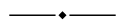
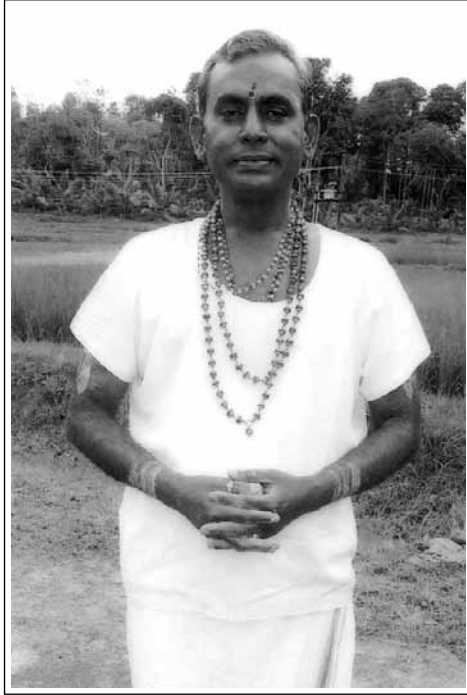


THE HOLY PANCHAKSHARA
AND OTHER WRITINGS OF
SRI-LA-SRI SAKTHEVADIVEL SWAMIGHAL



PART VI



Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal

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AND OTHER WRITINGS OF
SRI-LA-SRI SAKTHEVADIVEL SWAMIGHAL

—♦—
PART VI



Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal

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FOREWORD

It is by the sheer Grace of God and perhaps due to the merits of the store of our good deeds in past births, we have not only been fortunate to have Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal as our Guru Bhagawan but have been complemented by the divine presence of Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal in our midst.

Our Guru is all pervading and has helped us traverse every step in our lives and whatever we have achieved is due to his Blessings and Grace.

We all are aware of the greatness of Pandrimalai Swamighal. He is God incarnate himself. The former editions of the Holy Panchakshara and various other publications contain various notes on his Divinity, Godliness and All Pervasive Force.

It would therefore be appropriate to pay our reverence and respects to his successor, our very own Aasaan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal. He leads by example of being the 'First and Foremost Devotee' of our Guru Bhagawan.

Through heart and soul, body and spirit he oozes the nectar of devotion towards our beloved Guru Bhagawan. Through his eyes he reflects the Supreme light of our Guru, in his breath we can smell his divine fragrance, his lips eternally sing our Guru's praises and his countenance resembles Guru Bhagawan himself.

Through nearly three decades Sakthevadivel Swamighal has held aloft the rich tradition of Pandrimalai Swamighal and kept up the promise. He has guarded and guided, nurtured and nourished each one of his devotees. Each time the devotees are together it is like one large Pandrimalai family.

He has been instrumental in commemorating the greatness of our Guru not only in Pandrimalai - where it all started over a hundred and more years ago - by establishing a temple in his birthplace as part of the centenary celebrations of our Guru Bhagawan but also in spreading the fame of our Guru far and wide.

In 2011, at the time of the Maha Kumbhavishekam at Thandikudi, the temple of our Guru Bhagawan was also successfully consecrated in this holy land where the holy feet of Bala Muruga is imprinted.

Last year the Asharam premises and the meditation hall were fully refurbished to strengthen the construction mainly for the benefit of future generations.

And now, our beloved Swamighal is embarking on the prestigious project at Thiruvanamalai, where alongside the great Saints and Maharishis, our Guru Bhagawan will occupy his rightful place.

Thanks to his perseverance and vision, these milestones have been made possible.

Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal has always been the symbol of humility, fountainhead of love and affection and a pillar of strength to three generations of devotees. It is often said that there is really no difference between the Guru and the disciple. Both love and serve each other. There is no distinction between them and he has demonstrated this amply since 1985 when our beloved Guru Bhagawan anointed him as his worthy successor and attained the lotus feet. The Guru and disciple i.e. himself are two sides of the same coin and merge into one.

The Holy Panchakshara VI, is yet another instance of how he has endeavoured all his life in keeping the tradition of Pandrimalai Swamighal alive. It embodies 23 divine notings vouchsafed by Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal between 1996 to 2012, for the welfare of his devotees. The collection includes passages which have been materialized in divine ink on Lord Krishna, Lord Siva, Lord Bala Muruga, Lord Dakshinamurthy, Gautama Buddha and so on. These articles are indeed a source of spiritual education and enlightenment to mankind.

The seeds of the greatness of His Holiness are being sown for the world to know and experience. The faith will carry on to see more glitter and greater glory! The Light of Pandrimalai Swamighal will shine bigger and brighter!

'Tell me who your friend is, I will tell you what your character is' is an old cliché. Now we can say 'Tell me who your disciple is, I will tell you how great you are'. In this tradition, Swamighals' ardent and illustrious disciple Sri K A Nanjappa has kindly come forward to sponsor the printing of this great work. It is no exaggeration to say that it is devotees like this who are the role models for many others in the spiritual path.

The Tradition lives on... And The Promise continues...

Om Tatsat.

S. Radhakrishnan

2nd December 2014, the twenty eighth Aradhana Day.

THE MEANS TO SALVATION

*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*“Pasonampatim Paapanaasam Paresam
Gajendrasya kruttim vasaanam
Varenyam Jatajootamadhya Spuradgaangadhaarim
Mahaadevamekam Smaraami Smaraami!”*

My repeated prayers are for Lord Pasupati, the wiper-out of Sins and the Supreme Lord. I salute oft that Lord dressed in elephant skin, the Highest of the highest of divinities wearing the radiant Mother Ganges in the midst of His matted locks of hair.

The devotees of Lord Iswara do not have anything to fear. Unstinted devotion to Him is the sole means to salvation. One who surrenders himself totally to the Lord will never be tainted by any sin.

Surrender to the Lord Umamaheswara is the sure recipe for attaining self-realisation. Lord Sankara is to be thought of always in conjunction with Mother Parvati, the glorious daughter of Himavan. By completely throwing ourselves at the Divine Feet of this First Couple, we are sure to get redemption after blissful existence in the world. There can be no lack for one who gives his all to Them without any reservation and hesitation. This is illustrated in the lives of the holy Saiva Acharyas of South India. Tirugnana Sambandar sang in praise of the Lord as the son of God with a sense of filial affection and privilege. Appar showed the path of service while Sundarar the path of friendship. Chastity, poverty and self-surrender are the essential virtues of spiritual life. Chastity means an extreme and limpid purity of soul, virgin to all but God. Poverty refers to an utter stripping of the self, the casting off of immaterial as well as material wealth, a complete detachment from all finite things.

Self-surrender is nothing but abnegation of self-hood that mortification of the will which results in complete humility and indifference to the accidents of life and absolute reliance on God.



*Om Namasivaya
Ashram of Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal
at New No. 9 (Old No. 5) Village Road,
Nungambakkam, Chennai 600034*

These virtues could be seen fully exemplified in the life of Appar.

The name “Appar” by which Saint Tirunavukkarasu is familiarly known came into vogue from the time Sambandar so addressed him endearingly on their first meeting. Sambandar visited many holy places and sang hymns in praise of Lord Siva. On reaching Tirukkadavur he enquired where Appar was. Being told that Appar was at Tiruppoonthuruthi he started for that place to meet the great old saint Appar. Hearing about this, Appar went forward with some devotees to receive Him. Seeing the palanquin of Sambandar, Appar became one of his palanquin bearers without the knowledge of the great child Saint, Sambandar. Sambandar on entering the village enquired, “Where is Appar?” Appar exclaimed from below, “Here am I sharing the honour of bearing your palanquin”. Sambandar immediately got down and fell at the feet of Appar asking “Is it proper that you should do this?”

Appar reciprocating the salutation conveyed to Sambandar his pleasure doing it. Their meeting was like the meeting of two oceans - the ocean of love and the ocean of grace.

*“Satyam braveemi paralokhabitam braveemi
Saaram braveemi upanishadbrudayam
braveemi Samsaaramulbana masaara
mavaapya jantob Saaroyameeswara padaamburuhasyasevaa!”*

The service of the Lord Siva’s Lotus Feet is the only way for the salvation of all. I affirm that it is the Truth, the harbinger of well being leading to the heavenly abode of the Lord. It is the pith of the Vedas and the sum and substance of the Upanishads. It is the sure way to get out of the tentacles of samsara.

One who prays to Lord Siva with total surrender need have no fear. He will never be ruined. The Lord will save him if only his faith never wavers. He will test the purity of mind and the devotion of the devotee very severely too. One who stands the test successfully is sure to be redeemed.

—•—
Article materialised on 18th April 1996, Guru Bhagawan’s Jayanthi Day

MATHA SRI ANNAPOORNA

—•—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*“Nityaanandakaree Varaabhyakaree Saundarya Ratnaakaree
Nirdhootaakhila doshapaavanakaree Pratyaksha Maahesvaree
Pralayaa calavamsapaavanakaree Kaasipuraadheesvaree bhiksham dehi
Krupaavalambanakaree Matha Annapoornesvaree.”*

“Oh! Mother Annapoorna! renderer of the support of compassion, the bestower of eternal happiness, the donor of gifts and protection, the ocean of beauty, the destroyer of all sins and the presiding deity of Kasi, grant us alms.”

Goddess Sri Annapoorna is the presiding deity at Kasi which is also called Varanasi. Special offerings are made to her on the Deepavalli day and distributed to the devotees. Great Aachariyars like Aadhi Sankara and music composers like Muthuswami Dikshitar have sung in praise of Matha Sri Annapoorna. She is adorned with ornaments made up of different kinds of gems. She is the possessor of beautiful and dark braid of hair resembling the flower of the indigo plant. She is the most beautiful bearer of benign breasts, wearing golden-laced dress, the space in between Her breasts shining with the pendant garland of pearls. Her lips resemble the red pearl and bimba fruit. Her ear rings shine like the moon, sun and fire. She is golden complexioned resembling crores and crores of suns and moons. She is the daughter of Daksha and the destroyer of the sacrifice of highly self-centered Daksha. She removes all negative emotions in Her devotees and is the ocean of compassion. Sri Annapoorna is the cause of our comprehension of the purport of the Vedas, Whose basic syllable is “OM”. She is the flame of the lamp of true knowledge and the source of happiness of Her Pathi Lord Sri Visvanatha. She gives happiness to all those who worship Her. She opens the doors of emancipation and destroys the enemies of those who invoke Her blessings. She is the protector of the three worlds and the bestower of the fruits of penance. She is the cause of the three acts of Lord Sambhu namely creation, protection and destruction.

Let us all pray to Matha Sri Annapoorna with single-minded devotion because She fulfills the desires of Her devotees and She is the doer of auspicious acts. Feeding the poor and those who are in need, gladdens Her heart immensely. If not every day, atleast on special occasions like remembrance day, new moon day, full moon day, birthday etc., poor feeding can be done. In every creature like ants, sparrows, crows, dogs, cats and so on, there exists Matha Sri Annapoorna. So one has to offer them every day something that will please the Universal Mother Sri Annapoorna. She is also called Annalakshmi. In the life history of Saint Aadhi Sankara, it has been said that Sri Sankara meticulously followed the rules of a true Brahmachari. As per the convention he used to seek bhiksha every day. On one such day he went to the house of a pious brahmin who was economically very poor. He appealed, “*Bhavati bhiksham debi.*” As the brahmin himself had gone out to get food, his wife came out and was astonished to see a young handsome boy with divine radiance, asking for alms. Tears started rolling down her cheeks as she did not have anything to offer. However, she went in and brought a dry amalaka fruit to offer it to the Brahmachari Saint. Seeing her plight and helplessness due to her utter poverty, Sri Sankara sang Kanakadhara sthotra and propitiated the Goddess of wealth Lakshmi Who showered gold amalakas on that house banishing the poverty of that family forever

“Annapoorne Sadhaapoorne Sankarapraanavallabhe Jnaana vairaghya sidhyartham bhiksam dehicha Paarvathi.”

“Oh! Parvathi! Annapoorna! always full, the dear Consort of Sankara, grant us alms for the sake of securing knowledge and detachment.

“Maathacha Paarvathi Devi Pitha Devo Mahesvaraha Baandhavaah Sivabhakthaascha Svadeso Bhuvanathreyam.”

“Goddess Parvathi is my Mother, Lord Mahesvara is my Father, the devotees of Lord Siva are my relatives and the three worlds are my own country.”

OM TATSAT!

Article materialised on 21st October 1996, Vijayadasami Day

GODHA NAACHIYAAR

(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)

“Namah sakala kalyaanakaarine Karunaatmane Sreevatsa vaksbase tasmai Lakshmeenaaraayanaatmane!”

“I salute Lord Srinivasa, the cause of all auspicious things, full of mercy, having the great Sree vatsa mark on the chest and in manifestation as Lakshminarayana.”

Godha Naachiyar, popularly known as Andal was born at Srivilliputhur. She is regarded as an Avatara of one of the consorts of Lord Srinivasa. As she was found on the earth under a Tulasi plant as an infant by Periyalwar she was named Godha or gift from Mother Earth. Periyalwar took the baby to his childless home and brought her up with tender care and loving devotion.

From her childhood, Godha Naachiyar considered herself to be the bride-designate of Lord Sri Ranganatha. Every day in the innocence and madness of her love for Lord Sri Ranganatha, she used to adorn herself secretly with the garland which her father Periyalwar would prepare for offering to the Lord in the local temple. She would then look at her own image in the mirror and ask herself whether she looked fit to be the bride of the Lord. Afterwards, she would replace the garland in the basket and the father would take it to the temple. One day, Periyalwar saw Godha Naachiyar garlanding herself just when he wanted to go to the temple. He was horrified that she should be guilty of such sacrilege. He threw aside the garland, made a new garland for offering. That night the Lord appeared in his dream and told him that He valued the garland already worn by Godha Naachiyar more than a fresh one because the former had the added fragrance of her unparalleled devotion. From then on Periyalwar offered his garland to Godha Naachiyar before taking it to the temple. She is therefore called ‘Soodikkodutha Suddarkkodi’.

To qualify herself for the companionship of Sri Ranganatha, Godha Naachiyar underwent the hardship of vows and penances, one of which was a thirty day long vow in the month of Maargazhi, called Thiruppavai

Nonbu. Lord Krishna says that among the months He is Maargazhi. So Godha Naachiyar would call her companions together before dawn amidst the peal of the temple bells and the blowing of conches and they would assemble in the temple to sing the glory of the Lord and serve Him. The thirty songs celebrating this divine love called Thiruppavai are amongst the most charming devotional lyrics in Tamil religious literature and are said to contain the essence of the Upanishads. Sri Ramanujachariyar was such a great admirer of Thiruppavai that he came to be called Thiruppavai Jeeyar.

Lord Sri Ranganatha appeared in a vision to Periyalwar and allayed his fears because Periyalwar became anxious on seeing his daughter's God-craziness increasing. Lord Sri Ranganatha assured Periyalwar that He Himself would arrange for her marriage. To the temple priests of Sri Rangam, He ordered that Godha Naachiyar be brought to Sri Rangam with temple honours. Accordingly she was taken in a palanquin to Sri Rangam along with devotees and priests led by Periyalwar. Godha Naachiyar was in ecstasy when she reached the temple in bridal vesture. She stood close to the Lord in the Sanctum Sanctorum for a brief while. Periyalwar had a vision of Her wedding with the Lord. Then Her physical form was dissolved, like the co-mingling of two lights. She became One with the Lord.

“Chittram sirukaale vandunnai saevithun Potramarai Adiyae pottrum porul kaelaayai. Petram maeythunnum kulathil pirandhu Nee kuttraeval yengalaik kollamal pogaadhu; ittrai parai kollvaandru kaann Govinda! Yettraikkum yezhyezh piravikkum Vunthanodu vuttromae aavom Vunakke naam aatsivom mattrainam kamangal maatraelore Empaavaai”.

“Please listen to the purpose of our reaching too early and our worship of Thyself and hailing too with glee Thy own golden lotus-feet! Thou Who hast been born in the caste which grazes cows and then do eat corn, canst not without making us do odd jobs, leave this earth! Govinda, we content not with boons today! Throughout the fourteen births and always will be we serving as kith and kin with joy Thee alone! Do kill rest of our desires! Empaavai!”

OM NAMO NARAYANA!

OM NAMO BHAGAVATHE VASUDEVAYA!

Article materialised on 16th November 1996, Maha Skanda Sashti Day

DAKSHINAMURTI THE UNIVERSAL GURU

(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)

“Upasakanam yad upasaniyam upattavasam vatasakhimule Taddhama dakshinyajusa Svamurtya Jagartu citte mama bodharupam”.

“May that Supreme Spirit that has taken its abode under that banyan tree taking an anthropomorphic form facing south as an act of great condescension and which is the object of meditation for the devotees remain in my mind activating my intellect”.

“Kandavar vindilar, vindavar kandilar”.

“Those who have seen God do not talk about Him. Those who talk about Him have not seen Him.” This may be explained in other words that the eyes which see an object cannot talk about it, while the mouth which talks about the object cannot see it. Therefore to see God and speak about Him authentically a guru is required. It is the guru who removes the film covering our eyes to enable us to see God and who touches our unclean lips with the fire of truth to enable us to talk about God authentically.

Tirumalar says, “Thelivu Guruvin Thirumeni kandal; Thelivu Guruvin Tirunamam seppal; Thelivu Guruvin Tiruvarthai kaettal; Thelivu Guruvuru sindhithal thanae”. “It is enlightenment to see the sacred form of the Guru; It is enlightenment to utter the sacred name of the Guru; It is enlightenment to hear the sacred words of the Guru; It is enlightenment to contemplate the form of the Guru.”

Dakshinamurti, one of the radiant human forms which Lord Siva, the Supreme Spirit takes out of His infinite mercy (dakshinya) to uplift the ripe soul from bondage. Dakshinamurti sits at the foot of a banyan tree surrounded by four disciples. The Guru is young while the disciples are elderly. The Guru teaches by silence. The doubts of the disciples are dispelled. The banyan tree, which outlives several

other living species stands for the eternity (Sat) associated with the Supreme. The devotees who meditate on Him have their consciousness (Cit) illumined and experience bliss (Ananda). Thus Dakshinamurti is none other than Satcitananda. The 'cinmudra' indicates that He is the be-all and end-all of knowledge par excellence. The axe stands for his skill in destroying ignorance. The deer held in His hand is suggestive of His control of the senses as a master Yogin.

“Muditaya mugadhasasinavatamsine Bhasitavalepa-ramaniya murtaye Jagadindrajala-racanapatiyase Mohase namostu vatamulavasine”.

“Obeisance to that Great God dwelling under the banyan tree filled with joy, wearing the digit of the moon as a crest jewel and bearing a form pleasing with the holy ash smeared over it. He is indeed an adept at creating this magic show of this ever enchanting world”. The holy ash smeared over His body is the remnant of the Universe that is destroyed by Lord Siva at the time of the mahapralaya and it is indicative of the impermanence of the phenomenal world. This world is illusory like the product of magic and the causality of this world is to be accounted for in the indeterminable maya grounded in Isvara. He is filled with joy (mudita) that arises from a sense of fulfillment.

“Yaste prasannam anusandadhano Murtim muda mugdhasankamauleh Aisvaryam-ayur labhate ca vidyam Ante cavedanta-maharabasyam”.

“Those who constantly meditate with great exultation on Thy form with a head marked by the digit of the moon will obtain prosperity, longevity of life, true knowledge and ultimately the great secret of the Vedanta”. The Guru is indeed God himself. To those who regard the Guru as God, the grace of Guru verily becomes the grace of God Himself. The Guru is thus God Himself.

OM TATSAT

Article materialised on 21st November 1996, Guru Bhagawan's Aradhana Day

SRI DEVI MAHATHMYAM

(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)

*“Namo Deryai Mahaderyai Sivayai sadatham namaha:
nama prakruthai Bhadrarayai niyadha praanadha smatham.
Raudhrayai namo nithyai Gowrayai Dhathiryai namo namaha:
Jyothsnayai Saendu roopinyai sukhayai sadatham namaha.”*

“Salutation to the Goddess! Salutation to the Goddess, wife of Siva! Salutation to the Creative Energy! Salutation to the Preserving Energy! Controlled in mind we offer our salutations to Thee! Salutation to the Energy of Rudra, the terrible! Salutation to the Eternally Beautiful (Gauri), Who is the Upholder of the Universe! Salutation to the Dawn, the Moon, Bliss!” The supreme deity of the Tantras is known as Sakti, inseparable from Siva. Sakti and Siva are not two but are ultimately one and the same. They are the two modes of manifestation of the external and infinite Brahman, as Purusha and Prakruti. Sakti denotes Brahman and His divine energy, glorifying the mother aspect of God.”

Sakti is the reverse of the concept of Siva who is Sthanu and immovable. In one respect it is the concept of Divine Energy in its static aspect, motionless, inert and without agitation, whereas Sakti is the concept of Divine Energy in its dynamic aspect. Sakti is the personification of the Divine Energy that has brought this universe into existence and that preserves it from disruptive forces. So Sakti is the creative and preservative energy of Brahman.

Siva is the emblem of the destructive forces that lie dormant in the universe. Goddess Sakti is the fullest conception of Brahman in all its aspects, that is, as Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the universe. Sakti is also the power of every God like Indra, Vishnu and so on. She manifests herself as energy in everything and in every being. The universe is the manifestation of Sakti. ‘Sarvam Saktimayam’. A sakta worships Brahman as Sakti or as He appears through the manifestation of His Divine Energy, conceived as Mahasakti or the

fountainhead of all energy. Kali is a form of Mahasakti and Her form is described in Tantric texts especially in the Dhyana mantras. The Mahanirvana Tantra says that She is the great progenitor and the minutest as well as the biggest thing in the universe, pervading both the animate and the inanimate beings. She is cognisant of the entire universe but none in the universe knows Her. She is Kali, Tara, Sodasi, Bhuvaneswari, Dhumavati, Bagala, Bhairavi, Chinna-mastaka, Matangi and Kamala.

The tantras are unanimous in describing Sri Devi as in a state of eternal bliss and playing in the bosom of Siva. Her feet do not rest on anything except the breast of Siva. She resides in the cremation ground, where all the worldly objects are being reduced to ashes that is their seed stage. By Her independent will She begets the universe with all its diversifications and again sucks them to Her breast in the twinkling of an eye. She is black in colour and it means that all contradictions like black and white, cold and heat, possible and impossible, birth and death merge at Her Feet and all distinctions disappear. She has terrible teeth yet She is conferring boons to all. She is open-mouthed and yet is very affectionate to Her children bearing in Her bosom all their belongings, physical, mental and spiritual. She has a laughing attitude yet engrossed in wielding the terrible Spirit of Time. She possesses three eyes with which She can peep through the present, past and future. She is Anandamayee and She appears as Mahasarasvati, Mahalakshmi and Mahesvari to fulfil Her sport of creation, preservation and destruction.

*“Yaa Devi sarvabhoodeshu budhiroopaena samsthitva namastasyae
namastasyae namastasyae namo namaha. Yaa Devi sarvabhoodeshu
sakti roopaena samsthitva namastasyae namastasyae namastasyae namo
namaha. Yaa Devi sarvabhoodeshu shanthi roopaena samsthitva namastasyae
namastasyae namastasyae namo namaha. Yaa Devi sarvabhoodeshu
daya roopaena samsthitva namastasyae namastasyae namastasyae namo
namaha. Yaa Devi sarvabhoodeshu mathru roopaena samsthitva namastasyae
namastasyae namastasyae namo namaha.”*

“She, the Goddess that dwells as buddhi in all beings, Salutation to Her, salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again! She, the Goddess that dwells as power in all beings, Salutation to Her, salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again! She, the Goddess that dwells as peace in all beings, Salutation to Her, salutation to

Her, Salutation to Her, again and again! She, the Goddess that dwells as compassion in all beings, Salutation to Her, salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again! She, the Goddess that dwells as mother in all beings, Salutation to Her, salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again!”

Om Shanthi Shanthi Shanthihi!

—◆—
Article materialised on 18th April 1997

ஸ்ரீ சந்தோஷி மாதா

(எங்கள் சீடர்களின் விருப்பத்திற்கிணங்க என் சீடன் சற்குரு ஸ்ரீலக்ஷ்மி சக்தி வடிவேல் சாமிகளுக்கு அருளப்பெற்றது)

உலகம் யாவும் அன்னையின் அருளாலேயே வாழ்கிறது. அன்னை உலகைக் காக்கப் பல்வேறு திருவுருவங்கள் எடுத்து அருள் புரிகிறாள். மதுரையில் மீனாட்சி எனவும் காஞ்சியில் காமாட்சி எனவும் நாகையில் நீலாயதாட்சி எனவும் திருமயிலையில் கற்பகம் எனவும் திருவையாற்றில் அறம் வளர்த்த நாயகி எனவும் தலங்கள் தோறும் ஒவ்வொரு திருநாமம் பெற்று அடியார்களைப் பேணிக் காத்து வருகிறாள். தேவி சந்தோஷி மாதா என்பவள் அலைமகள், கலைமகள் மற்றும் மலைமகள் ஆகிய மூன்று தேவியரின் அம்சங்களைக் கொண்டு ஐங்கரனுக்குப் பெண்ணாகத் தோன்றியவள். தம்மைத் தொழுபவர்களைச் சந்தோஷ மாக வைக்க வேண்டும் என்ற காரணத்தினால் சந்தோஷி மாதா எனப் பெயரிடப்பட்டாள். சுருக்கமாக இந்த பெருமை மிக்க மாதாவின் வரலாற்றைப் பார்ப்போம்.

ஆவணி மாதம் பெளர்ணமி நன்னாளன்று வட இந்தியா எங்கும் தத்தம் சகோதரர்களுக்கு எல்லா நலன்களும் கிடைக்க வேண்டும் என்று சகோதரிகள் பற்பல அழகிய நிறங்கள் கொண்ட ரட்சைக் கயிறுகளைக் கைகளில் அணிவித்து ரட்சாபந்தன விழாவைக் குதூகலமாகக் கொண்டாடினர். மண்ணுலகில் இந்த விழா கோலாகலமாக நடந்துக் கொண்டிருந்தபோது விண்ணுலகில் விநாயகப் பெருமான் தம் இரு தேவியர்களான சித்தி, புத்தியுடன் அமர்ந்திருந்தார். விநாயகப் பெருமானின் இரு புதல்வர்களான லாபம், ஷேமம் என்பவர்களும் உடன் இருந்தனர். அப்பொழுது நாரதமுனிவர் அங்குச் சென்று மண்ணுலகில் நடைபெறும் ரட்சாபந்தன விழாவைப்பற்றி எடுத்துரைத்தார். அதைக் கேட்ட விநாயகப் பெருமானின் புதல்வர்கள் தங்களுக்கும் ஒரு சகோதரி வேண்டும் என்று சொல்லவே விநாயகப் பெருமான் சித்தி புத்தி என்ற இரு தேவியர்களையும் அன்பாக உற்றுப்பார்க்க அழகே உருவான ஆனந்த மயமான ஒரு சகோதரியை அந்த இரண்டுப் பிள்ளைகளுக்கும் உருவாக்கிக் கொடுத்தார். லட்சுமி, சரஸ்வதி, பார்வதி ஆகிய மூன்று தேவியரின் திரு அம்சங்களைப் பெற்ற இந்த அழகான, ஆனந்தமே உருவானப் பெண்தான் சந்தோஷி மாதா ஆகும். அவள் தம் சகோதரர்களின் விருப்பத்தை நிறைவேற்றும்

வகையில் அழகான ரட்சைக் கயிறுகளைக் கட்டி ஆனந்தத்தில் ஆழ்த்தினாள்.

வெள்ளிக்கிழமையில் தேவி ஸ்ரீ சந்தோஷி மாதா திரு அவதாரம் செய்ததால் வெள்ளிக்கிழமையில் அவளை எண்ணி விரதமிருப்போர் எல்லா நலன்களையும் பெற்று இன்பமாக வாழ வேண்டும் என நாரத முனிவர் வேண்ட அவ்வாறே விநாயகப் பெருமானும் அருள்புரிந்தார்.

ஸ்ரீ சந்தோஷி மாதா விரதம் அனைவருக்கும் எளிமையானதும் பலன் தருவதில் வல்லமை மிக்கதும் ஆகும். அனைவரும் குறிப்பாகப் பெண்கள் இந்த விரதத்தை மேற்கொள்வதால் எல்லா நலன்களும் சித்திக்கும். வறுத்தக்கடலையும், வெல்லமுமே ஸ்ரீ சந்தோஷி மாதா மிகவும் விரும்புவன ஆகும். விரதத்தை மேற்கொள்ளும்போது செய்யுமிடம் மிகவும் அமைதியாகவும் தூய்மையானதாகவும் இருக்க வேண்டும். மேடை ஒன்றை அமைத்து அதன் மீது தேவி சந்தோஷி மாதாவின் படத்தை வைத்துப் பூக்களால் அலங்காரம் செய்ய வேண்டும். குத்து விளக்கினை ஏற்றி தீர்த்தம் நிறைந்த கலசத்தை வைத்து அதற்கு மஞ்சள், குங்குமத்தினால் அலங்காரம் செய்ய வேண்டும். பின்னர் மஞ்சள் பொடியில் சிறிது நீரைச் சேர்த்து பிள்ளையாரைப் பிடித்து வைத்து விக்னேஸ்வரப் பூஜை செய்ய வேண்டும். இதைத் தொடர்ந்து கையில் கொஞ்சம் வறுத்தக்கடலையையும் வெல்லத்தையும் எடுத்துக் கொண்டு, எண்ணிய கார்யம் நிறைவேற வேண்டும் என்று மனதில் திடமான நம்பிக்கையுடன் சங்கல்பம் செய்ய வேண்டும். பிறகு ஸ்ரீ சந்தோஷி மாதாவின் வரலாற்றைப் பக்தியுடன் படித்து மாதாவைப் பற்றியப் பாடல்களைப் பாடி நிவேதனம் செய்து ஆரத்தி எடுக்க வேண்டும். அதன் பின் கலசத் தீர்த்தத்தைப் பூஜைக்கு வந்தவர்களுக்குத் தீர்த்தமாகக் கொடுத்து மீதத்தை வீடு முழுவதும் தெளிக்க வேண்டும். நினைத்தக் காரியம் நிறைவேறும் வரை ஒவ்வொரு வெள்ளிக்கிழமையிலும் மேற்சொன்னவாறு விரதம் அனுஷ்டிக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

விரதத்தைப் பூர்த்தி செய்கின்ற அன்று பூரி, முந்திரிப்பருப்பு பாயசம் வறுத்தக்கடலை வெல்லம் ஆகியவற்றை நைவேத்தியம் செய்து எல்லோருக்கும் பிரசாதங்களைக் கொடுக்க வேண்டும். வீட்டிற்கு எட்டு குழந்தைகளை அழைத்து அவர்களுக்கு உணவு தர வேண்டும். இவர்களில் யாருக்கும் கண்டிப்பாகத் தட்சணை கொடுக்கக்கூடாது. விரதம் ஆரம்பித்து விரதம் முடியும் வரை ஒவ்வொரு வெள்ளிக்கிழமையும் விரதம் இருப்பவர்கள் புளியோ புளிப்புப் பண்டங்களோ கண்டிப்பாகச் சாப்பிடக்கூடாது. அது மட்டும் அல்லாது மற்றவர்களுக்கும் புளிப்புப் பொருள்களைக் கொடுக்கவும்

கூடாது. எவரெவர் முழு நம்பிக்கையுடனும் மனத்தூய்மையுடனும் தேவி ஸ்ரீ சந்தோஷி மாதாவை வழிப்படுகிறார்களோ அவர்கள் அனைவரும் மாதாவின் திருவருளைப் பூரணமாகப் பெற்று சகல செளபாக்யங்களுடனும் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்வர்.

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Article materialised on 5 May 1997, Guru Bhagawan's Jayanthi Day

NAMMALWAR

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(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)

Nammalwar also called Satakopar was born in Alwar Tirunagari in Tirunelveli district on the day of Vaikasi Visakam. His father was a land-lord and his name was Kariyar. Udaya Nangai was the name of Nammalwar's mother. It is generally believed that a veil of ignorance or 'Sata' shrouds human beings even as they touch the earth at birth. But Nammalwar did not have that veil of ignorance. He had unobstructed vision of the truth even from his birth and so he was called Satakopar. The parents were wonder-struck on seeing Nammalwar silent and serene, radiant and absorbed in the Self from infancy onwards. They named him Maran, meaning that he was different from ordinary children. He seldom opened his eyes or spoke to others till he was sixteen years old. He spent most of his time sitting under a tamarind tree in the local shrine of Lord Vishnu at Alwar Tirunagari. His greatness was discovered and made known to the world by Mathura Kavi, a Brahmin saint who was born a few years earlier at Tirukkoyalur not very far from Alwar Tirunagari. He had studied the Vedas and was a gifted Tamil poet. So he was called Mathura Kavi. He went on a pilgrimage and when he was in Ayodhya, he had a vision which directed him to Nammalwar. When he met Nammalwar, he asked him, "If what is subtle is born in the world of mortals, on what will it subsist and how will it live here?" Soon came the reply from Nammalwar, "It will be hidden in the world, subsisting on what chance brings."

Mathura Kavi prostrated himself before Nammalwar and requested him to accept him as his disciple. He poured out his devotion to his Guru in a well-known decade of verses. To Mathura Kavi, devotion to the Guru was even sweeter than the love and worship of the Lord. Nammalwar continued his life of meditation under the tree and lived in a world of his own. He departed from this world when he was only thirty five years old.

Nammalwar expounded in his poems the nature of the soul, the

glory of God, the goal of life, the means of its attainment and the obstacles to be overcome. The absolute is the Supreme Self or the Paramatman, Who is transcendent and at the same time immanent in all beings as their Inner Self and easily accessible to all through His incarnational forms. From contemplation on the bliss of the realization of the indwelling self, Nammalwar leads us to the love of the incarnate beauty of Sri Krishna. The Alwar as the eternal bride is drawn by the captivating beauty of the Avatar and in his songs he pours out his heart's longing to embrace divinity and enjoy the divine through all his senses, highlighting thus the salient features of bridal mysticism. To understand the import of his songs fully, one must have felt that supreme love at least for a fleeting moment.

To Nammalwar, Sri Krishna is everything. "*Yaddinam Hari Sallaapa katbaa peeyoosha varjitam Taddinam durdinam manye Megbasschannam na durdinam!*" According to him, that day which is bereft of conversation about the nectar-like lore of Sri Hari alone should be regarded as a bad day and not a cloudy day. For him, there was only one God and that was Sri Krishna. "*Vaasudevam parityajya Yonyamdevamupaasate Trushitaa Jaahnaveeteere Koopam vaanchanti durbhagaha!*" To him, one who rejected Lord Vasudeva and worshipped other gods, was like that miserable person who desired to drink water from a well to quench his thirst while the holy Ganges flowed beside him.

Nathamuni, a great sage collected the hymns of the Alwars under the title of Naalayira Divya Prabandham. Of the four thousand stanzas, in the collection the third thousand and parts of the fourth thousand are Tiruvaimozhi of Nammalwar. Vedanta Desikar called Tiruvaimozhi 'Dravidopanoshad' while Ramanuja and the Acharyas who came after him wrote elaborate commentaries on Tiruvaimozhi.

Nammalwar is always kept near the Lord because of his complete surrender to the Lord. If the first three Alwars, Paialwar, Bhoodathalwar and Poigaiwar are regarded as the mind of the Sri Vaishnavite tradition, Nammalwar is considered the soul while the rest of the Alwars as the body.

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Article materialised on 19th July 1997, Guru Poornima Day

SARANAGATI

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*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

Saranagati or prapatti to the Lord is the only sovereign means to attain the lotus feet of the Lord. The whole body and mind must be kept attuned to the consciousness that the soul is indestructible and the Lord is the sole refuge. The easiest and shortest way to have the blissful vision of the Lord and attain salvation is in one's total surrender to the Lord and offering sincere prayer to Him leaving everything in His tender and loving care. This is the quintessence of the Geeta carrying the sanction of the Lord.

Yudhishtira fell into a highly despondent mood after the Mahabharata war. He did not want to remain in the kingdom, which was obtained by killing his kith and kin. But ultimately like his brother Arjuna, he surrendered himself with love and total reverence to the will of Lord Sri Krishna. He started doing his kingly duties with his mind on the Lord and with no absolute personal desire.

The two-lettered word "Mama" is the harbinger of death where as the three-lettered word "namama" is the forerunner of Brahmajnana. The thought of "I" and associated feelings should be eschewed and the thought of "Not I" should be entertained and nurtured. In all the individuals, battle goes on between "I" and "Not I", that is between death and Brahman. Real victory is not the victory over the external enemies. We should conquer our inner enemies namely Kama (desire), Krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (attachment), mada (pride) and matsarya (envy). Everyone should sublimate these qualities of the mind and perform deeds with faith in God, unattached to the fruits thereof.

Lord Sri Krishna not only saved the modesty of Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavas but also He helped the Pandavas in all their hours of trial. The Lord knew what was in store for the people of the kali age and how they would find it difficult to have the strength of mind and character to perceive Him by meditation and tapas. Therefore He

prescribed the path of Saranagati or absolute surrender to Him. He laid the path of unadulterated devotion as the surest and easiest means to attain Him. He gave a list of things in nature wherein He is manifest in part and wanted His presence to be recognised in them. He said that He would redeem all whether evil or good if only they trusted Him and sang in praise of Him. The Lord proclaimed His presence in the hearts of all beings and thereby wanted everyone to treat the other as His own form and be virtuous. Those who salute Him wholeheartedly and carry out His advice, will have no rebirth at all.

*“Krishna Krishna Krupaalastvamagateenaam gatirbhava
Samsaaranavamagnaanaam praseeda Purushottama!
Namo Brahmanya devaaya Gobraahmana hitaayacha
Jagaddhitaaya Krishnaaya Govindaaya namonamaha!”*

“Prayers are offered to you, Lord Krishna, the merciful, the Protector of the helpless! Kindly shed your grace on us who are deeply immersed in the ocean of samsara! We salute You, Lord Govinda, the Brahman and the Lord of lords, the Wellwisher and Nourisher of the Universe and the Protector and Benefactor of the innocent like the cows and Brahmins!”

OM TATSAT

Article materialised on 6th September 1997, Vinayaka Chathurti Day

ADITYA, THE LORD OF THE UNIVERSE

*—•—
(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to satisfy the desire of our disciples)*

*“Dhyaayet Sooryamanantakotikiranam tejomayam Bhaskaram
Bhaktaanaam abhayapradam dinakaram jyotirmayam Samkaram Aadityam
Jagadeesamachyutamajam Trailokyachoodamanim Bhaktaabheshtavarapradam
Dinamanim Maartaanda maadyam Subham.”*

“I meditate on Lord Surya of infinite-crored rays of brilliance, permeated with effulgence. I concentrate on Bhaskara who gives protection and shelter to his votaries, who makes the day for all, full of resplendent light, giving all auspicious and blessed things. I contemplate on Aditya, the Lord of the universe, Achyuta not subject to decay, the birthless and bright gem of the three worlds, fulfilling the desires of his devotees granting all boons asked for by them. I salute him of severe scorching rays, the beginning of all, the blessed one.”

Surya Deva is regarded in the puranas as Trimurthi. He is Brahma the creator in the morning, Shiva, the destroyer at noon and Vishnu, the protector in the evening.

*“Udbayam Brahma Swaroopam, Madhyahnetbu Maheswaram,
Asthamanam Swayam Vishnu!”*

Surya is described as a colossal bright red flower throwing his infinite rays in the firmament driving out the dark and disturbing evil. He is the son of sage Kaschyapa. Holding lotus flowers, wearing red clothes and red flower garlands, with a red coloured flame spreading around him, he presents a picture of brightness. He is adorned with jewels and a coat of mail embedded with flawless and sparkling rubies. His consorts Usha and Prathyusha accompany him always. He is the Lord of the Leo constellation. He goes around Meru Parvatham in a mono-wheeled chariot drawn by seven steeds of seven shades. These seven steeds represent seven natural colours namely Violet, Indigo, Blue,

Green, Yellow, Orange and Red. He presides over the planetary system on Sundays.

There are millions of people who worship the Sun; but only a few temples are built for him. Konark temple in Orissa and Suryanarayanar temple in Tamil Nadu are famous among them.

Both Sri Rama and Sri Krishna are said to have worshipped Lord Suryanarayana. Sri Rama chanted Adhitya Hrudayam with devotion and gained strength and prowess to kill Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. Sri Rama won the battle and regained his consort SithaDevi. A curse befell on Samban, one of the sons of Lord Krishna and he was afflicted with leprosy, a dreaded disease.

On the advice of sage Narada he devoted much of his time in penance to get the darshan of Aditya. Aditya, immensely pleased with his devotion appeared before him and cured his disease. As a devotee of SuryaDev, Samban built a temple on the shores of river Chandrabaga. It is the first temple built for Lord Surya. Those who worship Lord Suryanarayana will get long life, sound health, happiness, peace of mind and stable character. Let us all pray to Lord Aditya, the Lord of the universe and get all our wishes fulfilled.

OM ADIDITYA NAMAHA

OM SURYADEVAYA NAMAHA

OM BHASKARAYA NAMAHA

OM DINAKARAYA NAMAHA

OM SIVA SURYA NAMAHA

OM SURYANARAYANAYA NAMAHA

OM GURUMITHRAYA NAMAHA

OM! OM! OM!

—•—
Article materialised on 12th October 1997

KARMA YOGA

—•—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

Salvation is freedom from the bondage of samsara - births and deaths. It is the enjoyment of eternal bliss. It can be had through either intense devotion to the Lord or following the duty cast on him by virtue of his birth or position in society. Doing the duty with a sense of dedication is in itself yoga. The Lord Himself said in the Gita that performing one's appointed tasks devotedly without swerving from the right path is yoga: the karma yogi is the man who understands that the highest ideal is non-resistance and who also knows that this non-resistance is the highest manifestation of power. But he knows too that what is called the resisting of evil is a step on the way towards the manifestation of this highest power namely non-resistance. Before reaching this highest ideal man's duty is to resist evil. Let him work, let him fight, let him strike straight from the shoulder. Then only when he has gained the power to resist, will non-resistance be a virtue.

Swami Vivekananda once met a man who was a very stupid, dull person, who knew nothing and had not the desire to know anything and was living the life of a brute. He asked Swami Vivekananda what he should do to know God, how he was to get free. Swami Vivekananda asked him, "Can you utter a lie?" "No", he replied. Then Vivekananda told him, "You must learn to do so. It is better to utter a lie than to be a brute or a log of wood. You are too dull even to do something wicked."

That was an extreme case, of course and Swami Vivekananda was joking with him. But what was implied was that a man must be active in order to pass through activity to perfect calmness. Inactivity should be avoided by all means. Activity always means resistance. Resist all evils, mental and physical; when you have succeeded in resisting, then calmness will come.

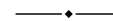
Ambition produces anxiety, whereas if one is free from ambition, one's entire energy is made available. Non-volitional activity is worth

trying. The first step lies in the concept of duty. The yogi does not look with favour upon desire-promoted activity. Activity backed by a profit motive is the key to tension, disaster and disappointment. We start doing something with no ulterior motive. Then with the realisation that we are all linked by a central essence - Truth, Reality, God - we serve one another. Then there is spontaneous activity and there one discovers love. We serve not out of duty but out of love.

At this stage there is still a feeling of “I” and “another”. If we are all cells in the cosmic body of God, then there is no “I”, there is no “you”. It is only one body of God. That is the reality. In the final stage the “I” and “you” have been absorbed in the truth of God and there is neither the actor nor the object to which the action is directed. What remains is pure action. When we reach this stage of pure, non-volitional living, non-volitional action, instantly all problems disappear because the creator of the problem, the ego, has been discovered to be non-existent. The story of Dharmavyadha is an illustration to the point. He was a butcher and earned his livelihood discharging his duties honestly and perfectly. At the same time there was a Brahmin called Kousika well versed in the Vedas. One day a crane passed its excreta on him. He looked angrily at it and it was burnt to ashes. Then he went to a housewife’s home. Though she saw him, she came to attend upon him after some delay. The brahmin became angry at her negligence and looked at her fiercely. The lady told him that her husband had top priority in her mind and she should take care of his needs first. The brahmin’s looks could not burn her as the crane had been by him. She told him that because she followed the duties cast on her as a wife to the letter and spirit, all such powers and siddhis were attained by her. She told him to meet Dharmavyadha and to learn about the intricacies of karma yoga from him. Accordingly the brahmin met Dharmavyadha who was selling meat. He saluted the brahmin saying the housewife must have sent the brahmin who was astonished on hearing this. The brahmin asked him, “How could you know that she had sent me to you? If you are the follower of dharma, why are you killing the voiceless living beings?” Dharmavyadha simply smiled at him and said, “My duty is to sell meat. It is the duty cast on me by birth. I am doing it conscientiously and if I do not do so I am committing a sin.” Though Dharmavyadha was a butcher he attained Brahmajnana by virtue of performance of svadharma with dedication and firmness.

Let us carry out the duties and obligations cast upon us as individuals and as members of the community properly as laid down in the scriptures. The Lord Himself says in the Gita, “Perform your duties as prescribed for you.”

Om Shanthi!



Article materialised on 10th December 1997, Guru Bhagawan’s Aradhana Day

SHAKTI

*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*Jaatavedase suna vaama soma maraatee yato nidahaati Vedaha
Sanah parshadati Durgaani vismaa naaveva sindhumduritaatyagnih
Taamagnivarnaam tapasajvalamteem Vairochaneem karmaphaleshujusthaam
Durgaam Deveem saranamaham prapadye sutarasi tarase Namaha!*

My salutations are to the Devi Who is the Paramatman in swabhava, the life spirit, the incarnation of bliss. I seek refuge in Thee, O Goddess Durga of fiery complexion, beheld by Brahma, the burner of all our foes, the fulfiller of the desires of all your devotees and the guide to ferry us over this ocean of Samsara.

Everything in the whole universe is a manifestation of prana. Prana is hidden in each cell: within each cell is some Shakti - the Atma which performs all kinds of jobs in exactly the same way electricity performs all kinds of jobs. It can create, destroy, make hot things cool and cool things hot. It can illumine lamps, turn a fan, operate a stove or a refrigerator. Basically it is all one Shakti, which can do all these.

The yogi in deep meditation realises that all the powers in the universe are one manifesting itself in infinite ways. When this is understood, traditionally known as 'evils' would disappear. Then everything in the universe appears as the manifestation of this power, Shakti. There is only one Shakti whether it is electricity or magnetism, love or gravitation, attraction or repulsion, war or peace, ghost, water, air or fire etc., Everything is the Shakti which enveloped by Consciousness - Chit Shakti - the ultimate reality.

One day a great king came to Buddha and offered him a flower. Since he was a king coming to pay homage, the flower was made of gold. Is it both gold and a flower? Can it be considered only as a flower and not gold or only as gold and not as a flower? Superficially it seems simple yet it is elusive. Hence it is called illusion. The world is an illusion, not because it is not there, but because it is illusive. The

reality is clothed with unreality. The unreal covers the real exactly as the figures cover the screen in a cinema. Once the projector is switched off, the pure white screen remains. The self, the screen is absolutely and eternally pure - the holy divine substratum of one's self, untouched by sin or suffering. Can the figures be seen on the screen? While the show is in progress we say, "Look what is happening; the screen which was pearly white and beautiful, now has a fire blazing on it. Let us see through that fire and look at the screen." The screen and the fire seem to be one. Brahman and Maya are one; God and illusion are one. Sifting the illusion from the unreality when both are mixed, is the difficulty. To be able to see through the cinema and to perceive the screen is Buddhi Yoga. Here the vision becomes unconditioned and limitless and none of the changes in the movie are seen to be true. It is realised that the Self is, was and will ever be one with the infinite.

According to Vedantic theory one infinite consciousness alone exists and the vibration in this infinite consciousness is what is called the world. The vibration in Shiva becomes Shakti. This Shakti is not a young, beautiful woman nor is it confined to womanhood. Shakti is common to all things in this universe. There is Shakti in all of us whether we are male or female. That Shakti has to manifest to be revealed and realised and that realisation, that manifestation of the omnipresent Shakti is Grace. Awareness of this is called knowledge, with which liberation can be achieved at the end.

OM SHAKTI!

Article materialised on 1st January 1998, New Year Day

NAMA SANKIRTAN

*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

Divine love is the flower of flowers. It is the rarest of all flowers and it is cultivated in the hearts of all devotees. Prema or bhakti is intense love and it is the highest form of devotion to God. It is supreme attachment to the lotus-feet of the Lord. It springs from the bottom of the devotee's heart. In it there is no effort but there is a longing to meet God. The longing is genuine, natural and spontaneous.

Just as a fish cannot live without water, the sunflower without the sun, the chaste wife without her husband, a true devotee cannot live without God even for a moment. Bhakti is of the nature of nectar. It gives freedom to the devotee and makes him fully satisfied. It takes him to the feet of the Lord. Three things occur due to the grace of God and they are human birth, the longing for liberation and the protecting care of a perfected sage.

The man who because of his actions in previous births obtains a human birth and a good intellect is foolish indeed if he does not actualize God in himself. He verily commits suicide when he clings to things which are unreal.

There is no hope of immortality by means of riches. This indeed is the emphatic declaration of the srutis or scriptures which declare,

"Na karmana na prajaya dhanena tyagenaike amrtatva manasub" - "neither by rituals, nor by progeny, nor by riches, but by renunciation alone can one attain immortality."

Mere giving up of objects will not constitute real renunciation. Real sacrifice lies in renouncing egoism, selfishness, anger, pride, desires and cravings.

People despise this Kali Yuga. This is wrong because one can attain God-realisation easily by just singing the names of the Lord - Nama Sankirtan. One does not have to do hard tapas or austerities; mere

constant remembrance will enable the devotee to attain God-realisation. Wherever there is satsanga or holy company, nama sankirtan, bhaktas, swamis and yogis there is Satyam. In all ashrams and holy places, Satyam prevails and Kali cannot enter there at all.

The devotees of Lord Vinayaka may chant, *"Jai Ganesa, Jai Ganesa, Jai Ganesa Paabimaam. Sri Ganesa, Sri Ganesa Sri Ganesa Rakshamaam"*.

For the devotees of Lord Muruga, nama sankirtan may be *"Subramanyam, Subramanyam Shanmukha Natha Subramanyam. Subramanyam, Subramanyam Jai Gurunatha Subramanyam"*.

Lord Vishnu may be worshipped by chanting, *"Harae Rama Harae Rama, Rama Rama Harae Harae. Harae Krishna Harae Krishna, Krishna Krishna Harae Harae."*

The devotees of Shakti and Shiva may chant, *"Amba Parameswari, Akhilandeswari Aadhi Parashakti Paalayamaam. Sri Parameswari Raja Rajeswari Aadhi Parashakti paalayamaam," "Jaya Jaya Sankara, Hara Hara Sankara. Jaya Jaya Sankara, Hara Hara Sankara."*

The power of prayer is indescribable. Its glory is ineffable. Only sincere devotees realise its usefulness and splendour. Prayer should be done with reverence, faith and non-expectation of fruits. It should be done with a heart full of devotion. Oh ignorant man! Do not argue about the efficacy of prayer. You will be deluded. There is no arguing in spiritual matters. Intellect is finite and do not trust such a frail instrument. Remove the darkness of your ignorance now, through the light of prayer.

Article materialised on 27th April 1998, Guru Bhagawan's Jayantbi Day

TIRUMANTIRAM

*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadeivel Swamigbal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

There are six main sects within the Sanatana Dharma known today as Hinduism: they are Saivism, Vaishnavism, Saktham, Ganapathiyam, Sauram and Kaumaram. Saivism was the precursor of the many-faceted religion now termed Hinduism and there was a time when there were no sectarian divisions. Within our Saivite sect which has roughly three hundred million followers there are several denominations or subjects, all following diverse theologies yet united in their unanimous recognition of Lord Siva as the Supreme God. There are six main subjects in Saivism. Of the six subjects, Saiva Siddhanta expounded by Saint Tirumular is the oldest and closest to the Advaita found in the Upanishads and Agamas. A divergent school within Saiva Siddhanta evolved out of the dualistic interpretations made by the philosopher Meykanda Devar in the Sivajnana Bodham and its commentary, Vartika, one thousand and three hundred years after the original postulations of Saint Tirumular were put forth. This school is also known as Saiva Siddhanta. A second subject is known as the Pratyabhijana Saivism of Kashmir, founded by Vasu Gupta and known as Kashmir Saivism. A third Saiva subject is Vira Saivism founded by Basava Deva in Central India commonly called Lingayat Saivism. The fourth is Pasupata founded by Nakulisa and now associated with Gujarat. The fifth is Saiva Siddhanta of North India and its founder is Goraksanath. The sixth Saiva subject is known to have been founded by Sri Kanta in South India.

Tirumantiram is the earliest full statement of Siddhanta, “the end of ends” composed over 2000 years ago. It is perhaps the most complete and profound exposition of the subtle theology of Saiva Siddhanta ever written, so filled with the esoteric and the abstruse that it has not through its long history been read or studied outside of the conclaves of scholars. Within the context of other Saiva scriptures of South India, the Tirumantiram is the tenth of the twelve Tirumurai or “Holy Books”.

“Tiru” in Tamil means “holy” and the other word “mantiram” has two meanings -- general and specific. In the general sense it conveys the meaning of devotional prayer composed in special words, for example Vedic Hymns. In the special sense a mantra is that which is composed of certain letters arranged in a definite sequence of sounds of which the letters are the representative signs. Here a mantra may or may not convey on its face its meaning. Bija or seed mantras such as Aim, Klim, Hrim have no meaning according to the ordinary use of language. Tirumular uses the word “mantra” in both senses. The title he gave his book originally was Mantra Malai or ‘Garland of Mantras’ conveying the sense of a Book of Prayer. Later in subsequent Tantras he elaborately speaks of special mantras for specific deities and special rituals and expounds in full the meaning of the Primal Mantra OM and the five-lettered Siva Mantra - Namasivaya - and the ways of intoning it in different contexts. Literally ‘mantra’ is composed of two syllables, Man (manas) leads to blossoming or liberation of the mind or heart.

Tirumantiram is comprised of nine tantras and a preface. Each tantra covers a different aspect of the Saivite path. The preface commences with an invocation to Lord Vinayaka in the traditional manner and offers an overview of the work. The first tantra begins with a synopsis of all that is to follow in the Saint’s opus. The topics include, transitoriness of body -- also of wealth, youth and life -- not killing, poverty, dharma of rulers, glory of giving. The topics of this initial tantra and of the great work by Saint Tiruvalluvar are indeed similar. The third tantra explores the mystical science of yoga. It is in essence the same as Patanjali’s Astanga Yoga but includes Tirumular’s mystic insights into each aspect of this ancient system drawn from his own experience. It is thus an exposition of yoga as Tirumular conceived it and lived it. Interestingly, these two sages were contemporaries and are said to have lived at Chidambaram at the same time; so it is not surprising that their approach to yoga is similar.

The fourth tantra is a highly esoteric work on mantras and yantras. He explains how to draw certain yantras including the Tiru Ambala Chakram (the “circle of Chidambaram”). The fifth tantra gives a resume of the essential features of the Saivite religion. It ends with a delineation of unorthodox paths, conduct to be avoided and an affirmation of approved margas or religious paths. Some of the areas covered in the sixth tantra are: the Siva Guru, attainment of Grace, renunciation, the signs of sin, penance, jnana and Siva darshan in

people and a description of worthy and unworthy persons.

The seventh tantra discusses the Lingam, Grace and corresponding attainments mudras, control of ida and pingala nadis, worlds reached by different classes of yogis on death and the Sat Guru. The eighth tantra covers many of the important theological elements of Siddhanta and is certainly one of the most inspiring. Among the concepts presented are, the five bodies, the eleven states, the three padarthas (pati, pasu and pasam), the true Siddhanta where knower, known and knowledge become one, the affirmation of Siddhanta and Vedanta as the same. The ninth tantra is a description of the fruits of realization including an account of the attainment of akasa, the state of liberation and the Samadhi of Silence. It contains descriptions of Siva's various dances, the ashram of the Guru and the meeting of the Guru. Thus the Tirumantiram contains in its concentrated and concise verbal gems all the fundamental doctrines of Siddhanta.

OM

SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA
SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA SIVA

—•—
Article materialised on 1st October 1998, Vijaya Dasami Day

14

SRI KRISHNA
THE OCEAN OF PERFECTION

—•—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*“Ekopi Krishnasya krutah pranaamo
Dasaaswamedhaavabruthena tulyaha
Dasaaswamedhee punareti janma,
Krishnapranaamee napunar bhavaaya!”*

Prostrating once before Lord Sri Krishna will bestow the punya accruing to one who performs ten horse sacrifices. But while the performer of the horse sacrifice is born again there is no rebirth at all for one who prostrates before Lord Sri Krishna. That glorious Lord is propitiated by this mantra easily.

Man's special faculty is his freedom to think and make choices. Not understanding the consequences he allows Rajas and Tamas to dominate his thinking. At such times he ignores saints and prophets and even persecutes them. Then Dharma declines and its opposite unrighteousness rises. Evil assumes dangerous proportions when it spreads among rulers and the subjects imitate them. A stage comes when the efforts of virtuous people and sages are unable to stop the downward trend. The Lord then descends to the human plane to restore the balance. Out of the ocean of perfection which is Himself He projects a powerful wave of Sattva. With this Pure Sattva, He makes a body fit for His work. In His own unique manner He re-establishes Dharma. If needed, he destroys the very bodies which evil does use as their basic tools. Sometimes He comes with a few competent companions as assistants and successors. Those who are spiritually blind and morally depraved will not recognise the Lord when He appears. Some will even go against Him. Even Arjuna, a close associate of Lord Sri Krishna for years could not recognize His Divinity till he had the Cosmic Vision.

The arrogance of “I” overtook Arjuna and the Lord wanted to take

out his mind from the mire into which he had fallen and cleanse it. The Lord wanted Arjuna to realise the duty cast upon him. So He asked Arjuna, “Has the delusion brought about by your ignorance been dispelled?”

Arjuna replied, “The delusion of mine is rooted out. I have got back consciousness of the eternal Atmatattva by your kind Grace, Oh! Lord Krishna! I shall carry out your behest.” Lord Sri Krishna granted the essential divine wisdom to Arjuna to perform his duty perfectly. Most of the military leaders with a few exceptions like Bhishma failed to see anything Divine in Sri Krishna.

The destructive urges in them made Rajas and Tamas dominate their mental fields. Indeed all the three modes of nature, including Sattva delude embodied beings and prevent the awareness of the Lord as distinct from them and immutable.

He Himself says, “Among thousands of men, one perhaps strives for perfection. Even among these successful strivers only one perhaps knows Me in essence.”

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

OM NAMO NARAYANAYA

OM NAMO BHAGAVATHE VASUDEVAYA.

—•—
Article materialised on 7th April 1999

LORD SIVA THE ABSOLUTE SELF

—•—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aasaan Sadguru
Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*“Jaya Sarvajagannaadha Jaya Chandravibhooshana Jaya Sailasutaakaanta
Jaya Shaktaparaayana Tvameyva kartaa karanam kaaranam karmacha Prabho
Tatphalam tatpradaataacha tatsaaksheecha niranjanaha!”*

“Hail O the Lord of the Universe and all! Victory to Thee! O Lord of Mother Parvati! Victory to Thee! the Ever-loving patron of devotees! You are the Cause, the Deed, the Causative Power, the Doer and the Did and the Done. You are the Vouchsafer of results for all actions and the Seer unattached to anything.”

Lord Siva is the Absolute Self, Parasivam, the timeless, formless, spaceless Reality beyond the mind, beyond all forms, beyond our subtlest understanding. Parasivam can only be experienced to be known and then it cannot be explained. Lord Siva is pure consciousness, the substratum or Primal Substance of all that exists. He is the Energy within all existence. He is Satchidananda or Truth, Consciousness and Bliss, the Self that flows through all form. Lord Siva is the Primal Soul, Mahesvara, the Original and most perfect Being. He is the Lord of all beings. He created all souls out of Himself and He is ever creating, preserving and destroying forms in an endless Divine Dance. Lord Siva is God the Creator, God the Preserver and God the Destroyer. Lord Siva is all of these, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. These are the final conclusions of Saivism, the Sanatana Dharma.

The Upanishads state it in this way:

He is the one God, the Creator.
He enters into all wombs.
The One Absolute Eternal Existence,
Together with His inscrutable maya,
Appears as the Divine Lord and Personal God
Endowed with manifest forms.

With His Divine Shakti He holds dominion
 Over all the worlds.
 At the time of the Creation
 And Dissolution of the Universe
 He alone exists.
 Our Lord is One without a second.
 With His Divine Shakti
 He reigns over all the worlds.
 Within man He dwells,
 And within all other beings.
 He projects the Universe, He maintains it,
 And He withdraws it into Himself.
 He is the Origin and the Support
 Of all the Gods, He is Lord to all.

When the Scriptures speak of the world or the soul as being eternal, we must understand that it is not any particular part of the world or any single soul that exists forever. Rather it is the existence of that which we call world. When this world ends, worlds and worlds will continue their existence in other parts of this universe. When a great soul merges forever into Siva, there will be other souls working their way through their karma towards moksha. *“Mahadeva Sambho Girisa Trisoolin Trayeedom Samastam Vibhaateeti yasmaath. Sivaadanyathaa daivatam naabhijaane Sivoham Sivoham Sivoham!”* “The whole world is permeated and lighted by you. O Lord Sambho the greatest God with the Trisool in hand. I do not esteem any god other than Lord Siva. I am Siva. I am Siva. I am Siva. Let there be Siva’s energy in me. Let the whole world appear Sivamayam.

OM NAMASIVAYA SIVAYA NAMA OM

—•—
Article materialised on 5th May 1999, at the Chamundi Temple in Coorg

BUILDER OF THE UNIVERSE

—•—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aasaan Sadguru
 Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*Sarvaswaatma swaroopam mukuranagaravat swaswaroopat
 swatantra swacchaswaatma swa bhittou kalayati dharaneetaha
 sivaamtamsadaa yaa Durgadevee mantraveeryam satata samudita
 sabdaraasyaatma Poornaa Hamtaanamtasphurattaa Jayati Jayati
 saa Sankaree Spandasaktibi!*

Victory to Thee! Victory to Thee! Devi! Spanda Sakti! You are the Builder of the Universe spread from the Bhoo-tattwa to Sivattwa. You are the Sakti or Vital Energy in Lord Sadasiva. You animate him. You dynamise him. You are the moving spirit and the mover spirit too. The painted figures of diverse colours in the creation art Thou. You are the wall for their drawing. You draw. You are the drawn. You are Drugdevi or Jnaana Sakti. You are the sound energy, the source for the power of mantras or incantations. The consciousness of ‘I’ in the Absolute Form of Lord Parameswara is You, Yourself. I offer my salutations to your lotus feet, Oh! Sankaree!

Goddess Sakambari, the spouse of Lord Chandrasekhara is Trikala Narayani. Her creator aspect merged in Lord Brahma, while Her preservation aspect Narayani shone resplendently in Mandara Hill as a damsel of pristine and peerless beauty. Her destroyer form made short work of a ferocious demon called Ruru.

*Sarvamangala maangalye Sive Sarvaarthasadbhake
 Saranye Tryambake Devi Naaraayani Namostute!*

Oh! Narayani! I make my obeisance to you, the creator of all auspiciousness, the fulfiller of all desires and the consort of the three-eyed Lord Siva. I surrender to you.

The Universal Mother is always on her dance of Laasya with proclivity to create while at the same time the Universal Father Siva inalienable from her performs his dance for dissolution of the manifest, called Taandava. His three eyes are matched by her two eyes which balance the

destructive fire of the Lord and sustains the eternal dance of creation, with upward, downward, harmonious many-sided motion. She is moolaprakriti or primal energy or the functional aspect of the Supreme power. She is the Creator of the Trinity of gods - Brahma, Vishnu and Siva - to whom She gave Her aspects of Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati. Worship of any of their forms makes one attain Her ultimately.

*Taamagnivarnaam Tapasaajwalanteem Vairochaneem Karmaphaleshu
jushtaam Durgaam Deveem Saranamaham Prapadye Sutarasitarase namaha!*

Oh! Devi! You are shining with the severe form of Agni, the firegod. You are burning away the enemies without exception by your brilliance. Those who desire things get all their desires fulfilled only by worshipping you. You are alongside of Lord Parameswara. Oh! Durga, the destroyer of all bad states, we surrender unto you. We seek your protection. You are the life-boat to ferry us over the Ocean of samsara.

Om Shakti!

—•—
Article materialised on 26th August 1999, Avani Avittam Day

SIDDHARTHA GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA

—•—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aasaan Sadguru
Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*“Dharaabaddha Padmaasanastaam gbri yashtiranniyamyaani
lannyasta naasaagra drushtibi ya aaste kalow yoginaam chakra
vartibi Sa Buddaha Prabuddhostu nischintavartibi!”*

“May Lord Buddha, the emperor among yogins, in padmasana pose, with his eyes riveted on the tip of his nose, enjoying the Supreme bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi bring us all auspiciousness and blessedness!”

On the night of his Bodhi (Enlightenment) Siddhartha Gautama realized the inexorable law, which causes things or events to happen. Out of avidya (ignorance) arise the sanskaras (conformations or predispositions), from the Sanskaras spring Vijnana (consciousness), from vijnana springs nama-rupa (name and form or mind and body), from nama-rupa springs shadayatana (six senses namely eye, ear, nose, tongue, skin and mind), from shadayatana springs sparsa (contact) from sparsa springs vedana (sensation or emotion), from vedana springs trishna (craving) from trishna springs upadana (attachment to existence), from upadana springs bhava (becoming), from bhava springs jati (birth) and from jati springs jara marana (ageing and death). Such is the origin of the worldly suffering. On the other hand by the eradication of ignorance (avidya) the evil tendencies (sanskaras) cease. By the destruction of evil tendencies all consciousness (vijnana) is destroyed. By the destruction of consciousness the notions of mind and body (nama-rupa) are destroyed. By the destruction of notions of mind and body the six senses (shadayatana) are destroyed. By the destruction of the six senses contact (sparsa) is destroyed. By the destruction of contact, emotion (vedana) is destroyed. By the destruction of emotion, craving (trishna) is destroyed, By the destruction of craving attachment (upadana) is destroyed. By the destruction of attachment, becoming (bhava) is destroyed. By the destruction of becoming, birth (jati) is destroyed. By the destruction of birth, ageing and death, pain and

suffering, dejection and despair are destroyed. Such is the cessation of dukkha, that is the whole mass of suffering.

Ignorance is the root of all suffering or dukkha. The redress is in the knowledge, or Vidhya, which can lead to emancipation from the whole mass of suffering that is Nirvana.

The remedy against suffering as revealed to Siddhartha Gautama on the night of enlightenment was presented in the form of four Noble Truths - CHATTVARI ARYASATYANI

These are

- (i) mundane existence is full of misery (dukkha)
- (ii) cravings etc are the causes of mundane existence
- (iii) mundane existence can be terminated by the destruction of cravings etc., and
- (iv) there is a path for destruction of cravings etc. The path is the Eight Fold Way namely,
 - 1) right speech
 - 2) right action
 - 3) right means of livelihood
 - 4) right exertion
 - 5) right mindedness
 - 6) right meditation
 - 7) right resolution and
 - 8) right point of view

The Buddha laid exclusive stress on personal endeavour for escape from suffering and ruled out the prospects of God's grace or Divine Dispensation. He accepted the law of Karma (action) but denied the existence of a Karaka (actor) like the Brahmanic Atman. The "being" which undergoes births and rebirths in the Buddha's doctrine is not the same as the "eternal being" of the Brahmanical doctrine. Everything is transitory and everything is in a flux. Sarvam anithyam Sarvam Sunyam.

Buddhist as well as Brahmanical scholars and seers debated on the Buddha's notions about ultimate reality. The Buddha did not lay down or yield to any dogma. Therefore the only acceptable weapons in this battle of intellect were logic and epistemology.

The Buddhist exponents and commentators can be grouped into four classes:

- 1) the direct realists (Vaibha shika)

- 2) the critical realists (Sautantrika)
- 3) the absolutists (Sunyavadi or Madhyamika) and
- 4) the idealists (Vijnanavadi or Yogachara)

The first two groups upheld the reality of the world while the other two groups rejected such notions. The first two belonged to the tradition called Theravada or Sarvastivada: the other two belonged to the tradition of Mahayana.

The direct realists or Vaibhashikas attributed reality to internal (abahya) and external (bahya) elements on the basis of direct perception (Pratyaksha). For them Nirvana was a reality and a positive concept. Katyayiniputra and Sanghabhadra were the foremost exponents among the Vaibhashikas.

The critical realists or Sautantrikas accepted cognition but attributed reality to external objects on the principle of inference or anumana. For them Nirvana was negative and not a matter of perception. Perception is nullified because the objects are all momentary. Dharmottara, Kumaralabdha and Srilabdha were the principle exponents of Sautantrika.

The absolutists or the Sunyavadis avoided the two extremes of absolute reality and total unreality of phenomena. They chose a middle path in the matter of spiritual discipline like the Buddha who refused to speak on the undetermined issues. Thus they took a relative view of things. All objects were in a way figments of imagination and hence unreal. The ultimate reality (Paramartha sat) was the realization of the illusion of all our standards and values (Sunyata). Attainment of this was Nirvana, which could not be otherwise defined. Nagarjuna, Aryadeva and Asvaghosha were some of the notable Madhyamikas. Chandrakirti and Santideva were equally well known exponents of Madhyamika in later days.

The idealists or Yogachara held that the practice of yoga alone could lead to enlightenment and denied the existence of all objects except the mind or Chitta.

The only reality was cognition or consciousness (Vijnana). Thus they were different from the Madhyamikas to whom all including the mind were unreal. Intellect (jnana) was the Sunyavadis' instrument for enlightenment while for the Vijnanavadis, yoga or meditation was the means. For the Vijnanavadis Nirvana was in

the realization of Vijnaptimatratna, that is mind or chitta anchored to its full awareness and not drawn to the phenomena of the world. Maitreyantha, Asanga, Vasubandhu formed the lineage of Yogachara thought.

Record of these explorations and experiences on the issue of ultimate reality forms a literature unique in the annals of human thought. If one ponders over the three fundamentals of Impermanence (anitya) Sorrow (duhkha) and Non-self (anatman) one's desire for mundane enjoyment will dissolve and lead him to Nirvana or cessation from misery.

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Article materialised on 29th March 2001

THANDIKUDI SRI BALA MURUGAN

—•—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aasaan Sadguru
Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

*“Thandikudi ondu. Thakkore miga ondu.
Thandi gudbitbarula Thanayan Murugundu.
Vendi Avan Arulal Uvandalikkap
Pandrimalai Andavar Anbundu.
Arul Jyothi Malai Kaneer.”*

“Thandikkudi is there. Many worthy people are there. To pass over obstacles Son Murugan is there. Love of the Lord of Pandrimalai is there invoking and bestowing on us His Blessings. See the mountain of Gracious Light”.

A beautiful place called Thandikkudi with a few thousand houses is located amidst big green mountains. In the year 1948, a big divine light of about 15 feet appeared. The light arose in the broad daylight and it shone for three days before it disappeared. The light activated the divine feeling of the residents of Thandikkudi. This Holy Light was responsible for a temple to be constructed later on and also for naming this mountain as Jyothi Malai - Mountain of Divine Light.

The Holy Feet of Lord Muruga are imprinted on the place from where the Holy Light appeared. This Holy Mountain is quite aromatic. There is a story explaining the reason for calling this Holy Place Thandikkudi. Lord Muruga is described as the Lord of Mountains. Saint Agasthiyar who learnt Tamil from Lord Muruga worshipped Lord Siva. Lord Siva gave Saint Agasthiar two small hills called Sivagiri and Sakthigiri. Saint Agasthiar asked his disciple Idumban to carry these two hills graciously gifted by Lord Siva, to Podhigai Mountain.

Idumban respectfully carried out his Guru's wish by having a pole called Brahmthadi with the two heavy hills, one each at either end and carried at the shoulder. On reaching Palani, Idumban kept the pole down to take rest for some time. Lord Muruga Who was enjoying the beauty of Thandikkudi mountain thought that He could make one of

the two hills His abode. So He just jumped and occupied one of the hills. Since then the place from where He jumped is called Thandikkudi.

The devotees of Lord Bala Muruga decided to construct a temple at Thandikkudi. So many sculptors were engaged for this purpose. But some of them fell unconscious with froth coming from their mouths, when they were chiseling certain stones. It was because of a devata called Guruvariyaan on whose path whoever were working with the stones for carving the images of various Deities, faced problems like losing consciousness, feeling giddy and so on. To divert the devata from the path, coconut pulp mixed with sugar was offered to the devata saying, "A temple for Lord Muruga is being constructed; so please change your path". Within a few seconds the mixture of cocunut pulp and sugar disappeared. The person who offered the mixture felt as if someone sucked the mixture with a syringe. From then on none was disturbed and the work of constructing the temple came to a successful end.

A tank for the temple appeared just by touching a rock on this Holy Mountain. Ganapathy, Muruga, peacock, Idumban, Bhairavar, Agasthiyar and Navagrahas are worshipped here. Like in the Palani Dhandayuthapani Swamy temple, in the Thandikkudi temple also poojas are done six times a day.

Thandikkudi means in the mind of every devotee Lord Bala Muruga should reside by jumping into the mind. His divine grace would be showered equally on every one, high and low, rich and poor. The only thing that matters is the intensity of dedicated love towards Him with total surrender.

OM SARAVANABAVAYA NAMAHA.

—◆—
Article materialised on 14th April 2003, at Thandikkudi

19
SRI VARAHI

—◆—
*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aassan Sadguru
Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our devotees)*

*"Hiranyaakshah kshonee mavisadasuro
nakranilayam Samaadaayaamartyaib
Kamalajamukhairambaragataih Stutenaa
namataatman nachiramati bhaatis
mavidhrutaa. Tvayaadamsbraagre
Saavavani rakbilaa kanduka iva!
Bhochorakahara punyamate krodod
druta bhoodeva Hare Krodaakaare
sareera Namobhaktante paripaalayamaam!"*

"I salute the Lord Hari who had taken the form of a boar to re-establish mother Earth in her original position from which she was forcibly taken away and thrown in a lump into the ocean by the giant – thief Hiranyaksha whom the Lord had annihilated in the process. I pray to that lord to protect and rule over me, his devotee!"

*"Geer devateti garudadhwajasundareeti Saakambareeti
Sasisekharavallabheti Srushtishthiti pralayakelishu
Samsthitayaa Tasyainam sribhuvanaika Gurostarunyai"*

"I salute the Universal Mother, the spouse of the preceptor of the three worlds, who shines as the goddess of speech and word at the time of creation, who takes the form of Mahalakshmi, the consort of Lord Vishnu who has Garuda on his flag staff at the time of preservation and who becomes goddess Sakambari, the wife of Lord Sasisekara at the time of dissolution". She is Trikala Narayani. Her creator aspect merged in Lord Brahma. Her preservation aspect Narayani shone resplendently in Mandara Hill as a damsel of pristine and peerless beauty. Her destroyer form made short work of ferocious demons like Rura.

Aadhi Sankara Bhagavadpada established six sects of Hinduism namely Ganapatyam, Kaumaram, Shaktham, Saivam, Vaishnavam and

Sowram. Shaktham is also called Srividhya.

Vidhya means wisdom and education. In the Srividhya Upasana nine forms of Shakti are worshipped. They are called Aavarna Deities; that is they form nine forts and each fort is governed by each of these nine forms of Shakti. These Aavarna Deities are classified into three categories which are

Satwik Deities, (ii) War time Deities and (iii) Malefic Deities

Satwik Deities are Tirupura Sundari, Mahalakshmi, Saraswati, Bhuvaneswari, Raja Mathangi, Raja Rajeswari and others about whom Bhaskaraya has written in detail. War-time Deities include Kali, Durga, Chamundi and Mahishasura Mardhini. Malefic forces like ghosts, devils and other evil spirits are under the control of Sri Parashakti. Apart from all these deities, there is one deity who is quite powerful and pretty close to Sri Parashakti. She is regarded as the direct assistant of Sri Parashakti and that Deity is called Sri Varahi.

Actually there is only one Deity and that is Aadhi Parashakti. But she has many faces with many responsibilities. To fulfil those responsibilities Aavarna Deities are there. Aadhi Parashakti resides in Nava Kona Chakram - a divine structure with nine angles. Sri Varahi is in the sixteenth Prahara, shining like an emerald. The Universal Mother has four main warriors and they are Sampathkari, Aswarooda, Mandhrinyamba and Dhandanadha. Sri Varahi is the Chief of these four main warriors. Sri Varahi is the leader of all war troops and malefic deities. The chariot which Sri Varahi uses is called Girichakra.

Unmatha Bhairavi, Swapnesi, Thirasguru, Giripadha Devi are the assistants of Sri Varahi. Sri Varahi has four pairs of hands, some of which carry weapons like conch, discus etc. The first right hand is of course Abhaya Hastha indicating she protects all those who worship Her. She wears the crescent moon on the left side of Her Head.

Sri Varahi resides on a golden lotus in a mandapam having a hundred golden pillars. She wears yellowish red sarees and precious jewels studded with rare gems. Her beauty cannot be just described with mere words.

Even before the construction of Brahadeewarar temple at Thanjavur, there was a shrine for Sri Varahi who was worshipped by thousands of farmers. By Sri Varahi's grace the farmers became rich and subsequently

they became land owners. In the Holy town of Kasi also there is a separate shrine for Sri Varahi.

Sri Varahi is described to be of three types. One of them is being worshipped right from the Vedic period. The second type of Sri Varahi is one among the seven Kannika Shaktis, worshipped in Shiva temples. The third type is said to be the consort of Sri Varaha Moorthi – one of the incarnations of Mahavishnu.

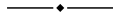
Atharvana Veda has several hymns praising Sri Varahi with respect. The entire system of magic revolves around Sri Varahi. According to Devi Mahatmyam, Sri Alarmel Mangai Thayaar of Tiruchanoor has appointed Sri Varahi as Her troop leader. The name of Sri Varahi is found in the Sahasranamam of Sri Alarmel Mangai Thayaar. This form of Sri Varahi is generally considered for our worship.

Sri Varahi is worshipped in two ways of which one is based on the principles of magic. So this method is kept rather confidential and it is to be learnt only after getting proper initiation from a guru who is well versed in this method, which has special manthra, yantra and tantra as its components. The second method is rather simple. In this method, the devotee has to firmly believe that Sri Varahi is a great Shakthi who is quite powerful to grant all that one wishes in one's life. Every day, let us all worship Her as Shivashakti and get Her Blessings for achieving success.

Sri Varahi Devi Padhukabyo Namaha!

—◆—
Article materialised on 13th September 2003, at Pandrimalai

“WHO AM I?”
SRI BHAGAWAN RAMANA’S
WORDS OF GRACE



(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aassan Sadguru

Sri-La-Sri Sakthevadivel Swamighal to gratify the desire of our disciples)

All living organisms always desire to remain well without sadness; self-love is noticed maximum in all. Well-being is the basis for such desires. One experiences this well being during sleep without any mental awareness. To achieve this well-being self-actualisation is required. Intellectual investigation into “Who am I?” is important for self-actualization.

Body having five sensory organs and organs carrying out five types of functions, or mind with emotional feelings are not self or “I”. Without all these and away from all these, independently functions intellect which is “I”. This intellect is Satchit Ananda or bliss. On detaching from external world, one gets full vision of self. When mind responsible for all sensory and motor functions shrinks, the world disappears. Mind is a great strength of soul. It creates all thoughts. Mind has no meaning without thoughts. So thought is form of mind. Removal of thoughts, makes the world no longer alien. In sleep, thoughts do not exist; the world does not exist. In dreams, world is seen within thoughts. When mind emerges from soul, the world appears. When the world appears, form of self disappears it is vice-versa. Enquiry into form of mind leads to the end of mind. Self is the form of soul. Mind takes gross body as its medium. It is not independent. Mind is regarded as inner form or life.

What emerges as “I” or “Self” is what is considered mind. If investigated, as from where it appears, it becomes known that it is from heart. Heart is the birthplace of mind. Continuous contemplation with regard to “I” takes the person to the very same point from where it starts.

Among the thoughts, which appear in mind, the first one is Self. Later only, other thoughts arise. Therefore Self-enquiry in the form of question “Who am I” controls mind. Thoughts on who I am, in course of time roots out all other thoughts and eventually it also gets totally out. Then vision of full form of self appears.

Pranayama (breath control), meditation, chanting of mantra (Holy syllables), diet control are also methods of controlling mind. But they do not completely ferret out mind. Self-enquiry is to be done to the extent to which mental eye is attached to the external world. As thoughts keep emerging, then and there, they need to be destroyed through self-enquiry. Till one gets inner vision, permanent form of light needs to be captured. As long as enemies exist in a fort, they will keep coming out of it. As and when they come out they need to be destroyed. Then the fort will be captured.

The one who surrenders oneself to form of God, is regarded as a great devotee. The one who dedicates oneself to Lord with thought on one’s Soul and no other thoughts, is a great devotee.

God and Guru show the way for salvation. Actually both of them are not different from each other. Those blessed by Guru are always protected by Guru. Still everybody through one’s own effort should attain salvation as guided by Guru or God. One should actualise oneself through one’s own intellectual eye, not through others. If Ram has to know that He is Ram, is any mirror required?

Just as how instead of collected garbage being removed one’s enquiry on it is useless, without shedding all unnecessary things for self actualization, one’s investigation into properties of those things will be useless. The world is to be treated like a dream.

Well-being is the true form of Soul. Well-being is not associated with any object in the external world. But we think otherwise. When mind comes out it experiences sadness: when it goes inward it experiences bliss. Thus without any rest it wanders in and out. Being quiet enables the individual to attain intellectual vision. Merging mind with form of soul takes place when one is quiet. Detachment is intelligence. Mind should not emotionally involve itself in any object. Intelligence is, not seeing any object. Not seeking an external object is detachment. That is determination. Intelligence is not losing oneself.

Self in bondage, through investigation, getting to know its True Form is Salvation.

OM TATSAT

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Article materialised on 28th October 2003

21

I

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*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aasaan Sadguru
Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

“I” is nameless and formless; but without it nothing can be known. Or, apart from this innate experience there is nothing which is separate. Our entire existence is reliant upon this factor which is indispensable.

The first thought that arises in our consciousness is the sense of “I” which is identified with the body. The mind is a mixture of thoughts and feelings which result in actions and reactions. “I-thought” serves as the substratum of the psyche or the mind. When the awareness of “I” is linked with an object, “I am so and so or such and such” becomes a thought. As stated above Self really has no name. It is the true source of our existence. The more we focus our attention on this sense of “I” the more the mind subsides. Then self knowledge (atma-jnana) is revealed.

The aim of self-enquiry (atma-vichara) is to know that by which everything else is known. If we concentrate on the subject “I” without the slightest interference of any other object including thought that awareness will pull us into the Heart where the pure consciousness shines free of all bondages. When we identify with a physical body it seems real but it disappears when we are in another state, that is sleep. In the state of sleep the dream world presents to us an individual with whom we identify as our self and who interacts with others in a seemingly real world.

Every night when we are in a state of deep sleep there is no awareness of our body or mind. But as soon as we wake up our mind begins to act and we think, “I am this body”. With this association the external world arises spontaneously through the five senses and just like the spider we create our individual world.

The object universe is inadequate and incomplete. In Reality alone there is perfect fullness. The inadequate world can give us only

inadequate experience. From the adequate course alone can we get adequate results. Human being is not body and mind alone. The real nature is Existence - Knowledge - Bliss Absolute. Therefore we can have a real sense of fulfillment in God, the true "I" alone. But as long as one is attached to one's body and mind one cannot escape the world. Wherever one goes even be it a remote cave in the Himalayas the same world will follow. Knowing Self is actually being "I".

Give the world its due recognition. But do not lose sight of Reality in the midst of diverse appearance. Do not expect permanent values from impermanent sources. In all living beings the same Self dwells though encased differently according to the constitution of individual differences. Behold the Self in all. Then the differences in personalities will not hamper amicable relationship.

Sensory perception is faulty. Have right discernment. Discriminate between the real and the unreal. Happiness comes from within, that is from the Self which is an embodiment of happiness. The sense of want will never vanish unless God is realized in the Self. One can be content for some time. But to be content forever is to realize the Self. Nowhere can real happiness be found. Real happiness can only be found through Self Realization. The state of Self Realization alone is ever enduring.

A despondent view of a frustrated person is that the world is nothing. The world is the best school for gaining wisdom and doing selfless service for the purification of one's heart.

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Article materialised on 1st December 2006, Guru Bhagawan's Aradhana Day

ATMA NIVEDHAN

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*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aasaan Sadguru
Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to satisfy the desire of our disciples)*

As food is important for the preservation of the body, love is required to maintain the spiritual balance. When a human being begins to perceive the love of God in all its richness, he or she begins to love one's neighbour with spiritual maturity. This is the love about which all the scriptures speak. Friendship after the flesh is very easily destroyed on some slight pretext since it is not held firm by spiritual awareness. But when a person is spiritually awakened, even if something irritates the person, the bond of love is not dissolved. Rekindling oneself with the warmth of the love of God, the person quickly recovers from the feeling of irritation. The sweetness of Divine Love completely consumes the bitterness of the quarrel.

Love is a triangle. There can be no triangle without its three angles and there can be no true love without its three following characteristics. The first angle or the first characteristic of love is that love knows no bargaining. Wherever there is any seeking for something in return, there cannot be any real love; it becomes mere matter of shop keeping. So long as there is in us any idea of deriving this or that favour from God in return for our respect and allegiance to Him, there can be no true love growing in our hearts. Those who worship God because they wish Him to bestow favours on them are sure not to worship Him if these favours are not forthcoming. The bhaktha loves the Lord because He is lovable; there is no other motive originating or directing this Divine emotion of the true devotee. Love knows no reward. Love is always for love's sake. The bhaktha loves because he or she cannot resist that Divine force which comes from within. When we see some beautiful scenery and fall in love with it, we do not demand anything in the way of favour from the scenery; nor does the scenery demand anything from us. Yet the vision of it brings us a blissful state of mind: it tones down all the friction in one's soul. It makes us calm, almost

raises us, for the time being, beyond our mortal nature and places us in a condition approaching Divine ecstasy. This nature of real love is the first angle of the triangle. Let us not ask anything in return for our love; let our position be always that of the giver. Let us give our love unto God; but not ask anything in return from Him.

The second angle of the triangle of love is that love knows no fear. Those who love God because of fear are the lowest of devotees - not fully developed human beings. They worship God to avoid punishment. To them He is a great being with a whip in one hand and a sceptre in the other. They are afraid that if they do not obey Him they will be whipped. It is a degradation to worship God because of fear of punishment. So long as there is any fear in the heart, how can there be love also? Love conquers all forms of fear naturally. Love and fear are incompatible. God is never to be feared by those who love Him.

The third angle of the triangle of love is that love knows no rival, for in it, is always embodied the love's highest ideal. True love never comes until the object of our love becomes our highest ideal. The highest ideal of every human being is realization of God in oneself. Ignorant or wise, saint or sinner, man or woman, educated or uneducated - to every human being the highest ideal is to perceive God everywhere and in everything. The synthesis of all the highest ideals of beauty, of sublimity and of power gives us the complete conception of the loving and lovable God to Whom let us offer PURE LOVE from the bottom most chamber of our hearts.

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Article materialised on 18th April 2007, Guru Bhagawan's Jayanthi Day

ALL IN THE MIND

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*(Vouchsafed to my Seedan Aasaan Sadguru
Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Sakthevadivel Swamighal
to gratify the desire of our disciples)*

Clouds are brought in by the wind and again driven away by the same agent. Similarly human being's bondage is caused by the mind and liberation is caused by that alone. The Guru is the formless Self within each one of us. He may appear as a body to guide us, but that is only His disguise. The function of the outer *guru* is to awaken the inner *guru* in the heart. The nature of *abhyasa* (spiritual practice) which every human being has to do is the constant search for "I", the source of the ego. The pure "I" is the reality, the Absolute Existence - Consciousness - Bliss. The seeker realizes one's nature by distinguishing the eternal from the transient and never swerves from one's natural state. This is called *jnanabhyasa* (the practice of knowledge). It is the inquiry leading to Self-realization). *Abhyasa* consists of withdrawal within the self every time when one is disturbed by thought. This may sound too simple to feel disappointed that this teaching lacks an inspirational grandeur. It is because the human in its habitual search for complex and sophisticated techniques derives pleasure in various intellectually stimulating strategies rather than in the direct teachings which are profound and unerringly accurate in addressing the root issues of human suffering. Truth is always simple and so it does not require embellishment at all. Guru's Holy Words are always simple, direct and practice oriented. They bypass elaborate theoretical constructs which just mesmerize the intellect. Each individual has to go beyond the intellect by folding it up at its source namely the self.

Talk is like the surging sea; silence is like the surface of still waters. Silence settles down the disturbed mind to its native calmness. Peace is silence, love is silence, and the great Truth is silence. Silence is the cause of all birth. From silence evolves out the varied universe. Silence is the beginning and the end of all things. In the middle state it is all activity, noise turmoil and the mad rush. The resting snake runs

and fidgets about and then rests again. Where the river starts there is perfect stillness, the running water is active and noisy in its course, until it attains calmness again when it meets the ocean. The sleeping bird starts up early morning, flies about from tree to tree; when the evening comes it regains its nest and becomes calm again. From silence all come, to silence all revert. All activities are rounded by silence. Close to the practice of silence is faith. The following episode will convey how powerful faith is:

A man was about to cross the sea from Sri Lanka to India. Vibhishana said to him, "Tie this thing in a corner of your wearing-cloth and you will cross the sea safely. You will be able to walk on the water. But be sure not to examine it, or you will sink." The man was walking easily on the water of the sea - such is the strength of faith - when, having gone part of the way, he thought, "What is this wonderful thing Vibhishana has given me that I can walk on the water?" He untied the knot and found only a leaf with the name of Rama written on it. "Oh, just this!" he thought and instantly he sank.

Abhyasa will have to include love as well. Love is the expression of Truth in life, for Truth is an indwelling substance in all. A loving heart makes a youthful body. A true loving heart helps one to attain knowledge. Humility is the corner-stone of spirituality. To attain God-realization be as a little child. There is no love without humility. Compassion to all beings is the expression of spirituality. Forgiveness is one of the greatest virtues. Bliss belongs to those who restrain their anger and forgive others. Sacrifice opens the flood-gates of God's Grace. Charity earns Divine Grace. A large heart is the outcome of His Grace. Give the wealth of your heart and give your spiritual wealth. Forbearance is an ornament to both men and women. Forbearance is charity, truthfulness and sacrifice. The structure of the whole world has to be based on this edifice.

*"Charanam Tarunendusekharascharanam Mey Girirajakanyakaa
Charanam punareva taa vubbow charanam naanyadupaimi Deivatam!"*

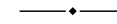
"I seek refuge in Thee, the Lord with the crescent moon in the head and in the Divine Mother, the Daughter of the King of Mountains. I surrender to both of You and seek no shelter from any other deity." Surrender to the Lord ParvathiParameshwarar is the sure recipe for attaining self realization. Lord Siva is thought of always in conjunction

with Mother Parvathi, the Glorious Daughter of Himavan. By completely throwing ourselves at the Divine Feet of this First Couple, we are sure to get redemption after blissful existence in the world. The Lord with His Consort on His left side shall certainly shower His choicest blessings on all who surrender unto Him.

*"Siva Sarvaga Sarva Sarmada pranato Devadayaam kurushva Mey!
Nama Easwara Naadha Dikpatey Punarevesa Namonamostutey!"*

"O Lord Siva existing in everything and all! O Sarva! Sarmada! Begin showering kindness upon me! I salute You my Lord Easwara, the Lord of Directions! I salute You again and again!"

"Nama Parvathi Pathayae! Hara Hara Mahadeva!"



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