. Om comes out from God and is God Himself. Om is referred as Shabdha Brahman. If one can hear 'Om', it means he has found God.

This devotee says that God 'stands' in his heart in the form of 'Om' sound to relieve him from all bondages. One can feel this sound vibration if one's internal environment is clean and empty. If it is filled with unnecessary stuff, one can not feel or here this sound. The author says that God has stood as Shabdha Brahman in his heart. God is not a guest to his heart, He 'had stood' in his heart. Through his own experience he confirms that God has taken permanent aboard in his spiritual heart.

Then he praises God: as the embodiment of the Truth, flawless Being, the Rider of the Bull. Bull (Nandhi) which is said to be the vehicle of God is the symbolic representation of Dharma. The four legs of the

Bull represent austerity (Tapas), cleanliness (Shaucha), mercy (Daya) and truthfulness (Sathya). Srimad Bhagavatam talks more about these Padhas (legs) of Dharma (righteousness).

..... *Vedhngal*
Ayya ena oangi aazhndhu agandra nunniyan

Vedhas – the religious scriptures praise God with reverence and they simply say ‘Ayya’ (the Owner or Master of everything) as they couldn’t explain God’s omnipresence. They admire at His height, depth and width (as they couldn’t see the boundaries). While talking about God’s magnitude, they also accept that He is subtler than the subtlest. This stanza talks of God’s omniscience. We, the ordinary beings can not know Him as He is, but He knows every particle of His creation (including our beings) particularly and generally.

Veyyaai thaniyaai iyamaananaam vimala

This stanza talks about the science of breathing, known as pranayama.

The incoming breath is heat; the outgoing breath is cool. The interval between two breaths is the soothing one. It leads one to the purpose of breathing. Distribution of energy and removal of blockages occur in this phase of pranayama. God is there in all these phases of breathing, in heating (Prana), cooling (Apana) and balancing (Vyana) phases.

Madhvacharya’s commentary as per Brahma Vaisnava Sambradhaya: “Lord Krishna explains that those who are devoted to pranayama or regulation of the breath offer the prana or outgoing breath to the apana or incoming breath and the incoming breath to the outgoing breath. In this way they arrive at the stage

of kumbhaka or complete restraint of the breath and this is considered to be yagna or offerings of worship.”

By offering worship through pranayama, one’s physical body, mind and even astral body gets purified. All the malas (impurities) go and vimalam (purity) prevails – Godly nature prevails.

***Poyyayina vellaam poyagala vandharuli
meynjaanamaagi milirginra meychudare***

‘You render grace through coming as Self realization (Meinjaanam), so that all falsehood is driven out and You glitter as the radiant Truth.’

Self realization and removal of falsehood – these two things happen simultaneously. The light comes and the darkness goes. These are not two different things. These are the results of the same understanding of the Self. There is no physical traveling of light – it is related to the finding or ‘seeing’ of the light which is already there inside and also outside – simply everywhere.

The author never used the words ‘I see the Atman or God’. He says, ‘Self realization or Meynjaanam happens through the Will and Grace of God.’

***Enjaanam illaadhen inbapperumaane
anjaanam thannai agalvikkum nallarive***

‘O, the embodiment of Bliss, what knowledge do I have here of my own (to know God)? I am ignorant by all means. You are the fine Knowledge that dispels ignorance.’

The author says ‘fine knowledge’. It implies that all other knowledge is ‘ill knowledge or knowledge of lower cadre’. God is in the form of this Wisdom – the fine and flawless wisdom. Only this Wisdom can dispel falsehood or ignorance of the soul. Other secular knowledge won’t remove the ignorance of the soul.

Once ignorance is gone, all that remains is Bliss.

***Aakkam alavu irudhi illaai anaithulagum
aakuvaai kaappaai azhippaai arultharuvaai***

‘You are not formed or created (by some other entity); You do not have life span or any limits that may restrict Your existence; You do not have an end. You are the One who forms all the worlds; You are the One who gives life spans to all the worlds and sustains all the worlds; You are the One who destroys or takes away the life energy of these worlds. You are the One who renders Grace or Mercy.’

God gives the platform to Jeevaas (souls with the body). He gives body, nature and other subtle things to Jeevaas. The souls perform actions and consume the after effects. Each Jeeva lives to a stipulated period. God protects Jeevaas till their stipulated life span and let them progress in their self realization. When the time is over, He separates the soul from His creation and gives timely solace to the soul. Due to the power of Maaya (delusion), the soul loses the memory of its past lives and is given another body based on its past performances. God saves the soul from wandering without a platform - and that too with the painful memories of the past. God makes the soul forget its past through the power of delusion; He gives another opportunity, another body to the soul in the process of removing its ignorance and realization of the Truth. This is His Mercy.

Pokkuvai ennai puvuvippai nin thozhumbil

‘O, God. You remove the ignorance (and so all my past imprints and impurities are gone). You employ me into Your service.’

Till ignorance exists, one acts for oneself i.e for the ego. If one finds the Truth, one is no more for the false

ego. The realized being works as per the Divine Will, into the service of God.

Naatrathin neriyaai seyaai naniyaane

‘As the fragrance is inseparable to the flower, so as do You stand in the hearts of Your devotees. For others, You are far away.’

For the devotees, for the knower of the Truth, God is so close; He becomes an indivisible part in realized beings. As we can’t separate flower and its fragrance, so are the devotees and God. No one can separate them. But for the unrealized beings, for those who are still in the clutches of delusion and ignorance, for the material minded, God seems to be far away.

We need to clarify one thing here. The scriptures say that God resides well within everyone’s heart. This is applicable to all beings. Then how can we say that He stands far to some people? The sun shines bright to all under its hood. But the blind can not see the sun, they can not feel its brilliance. Though God permeates everyone’s heart, only the realized beings feel His presence; the ignorant do not find His presence. For them, He (seems to) stands far away.

Maatram manam kazhiya ninra maraiyoney

‘Oh, the pivot point of Vedhas, You are beyond the reach of words and mind.’

Vedhas (the religious scriptures) revolve around God, they try to explain and praise His qualities. But, Vedhas too couldn’t disclose all things about God. They say that God is Aprameya – beyond any definition. If things are so, how can an ordinary man describe Him through words and through his unclean mind? It is impossible. God is beyond the reach of words and mind.

***Karandhapaal kannalodu neikalandhaarpola
sirandhadiyaar sindhanaiyul thenoori ninru
pirandha pirapparukkum engal perumaan***

‘Our Lord, in the consciousness of the matured devotees, You stand stubbornly and spring out like honey from the milk and cut off the births of Your devotees.’

The intellect of the matured devotees is already sweet. It is further sweetened through the grace of Lord. To explain this, an example is given in the stanza. Cow milk is delicious and sweet in nature – if honey is added to it, it will become sweeter. Like this, God sweetens the intellect and consciousness (which is already sweet) of His true devotees through His outpouring grandeur presence. As a result, the future births of His devotees are cut off. Here the author says in general that the ‘births are cut off.’ This implies that, not only the births of the sincere devotees in whom God expresses His opulence, but also the births of the sincere disciples who stand near to such devotees, are also cut off. As the author says this in the present tense, this applies to all times. The births of those Truth seekers, who are able to get closer to the true devotees’ devotional scriptures and are able to taste ‘the outpouring honey’ of the eternal consciousness therein, are also cut off by God’s grace.

The author already confirmed that He is Home (in stanza 32). The matured devotee wouldn’t have any doubt with regard to the Grace of God in rendering permanent peace to His sincere devotees. Through these stanzas, the author confirms that God would also grant salvation to those who are close and are able to taste the streaming nectar in the consciousness of His matured devotees.

**Nirangaloar aindhudaiyaai vinnorgal etha
maraindhirundhaai emperumaan**

‘Oh, my Lord, You have five colors, You are worshipped by the divine beings, You stand hidden in everything.’

These five colors refer to both the inner and outer worlds. It refers to the five natural elements – earth, water, air, fire and sky; it also refers to the five sheaths of the body – anna maya, prana maya, mano maya, vignana maya and ananda maya. Thus God is perceivable through inner and outer faculties. God is praised by the divine beings. Not only these five colors – He is still more and is hidden in everything.

..... valvinaiyen thannai
**maraindhida moodiya maaya irulai
arampaavam ennum arungayittraal kattip
puranthol porth engum puzhu azhukku
moodi Malanjorum onbadhu vaayir kudilai
malangap pulanaindhum vanjanaiyaichcheyya
vilangu manathaal Vimala unakku
kalandha anbaagik kasindhu ul urugum
nalandhaan ilaadha siriyerku nalgi
nilnthan mel vandharuli neel kazhalgal kaatti
naayir kadayaaik kidandha adiyerkuth
thaayir chirandha dhayaavaana thathuvane**

‘I am having strong bondages through my actions. The delusive darkness covers the true Self and makes me bonded through the performance of good and bad actions. The body house, which is having nine entrances (in two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, genital and anus), is continuously filled with stinking disposals, and is covered by outer skin to hide the worms and dusts inside it.’

It is through God's Grace that we got this 'body make-up' to perform sadhana (spiritual aspiration) so that we may get freedom.

But, the five senses deceive and drive the body hither and thither; the mind is bonded with the deceiving senses. O, Embodiment of Purity, due to this, we, petty beings don't have the goodness of inborn loving quality that melts internally for You. O, the embodiment of Compassion, You stand greater to our worldly mothers, as You came on this earth (in the form of Guru – spiritual Master) and showed Your immeasurable lotus feet of Grace even to the corner most beings, who are pettier than dogs.'

Here, the author says that the five senses deceive; they fool cruelly. And the one getting deceived – fooled, is our mind. The five senses which are seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching - drag the mind outside and they make it believe that the happiness, peace and the reality stand outside us. So the mind craves for all of these in external matters. The body is made to work on futile matters; it becomes tired and incapable to serve its purpose.

In another place, the author says that God came on this earth to render His Grace. It doesn't mean that God was not on earth before. He is Omnipresent. Occasionally, out of Compassion, He assumes a specific form, mostly that of a Spiritual Master, to release the bonded souls.

In the last stanza given above, the author points out an important revelation about God. The author calls Him, the Embodiment of Compassion. One may try to explain God through so many Thatwaas (revelations). The highest revelation is that God is in the form of Compassion; He is Compassion itself.

Maasattra Sodhi malarndha malarchudare

‘O, Garland of Flame in which blossoms Dustless Light’

Can there be dust or pollution in light or fire? There can be. The fire may leave smoke. It may emit bad odor on the basis of the quality of its fuel. It may leave ashes behind its burning. It may hurt the ones who touch it. But what the author talks about is the Light that doesn't have any mark of dust or pollution as It's very nature is Brilliance. And It is as cool and soft as flowers. What else can It be, except the Compassionate God – the all pervading Spirit?! Through these lines, the author talks about the aura of the Infinity which can be felt only by true devotees.

Desane thaen aar amudhe sivapurane

‘O, Master, Honey like Elixir, the Dweller of Sivapuram’

God resides in Sivapuram. Doesn't He present in other places? God is everywhere. He is Omnipresent. The world is one and the same for all. But the world seen by a child is completely different from the world seen by an old man. Everyone has one's own view about the world. Practically speaking, we are having different types of opinions about the world, though the world is one and the same. Realised beings see ‘the world’ differently. They see ‘Siva’ (God) everywhere. For them, there is no second thing – it's all Siva, God. For them, the place where they stand itself is Sivapuram. Thus, the author praises God as the Master, Elixir and Indweller of Sivapuram (the all inclusive abode of realized beings).

Paasamaam patraruthup paarikkum aariyane

‘O, the Supreme Savior who cuts off the death like desires’

The author says that desire is death itself. The one who leaves this world with unfulfilled desire(s) is going to be born again; obviously he will die again. Therefore, to conquer death means to cut off all desires. Scriptures say that even the desire for salvation will make one bonded; it will lead to reincarnation. Of course, it is a superior desire which will wipe out all other desires, and then freedom becomes much easier.

God, the Supreme, destroys all desires what so ever and makes His devotees evolve in their realization; they become deathless.

***Nesa arul purindhu nenjil vanjam kedap
peraadhuninra perunkarunaip peraare***

‘O, The Great River of Great Vast Compassion, You render Grace and stand permanently in my heart with friendly love to destroy the deceiving imprints in the mind.’

We already saw that the senses deceive the mind and drag it towards wrong ends. With wrong guidance and intentions, the mind is filled with so many binding imprints which are stored over many incarnations,.

God’s perennial flow of Grace destroys these imprints forever.

Aaraa amudhe alavilaa pemmaane

‘O, Everjoyful Elixir, Boundless Great Leader’

The worldly consumptions and joys are subject to decelerate as one takes them more. But the joy that comes out of God realization is overwhelming; it will not slow down. Here, author refers God as the ever joyful Elixir. He refers God as the great leader who doesn’t have any limitations what so ever.

Oradhaar ullathu olikkum oliyaane

‘O, The Light, hidden in the hearts of unconsidering people’

Those who do not consider or think about God may be put under two types: Those who do not have faith in God and those who are reluctant in praising God (even though they might have faith in God). God is not partial to His children. He is present in all of His creation. But for those who had developed the layers of ego and ignorance, He stands hidden. Once these layers are gone, these people too can feel their inborn Godliness.

Neeraai urukki en aaruyiraai ninraane

‘You melted me and stand as my precious Spirit’

This stanza has relevance to the previous stanza.

In the previous stanza, we saw that God stands hidden in the hearts of the unconsidering people. The hearts of such people are hard. Here we are talking about the spiritual heart. God’s Grace melts even the rocklike hearts of such people and makes them realize who they really are. Once the layers of falsehood are smashed, once the heart melts and overflows in devotion, then one sees that God is there as one’s own dear soul. To put it in other words, in the height of devotion, the realized devotee experiences that he and He are one and the same.

Inbamum thunbamum illaane ullaane

‘The One who has/has not joy and sorrow’

The author puts contradicting views about God here. i) God possesses joys and sorrows, ii) God doesn’t possess joys and sorrows. First thing to be clarified here is, the pleasures and agonies that are talked about here

pertain to this world. Let us analyse what makes one joyful and sorrowful?

It is ego or Ahankara that makes one feel happy or sad. In Samkhya of Indian philosophy, ahankara is referred as one's outside existence which is focused on creation. This is not one's real nature. One's true nature is the One that doesn't have any object of contemplation. But one's ego always tries to compare itself with other things, it tries to go higher. As long as one caught up in the mask of one's own Ahankara, one experiences pleasures and pains. When one loses or tears out one's Ahankara and sees what One is, then one is away from the worldly delights and strains. In this spiritual consciousness, there is no question of comparing or 'rising higher' as all that exist is Spirit alone.

Therefore, as long as the ahankara is predominant, the Spirit seems to have enjoyment and annoyance; but actually It is away from these ordinary emotions, since the Spirit in a living being is none other than God Himself. If one associates oneself with Ahankara, then one is subject to feel pains and pleasures. If one associates oneself with the Truth (the Spirit), then one is away from the contrasting feelings.

It will be right to recall the Upanishad example about 'the two birds' which had been already given in a preceding page.

Anbarukku anbane yaavayumaai allayumaam

'Dear to the loved ones, You stand as everything and
You stay away from everything'

As in the previous stanza, in this stanza (and in a few succeeding stanzas) the author is going to post some contrasting views about God. For ignorant, there seem to be some contradictions. For the realized, there is no

contradiction. These views try to tell that one can never define God in one's own terms and that God would appear in any form – in fact, in all forms.

God is very dear to His devotees. But it doesn't mean that He is absent in the non-believers or in the people who do not bother to think about Him; He is the indweller in all beings. God stands throughout His creation. He is still away from His creation, what this means is He is unaffected by the happenings in His creation.

Sodhiyane thunnirule thonraap perumaiyane

'You are the Light and also the Darkness; You are the Great One who doesn't have a beginning'

In many occasions, the author has portrayed God as Light. Here, this devotee says that God is the pit darkness as well. What is darkness? The place where God's presence is not felt is darkness. All are living in the same world. But, the ignorant are living in darkness. The devotees are living in the Light.

This darkness is not something different from God; it's like the shadow of God. The darkness, called Maya (delusion) is also a product of God. The darkness doesn't have a different origin other than God. In delusive darkness, Truth seems to be absent; and the worldly falsehood is celebrated. God is there in this delusive world also. He is the Creator of everything.

The Creator of everything is not created by anything.

Aadhiyane andham nadu aagi allaane

'O, The Origin, The one who has become the end, the in between and the One who is not all of these'

The author says that God is the origin of everything. It is from God that the creation emerged. He stands

with His creation all through its existence till its end. Still, He is none of these.

Origin, existence and end – these terms are associated with the time factor. Everything we see in God's creation – the earth, the moon, the sun and the stars are bound by the time factor and its limitations. God stands throughout the 'time' and still stays out of its limitations. Time cannot limit God's existence. It is God who limits or controls the time.

The consciousness of existence (Sath) depends on one's own realization – not on time. The same period of time, say for example - one hour, may look lengthy to one and short to another. The realized beings always live in 'the present'. They don't have 'the past' or 'the future', though they have the knowledge of both. This is one of the standards of God. Those who know Him (i.e. the Spirit) also imbibe this quality.

Eerthennai aatkonda endhaip perumaane

'O, my Father, my Lord, You drew me closer and made me Your own'

The author says that God attracted him like a magnet and took complete possession of him.

God owns everything. But only a few realize this fact. All others think that they own the world - the body, land, money, relationships and others. In reality, no one in this world owns a single atom – during their presence and after that. God attracts these realized souls, who are aware of the fact that the world is not permanent, to His side. All others are going away from Him through the ego driven ignorance – to the sides of multifaceted material amusements. By God's Grace, these realized beings get merged in Him. The author points out this fact through his own experience.

Another message is inherent in this stanza. It is God, only God who absorbs the matured souls – the souls who have compassion and the right knowledge about themselves. This happens naturally, like the magnet attracting the pure iron.

There are two ways to get merged in God. Gnana and Bakthi. Those who follow the path of Gnana are trying to hold God through their own efforts, like a baby monkey holding the belly of the mother monkey tightly so that it will not fall off from its mother. This is referred as kurangu kutti njaayam.

Those who are in the path of Bakthi, do not hold anything. It is God that holds them and take them to His directions like a mother cat carries its kitten through its mouth. This is referred as poonai kutti njaayam.

Since, this is primarily a devotional literature, the author experiences and expresses the compassion and almightiness of God. He declares that everything, including the act of attaining salvation, happens at the will of God.

The point of God absorbing the spiritual aspirant to His side comes in Mey Kanda Devar's 'Siva Gnana Bodham' (fifth Sutra) also. Though it (Siva Gnana Bodham) is a saasthra (wisdom scripture) primarily, it accepts the truth that it is God who can render the ultimate freedom. In the path of Wisdom, purity is the point of hold. If one loses purity, it means he is losing the hold of God. If one is very serious about maintaining his purity, it means he is tightening his hold with God. When we come to the path of Bakthi, the deciding point is one's unselfishness or egoless state. The one who doesn't have any sort of ego or desire is absorbed by God's Grace. In both the cases, it is God who absorbs the matured souls. In the path of Gnaana which is based

on Purity, God cannot restrain Himself from taking the deserving soul to His side. In the path of devotion, God bends down and takes the deserving soul to His side.

***Koortha meynjaanathaal kondunurvaar
thamkaruthin
nokkariya nokke nunukkariya nunnunarve***

‘You are the One who is beyond the conclusion of those who use their sharp self wisdom to feel You; You are subtler than the subtlest’

Here author talks about the subtleness of God. He uses the words ‘sharp self wisdom’. It is not ordinary wisdom, it is not ordinary secular sciences. He talks about the wisdom that experiments and experiences the Self in each being. Many seers of India had done this experiment and are able to derive some conclusion about the nature of the Self (or God). But truly speaking, God stands even beyond such conclusions. What the seers had said could be true; but they depict is only a part of God – not His whole. God is mightier than the mightiest; subtler than the subtlest.

Poakkum varavum punarvumilap punniyane

‘O, the Auspicious, You don’t have exit, entry and association’

God doesn’t have births, deaths and associations. This stanza talks about the Supreme Individuality of God. Only the mortals take birth and death. They mingle/associate with similar breed and stand as the cause for the entries (births) and exits (deaths) of Jeevas (souls with physical body) of similar nature and of their own.

A cow won’t mingle with a tiger. Only beings of similar nature make associations. God doesn’t have any equal entity to associate with. He is Supreme authority.

It is in Him that all entries, exits and associations take place.

Out of compassion God may appear to His sincere devotees in a flash and may disappear in a while, as He did to the author in the Thirupperunthurai. But he wouldn't take birth in the usual form. We say that incarnations (Avatars and Sath Gurus) come to this world and leave this world. No Avatar would come to this world in a usual format, and they do not 'die' like ordinary mortals. They do not associate themselves with the worldly things. Out of compassion and commitment, they mingle with their devotees and followers, only to render solace and freedom to the latter.

The author himself stands as an example to this saying. Though he might have taken birth ordinarily, he did not make ordinary exit – he just disappeared in the temple of Chidambaram without leaving the physical body. And he didn't mingle with the worldly minded. For these regards, Maanikka Vasagar is worshipped as a Great Master.

Kaakkum en kaavalane kaanbariya paeroliye

'O, my protecting Emperor, the unperceivable Great vast Light'

God is the true protector. The ordinary kings of the world give protection to the temporary properties of the jeevas. They can stop someone from stealing the properties of their countrymen. They can give protection to their citizens (and to themselves) as long as the soul stays in the body. When the soul leaves the body, no one is at rescue except God. God gives protection and path to the departed souls based on the performance of the souls. He protects – not only the souls but His whole creation. He is the Ultimate

Emperor. His luminescence is such that no one will be able to see/measure It.

***Aatru inba vellame athaa mikkaai ninra
thottrach chudaroliyaai solladha nunnunarvaai***

‘O, River of flowing Bliss, my Father, the Greatest, The rays of stable sun rise, the unspoken subtleness’

Author refers the Bliss to the flowing waters of the river. It’s the flood of Bliss. It just takes away everything along with its flow. Then the author refers God as his Father. Ordinary people too call Him, ‘Father’, ‘the Almighty’ and so on. They are just mechanical expressions. But the true devotees call God from their hearts. It’s an intimate expression of the soul. This devotee mentions that God is the Greatest. It’s not because that everyone mentions Him so, but for that he ‘knows’ that God is the Greatest.

God’s brilliance emits like the soothing morning rays of the sun. It won’t hurt anyone. It won’t become hot later. It is soothing and stable. All devotees and Gnaanis try to express their divine experience in various words. But God’s subtleness remains still unspoken. It can’t be expressed in words.

***Maatramaam vaiyagathin vevvaerae vandharivam
thaeatranæ thaeattrath-thelivæ en sindhanayul
ootraana unnaar amudhe udayaanae***

‘The world keeps on changing – so You too appear in different dimensions of wisdom. You render clarity – You are the Clarity. You are the one who springs out delicious eatable nectar in my intellect. You own everything.’

This world is subject to changes. The appearance changes, the attitude keeps changing, the routes of pains and pleasures keep changing. So humans are utterly

confused. Who can render them clarity and peace?
Who can show them the Truth that doesn't waver?

God and God alone. He is the Truth – He is the clarity in the Truth. Having tasted this Truth, the devotee's intellect has become the source of ever pouring delicious honey that even ordinary humans can take. Here the honey represents the peace and bliss that never change. They taste like nectar. God renders all these. He is the owner of all things.

***Vettru vigaara vidakkudambin utkidappa
Aatraen em ayya aranaeyo enrenru
Poattrip pugazhndhirundhu poi kettu meyyaanaar
Meetingu vandhu vinaippiravi saaraame***

“Those who continuously praise and pray the Lord, saying, ‘O, my Father, Savior, I can no more stay in this alien disgusting fleshy body’, have their ignorance destroyed and become the Truth itself; they will not come back and take the karma based birth again.”

The author calls the human body as ‘alien’. He knows that he is different from the body and that the body that he is forced to dwell in is not his home. He also knows that he doesn't own this body. That's why he calls the body as alien, strange to his original nature. This is the point where the devotees differ from ordinary beings. The ordinary people, by ignorance, feel that they own their bodies and that their bodies are their permanent abode.

Then the author calls the human body as the disgusting one. Because it is dependent on so many contrasting factors and always strives to establish its presence in this impermanent world.

Finally the author refers the body ‘fleshy’. It implies that the body that we dwell in is subject to stinking

and decay. The body that the author refers here is the sthoola sareera (physical body).

We also have sukshuma sareera (subtle body) and kaarana sareera (causal body). All these three types of bodies are inter-related. Attaining salvation implies the ultimate freedom – the state where one doesn't have the causal, subtle and action based reasons to get fettered to any of these three types of bodies.

The devotees who unceasingly pray to the Lord to release themselves from the 'alien-disgusting-fleshy' body are given salvation, as the ignorance, which is the cause of getting constrained to limited existence, is destroyed forever, and they become the Truth itself. They won't come to this world again and wouldn't suffer in action based life again.

Kallap pulak kurambaik kattazhikka vallaanae

'O, the Talented One who knows to unknot the complex body, knit by robbery senses'

The body is made up of senses. They are not quiet by nature. They are the craving stealers. They drag us to the external matters for their own appetite and steal our peace and happiness. Because of their (the five senses) extravagance, the body becomes a bundle of complexity and commotion. Who has the talent to untie 'this body bundle'? God. Author praises this talent of God in this stanza.

Nallirulil nattam payinru aadum naadhanae

'O, The Leader who keeps dancing in the mid dense darkness'

What is this mid dense darkness?

As already mentioned, man has been moving around in three bodies. The one that we use in the waking state

is our sthoola sareera – the physical body. The one we use while dreaming is our sukshuma sareera – the subtle body. The one that is present in our deep sleep state is our kaarana sareera – the causal body. Kaarana sareera is the base of the other two bodies. It is said to be ignorant – it just doesn't have even the presence of ego – the 'aanavam' in this state. There are no dualities here. But, this is not the state of realized beings. The reason is there is no consciousness of 'the Self' or 'the Truth' here. So, this state is compared to pit dense darkness.

Just like these three types of human bodies, the creation too has three types of delusive existence. 1) The physical cosmos – the one that we see and perceive through our physical body, 2) the subtle cosmos – the one that we perceive through our subtle body, and 3) the causal cosmos – the one that is felt in our causal body. The causal cosmos provides substance for all other cosmoses. It is from the causal cosmos – which is pit dark ignorance – that all other cosmoses emerge.

God literally dances on this causal cosmos. God's Nataraja form (of Saivaites) depicts this truth. The whole creation is under His divine foot. He dances placing one feet on the ignorant demon Muyalaka (the causal cosmos), and the other in the infinity. It represents the fact that God is present in His creation and also beyond His creation. The dance posture represents the lively presence of God. The Nataraja form depicts the truth that God 'holds' the elements (fire, sound, air, water and substance) that drive His universe. The cosmoses come into existence, see changes, and get dissolved at God's will. The cycle of creation of the cosmoses, preservation, destruction, hiding of beings and granting of freedom keeps on happening. God's dance, the vibrant blissful presence, the sachidhananda – never seizes.

The author thinks of God's majestic living presence from the root of His creation and praises Him as 'the Leader'.

Thillayul koothanae

'O, The Dancer in Thillai'

Thillai is a town in Tamil Nadu. We already had seen the 'Dance' of God in the previous stanza. The dance posture of God is available in almost all saivites temples in Tamil Nadu. But the author is specific about the 'the Dancer' in Thillai, otherwise known as Chidambaram. There are reasons. For saivites in Tamil Nadu, 'Temple' means the temple of Chidambaram or Thillai. It is a huge temple holding many mysteries. This temple doesn't have any stone idol inside the Moolagraha – this represents the 'space' element of God. We had already seen in 'God is in our land' that there are five saivite temples for five natural elements. Thillai temple is the biggest of all. This temple is directly associated with the life of the author. This is the temple where the author disappeared, without leaving the traces of his physical body.

It was found that Chidambaram is the center of the Universe's Magnetic Field. It is also stated that Lord Nataraja's big toe placed in Pon Ambalam in Thillai temple is the Centre Point of World's Magnetic Equator. To acknowledge this, a two meter tall statue of 'the Dancing Lord of Ecstasy' – Lord Natarajar was placed in CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research. Having known the spiritual and geophysical significance of Thillai 17 centuries ago, the author praises the Dancing Lord in Thillai, with special attention.

Then paandi naattaanae

‘Oh, The Resident of the south Paandi naadu (Southern Tamil Nadu)’

In this verse, the author brings out the spiritual significance of south Paandi Nadu, which is the southern part of the present Tamil Nadu state. We already saw in the previous verse about the geophysical importance of Thillai, which is a town in Tamil Nadu. We have many such temples in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu is the Indian state having the maximum number of temples. The Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple in the city of Madurai, the capital of the then Paandi Naadu, was one of the archeological beauties prescribed in the Seven Wonders of the World contest.

In the history of India, God has been ‘coming down’ in some form to help the spiritual awakening of the human kind. Such incidents took place in plenty in the surroundings of Paandi naadu. Thiruvilayadal Puranam details the divine interventions in the lives of selected beings through 3365 verses. The south India and the whole nation hold such blessed places and beings. God can be perceived by anyone anywhere. But He makes Himself ‘present’ only to the deserving devotees. Such devotees enrich the soil where they dwell in and the soil in turn enriches the beings who dwell in there.

The author brings out the spiritual significance of the south Tamil Nadu through this stanza.

Allal piravi aruppanae

This life is not on bed of roses. It is painful and perturbed from beginning to end. Those who seem to be joyful on material grounds would be facing problems in some other perspective. So, the truth is the worldly life is not blissful – the life of a being becomes stable

and blissful only when it is relieved from the cycle of birth and death. God alone grants this eternal relief – to the deserving souls.

Sri Sankaracharya, in his Atma Bodha, explains about six stages of life.

Asti (the foetus in the womb), jayathe (the babyhood), vardhathe (childhood), viparinamathe (manhood/womanhood), apaksheeyathe (the body starts decaying), vinashyathi (the body passes away). The soul suffers in all these stages. The death may come in any of these stages. That's why the author Maanicka Vaasagar refers this life as the painful one. And he praises God, who alone has the ability to cut off the thread of birth and death cycle. God may grant this relief at any stage of one's life cycle. Thiru Gnaana Sambandhar disappeared at his early sixteen. The author, Maanicka Vaasagar dissolved in the eternity in his 30's. Appar Swamigal got salvation in his 80's.

.....**O enru
sollarku ariyaanaich chollith thiruvadikkeezhch
cholliya paattin porulunardhu solluvaar
selvar sivapurathin ullaar sivanadikkezhp
pallorun aethap panindhu.**

‘Those who praise under the lotus feet of the One who is beyond the reach of words, with the understanding of what they praise, will reach Sivapuram, and will be praised humbly by those who dwell under His divine feet.’

The author tells the ‘nool payan’ of this devotional scripture in these concluding verses. ‘Nool payan’ means the end result of the literature. He admits the fact that God is beyond human comprehension. His greatness cannot be defined through human languages. Whatever

has been told is only a little and that too comes through the blessings of God.

Author says that these verses are uttered under the lotus feet of God. This implies that only those, who are connected to the divinity (divine feet) with utter humility, will be able to praise Him. If one worships God through these verses, with clarity and humility, then one will reach Sivapuram. We had already seen in detail about 'Sivapuram' in an earlier stanza. It simply means that one would become God realized and such a realized being will be adorned by similar beings. They all dwell happily and humbly under the divine feet of God forever and forever.

Thiruchittrambalam

(Salutations to the lotus feet of the Supreme Indweller)

சிவபுராணம்

நமச்சிவாய வாழ்க! நாதன் தாள் வாழ்க!
இமைப் பொழுதும் என் நெஞ்சில் நீங்காதான் தாள் வாழ்க!
கோகழி ஆண்ட குருமணி தன் தாள் வாழ்க!
ஆகமம் ஆகிநின்று அண்ணிப்பான் தாள் வாழ்க!
ஏகன், அநேகன், இறைவன், அடி வாழ்க!

வேகம் கெடுத்து ஆண்ட வேந்தன் அடி வெல்க!
பிறப்பு அறுக்கும் பிஞ்ஞுகன் தன் பெய் கழல்கள் வெல்க!
புறத்தார்க்குச் சேயோன் தன் பூம் கழல்கள் வெல்க!
கரம் குவிவார் உள் மகிழும் கோன் கழல்கள் வெல்க!
சிரம் குவிவார் ஓங்குவிக்கும் சீரோன் கழல் வெல்க!

ஈசன் அடி போற்றி! எந்தை அடி போற்றி!
தேசன் அடி போற்றி! சிவன் சேவடி போற்றி!
நேயத்தே நின்ற நிமலன் அடி போற்றி!
மாயப் பிறப்பு அறுக்கும் மன்னன் அடி போற்றி!
சீர் ஆர் பெருந்துறை நம் தேவன் அடி போற்றி!
ஆராத இன்பம் அருளும் மலை போற்றி!

சிவன், அவன் என் சிந்தையுள் நின்ற அதனால்,
அவன் அருளாலே அவன் தாள் வணங்கி,
சிந்தை மகிழ, சிவபுராணம் தன்னை,
முந்தை வினை முழுதும் ஓய, உரைப்பன் யான்:
கண்ணுதலான், தன் கருணைக் கண் காட்ட, வந்து எய்தி,
எண்ணுதற்கு எட்டா எழில் ஆர் கழல் இறைஞ்சி;

விண் நிறைந்து, மண் நிறைந்து, மிக்காய், விளங்கு ஒளியாய்!
எண் இறந்து, எல்லை இலாதானே! நின் பெரும் சீர்,
பொல்லா வினையேன், புகழும் ஆறு ஒன்று அறியேன்;

புல் ஆகி, பூடு ஆய், புழு ஆய், மரம் ஆகி,
பல் விருகம் ஆகி, பறவை ஆய், பாம்பு ஆகி,
கல் ஆய், மனிதர் ஆய், பேய் ஆய், கணங்கள் ஆய்,
வல் அசுரர் ஆகி, முனிவர் ஆய், தேவர் ஆய்,
செல்லாஅ நின்ற இத் தாவர சங்கமத்துள்,

எல்லாப் பிறப்பும் பிறந்து இளைத்தேன்; எம்பெருமான்!
மெய்யே, உன் பொன் அடிகள் கண்டு, இன்று வீடு உற்றேன்;

உய்ய, என் உள்ளத்துள், ஓங்காரம் ஆய் நின்ற
மெய்யா! விமலா! விடைப் பாகா! வேதங்கள்
“ஐயா” என, ஓங்கி, ஆழ்ந்து, அகன்ற, நுண்ணியனே!

வெய்யாய்! தணியாய்! இயமானன் ஆய் விமலா!
பொய் ஆயின எல்லாம் போய் அகல, வந்தருளி,
மெய்ஞ்ஞானம் ஆகி, மிளிர்கின்ற மெய்ச் சுடரே!
எஞ்ஞானம் இல்லாதேன் இன்பப் பெருமானே!
அஞ்ஞானம் தன்னை அகல்விக்கும் நல் அறிவே!

ஆக்கம், அளவு, இறுதி, இல்லாய்! அனைத்து உலகும்
ஆக்குவாய், காப்பாய், அழிப்பாய், அருள் தருவாய்,
போக்குவாய், என்னைப் புகுவிப்பாய் நின் தொழும்பில்;
நாற்றத்தின் நேரியாய்! சேயாய்! நணியானே!
மாற்றம், மனம், கழிய நின்ற மறையோனே!
கறந்த பால், கன்னலொடு, நெய் கலந்தால் போலச்
சிறந்து, அடியார் சிந்தனையுள் தேன் ஊறிநின்று,
பிறந்த பிறப்பு அறுக்கும் எங்கள் பெருமான்!

நிறங்கள் ஓர் ஐந்து உடையாய்! விண்ணோர்கள் ஏத்த
மறைந்து இருந்தாய், எம்பெருமான்! வல்வினையேன் தன்னை
மறைந்திட மூடிய மாய இருளை,
அறம், பாவம், என்னும் அரும் கயிற்றால் கட்டி,
புறம் தோல் போர்த்து, எங்கும் புழு அழுக்கு மூடி,
மலம் சோரும் ஒன்பது வாயில் குடிவை
மலங்க, புலன் ஐந்தும் வஞ்சனையைச் செய்ய,
விலங்கு மனத்தால், விமலா! உனக்குக்
கலந்த அன்பு ஆகி, கசிந்து உள் உருகும்
நலம் தான் இலாத சிறியேற்கு நல்கி,
நிலம் தன் மேல் வந்தருளி, நீள் கழல்கள் காஅட்டி,
நாயின் கடையாய்க் கிடந்த அடியேற்கு,
தாயின் சிறந்த தயா ஆன தத்துவனே!

மாசு அற்ற சோதி மலர்ந்த மலர்ச் சுடரே!
தேசனே! தேன் ஆர் அமுதே! சிவபுரனே!
பாசம் ஆய் பற்று அறுத்து, பாரிக்கும் ஆரியனே!

நேச அருள் புரிந்து, நெஞ்சில் வஞ்சம் கெட,
 பேராது நின்ற பெரும் கருணைப் பேர் ஆறே!
 ஆரா அமுதே! அளவு இலாப் பெம்மானே!
 ஓராதார் உள்ளத்து ஒளிக்கும் ஒளியானே!
 நீராய் உருக்கி, என் ஆர் உயிர் ஆய் நின்றானே!
 இன்பமும் துன்பமும் இல்லானே! உள்ளானே!
 அன்பருக்கு அன்பனே! யாவையும் ஆய், அல்லையும் ஆம்
 சோதியனே! துன் இருளே! தோன்றாப் பெருமையனே!
 ஆதியனே! அந்தம், நடு, ஆகி, அல்லானே!
 ஈர்த்து என்னை, ஆட்கொண்ட எந்தை பெருமானே!
 கூர்த்த மெய்ஞ்ஞானத்தால் கொண்டு உணர்வார் தம் கருத்தின்
 நோக்கு அரிய நோக்கே! நுணுக்கு அரிய நுண் உணர்வே!
 போக்கும், வரவும், புணர்வும், இலாப் புண்ணியனே!
 காக்கும் எம் காவலனே! காண்பு அரிய பேர் ஒளியே!
 ஆற்று இன்ப வெள்ளமே! அத்தா! மிக்காய்! நின்ற
 தோற்றச் சுடர் ஒளி ஆய், சொல்லாத நுண் உணர்வு ஆய்,
 மாற்றம் ஆம் வையகத்தின் வெவ்வேறே வந்து, அறிவு ஆம்
 தேற்றனே! தேற்றத் தெளிவே! என் சிந்தனையுள்
 ஊற்று ஆன உண் ஆர் அமுதே! உடையானே!

வேற்று விகார விடக்கு உடம்பின் உள் கிடப்ப
 ஆற்றேன்; “எம் ஐயா,” “அரனே! ஓ!” என்று என்று
 போற்றி, புகழ்ந்திருந்து, பொய் கெட்டு, மெய் ஆனார்
 மீட்டு இங்கு வந்து, வினைப் பிறவி சாராமே,
 கள்ளப் புலக் குரம்பை கட்டழிக்க வல்லானே!
 நள் இருளில் நடடம் பயின்று ஆடும் நாதனே!
 தில்லையுள் கூத்தனே! தென்பாண்டி நாட்டானே!
 அல்லல் பிறவி அறுப்பானே! ‘ஓ!’ என்று,
 சொல்லற்கு அரியானைச் சொல்லி, திருவடிக் கீழ்ச்
 சொல்லிய பாட்டின் பொருள் உணர்ந்து சொல்லுவார்
 செல்வர் சிவபுரத்தின் உள்ளார் சிவன் அடிக் கீழ்,
 பல்லோரும் ஏத்தப் பணிந்து.

