

**Śrī Raṅganāthāya Namō Namastē.**

# **LORD RAṄGANĀTHA**

**S. SATYAMURTHI AYYANGAR**

(Retd. Officer, Indian Audit Department  
and

Author of several religious books in English)

## ERRATA

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
li	12	diurna	diurnal
8	8	insert 'in' after 'behold'	
10	10	Principle	principal
15	10	Devine	Divine
18	2	(from bottom) substitute , for full-stop after 'mouth'	
18	2	(from bottom) While	while
19	11	delete the , before 'took'	
19	16	batched	bathed
20	4	(from bottom) food	foot
20	2	(from bottom) Ilayāṙṙkudl	Ilayāṙṙkkuḍl
22	3	(from bottom) stil	still
23	20	insert ! before 'delgn'	
23	11	(from bottom) delete 'ls'; insert 'from' after 'bursting'	
24	15	temples	temple
24	19	insert 'ls' after 'hls'	
26	11	delete, after 'than'	
28	5	herosles	heresles
36	7	Comper	Compas
37	4	Every	every
37	8	in	in
37	23	substitute, for; after 'Älvär'	
39	4	insert ' 'after 'do ?'	
40	5	invisiible	invisible
40	11	(from bottom) upanlsade	upanīṣads
40	6	(from bottom) Calestium	Celestium
47	13	insert " before 'enquires'	

## LORD RAṄGANĀTHA

### INTRODUCTION;

(1) Known as 'Bhuloka Vaikuṅṭham' (Heaven on Earth) Śrīraṅgam, in the heart of Tamil Nāḍu, occupies a unique position among the several pilgrim centres. Tirumaṅkai Āḷwār has likened all the other pilgrim centres to the gardens surrounding the Mansion (Summer house), namely Śrīraṅgam. (ஆராமம் சூழ்ந்த அரங்கம்). The same Āḷwār had constructed the magnificent temple there, vast and spacious, with as many as seven portals, rightly called 'Periya Koil' (Great Temple).

(2) Lord Raṅganātha, enshrined in that temple, is also unique in that, of all the Deities, enshrined in the several temples, He alone is known as 'Periya Perumāḷ'. (Grand Deity). This appellation is appreciated in two ways, namely (1) the Deity, sung by all the Āḷwārs, the anthology of whose laudatory hymns is known as 'Divya Prabandham' and (2) the Deity worshipped by no less than Śrī Rāma (known, in Śrī Vaiṣṇava parlance, as 'perumāḷ') in the long line of Ikṣvāhu Kings. All our Saints, Sages and Preceptors paid homage here and realised God as the final Essence of all Essences.

(3) If only Tonḍaraḍippoḍi Āḷwār, an English rendering of whose hymns has, *Inter alia*, been presented by me, in this volume, had also sung the glory of Lord Veṅkaṭeśvara, enshrined in Thirumalai Hills, there would have been parity between Him and Lord Raṅganātha, insofar as adoration by the Āḷwārs is concerned. But Tonḍaraḍippoḍi was such an ardent votary of Lord Raṅganātha that he could not lift his mind off Him. Let us also enjoy and experience his outpourings in the succeeding pages.

(4) This book also contains my English glossary on the second decaḍ of the seventh centum of Tiruvāymoḷi,

the '*Magnum opus*' of Saint Nammālvār, Chief among the Ālvārs, which pertains wholly to this pilgrim centre. The entire English glossary on Tiruvāymoḷi, with juicy notes, written by me, a marathon work running to 1209 pages, is currently under print in Hoe & Co., Madras.

(5) There is a vast volume of literature on temples and iconology, the lay-out of the temples, the structure of the Gopuras (towers), Vimānas (Sacred domes overhead), Manṭaps, Sanctum Sanctorum, the special featuring of the Icons, deification of Gods and Goddesses, the stationary 'Mula' Vighrahās, the mobile 'Utsava Mūrtis', taken out in ceremonial procession, Conduct of the diurnal worship, during stated periods, the periodic and annual festivals etc. All these are, however, outside the scope of this book, which is primarily intended to focus the reader's attention on the great glory of the Lord, housed in this magnificent temple of unique dimensions. As a matter of fact, temples derive their significance, rather acquire a meaning, only in terms of the Deity they enshrine, as could be seen from the names given to them, as Śrī Raṅganāthaswāmi temple, Śrī Mīnākṣī temple and so on. And now, here is Lord Raṅganātha, none other than the Iconic manifestation of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the very first of its kind, proclaiming its hoary antiquity. (See notes within on 'Śrī Raṅga Vimāna' and 'The final essence of all essences', highlighting the significance and efficacy of Idol-worship.) The laudatory hymns, the gist whereof has been given in this modest volume, are only selective and not exhaustive. Indeed, how can any one exhaust the infinite glory of the great Lord, of which even the most exalted Devas in the higher echelon, could touch but a fringe?

(6) I am beholden to Arulmiku Raṅganāthaswāmi Devasthānam for having kindly undertaken this publication. In all humblity, I take it as the Lord's own gesture.

**S. Satyamurthi Ayyangar.**



LORD RANGANĀTHA

## NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

In this book, Devanagari characters as well as the Tamil alphabet have been transliterated according to the scheme adopted by the international body of orientalists and since then generally acknowledged as the only rational and satisfactory one, ruling out inconsistency, irregularity and redundancy of English spelling.

### I. SANSKRIT (Devanagari) SCRIPT

अ a; आ ā; इ i; ई i; उ u; ऊ ū; ऋ r; ए e;  
ऐ ai; ओ o; औ ou; ँ ṁ; ः ḥ; क k; ख kh;  
ग g; घ gh; ङ ṅ; च c; छ ch; ज j; झ jh;  
ञ ṅ; ट t; ठ th; ड ḍ; ढ ḍh; ण ṇ; त t;  
थ th; द d; ध dh; न n; प p; फ ph; ब b;  
भ bh; म m; य y; र r; ल l; व v; श ś; ष ṣ;  
स s; ह h;

क ka; का kā; कि ki; की kī; कु ku; कू kū;  
के ke; कै kai; को ko; कौ kou; कं k̄; कः kaḥ;  
Likewise, for all other consonants.

Dot below ḥ gives the visarga (:), dot above ṁ gives the anusvara (̄) while the dot below ṇ gives the sound, as in 'gone'.

### II. TAMIL SCRIPT

அ a; ஆ ā; இ i; ஈ i; உ u; ஊ ū; எ e;  
ஏ ē; ஐ ai; ஒ o; ஓ ō; ஔ au; க் k; ன் ṅ;  
ச் c; ஞ் ṅ; ட் t; ண் ṇ; த் t; ந் n; ப் p;  
ம் m; ய் y; ர் r; ல் l; வ் v; ழ் ḷ; ள் ḷ;  
ற் ṛ; ண் ṇ; ஃ k; ஜ் j; ஶ் ś; ஷ் ṣ; ஸ் s;  
ஹ் h; க்ஷ் kṣ;

க ka; கா kā; கி ki; கீ kī; கு ku; கூ kū;  
கெ ke; கே kē; கை kai; கொ ko; கோ kō;  
கௌ kau; க: kah.

Likewise, for all other consonants.

## SRIRANGAM ( THE PREMIER PILGRIM CENTRE )

### 1. Its greatness and grandeur.

Of the 108 'Divya Deśās', the pilgrim centres, lauded by the Ālvār Saints, the territories, *par excellence*, 'Tirunāḍu' (Nityavibhūti or Heaven) and 'Tiruppāṅkaḍal' (Milk-Ocean-Vyūha, the seat of the Lord's creative activity) are altogether on different planes, outside the ken of the sense-buried, earth-bound mortals, which the Ālvārs could, however, envision, right from this abode, with their rare mystic vision, bestowed on them by God Himself. All the other 106 pilgrim centres are spread over this sacred country of ours. Even among these 106 holy places, Srīrangam, also known as 'Bhūloka Valkuṅṭha' (Heaven on Earth), occupies a unique position. As Tirumaṅkal Ālvār puts it, it is the 'Summer House', the central mansion, surrounded by lovely orchards (the other pilgrim centres). There are several historical incidents, nurtured by tradition as well, bringing to the fore, the greatness and grandeur of this beautiful walled-city, with its seven enclosures, well laid out. These are in great evidence, down to this day, as indicated below. The citation, given below, is only illustrative and not exhaustive.

### 2. Godā Devi (Śrī Āṇḍāl) and Lord Raṅganātha

Godā Devi, an incarnation of Śrī Bhū Devi (one of the three Divine consorts of Lord Mahāviṣṇu), was discovered by Śrī Viṣṇucitta (Periyālvār) while digging his Tulasi garden in Srivilliputtur (in Ramanathapuram District of Tamil Nadu), in the same way as King Janaka discovered Sitā. The glorious child, covered with sod, was gathered up lovingly by Viṣṇucitta and reared by him. As Āṇḍāl, the foster-child, grew up, her

love for God also grew up to enormous dimensions. She just detested the idea of marrying a human and, as a matter of fact, she was greatly enamoured of Lord Raṅganātha and could not brook separation from Him, her superb God-Love finding expression in her scintillating hymns of 'Tiruppāval' and 'Nāccivār Tirumōḷi'. To cut a long story short, great indeed was Viṣṇucittā's dilemma, which was, however, solved by Lord Raṅganātha Himself, by proposing to marry her. As ordered by the Divine Sultor, Āṇḍāḷ was decorated and taken, all the way to Srīrangam, in a closed palanquin. When she was led inside the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Temple, she ascended the serpent couch; the Lord pressed her more and more to His side, till she could no longer be seen by the mortal eyes. The spiritual transmutation was thus complete and posterity, down to this day, can feast its eyes on Āṇḍāḷ's worshippable form (Image), in a beautiful shrine, consecrated to her, in the precincts of the famous temple of Lord Raṅganātha, very near the Southern entrance.

### 3. Tiruppāṇāḷvār

Like Āṇḍāḷ, this Saint also came into this world as 'Ayonija' (not born via the ordinary gate of birth, through sexual conjugation). A child was discovered by a harijan, in a flower garden, on the south bank of the sacred Kāveri river, where stands Nichulāpuri, modern Uraiyūr. Though brought up by the harijan foster-father, in his native environments, the child was of a separate class, steeped in devotion to Lord Raṅganātha, singing His glory, all the time, with harp in hand. He dared not enter the holy soil of Srīrangam and, therefore, confined himself to the South bank of the river. Little Pāṇaṇ, as he was known, was one day lost in rapturous singing of the Lord's praise and was, therefore, not conscious of the presence of Loka Śāraṅga Mahāmuni, the high priest of the Temple of Lord Raṅganātha, close by, who had gone there to collect water from the river for the sacramental bath of the Deity. The little harijan bard was jolted into



consciousness, only when the infuriated priest flung a pebble at the former, drawing blood from his body. After poor Pāṇaṇ, a hero of humility, retreated and withdrew himself to a considerable distance, the temple priest performed his daily round of duties and carried the holy pails of water to Lord Raṅgā, with the customary pomp. But alas! when he entered the Sanctum of the temple, he was shocked to find blood on the Lord's person, seated as He was, in the very heart of Pāṇaṇ, as he was singing. The Lord accosted the Priest, conveying His severe displeasure, and commanded him to lift Pāṇaṇ up, on his shoulders, in all reverence and humility, and conduct him to the shrine, in a public procession. The priest did accordingly, incidentally conferring on the young devotee the name of 'Munivāhana' (the one mounted on the shoulder of the Muni, the temple priest). Bathed in the glory of Lord Raṅganātha, Pāṇaṇ's devotion surpassed all limits and broke out into a hymn — 'Amalan — Ādipprān', describing the rapturous charm of the Lord, in front, from feet upwards. Having beheld the Lord, so sweet, the Saint would see none else and so he melted and passed into the Lord, body and soul, no more to be seen by those around. The shrine of Tiruppāṇālvār, located in the temple precincts, is a constant remembrancer of the glory of this Saint.

#### 4. The advent of the 'Śrī Śaileśa Tirumantram'

When Śrī Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuṇi, the last of the grand lineage of 'Pūrvācāryas', in their apostolic succession, was spreading his unique lustre, in and around Srirangam, Lord Raṅganātha beckoned him one day and conveyed to him His desire to hear the soul-stirring Tiruvāymoḷi, expounded by him, from the next day onwards, in the light of Iḍu commentaries, the inspired out-pourings of Ācārya Namplīḷai, faithfully recorded by his disciple, Vaṭakku Tiruvithi Pillai. The discourses were accordingly delivered daily in the spacious maṇṭap of the temple, known as periya (big) maṇṭap. Included in the audience were, of course, Lord Raṅganātha and His

Divine consorts, seated on splendid thrones. This august assembly of unprecedented grandeur was in session for a whole year, uninterruptedly. These discourses, initiated by the Lord Himself, naturally took precedence over all festivals, diurnal, weekly, fortnightly and so on, all of which remained suspended during that year.

The last stanza, in the last decad of the last centum of Tiruvāymolī, had just been expounded by Māmuṅḡal and the further ceremonial proceedings, marking the conclusion of the year-long discourses, were about to be gone through. And then, the great wonder of wonders came off. Lord Raṅganātha, assuming the form of a young boy, pierced through the gathering, in great haste, stood reverently before Māmunī, with joined palms, and recited, in clear accent and resonant voice, the following invocation:

*“Sriśaiḷṣa dayā pātram dhībhaktyāti guḥārṇavam,  
Yatindrapravaṇam vande Ramyajāmātaram Munim”*

and disappeared instantly, leaving the assembly, agape with wonder. This verse, with such a divine back-ground, regarded as a holy mantra, was recorded, then and there, on a palm-leaf and consecrated with turmeric paste. The sacred document was then placed on a platter and kept at the feet of Lord Raṅganātha. The event was celebrated with great eclat and the Mantra *cum* Taṅḷyaṅ (invocatory song), inscribed in the particular venue, can be seen right now. This Śloka has since then been accorded the same stature as ‘Pravaṇa’. Even as the latter is chanted, both while commencing and ending the recital of the Sanskrit Vedas, this śloka is sung as per the wish of the Lord, conveyed to Senai Mudaliyār, His premier chamberlain, in all ‘Divya Deśās’, both at the commencement and at the end of the recital of the ‘Divya Prabandham’ of the Ālvārs. The advent of this sacred taṅḷyaṅ, right from the lotus lips of Lord Raṅganātha, is commemorated through an annual festival, held in the Tamil month Āṇi, on a day, presided by the Star ‘Mūlam’.

There is also a separate shrine of Maṅavāḷa Māmuṅḡal here and his annual Śrādh ceremony is performed by Lord Raṅganātha, the august disciple, with temple honours, on the day of the Master's ascent to heaven.

## 5. Muslim raids and after

Students of history will remember the notorious raids on Hindu temples by the Muslim band of iconoclasts, between the 12th and 16th centuries; Srirāṅgam, being a temple of front rank eminence, was naturally the main target of such raids. Great were indeed the sacrifices, undergone by our illustrious Ācaryas to protect the 'Utsava Mūrti' (Nāmpērumāḷ), the mobile image taken in ceremonial processions, from the marauders. On one occasion, Saint Rāmānuja, proceeded to Delhi to recover the Image, then in possession of the Sultan's favourite daughter. The deity responded to the call of Saint Rāmānuja, who could recover it with ease but not without embarrassing the Sultan's daughter, who had, by then, developed inordinate love for the image. Unable to bear being apart from the Mūrti, the Muslim lady followed Rāmānuja, right up to Srirāṅgam and she too dissolved in the Divine presence like Āṇḍal and Tīruppāḇāḷvār. The strange devotee of Lord Raṅganātha, though belonging to a different faith, has been duly honoured and her shrine can be seen in the North-East corner of the Arjuna Maṅṭap. Her association with Nāmpērumāḷ is commemorated, down to this day, by incorporating in the temple proceedings, some of the Muslim practices and observances *e.g.*, the muslim pattern of cloth (kaili), worn by the Mūrti during 'Tirumañjanam' (the Sacramental bath), adoption of the muslim custom of keeping the offerings (nelvedya) on a sheet of cloth for distribution to the votaries etc.

6. Once a Hindu concubine saved the temple from a raid, contemplated by her paramour, a muslim chieftain. She took the unsuspecting Chieftain, on the sly, to the top of the tallest tower of the temple and coolly pushed him down, from


that dizzy height, to meet certain death. The Devadāsi in question and all others of that tribe were thenceforward conferred special concessions, as long as the institution of Devadāsīs flourished.

7. Of the several meanings, attributable to the word 'Nārāyaṇa', there is one, which refers to the auspicious qualities of His, which become pronounced, once the 'Svātantarya' (unbridled independence) of the Lord gets submerged through the spell cast by the Divine Mother's (Mahālakṣmī's) personal magnetism and the persuasive eloquence of Her pleadings. These are 'Vātsalya'—tender solicitude, 'Svāmitva'—Sovereignty, 'Souśīlya'—loving condescension, 'Soulabhya'—easy accessibility, 'Jñāna'—centre of all knowledge and 'Śakti'—the power of achieving everything, including what might be deemed unattainable by others. Of all these, 'Soulabhya' or 'Easy accessibility' is very important and the 'Archa' or iconic manifestation of the Lord, which enables the devotees to worship a chosen image of the Lord, is obviously the farthest limit of His easy accessibility. Actually, all the aforesaid traits could be discerned in the Lord, enshrined in the Image Form at Srirangam (Namperumāḷ). He holds the divine weapons in hand (indicative of His power), keeping one hand in a posture, suggestive of His asking the worshippers not to fear, that is, not to be scared away by His sovereignty (thus revealing His tender solicitude), the crown on the head (proclaiming His sovereignty), the sweet smiling face, attracting the worshippers (a gesture of His condescension), the feet poised firmly on the lotus seat (leaving, in no doubt, His easy accessibility)—indeed, these constitute our sole refuge. (See aphorisms 136-143 of Lokācārya's Mumukṣuppaḍī — Dvaya prakaraṇa, an English glossary whereof, written by this humble self, was published in the year 1970).

## Sri Raṅga Vimāna

The Āgamās, governing the lay-out and construction of temples, the special featuring of Icons ( Images ), their deification and subsequent worship in all their minute details, are broadly classified as Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva, Viṣṇu theology and Śiva theology running on parallel lines. There are two Vaiṣṇava Āgamās, namely, 'Pāñcarātra' and Vaikānasa. Pāñcarātra is the oldest, all the others being of later origin. It is also known as Bhagavad Śāstra for the reason that Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Brahman, as revealed by Vedānta, is Himself the promulgator of the entire Pāñcarātra and hence it is deemed to be canonical. The authority of the said Pāñcarātra was, however, challenged by the mīmāṃsakas of the Bhaṭṭa and Prabhākara Schools, the Advaitins and the Nayyāyikās. In his 'Āgama Prāmāṇya', Śaṅkara Yāmunaçārya ( Āḷavandār ) has firmly established the authenticity of Pāñcarātra, with exceptional dialectical skill and a wealth of incontrovertible evidence, covering a wide range of problems.

( 2 ) The temples themselves fall under different categories, depending upon the agency by whom they are instituted. These are Svayam vyakta ( self-originated ), Divyam ( installed by Devas ) Saiddham ( Set up by Siddha Puruṣās ) and Mānuṣam ( installed by humans ). It transpires from the dialogue between Lord Śiva and Sage Nārada, embodied in 'Brahmāṇḍa purāṇa', that the very first Iconic manifestation ( Archā Vighra ) of Lord Nārāyaṇa is the Self-originated ( Svayam vyakta ) Idol of Lord Raṅganātha, who emerged, several millions of years ago from the Milk-ocean ( Tirupparāṭal ), along with the 'Raṅga Vimāna' ( the dome overhead ), in response to the four-faced Brahmā's penance, lasting over a thousand years. The 'Nitya Sūris' ( Eternal angels in heaven ), Sages Sanaka, Sanandana, Sunanda, Nandana, the Yakṣās, the Gandharvās etc, were among the first to worship the 'Archā-Mūrti', on His emergence from Kṣīrabdhi ( Milk-ocean ) Brahma and the other exalted Devas and

Sages, assembled on the spot, reverently entered the Praṇvākāra Vimāna, shaped like the Sanskrit (grantha) letter , (a veritable epitome of the entire universe) and feasted their eyes on the exquisite charm of Lord Raṅganātha, reclining on His serpent-bed and Namperumāḷ, the 'Utsava Mūrti', in the company of His Consorts, 'Śrī' and 'Bhū' Devis. It is the Self-Same Vimāna, with its venerable occupants, we have the great good fortune to behold Srīrangam, with our physical eyes, at this distance of time. From 'Brahma loka', the Lord and His Vimāna moved down to this world, attracted by the arduous penance of King Ikṣvāku, the great Ruler on Earth, in whose illustrious lineage, Lord Nārāyaṇa took birth as Rāmā, son of King Daśarathā, in the Treta Yuga of the 28th Cycle of the current Manvantara (epoch), dating back to hoary antiquity (we are now in the Kaliyuga of the same cycle, roughly ten million years after the advent of Rāmā). Lord Raṅganātha was worshipped by the long line of Ikṣvāku Kings but the Lord's wish was that He should ultimately stay in the present spot, in between the two rivers. Therefore it was that Śrī Rāmā presented his 'Kuladhāna' (ancestral property), the Deity, along with the domed mantap, to Vibhīṣaṇa, King of Laṅkā, as a coronation gift.

(3) From Ayodhyā, Vibhīṣaṇa set out on his southward journey to Laṅkā, carrying reverently, on his head, the Raṅga Vimāna (with the Holy occupants) also facing south. According to Vibhīṣaṇa, the destination of his venerable load was Laṅkā but the Lord willed otherwise, in deference to the age-long penance of eminent sages and King Dharmavarman, the then ruler of the Kingdom over here. Vibhīṣaṇa, who deposited the Vimāna, on a spot, near Candrapuṣkaraṇi, facing South, in order to attend to his mid-day oblations, was unable to dislodge it from there. Great indeed was the jubilation of the Sages and King Dharmavarman, who were eagerly looking forward to this august event, since long. On the other hand, one can very

well imagine Vibhiṣaṇā's discomfiture over the privation of such a colossal magnitude. Actually, he was in great hurry to reach Laṅkā, well on time, to celebrate the Ādi Brahmotsava, the annual festival, initiated by Brāhmā and continually celebrated by the Ikṣvāku line of Kings, every year. But Vibhiṣaṇa had to perforce reconcile himself to the inevitable, the paramountcy of the Lord's will. The King of Laṅkā stayed on, in Srīrangam, and celebrated the festival with the help of Dharmavarma, the King. Lord Raṅganātha Himself spoke to Vibhiṣaṇa, expressing His desire to stay in Srīrangam itself, on the bank of the river Kāveri, deemed to be even more sacred than the river Gaṅgā. While bidding Vibhiṣaṇa farewell, the Lord assured him that he would reach heaven, at the end of the current 'Svetavarāha Kalpa'. This, in a nutshell, is the history of Sri Raṅga Vimāna. Ofcourse, volumes can be written expatiating on its greatness and grandeur.

(4) Being the oldest 'Archa' manifestation, it is but appropriate that the worship is also conducted on the basis of the aforesaid Pāñcarātra, the oldest of the Āgamās expounded by Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself. The temple in its present shape and size of enormous dimensions, is the outcome of subsequent extensions and improvements, made by Kings etc., down the years. The major part of this, however, stands to the credit of Tirumāṅkai Āḷvar, the last of the Āḷvars, who put through the grand construction project of *this temple of temples*, braving many odds, with remarkable fortitude and admirable resourcefulness, blest, ofcourse, by the benign Lord Himself, who pulled him out of many a difficult situation, encountered in the process. The lay-out of the temple, with its seven rectangular enclosures, one behind the other, beginning with the immediate enclosure surrounding the *Sanctum Sanctorum* with its sparkling dome, named after Dharma Varma, who built it, is unique. The imposing portals, both inside and outside the temple on all sides, heighten the grandeur of the temple and the surrounding

township There are a good many towers on all sides, but the tallest one is at the eastern entrance with a distinct appeal. A tower, even taller than this, is coming up right at the southern entrance, which, when completed, bids fair to be the tallest in the country. Regarding the efficacy of Idol-worship vis-a-vis the other hypostatic manifestations of God, see the article below entitled, 'The final essence of all essences'.

(5) Tradition has it that Goddess Śrīraṅga Nācciyār, the principle Consort of Lord Raṅganātha (Śrī Raṅgarāja divya mahiṣī) was also responsible for the migration of Lord Raṅganātha, along with the Vimāna of great renown, to where the shrine now stands. She is said to have been staying for many many years, underneath the 'VILVA tree, still seen in the north-east quadrangle of the separate shrine, dedicated to Her, eagerly awaiting Her Lord's arrival. This shows that she was literally the 'Kṣetra Devatā' and the centre was known as Śrīnarmaraṅgam *alias* Śrīraṅgam, even before the advent of Lord Raṅganātha. Festivals are being conducted for Her, almost on the same lines as those of Namperumāḷ (the mobile Utsava Murti) but on different dates, in close proximity to each other. All Her ceremonial processions are, however, within the precincts of Her shrine, whereas the Utsava Mūrti of Lord Raṅganātha (Namperumāḷ) is taken out on ceremonial processions, during the periodic festivals, not only inside the township but also to outlying stations. On a day in the Tamil Month, Paṅkuṇi, presided over by the star Uttiram - உத்திரம், it is customary for Namperumāḷ and Goddess Śrī Raṅga Nāyaki to be seated, side by side, on one and the same throne, at the latter's shrine. There could not have been a more propitious setting than this grand conjunction, a rare event occurring but once a year, for Saint Rāmānujācārya, the redoubted Vaiṣṇava Ācārya (who adorned this abode in the 11th and 12th centuries A D), to pour out his heart, in humble submission, at the feet of the Divine couple and seek their blessings for the universal weal.



Right at the beginning of the 'Saraṇāgathi gadya' (the first of the three prose-pieces, delivered on this occasion), came the gracious response from the Goddess, granting not merely the prayers of the Saint but also vouchsafing salvation, sure and certain, to all those linked with him, generation after generation. It was this boon, granted to the Saint, on this unique occasion, that Śrī Vedānta Dēśikar, the great luminary who came on the religious scene, nearly 150 years later, referred to, with an air of assurance, in Śloka 22 of his 'Nyāsatilaka'. This event is celebrated with great eclat in the shrine of the Goddess, every year on the 'Paṅkuni-Uttiram' day. The day's festival is significantly called 'Periya Tirunāḷ' (Big festival), in view of the bonanza of salvation accrued to posterity, by virtue of its unbroken links with Saint Ramanuja, kept up through the traditionally constituted Guru, in apostolic succession. One feels thrilled with ultra-mundane joy, on listening to the grand recital of 'Gadya traya' of Saint Ramanuja, on this day, by the temple Adhyāpakas, close upon midnight, in a serene atmosphere. And what a feast for the eyes, the Divine couple, majestically seated on the throne in the elevated Mantap - a sight for gods indeed!

### **The final essence of all essences -**

### **Sarvam pūrṇam Sahom**

*(highlighting the significance of the Lord's Iconic manifestation, the Archā - Avatāra)*

On the battlefield at Kurukṣetra, Lord Kṛṣṇa could have jolly well played the simple role of an Army Chaplain, exhorting a malingering soldier to fight, when the bewildered Arjuna sought His advice and guidance. Whereas a dissertation, short and sweet, on the 'Kṣatriya dharma', the duty of a warrior at the Zero hour, would have met the needs of the

occasion, Lord Kṛṣṇa went the whole hog out, restating the central teachings of the Upaniṣads, discharging thereby, His role as the Universal Teacher. The following final directive-cum - assurance of the Lord, the quintessence of His teachings, however, came only at the very end of the 'Song Celestial'.

*"Dedicating all duties and results to  
Me take refuge in Me alone; grieve  
not, I will liberate you from all sins".*

To unbridled egoism, this teaching conveys little; the egoistic perverts would even condemn this as a defeatist mentality, leading to mental vacuity. It is only when they are confronted with exceptions, failures, puzzles, and betrayals, that they would learn to pay homage to the hidden hand, the Supreme Power beyond. The vitality of social mechanism is by - no - means impaired by our sincere submission to the Lord's redemptive grace, saying, 'Tavāsmi - I am yours'. On the other hand, it serves as a corrective to restore the much needed mental balance and enable mankind to find the true perspective more readily than through any other means. Further, it fosters the wholesome spirit of selfless service, marked by internal harmony among all the attendants, eliminating the scope for competition and profit motive from social endeavours and leaving no room for discord, deceit, greed and exploitation, which creep into a competitive world. It behoves us, therefore, to imbibe the quintessence of the Lord's teachings and stick to the path of loving surrender to His sweet, spontaneous grace (prapatti mārga), looking upon Him at once, as the 'Means' and the 'End'.

2. Surrendering at the Lord's feet is perennially wholesome and extremely easy. None is excluded from the scope of 'Saraṇāgati' (Loving surrender unto His Grace) on grounds of ineligibility, as could be seen from the fair cross-section of those who had recourse to it and achieved the intended results - the Pāṇḍavās, Draupathī, Kākāsura (the crow), Kāṣṭhī (the serpent), Vibhiṣaṇa (Rākṣasa),

Lakṣmaṇa (Sīl Rama's brother) and so on. There is also no special imposition or pre-condition, such as purificatory bath etc., Considerations of time, place, environment etc., which usually enter the performance of other tasks, are also completely ruled out. And yet, what matters is from whom you seek salvation through such surrender. Evidently you have to rely on the Supreme One and not the lesser deities. Even in respect of the Supreme Lord, it is His 'Archā' (Iconic) manifestation that is attracted, being not only the most easily accessible but also the very embodiment of the innumerable auspicious traits of the Lord, in a perfect measure. This is brought out by the Vedic text, 'Pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇameva avaśiṣyate. Sarvaṁ Pūrṇam Sahom'. This needs further elaboration and is, therefore, elucidated in the following paragraphs.

3. Confounded by the reference, in the Scriptures, to 'Brahman', the Supreme Lord, as 'Nirguṇa', there is a school of thought, which holds that He is no more than a cold, icy abstract entity, devoid of attributes. This is, however, not valid seeing that every reality must have attributes and 'Brahman' is a reality indeed. What is really meant is that 'Brahman' is devoid of the qualities of 'Prakriti' (nature or unmodified cause, which produces several changes of state), which afflict all else, the 'heya guṇās' or bad qualities, the material limitations and imperfections. The term 'Guna' signifies the three qualities of 'Prakriti' - 'Satva', 'Rajas' and 'Tamas'. What then are the 'Guṇās' possessed by God (The Saguna aspect)? The scriptures specify the six main attributes of the Lord, namely, (i) 'Jñāna', that is, He is the centre of all knowledge; (ii) 'Śakti', the power of achieving everything including what might be deemed unattainable or incompatible by others; (iii) 'Bala', the power of containing everything in Himself; (iv) 'Aśvarya', the power of containing all the Treasures of the entire Universe and keeping them in order; (v) 'Virya', the power of being immutable, that is, with no 'Vikārās' or changes, unaffected [by the created world of

differences and modification evolved by Him and (vi) 'Tejas', the halo by which He holds Himself superior to all else. Saint Nammālvār, looked upon, as the monarch of all the Ālvārs, the love-intoxicated saints, has, right in the opening line of his scintillating hymnal of unparalleled excellence, 'Tiruvāymoḷi', thrown open the flood-gate of his mystic vision of the Lord, as the abode of inexhaustible bliss that cuts out all fatigue, a God, full of compassion and a host of other auspicious traits, the repository of all conceivable excellence, immeasurable and unlimited - the very antithesis of the icy-cold, abstract, formless and colourless God, conceived by others. No doubt, God is shapeless, formless, colourless and nameless too, in His Universal aspect, as the Omni-present, All-pervading and Infinite, the entire Universe constituting His body. He can, however, take upon Himself any form or body, at His volition. He is signified by all names, which signify Him, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly. Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu and Vāsudeva signify Him directly. In fact, the two aspects of 'Nirguṇa', the 'akhaṇḍākāra' or 'Viśvarūpa', and the 'Saguṇa', the personal God of finite form, are mutually complementary and not exclusive.

4. The five-fold Form of manifestation of God, which helps Him to govern His very vast kingdom, is sure to make interesting reading, in this context. 'Sri pāñcarātra' describes the five-fold hypostatic manifestation of the Lord, as 'Para', 'Vyūha', 'Vibhava', 'Antaryāmi' and 'Archāvātara'. 'Paraviḡraha' is the transcendental form in which God manifests Himself in the 'Vaikuṇṭhaloka' (Heaven); 'Vyūhaviḡraha', in His operative forms as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, the seat of activity shifting from the High Heaven (Vaikuṇṭha) to the Milk-ocean (Tiruppāṅkaṭal) 'Vibhava' is the incarnate form, such as Sri Rāma and Sri Kṛṣṇa, the Lord assuming a form of His choice, eminently suited to the purpose of the particular Avātāra (Incarnation), when He freely mingles

with one and all, high and low, and exhibits many a rare quality in super-abundance; 'Antaryāmi Vighraha' is the pervasive form of the Lord, pervading all things and beings, all over, at all times, dwelling in the heart-region of every being, as the Internal Controller; 'Archāvighraha' is the Image Form in Temples and houses of worshippers, in which the Lord is consecrated, the visible, worshippable form which He assumes in accordance with the wishes of His devotees, the very cream of theistic philosophy. The general featuring of the Divine person follows from the most desirable formation of the human form and it should not be lightly brushed aside as idolatrous, fetish loyalty or something anthropomorphic. The mole (Srivatsa) on the winsome chest of Lord Viṣṇu is an exclusive identity mark and this very region is also the reputed abode of Goddess Lakṣmī, the Divine Consort. That Lakṣmī resides in the Lord's heart-region is indeed appropriate to the immense prosperity, which inheres in the protecting Deity. It is only on the strength of Śrī Pāñcārātra', of well-established authenticity, extolling the 'Archa' aspect of the Lord, the 'Saguṇopāsanā', as it is called, that the several holy shrines, extant in Bhārata varṣa (India), have been instituted and God is made visible therein to our fleshy eyes. It was only, in this aspect of God, that the Great Āḷvār Saints, known for their profound Divine Wisdom, imparted to them by the Supreme Lord Himself, shorn of doubts, discrepancies and deviations, did 'Prapatti', that is, took refuge, the 'Archa' being a veritable ocean of innumerable excellences, the *Final Essence of all Essences*.

5. No doubt, the qualities of 'Soulabhya' (easy accessibility), 'Souśīlya' (loving Condescension) and 'Vātsalya' (tender solicitude) are also displayed by the Lord, in His 'Para' or transcendental manifestation, presiding in the High Heavens - 'Vāsudevospūrṇaḥ'. But, in that land of perfect bliss and perpetual splendour, these qualities can hardly be perceptible, in such a marked degree, as they are in this land of darkness, delusion and despair. There is all the

difference between the two spheres, as between a light burning imperceptibly in broad daylight and the one shining forth in a dark room. Like unto the whole Cosmos being confined in an atom, the Supreme Lord not only pervades the Image Form through His all-pervading power but, by virtue of His extra-ordinary attribute of 'Soulabhya' or easy accessibility, He makes it His special abode, according to the worshipper's wish, so as to be within his easy reach. Here, He is the very acme of simplicity, hanging on willy-nilly to the frail mankind and trying to redeem them, at all costs, their indifference notwithstanding. From inside the hollow of the tamarind tree in the temple at Āḷvārtirunagari, Nammāḷvār envisioned the celestials, headed by Śenāpati, coming down, all the way from Heaven to serve Lord Venkaṭeśwara, attracted by His great trait of 'Soulabhya', which they cannot experience in Heaven, in such an ample measure. Actually, the Āḷvār saw the Celestials being swept off their feet by Lord Srinivasa's amazing simplicity and dropping on the ground, unawares, the garlands, set with the colourful, non-decaying flowers of the ultra-mundane region, held in their hands. Lost in admiration of Lord Venkaṭeśwara's grace-galore, His mingling freely with the monkeys and hunters and shedding love profusely even on one of his mean stature, the Āḷvār pined for rendering blemishless service unto the Lord, in every conceivable manner, without intermission.

6. God will cease to be, so far as the sorrowing mankind is concerned, if He was merely the Lord of Heaven, surrounded by Angels (the Nityas and Muktas), unapproachable, unattainable and invisible to the rest. Our concern can and shall be only with a God, nearest, dearest and most patent to our heart and understanding, whose greatness lies not in His might and majesty but in His grace, condescension and easy accessibility. Against this background, it will be readily appreciated that, for us in this abode, all the four anterior hypostatic manifestations of the Lord

are of no avail and we have to draw spiritual nourishment and austenance, only from the Lord's 'Archā' manifestation. The 'Para' or the transcendental form of the Lord is like the waters, surging beyond, on the periphery of the vast Universe; the 'Vyūha' or the operative form is as remote as the milk-ocean; the 'Vibhava' or the incarnate forms of the Lord, like Śrī Rāmā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa are like the swollen rivers whose waters have long ago rolled down to the ocean. The 'Antaryāmi' aspect of the Lord, no doubt, puts Him on very intimate terms with us, as He resides in the region of every one's heart, as the internal Controller, and yet, it is just like ground-water, deep inside the Earth, which can be got at (realised) only by the Yogins, devoutly absorbed in single-minded devotion. The 'Archā' (Idol) alone can, on the other hand, be invoked, at all times, like unto the deep pockets of water, cool and refreshing, in the river beds, the aftermath or legacy of the erstwhile floodwaters. Adepts like Nammāḷvār could, ofcourse, realise through 'Archā', the Lord's visible, worshippable form, all the other four anterior hypostates, as well.

7. In His Iconic manifestation, the Lord achieves what the vociferous Sāstras have failed to secure. No doubt, the Sāstras do impress the need for developing God-consciousness and pursuing the paths of discipline, leading the Subjects to the Lord's lotus-feet, by expatiating on His great glory and decrying, side by side, the dangerous pursuit of sensual pleasures, which will keep them sense-buried. And yet, by dint of their age-long, accumulated tendencies and odours, driven underground, the people have been straying farther and farther away from God, enslaved by the sense-objects. But by exhibiting the bewitching charms of His 'Image' form, the Lord casts an irresistable spell on the hitherto ungodly Subjects, determined to run away from Him. Having enticed them and engendered in them the requisite taste for God-head, He is right there to redeem them, who, with their new-found avidity, cling to Him and seek refuge

in His 'Image' form. In fact, the very purpose of His manifestation in 'Archa' is only to get hold of His errant Subjects, straying away from Him, by some means or the other. And when He gets His catch all right, His gratification knows no bounds. The Lord's stay in the pilgrim centres is not an end in itself but only a means for the reclamation of His Subjects, His ultimate destination being the heart-centre of the spiritually rejuvenated Subjects. Once the destination is reached, the means employed for reaching it get relegated to a place of secondary importance. It is then the turn of a devotee like Peyālvār to request the Lord not to relax His interest in the pilgrim centres, which operate as the spring-board whence the Lord could reach His devotees, His ultimate destination. It is now a case of the Lord loving the pilgrim centres, firstly, as places adored by His devotees and secondly, out of gratitude to those centres for helping Him to reclaim the subjects, by turning them God-ward.

8. There are, however, a good many sceptics and half-hearted believers among us, who have not got implicit faith in the 'Āgamās' relating to Idol-concentration and Idol-worship and look upon idols as a beginner's task, as mere aids to concentration, in the early stages. These persons will do well to study the fore-going paragraphs and grasp the solid truth that the Lord's living presence can be realised, best of all, only in His Iconic manifestation, and in the 'Image' form, all His excellences converge in a perfect measure. A few telling anecdotes are cited below, by way of reinforcing their faith in the efficacy of Idol-worship.

(i) A devotee (temple bard - அரைவர்) always carried about him, his nut-wallet and in it, he had kept a 'Sālagram' Image, as his constant companion. When, by accident, the tiny marble-like Image got mixed up with nut and entered his mouth. While chewing the nut, he would, ofcourse, feel the hardness of the marble, different from the nut. He



would then reverently take it out, wash it in water, dry it with his robe, dress it and taking cymbals in his hand, sing a song of praise from Nammālvār's 'Tiruvāymoḷi' and then lull it to sleep again in his nut-wallet. This confusion often happened with him. A Vaiṣṇava, more of the ritualistic bent of mind than of love to God, who observed this quite often and got enraged at the blasphemy, approached that gentleman, one day, unable to contain himself any longer and asked for a present to him of the desecrated marble-God. The holy property changed hands and the other Vaiṣṇava, took it home and started worshipping it, in all the strict details of ceremonial worship. The image, however, appeared in his dream, on the first night itself, and said:

"Fool! I was happy where I was. I had the felicity of getting bathed in the nectar-like saliva of the bard's holy mouth, holy due to the constant chanting of Saint Nammālvār's hymns. I had also the supreme delight of listening to the sweet canticles from "Divya Prabandham" which he warbled to me now and then. But now, you have deprived me of all this happiness and subjected me to the tedious trials of your formal worship".

Put into great trepidation by this dream, he restored the 'Sālagrām' forthwith, to the former custodian. God is love and love is God; He takes supreme delight in listening to the rapturous outpourings from the love-smitten hearts of His devotees. This anecdote also presents the Lord, in His 'Archā' manifestation, as being highly adorable and easily worshippable.

(ii) The Champaka flower is the favourite of God Jagannātha at Pūri (Orissa State). On one occasion, some princes had a desire to offer these flowers to the Deity. Going to the flower market, they found that the flowers had been sold out, a single flower alone being left. In buying

this solitary flower, there was, therefore, keen competition among them. They bid and bid till one of them staked his entire fortune, bought the flower and offered it to the Lord. That night, God appeared in the Prince's dream and said, "The debt of your flower is very heavy; I cannot bear its weight", thus signifying His gracious acceptance of the sincerely made offering, even beyond His capacity to repay.

(iii) A certain devotee, proficient in singing, came all the way to Srirangam, from the far north, longing to worship Lord Raṅganātha. When he went to the temple, it was the concluding day of a certain festival. Āḷvār Tiruvāraṅgap-perumāl Araiyar, the temple bard, chanted Tirumālai (the hymnal of Tondaraḍippoḍi Āḷvār, of which an English version, also in verses, has been included in this volume) before Lord Raṅganātha, with great feeling and literally coaxed the Lord's pleasure. The Lord was highly pleased with His minstrel and seemed readily inclined to do the latter's bidding. At this ripe moment, the Araiyar ushered in the devout pilgrim from the North, who had covered, on foot, more than two thousand miles and prayed for the Lord's condescension to honour the visitor suitably through a special recognition of his great devotion unto Him. The Lord immediately responded by walking four paces of a rod-length each (Uyyāra naḍai - the entrancing gait of the Lord, for which this pilgrim centre is very famous), in the hands of His holy bearers, from the laurel tree (Punnai) in the cloisters of the temple. Addressing the holy choir, the Lord enquired: "Tell us, you holy Chanters; whether what we have done is adequate recompense for the pains taken by this supplicant of Ours, from the north". (Here then is the traditional anecdote bringing home the truth that, when man ascends to the God's food-stool, God descends to the Soul of man).

(iv) Iḷayārkkudi Nambī, a great devotee of Lord Raṅganātha, would go to the temple at Srirangam, only

during the festivals. He would keep on musing, with great delight, the proceedings of the last festival, till he attended the next festival. With declining age, the nonagenarian could not be present on the opening day of a festival, which the Deity (Namperumāḷ) took special note of and exclaimed, "We doubt very much whether this is at all our festival, when we don't find our beloved Nambi around." When the devotee eventually presented himself on the sixth day of the festival, the Deity felt greatly pleased and enquired, "Nambi! what can we do for you?". Nambi replied, "Sire! this body, endowed by you, has done its job so far, and now its mobility stands impaired". "Well", said the Lord, "if your body has dwindled, better stay with us". Lo! Nambi breathed his last, immediately after the Deity left the temple gate for the ceremonial procession around.

(All these anecdotes are from the Īḍu commentaries on Tiruvāymoḷi, extracted from my English glosary on this grand hymnal, comprising 1102 stanzas.)

## TIRUPPAḶLIYELUCCI

### 'Waking Up The Ever Awake'

By *Tonḍaraḍippoḍi Āḷvār*

Steeped, as we are, in age - long slumber, ignorance *cum* moral stupor, we wake up, at long last, when HIS effulgent Grace descends on us. We then catch up with the bestific vision of the Lord and thereafter it is a state of perpetual awareness and wakefulness - a spiritual *Aurora Borealis*.

‘ பகல்கண்டேன் நாரணனைக் கண்டேன்.’

‘ அன்று நான் பிறந்திலேன், பிறந்த பின் மறந்திலேன்.’

‘ மலரான் மணளைத் துஞ்சும் போதும் விடாது தொடர்  
கொண்டாய்.’

etc. etc.

Not only that, the awakened (enlightened) souls like Saint Vipranārāyaṇa, later known as Tonḍaraḍippoḍi Ālvār or the dust from the feet of the Lord's devotees, go one step further. The Saint, ensnared by the bewitching looks of a sweet damsel, remained sense-buried and was drifting farther and farther away from Godhead. But then, the Lord reclaimed him by revealing to him the unsurpassing charm and enthralling beauty of HIS divine person and made him drink deep of that insatiable nectar. Then opened a new vista, beaming with the resplendence of the Lord's *Divya-mangala Vighraha* and *Divyātma Svarūpa*. The Saint started on his God-bound journey, firstly, by singing His Praises (Vācikaṃ) and, not satisfied with that, he pined for bodily service (Kāyikaṃ) i. e. serving the Lord even in the Archā (Idol) state, in every conceivable manner. He would not, however, take the liberty of rendering such service, at his own sweet will and pleasure. On the other hand, it would gladden his heart if the Lord would command and take service from him. The Lord at Srirangam was, however, reclining on His serpent bed, in a state of 'Yoga Nidhra' and seemed, for all outward appearance, to be a sleep although 'Yoga Nidhra' by itself, is the highest form of activity—the activation of one's own energies. The love-intoxicated Saint, therefore, entreated the Lord to wake up, in ten stanzas, an English version whereof is given below.

**Stanza-1 :**

*The Sun is atop the eastern sky,  
Darkness is gone and here's bright morn;  
The blooming flowers shed honey in plenty;  
The Celestials and the Earthly kings have all come down,  
Striving to take up positions right in front,  
Their elephants scream with joy and the drums beat,  
Reverberating like Waves in the sea-front;  
O Lord at Arāṅkam deign to wake up.*

*Note:—* 1. The cosmic Sun sheds light on exterior objects and dispels outward darkness only but the Sun whom the Saint is waking

up from His Sweet reposs, the Yoga Nidhra, lights up the interior as well, penetrating deep down the inner most recesses of the hearts of the ardent seekers.

2. Everything stands solely related to the Lord. The sun rises daily at His command, the flowers, meant for His worship, blossom forth, shedding copious quantities of honey. The celestials as well as the earthly kings vie with each other to be the earliest recipients of the glances beaming forth from the Lord, as He wakes up

**Stanza-2 :**

*From the lovely jasmine creeper comes  
The fragrance conveyed by the easterly breeze ;  
The swans have got up from their flowery bed,  
Fluttering their dew-drenched wings ;  
The elephant (Gajendra) in great distress, you rescued  
From (a) crocodile's spacious jaws and vicious white fangs,  
O Lord at Araṅkam! pray get up from bed.*

*Note:—* When the earthly swans have got up from bed, should the Lord, who appeared as a Swan when He disseminated the Vedas, lag behind and stil be in bed ?

**Stanza-3 :**

*The Sun's rays have spread all round,  
The clustered stars have faded out,  
The bright cool moon has also dimmed ; }  
Darkness is gone and does the morning breeze waft,  
From green groves, the aroma is bursting arecanut shoot ;  
O Lord at Araṅkam, holding in your hand, exquisite,  
The discus radiant and imposing! pray wake up.*

*Note:—* With the rising of the Sun, not only the darksome night has lost its grip, in toto, but the other celestial bodies, the Moon and the Stars have also faded out. In dire contrast, here is the effulgent discus in the Lord's charming hand and it is indeed bewitching to behold the Lord gripping it. Need it be said that the radiance of the discus is infinitely richer in its volume and content than that of the physical Sun, insofar as it liberates us even from the dark clutches of the unruly senses ?

**Stanza-4 :**

*The sweet strains from the young and winsome cowherd's flute,  
Mingled with the tinkling of bells tied to grazing bulls,  
Echo far and wide; in the fields, humming bees are on thier beat;  
Supreme among the celestials, You, with your bow beautiful,  
Routed, root and branch, the Rākṣasās of Laṅkā  
And helped Sage Viśvāmitrā through his Yāgā ;*

**Stanza-5 :**

*Invincible ruler of Ayodhya, now reclining at Araṅkam!  
prayer wake up.  
The birds are chirping in the flower garden;  
Night is gone and the day has set in;  
The roaring noise of the eastern sea has grown;  
To pay obeisance to You, the Devas have come down  
With multi-coloured garlands, the honey bee's gay resort.  
My Lord, recliniug in the temples served by the devout  
Vibhīṣaṇa, King of Laṅkā ! pray wake up.*

*Note:—* What honey is for the bee, service of the Lord is for this Saint. Without such service, the Saint would languish. The primary difference between him and the Devas is that his selfless devotion while the Devas have an ulterior motive in worshipping the Lord namely, achieving their own personal desires.

**Stanza-6 :**

*The twelve Adityās, in their chariots, big and comely,  
The eleven Rudrās, Subrahmaṇya, with his peacock lovely,  
The Marutgaṇas and Aṣṭavasus have come down jostling  
In horse-drawn chariots, singing and dancing all along ;  
The entire Deva Ṣena is also here, thronging infront  
Of your temple, majestic as a mount ;  
O Lord at Araṅkam ! pray do get up.*

**Stanza-7 :**

*My Lord ! in your temple-yard have assembled,  
In their full strength, the Devās from the upper world,  
The austere sages, the Marutgaṇās and Indrā, with his elephant;  
With the Yakṣās, the Gandharvās and Vidyādharās  
elbowing out*

To worship you, there's hardly any space, in and out ;  
Pray, do wake up.

**Stanza-8 :**

The Devās, Mahaṛṣis and Sages Tumpuru and Nārada  
are here,  
With choice things, Scented grass, ŚAṆKA, PADMA-  
NIDHI, KĀMADHENU and mirror,  
The very first things to be seen by you, on waking up ;  
Spreading fast his radiant rays, the Sun is up ;  
Darkness is gone and the sky is lit up ;  
O Lord at Araṅkam ! Pray wake up.

**Stanza-9 :**

The celestial minstrels, the Kinnaras, the Garuḍās  
and Gandharvās,  
Singing to the accompaniment of the little trumpet flawless,  
Single-stringed harp, drum, Veena and flute, sending out  
Sweet strains in all directions, the Devas and their whole lot  
The Cāranās, the Yaksās, Siddhās and Mahaṛṣis  
standing all night,  
Jam-packed, are eager to worship You ; it is,  
therefore meet  
O Lord at Araṅkam ! That You wake up and  
unto them, audience do grant.

**Stanza-10 :**

O Lord, reclining in Srirangam, surrounded by  
Kāveri waters !  
The lotus flowers have blossomed, emitting fragrance sweet,  
As the Sun has gone up the horizon of the roaring sea ;  
The thin-waisted damsels have finished their bath, you see,  
And, drying up their curly locks, left the river,  
duly dressed,  
Here is your humble Servant Tonḍaraḍippoḍi, fully dressed.  
The flower basket hanging down the shoulder and  
Thulasi garland in hand,  
Pray, wake up and shed unto me Your grace sweet  
By enlisting me in the service of Your devotees sweet.

- Note:—* 1. In the proximate Kṛṣṇa Avatāra, damsels (Gopis) could, one day, come up the river bank after bathing, only when the Lord, perched upon a neighbouring tree, condescended to release from His custody, their garments left by them earlier on the bank. Here then is a sharp reminder to the Lord, in His archā manifestation, that morning is up and the damsels have also finished their bath and got out from the river, without HIS aid.
2. It is worth noting that the Ālvār eventually prayed unto the Lord, that he should be enlisted in the service of His devotees, thereby bringing home to us that there is no greater bliss than, serving the Lord's devotees, their devotees and so on, in that endless chain. Indeed, God feels more pleased with those serving His devotees than with those serving Him directly.

## TIRUMĀLAI

( The lovely garland )

BY

( TONḌARAḌIPPOḌI ĀLVĀR )

( INVOCATORY STANZA )

( by Tiruvaraṅgapperumāl Araiyar )

*Nothing else is needed for thee, my mind!  
Meditate always on Tonḍaraḍippoḍi the great bard,  
Who unto the comely feet of the divine cowherd,  
In the walled city of Araṅkam enshrined,  
Sang Songs rapturous like unto a garland.*

( 1 )

*O, Primate, Who did gulp and then disgorge  
The three worlds! Thy potent Name did purge  
All our sins and made us jubilant and strong  
And upon the heads of Yama and his gang  
We now trample with great gusto and a bang.*



( 2 )

*O, what a bliss ! behold I do your form exquisite  
Like unto a mountain of emerald green, Coral lips  
And eyes, red as lotus, and your names, I recite  
As Accutā, Ananta and Govinda ; all else,  
Even the pleasures of ruling the yonder heavens,  
I abjure, O Lord , dwelling in Araṅkam, the great !*

( 3 )

*O Lord, dwelling in the city of Araṅkam !  
Even if men live through the Vedic span  
Of hundred, half in sleep is skipped off  
And in infancy and adolescence passes off  
The rest, with miseries beset, illness, hunger  
And old age ; I, therefore, desire not birth over here.*

( 4 )

*Alas ! how do men in the mesh of birth linger  
When our Araṅkaṅ full of compassion, is so near ?  
Did not the three letters ' GOVINDA ' succour  
Even Kṣatrabandhu the worst sinner ever ?*

( 5 )

*Why feed and pamper the body and torment the mind,  
Seeking through wife and others, pleasures enticing ?  
Serve instead, the Lord wearing cool Tulasi garland ;  
Better thrive on such service, singing and dancing.*

( 6 )

*You know not when your frail body will fall,  
Screened by cruel forces of evil like the wall ;  
You serve not Araṅkan, the wall of Dharma erect,  
But caress the body foul, vultures pick, only to reject.*

( 7 )

*Sire ! He alone is the Deity whose bow severe  
Routed Laṅkā, this is the absolute truth, you see,  
Die I'll not, even if you my head did sever,  
Will man, with deep learning of Śāstras at all behold  
The herosies of Buddhists and Jains and about them hear ?*

( 8 )

*O, Lord, dwelling in Araṅkam, the city grand !  
When the hateful Jains and luckless Buddhists brag  
About you things intolerable. Your votaries won't lag  
But rather die and possibly chop their heads, duty-bound.*

( 9 )

*You witless humans ! is there yet another God ?  
Of the Supreme, You will know only when in distress dire !  
You know not the inner reality, there's no other God,  
Better worship the feet of the divine cowherd, our Sire.*

( 10 )

*Haven't ye men, with your fill of things earthy,  
Heard, the Lord has by His unique grace set up all over,  
Minor deities but shown holy Araṅkam to the seeker  
Of salvation ? when He who rides Garuda is over here  
Why turn elsewhere like seeking money from the impecunious ?*

( 11 )

*O, ye men, devoid of God's grace, when inside  
Mother's womb, you waste a whole life-time  
Without meditating on the high-walled Araṅkam  
In whose big temple dwells, for ever, our beloved Lord,  
Whose bow tamed the ocean and bunding it, killed  
Rāvaṇa, the demon king, for the benefit of the world.*

( 12 )

*I grieve for them who grieve but fail to utter  
The name of Araṅkam where stays our perfect Lord, for ever,  
Whose name Muṅkalaṅ, the sinner great, did but once spell,  
A merit which brought Yama right to the gates of hell,  
Him to receive, and the inmates heard the dialogue  
That ensued, transforming the entire hell into Swarg.*

( 13 )

*Were the denizens of this Earth, surrounded by wavy waters  
Of the stinking seas, only to mouth the word ' Araṅkam '  
Despite their ignorance of worship of the Lord of the Universe  
Sporting the fragrant Tulasi garland, it would mean  
The end of hellish existence here, dominated by the senses.*

( 14 )

*Better feed dogs , snatching the food pounced upon,  
By ungrateful men, who utter not the word ' Araṅkam ',  
The habitat of the Lord of celestials, adorned by orchards,  
Rising up to the clouds, where bees, in numbers, hum  
And groups of peacocks and jackdaws dance and sing.*

( 15 )

*The Lord, with Garuḍa on His banner, is a Reality, ofcourse,  
To those inclined towards Him but elusive to the otherwise ;  
Araṅkam is the citadel of the Lord whose charm dispels  
The doubts of the seekers of Salvation, who, His  
supremacy realise.*

( 16 )

*Time was when I got badly mixed up  
With thieves and gamblers and sank into the trap  
Of the bewitching looks of damsels but came sharp  
The captivating call from the Lord at Araṅkam  
Whose exquisite beauty filled my heart to the brim.*

( 17 )

*The Lord resides in glorious Araṅkam amid orchards rosy,  
The home of bees, for my eyes to feast on His form juicy,  
And my heart, hard as iron, to melt down, bit by bit ;  
I knew Him not before and hence His glory I sang not.*

( 18 )

*Amid waters wavy and expanse, sending cool sprays,  
My lotus-eyed Lord reclines and reigns supreme ;  
When I behold His lips, red as fruit, and radiant form,  
Tears of joy I shed, a felicity I lacked before, devoid of  
His Grace.*

( 19 )

*Oh, what shall I do, Ye men of this world?  
My body thaws down, seeing my sea-hued Lord  
Resting on serpent bed, with His crown westward,  
Facing Laṅkā southward, His back to the north,  
and feet stretched eastward.*

( 20 )

*Can the devout keep off from the mystic Lord  
on serpent bed  
At Araṅkam, which the gushing Kāveri waters surround,  
His winsome chest, emerald form, lotus eyes impartial,  
Sinewy shoulders, red lips and mouth pretty as coral,  
Ancient crown, and halo'd form with its spell remarkable?*

( 21 )

*You, my unbending mind! having strayed so long,  
Not daring to repose in the Coral-lipped Araṅkan,  
Shining like blue gem, say if you can comprehend  
The state of His reclining in the temple of red gold,  
Lovely and majestic as Meru, the mountain great.*

( 22 )

*My stupid mind! say if you can His glory describe  
And do aught but worship Him; mere words oft-repeated  
Cannot His greatness comprehend, He eludes the grasp  
Of all but the unblemished, to Him solely rivetted,  
In whose hearts. He does for ever reside.*

( 23 )

*My beloved Lord, the Supreme Master reclines at Araṅkam  
Amid orchards lovely, watered by the gushing Kāveri,  
Even more sacred than Ganga; and after seeing Him,  
On the unique bed, can poor me keep off from that glory?*

( 24 )

*My stony mind! you can't realise the unique glory  
Of the charming Lord, stealing our minds,  
reclining at Araṅkam  
Amid spacious gardens, fed by the sprawling waters of Kāveri  
In spite; even after seeing His lotus face in full bloom,  
You persist in your sham devotion, wasting all the time.*

( 25 )

*O Lord at Araṅkam, the city great! I cry out  
To you the sea-hued, for grace, for there's no other comfort  
For me; I have my ritualistic brahminism set at naught,  
And loving devotion unto you, my heart knows not.*

( 26 )

*O Lord Araṅkā! why I was born at all I know not,  
I worshipped not, at any time, your golden feet,  
Nor sang your glory with flawless words, replete  
With loving devotion, which, alas! swelled not in my heart.*

( 27 )

*With a heart hard as wood and never inclined  
To serve Lord Araṅkaṇ, I am for ever damned;  
From the guileless squirrels, I took no lesson,  
Which, on seeing monkeys bridging the ocean  
Rolling mountains down, did on moist backs contain  
Dry sands and shook them all into the ocean.*

( 28 )

*Came down the Lord from the resplendent heaven,  
Beyond the ken of the celestials' comprehension,  
Full of fury against a Crocodile, feeding on raw flesh,  
To rescue Gajendrā, the elephant, from its fangs vicious;  
To such a Benefactor, who our dog-like lowliness minds not,  
We, a burden shan't be; what for was I born  
who serve Him not?*

( 29 )

*My Lord, enshrined in Araṅkam, the city great!  
With none but you to protect me, I do cry out  
To you, the cloud-hued; in all this world  
Friends and relations have I none nor did I hold  
To your feet tight, O supreme one; in the land  
Held by you dear, I wasn't born nor do I own there any land*

( 30 )

*O, my Liege-Lord at Araṅkam which Kāveri waters surround!  
My mind is aught but pure and on my lips aren't sweet words,  
I flare up for no reason and spit out foul words;  
Say, who but you can salve me, O, wearer of  
lovely Tulasi garland!*

( 31 )

*O, Lord at Araṅkam, the city great!  
This birth, you gave me, is sheer waste;  
I've neither pelf nor penance to my credit,  
To the red-lipped damsels I am a hypocrite,  
My relations find me worthless like water, full of salt.*

( 32 )

*My Lord, resembling a cluster of clouds, dwelling in  
Srirangam,  
Adorned by orchards where humming bees go gay!  
a traitor I am  
Among men, I know not the means of attaining you,  
And so, rough and ragged, I now stand before you.*

( 33 )

*Lost beyond words, deed and thought  
In the alluring loose locks of women, an spostate  
That I am, I've come, O, Araṅkā, my Sire!  
Eager to avail of your grace, a triple liar,  
I stand before you shamelessly, right here.*

( 34 )

*O, Lord! ignorant of your presence in one and all,  
I made a show of service unto you but when I feel,  
Being so close, you know every thought that we think,  
I burst into rip-roaring laughter and with shame do I sink.*

( 35 )

*O, my lotus-eyed Lord! sweet as nectar and dear  
As life, you are my very breath; this sinner dire  
Shall cling fast to you, who once strode across  
All the worlds, and worship or think of none else.*

( 36 )

*My darling, sweet and strong! you once repelled  
The rains, holding the mountain aloft; enthralled  
By the looks of damsels with eyes like the young one  
Of the deer, O, Ancient one! I call forth you alone,  
O Lord at Araṅkam! won't you your grace on me turn?*

( 37 )

*The replendent Lord at the sacred Araṅkam, girdled  
By the turbid waters of Kāveri, is Father and Mother rolled  
Into one and yet, His grace He won't on me shed  
And call me, 'My beloved son!', how cruel indeed!*

( 38 )

*Methinks, O Lord of Araṅkam, encircled by Kāveri!  
Unto you are dear they that give up things worldly,  
Realise their true nature, subdue the senses unruly,  
And at your door flourish, resigned to your grace wholly.*

( 39 )

*O Lord of Araṅkam, wearing tulasi garland on your crown!  
It seems you covet even more than the Vedic brahmin,  
Who, from your service, keeps aloof, those who  
adore your intimate feet,  
Albeit they are born in the lowest of all castes.*

( 40 )

*Even they that butcher and commit plenty of sins,  
Terrifying all around, shall be absolved of all sins,  
If they but adore you firmly in their hearts,  
O Lord of Araṅkam,  
Holding, on your chest, Tiru (Lakṣmi) and the  
mole (Śrīvatsam)!*

( 41 )

*Those, who in base deeds indulge or have them  
Committed by others, but look upon the Lord as well beyond  
The celestials' comprehension and meditate on Him,  
That wears on the crown the honey-studded tulasi garland,  
Indeed purify those eating the food left over by them.*



(42)

*My Lord, in the walled city of Araṅkam! You have*  
*Ordained the brahmins, well versed in Vedas, in their* *it seems,*  
*Line of descent, to revere on a par with you,* *flawless*  
*Born in low castes and with them mix in a spirit of* *Yuor devotees,*  
*"Give and take".*

(43)

*O Lord at Araṅkam! even brahmins in the top caste,*  
*Learned in all the four vedas and their six adjuncts*  
*Will it seems, become in a trice, outcastes*  
*Should they decry your devotees in the low caste!*

(44)

*Even Piramaṇ and Śivaṇ, holding Gaṅgā on matted locks,*  
*Stand perplexed, unable to catch a glimpse of you,*  
*After ages of penance, and yet, to the celestials' dismay,*  
*You came the other day to the rescue of an elephant;*  
*Merciless that you are unto me, how can I on you depend?*

(45)

*These hymns, even if sung in a slip-shod fashion,*  
*By Toṇḍaraṣippoṣi, the seasoned devotee, engaged*  
*In making tulasi garlands for the Lord, are sweet indeed*  
*To Kaṇṇaṇ, my liege-Lord, now resting at Araṅkam,*  
*Who slew the elephant, monstrous and enraged,*  
*In Mathurā the city glorious, with its lovely white castles*

**(Blessed be the holy feet of Toṇḍaraṣippoṣi Āḷvār).**

*Notes in brief:*

Fortified by his knowledge of the glory of the Lord's names, the Āḷvār would even go to the extent of trampling upon the heads of Yamā and his horde, whom he was

dreading earlier, (opening verse). On the other hand, he would place his head reverently at the feet of the godly, without distinction of high and low (verses 39 to 43). The Āḷvār commends the stance of those, who give up attachment to things worldly and remain wholly resigned to the Lord's redemptive grace. He refers to such men as (*Vāḷum comper*). Verses 7 to 10 reveal the steadfast devotion of the Āḷvār, his unflinching faith in the supremacy of Lord Raṅganātha, the Iconic manifestation of Lord Nārāyaṇa. The Āḷvār acknowledges the great transformation, wrought in him by Lord Raṅganātha, who attracted him by exhibiting His exquisite charm. It deserves to be noted, in particular, that the Āḷvār has emphasised the importance of sincere love for God, which cuts across the barriers of parentage, wealth and learning and puts people, born in low castes, above those in the higher strata of society, devoid of such devotion.

## TIRUVĀYMOLI

(Seventh centum, second decad)

KAN̄KULUM PAKALUM

(கன்குலும் பகலும்)

*Preamble* :- Towards the end! of the sixth centum, we saw the Āḷvār surrendering himself at the feet of the Lord at Tiruvēṅkatam. Finding, however, that he was still lingering in this material world, dominated by the unruly senses, he cried out his fears, in the last decad, like unto a child crying out, from the tiger's jaws, facing the mother, standing in front. The Lord was, no doubt, well aware of the intensity of the Āḷvār's God-love and his deep yearning to get out of the material shackles, with no further delay. And yet, He deliberately prolonged the Āḷvār's stay in this abode and his resultant uneasiness, just to do lasting good to the world, at large, through him,

Of course, this is like starving one's children and entertaining the guests. Actually, the Āḷvār wrought the miracle of transforming the very duds and the deluded, given up, as incorrigibles, even by the Omni-potent Lord-and Every moment of his stay, in this abode, would certainly enrich the world through the scintillating hymns flowing from [his lips, both by way of adoring the Lord and advising the world.

But then the Āḷvār, in deep anguish, is once again (figuratively) transformed as the Nāyaki (Mistress), weighed down by melancholy, too deep for words. The critical condition of the speechless Nāyaki and her various moods are narrated, in this decad, by her gnostic (imagined) mother to Lord Raṅganātha, enshrined in Srirangam, bending over her daughter, right in the Sanctum. The mother enquires of Lord Raṅganātha, the Sole Saviour, as to what His intentions are and how exactly He would like to deal with her love-lorn daughter

Whenever Śrī Parāśara Bhaṭṭar (one of the great luminaries in the glorious line of the Pūrvācāryas) discoursed on this decad, he would place both his palms over his head, charged with emotion, and cry, "How can we, hard-hearted people, incapable of feeling the pulse of Parāṅkuśa Nāyaki (Āḷvār; transformed, figuratively, as the forlorn female lover), her sentiments and yearning, ever do justice to the words of deep love uttered by her, in this decad?" How can any one indeed enter into the spirit of the Nāyaki, whose torrential tears were bailed out by her palms? It was like attempting to drain off the oceanic waters with a tiny leaf. c. f. Hanumān's enquiry, as soon as he met Sitā in Aśoka Vana, how it was that tears kept flowing from her lovely eyes like a cascade.

VII-2-1

*O, Lord, reclining in Tiruvarāṅkam where flows water  
in abundance  
And the gay fish with joy gambol! this lady knows  
no sleep, day and night,*

*Tears in torrents from her eyes do flow and she  
with her palms bails them out;  
Cries she with joined palms, "O conch!", "O discus!"  
here are the lotus eyes!  
She pants and reels, the ground she gropes, for her  
Lord from whom she can't bear  
Being apart, what indeed do you intend doing with her?*

*Notes :*

(1) The worldlings are steeped in sleep, both day and night, while the Celestials in Heaven have neither nights nor sleep. The Nāyaki also knows no sleep, like the Celestials. It is said that she knows no sleep instead of saying that she doesn't sleep, because, when in communion with the Lord, He wouldn't allow her to sleep and, when away from Him, she is so disconsolate and dejected that she just can't sleep. Either way, sleep is unknown to her.

(2) Tears trickling down the cheeks copiously could be a common occurrence in the case of devout contemplation of the Lord's auspicious traits and heroic deeds. Bailing out the tears, with the Nāyaki's palms, denotes the abundance of tears like the water in the river Kāveri flowing around. Reference to the fish, joyfully dancing in the river waters, carries with it the suggestion that even as the fish cannot stay out of water, the Nāyaki cannot stay apart from the Lord. Delirious that she is, she can still behold the Lord, in His iconic Form, right in front, and suddenly she exclaims, "Here is the conch, here is the discus, here are the lotus-eyes", and so on. As one subsisting solely on Him, she can't bear being apart from Him and she says so. Even then, she can't find Him beside her and she runs her fingers through the ground, in search of Him, as if He is handy, like taking sandal paste from a porcelain cup.

(3) The gnostic mother enquires of the Lord what He proposes to do with her daughter, as the Lord's remembrance of the Individual, in the light of his ultimate redemption

is the only 'Means,' for his salvation. (see aphorism 66 of 'Srivacanabhūṣaṇam').

VII-2-2

"My lotus-eyed Lord! unto me what will you do?  
Is the question by this lady put, her eyes filled  
with tears,  
She stands still and queries again, "what shall I do  
To get at you, O, Lord of Tiruvaraṅkam! with  
surging waters?"  
Says she panting and breathing hot, "Come before me,  
my past sins!"  
"O, cloud-hued Lord! is this all your mercy?" unto  
this girl tense,  
Say what will happen, O, Lord! who the worlds  
did create,  
Ate and spat, spanned and did many such things,  
them to protect?"

Notes ;

(1) The Nāyaki would like to know what those massive sins committed by her, are, which stand between her and the Lord. That only shows, she is painfully conscious of the fact that she has to face the consequences of her past sins, instead of blaming the Lord. But then, the cloud-hued Lord, known for His munificence, like the rainclouds, could, in the exercise of His quality of mercy wipe off the sins, *in toto*, and in no time.

(2) Breathing hot, the Nāyaki melts under the impact of that heat as if she is not there; to sigh any more.

(3) So great is the heat generated by her separation from the Lord that she would like to be thrown by some one into the cool waters of the river Kāveri in Srīrangam, the river Tāmiraparni, in her birth place, having already become hot, because of her desolation.

## VII-2-3

*Shaking off all reserve, this lady calls out,*

*“O Lord of Sapphire hue!”*

*And at the sky gazes, pining for Him unique,, who slew  
The Asurās formidable; thawing down, she prays,*

*“O Lord invsiible!*

*You did incarnate as Kākuttia ( Rāmā ) and Kaṇṇaṇ,*

*make yourself visible*

*Uuto me now”; O Lord, who does recline*

*in Tiruvaraṅkam,*

*The walled city strong! what’s it you have unto*

*this girl done?*

## Notes :

(1) The mother is amazed at the complete lack of the innate modesty, on the part of her love-intoxicated daughter, her calling out loudly the name of her spouse and that too, the one indicative of His bewitching Form, which she ought to enjoy secretly, at heart.

(2) The Lord, who slew the Asurās and relieved the distress of the Devās, notoriously selfish, should certainly rush to the aid of the weaker Sex, particularly those, who cling to His feet, under all circumstances.

(3) The upaniṣade state that the Lord will exhibit His exquisite Form and splendour to the Subjects of His choice. It is this that emboldens the Nāyaki to call upon Him to appear before her. The Incarnate Forms like Rama and Kṛṣṇa could, ofcourse, not be seen, at all times, they having already gone back to the Caestium. So then, the Āḷvār wants the Lord at Tiruvaraṅkam to appear before him, in His iconic Form.

(4) The mother wants to know what exactly the Lord had done to bring about this kind of infatuation in her daughter.

## VII-2-4

*Some times this lady is motionless and she moves about,*  
*at times,*  
*Insensate she remains but is still seen with joined palms,*  
*She swoons exclaiming, 'God-love is indeed hard to endure!'*  
*Says she, "O, sea-hued Lord! You are unto me severe,"*  
*Calling out, many a time, Him that wields the discus round*  
*In His right hand, she faints when He comes not;*  
*O Lord Immaculate,*  
*Reclining in fertile Tiruvaraṅkam! what is it you do*  
*for her contemplate?*

## Notes :

(1) The Nāyaki, intoxicated with God-love, exhibits the same behaviour as those struck by Sri Rama's mighty arrows. The targets of those arrows will be seen either fainting with pain or tortured or running about, here and there, in great fright. So also, the Nāyaki is at times insensate; some times, she moves about, here and there, agitated, and at other times, feels tortured by the immensity of her God-hunger, still remaining unappeased. The Āḷvār, who was hitherto looking upon God-love as an end in itself, now feels it a terrible tormenter, much beyond his capacity to endure.

(2) The mother's reference to an Immaculate God is rather ironical. She seems to suggest that, after inflicting all this pain on her daughter, He masquerades as the perfect One, like unto a Brahmin going about chanting Vedas, wearing white sacred thread and twisted Kuśa grass in the fourth finger, the very picture of a perfect Brahmin, after killing several Brahmins.

(3) *Fertile Tiruvaraṅkam*: The mother chides the Lord whether He came down to that cosy place only to sleep away, unmindful of the precarious condition of her daughter and His duty towards her.

## VII-2-5

*O Lord! Avuṇṇa's body you tore off at twilight,  
 You are the Nectar insatiable that churned the ocean,  
 You have the heart of this lady stolen;  
 With resolve firm to join you and stay at your feet,  
 Dwindles she in contemplation of her erstwhile union;  
 Suddenly rallying round with joined palms and head bent,  
 She calls out, O, Lord in Tiruvaraṅkam!  
 and tears from her eyes do rain,  
 'You haven't come'. 'You haven't come',  
 she utters and faints.*

## Notes :

(1) Turning the searchlight inward, the Nāyaki finds that her soul, badly caught up in the vortex of worldly life, with its terrific involvement in a recurring cycle of birth and death, was attracted by the Lord's bewitching eyes, had the blissful union with Him, for a while, only to be deserted by Him, as at present. Contemplating thus, she breaks down and even then, her palms remain joined in reverence, a unique feature of hers under all circumstances.

(2) Despite the Lord having taken up His abode in Tiruvaraṅkam, in His worshippable (Iconic) Form, it is indeed distressing that He hasn't obliged the Āḷvār with His presence, Did He not assume the Form of Narasimha and keep Himself ready for emergence, at the precise moment, where and when His Presence would be demanded, all for the sake of a young lad, Prahlāda, son of Avuṇṇa (Hiraṇya)?

(3) *Stealing the heart of this lady* : It was just because a mere crow inflicted a slight injury on the person of His beloved consort, Sri Rāmā sent 'Brahmāstra', a super-missile, in hot pursuit of the little creature, literally applying heroic remedies for petty maladies. Even so, He took great pains to enthrall a petty soul like the Āḷvār's and the latter gave away his heart unto Him, in sweet contemplation of this great gesture on His part.



(4) The three successive stages of love to God, indicated in this song, are worth noting. These are *Recollection*, *Trance* and *Rallying* - *recollection* of all the past ravishments, vouchsafed by the benign Lord, *trance* - fainting in desolation caused by such recollection, in the light of the present state of non - enjoyment, and *rallying*, that is, the sudden lucidity while in the trance state, considered to be very dangerous indeed. The momentary lucidity, in a delirious state, is akin to the sudden lighting up of consciousness in a person under the spell of death - coma or the sudden flicker of the dying light. That was the reason why Ācārya Nāñjīyar exclaimed, with great fright, when Uyndapillai, Jīyar's disciple, recited this song, "Woe unto her (Saint's) lucidity! I am undone".

VII-2-6

*Please say what this sinner can do unto her daughter,  
Who exclaims, 'O, you that enticed me and stole my heart',  
"You that worked many wonders huge!", "Oh Raṅgā,  
reclining amid cool waters!"  
"You, of sapphire hue, with lips red,  
"Chief of Celestials, wielding weapons hot!"  
And so on, O Lord! reclining on the hooded serpent.*

*Notes :*

The mother says unto Lord Raṅganātha :

"My daughter keeps wondering how you stole her heart by bestowing on her enormous love, how, during your union with her, you worked many wonders such as exhibiting your loving condescension of amazing magnitude, how you enthralled her by your exquisite personal charm, your red lips and sapphire hue, how you don't come to her, although so very near, in Tiruvaraṅkam, how your mighty weapons do not cut out her sins, if at all they do stand between you and her and so on. Should you not be inseparable from my daughter even as you cling to your serpent bed? How is it you relax yourself on this cosy bed, when my daughter is

struggling hard, panting for you, as above? please say what this sinner (self) witnessing the sad spectacle, can at all do to relieve my daughter's distress".

VII-2-7

*Says my tender darling, her eyes, cool and lovely,  
filled with tears,  
"O, Distributor of weal and woe among your creatures!  
Even unto those who seek not refuge in you,  
you are the Protector  
O, Controller of the wheel of Time!  
the Milk-ocean is your abode,  
O, sea-hued Lord! O, Kaṇṇā; O, You who  
in Tiruvarāṅkam do reside,  
Amid cool waters, full of fish! You, my Sanctifier!",  
and so on.*

Notes :

The Nāyaki's address to the Lord. as above, quoted by the mother, when analysed, would reveal her trend of thought, as follows :

(i) "My Lord! You are known to inflict miseries on the ungodly and regale the devout. Perhaps, you have excluded me from the scope of such a dispensation,

(ii) "My Lord! you carry the credential that you extend protection even to those who do not submit themselves, as such, to your protection (Aśaraṇya Śaraṇyaḥ) and yet, you torment me like this. It sounds paradoxical like unto a prickly plant being glorified' as the grand wish-yielding tree.

(iii) 'O, Lord! if you mean to say that the propitious time for my succour has not yet arrived, may I point out to you, that 'Time' is at your beck and call?".

(iv) Reference to Lord Raṅganātha, in the midst of cool waters, full of fish, points to the Nāyaki's incapacity

to stay apart from Him even as fish can't stay out of water. And yet, can He afford to Keep away from the Nāyaki?

(v) *You, my Sanctifier!* The Lord has instilled in the Nāyaki sanctity, by way of endowing her with the firm conviction that He is her sole Saviour, a belief which remains unshaken, even in the most desperate situation.

(vi) *Tender darling*, like unto a creeper, which can thrive only when it twists round a pole, firm and fixed, like the Lord Himself.

The mother says, her daughter is shedding tears in plenty, unable to endure her separation from the Lord. Actually, it was on account of His indefatigable efforts that He was able to induct in her such assiduous love for Him and yet, how is it, He would not come and see for Himself, the fruits of His labour?

VII-2-8

*O, Raṅgā, reclining in Tiruvarāṅkam, amid  
sacred waters! What shall I do  
For my daughter, like unto Tirumaka!, ever calling you,  
"O, Chief of Celestials! O, Lifter of Mount Govardhan  
and Protector of cows"  
With joined palms and tearful eyes, breathing hot, she calls,  
"O, dark-hued Lord!", gazing at the sky, she would ask,  
How and where indeed she could for you look.*

Notes:

(1) The Nāyaki mentions, side by side, the Lord's Supremacy and simplicity, so that one need not be scared of the former nor be tempted to underrate Him because of the latter.

(2) The mother suggests that the Lord should be inseparably attached to her daughter even as Tirumaka!

(Mahālakṣmi) inhrres in His chest always, brooking no separation whatsoever.

(3) Not sighting the Lord in the direction she looks up, the Nāyaki would turn behind, in the fond hope that He might take her by surprise, and embrace her from behind.

VII-2-9

*O, Lord in Tiruvaraṅkam enshrined! it isn't unto me clear  
What indeed will be the end of this lady's inordinate longing,*

*Calls she, "O, my Soul, bearing on Your chest,  
Tirumaka! my Mother!*

*O, Spouse of Dame Earth whom You lifted  
on your bent tooth long!*

*Dear you are unto the shepherd girl whom you  
once took over,*

*Slaying the unruly bulls seven with the voice of thunder"*

*Notes :*

(1) The Nāyaki wonders how she could suffer in spite of Mahālakṣmi, the unfailing Intercessor between the Lord and His Subjects, being ever present on His winsome chest. The Lord is the soul of all souls and what is more, the Mother is always in conjunction with Him; here then is a grand setting, the Soul of our Souls, the Super-Soul being in a mighty combination, highly conducive to our well-being. When Nañjiyar spelt out, in one breath without a break, the first line of this Song, as in the original text, so as to yield this meaning, his Preceptor, Parāśara Bhaṭṭar, the Priest of Lord Raṅganātha, was taking food and listening to the marvellous recital by the inspired Saint. Thrilled by this manner of chanting, with the new light thrown on the text, Bhaṭṭārya Stopped eating and reclined in the easy chair, wrapt in rapturous meditation.

This way of addressing God is indeed very fascinating. Tradition has it that the famous Anaṅtālvāṇ named his daughter as "My Mother Laksmi!" (Yeṇ Tirumaka!). Śrī Parāśara

Bhaṭṭar, reputed to be as good as the son of Lord Raṅganātha, by virtue of the special circumstance of his birth, is said to have requested the Deity, "O Lord! please consider me as but a part of the bridal outfit of Your consort, Mahālakṣmī, my mother and also grant that I may love You as the Beloved of my Mother—(*Aḷakiya Manavāḷa* or *Lovely Spouse*)."

(2) The Lord can be dear to Mother Earth only if He could take care of her favourites like the Nāyaki.

(3) "Having slain the seven unruly bulls with thundrous voice, for winning the hand of Goddess Nīlā Devi, incarnated as Nappiṇṇai, shepherdess, O Lord! you are now relaxing in Tiruvaraṅkam on your serpent bed. How indeed do you intend to put an end to my daughter's afflictions? enquires the gnostic mother of Paraṅkuṣa Nāyaki. (*Nammāḷvār* figuratively turned into a female lover).

VII-2-10

*It seemed this lady, panting for the Lord  
wouldn't attain Him.  
'I know not the end of my sufferings at all', she did exclaim,  
'O, Supreme Master of the three worlds!'  
"O, Internal Controller  
Of Śiva, wearing on matted locks, fragrant flowers,  
And Brahmā, the four-faced!",  
"O, Chief of Celestials of like form!",  
"O, generous Tiruvaraṅkā" and so on,  
but now has she attained,  
The lovely feet of the cloud-hued Lord indeed!*

*Notes:*

(1) The mother is mighty glad that her daughter, who was in a hopelessly desperate condition, with no prospect of an early end to her sufferings, has, after all, attained the feet of Lord Raṅganātha, who is graciously reclining in Tiruvaraṅkam, so as to be worshipped by all down below,

desirous of beholding and enjoying His exquisite form, instead of being the close preserve of the denizens in heaven.

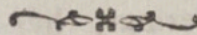
(2) The Celestials in heaven are endowed with a form like unto the Lord's own and what is more, the continual stream of joy flowing unto them from the Lord, who is an inexhaustible fountain of bliss, is reflected on their person, enhancing their charm, ever more.

VII-2-11

*Those that are well-versed in these songs ten,  
Out of the choice thousand, composed in adoration  
Of Lord Raṅganātha, cloud-hued Lord, by Caṭakōpaṅ  
Of fertile Kurukūr on the bank of Porunal, the river sacred,  
Who attained the cloud-hued Lord and was by His grace salved  
Will be by Celestials surrounded in High Heaven  
And immersed in joy eternal they shall remain.*

Notes :

It is quite clear from this song that the entire hymnal, Tiruvāymoli, comprising a thousand and odd songs, is in adoration of Lord Raṅganātha, enshrined in Tiruvaraṅkam (Srirangam). The invocatory song (serial number 4), cited at the beginning of this hymnal also highlights this fact. No doubt, several decads (group of ten stanzas) have been dedicated to the Lord, enshrined in other pilgrim centres, as well. This is however like portions, doled out from the main dedication, even as the holy food, first offered to Lord Raṅganātha, is divided and distributed among the minor deities in the chapels around, as Nampillai would put it in his inimitable Īḍu commentary.



**SRI RAṄGANĀTHA STOTRA**  
OF  
**SRI PARĀŚARA BHATṬAR**

---

श्रीपराशरभट्टार्यः श्रीरङ्गेशपुरोहितः ।  
श्रीवत्साङ्गसुतः श्रीमान् श्रेयसे मेऽस्तु भूयसे ॥

---

सप्तप्राकारमध्ये सरसिजमुकुलोद्भासमाने विमाने  
कावेरीमध्यदेशे मृदुतरफणिराद्भोगपर्यङ्कभागे ।  
निद्रामुद्राभिरामं कटिनिकटशिरःपार्श्वविन्यस्तहस्तं  
पद्माधात्रीकराभ्यां परिचितचरणं रङ्गराजं भजेऽहम् ॥ १ ॥

*This vassal does shelter take at your lovely feet,  
O, Lord Raṅganātha! resting you are on serpent couch soft,  
In charming repose, your left arm poised on your hip lovely,  
And the right pointing to your crown majestic; your spouses lovely,  
'Sri' and 'Bhū' massage your lotus feet, under a canopy fine,  
Like unto lotus bud, girdled by Kāveri, amid enclosures*  
seven .. (1)

कस्तूरीकलितोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रतिलकं कर्णान्तलोलेक्षणं  
मुग्धस्मेरमनोहराधरदलं मुक्ताकिरीटोज्ज्वलम् ।  
पश्यन्मानसपश्यतोहररुचः पर्यायपङ्केरुहं  
श्रीरङ्गाधिपतेः कदा नु वदनं सेवेय भूयोऽप्यहम् ॥ २ ॥

*O, Lord Raṅganātha! when can I, your face exquisite behold,  
Like unto lotus, displaying the fragrant Kastūri tilak*  
*on your forehead;*  
*The longish pair of eyes, stretching across, to the ear-lobes fine,  
The lips lovely where the smile gentle is ever in attendance,  
And the crown on your head, studded with sparkling pearls,*  
*the splendour*  
*That instantly steals the heart away, of many a beholder ... (2)*

कदाऽहं कावेरीतटपरिसरे रङ्गनगरे शयानं  
 भोगीन्द्रे शतमखमणिश्यामलरुचिम् ।  
 उपासीनः क्रोशन् मधुमथन ! नारायण ! हरे !  
 मुरारे ! गोविन्देत्यनिशमनुनेष्यामि दिवसान् ॥ ३ ॥

*O, Lord Raṅganātha! when shall I stay beside you,  
 of sapphire hue,  
 Reclining on the King Cobra, in Raṅganagar, on the kāveri bank  
 And spend my days, chanting your holy names, with fervour great,  
 As, O, slayer of Madhu! O, Nārāyaṇa! O, Hari!  
 O, Murāre! O, Govindā! ... (3)*

कदाऽहं कावेरीविमलसलिले वीतकलुषो भवेयं  
 तत्तीरे श्रममुषि वसेयं घनवने ।  
 कदा वा तत्पुण्ये महति पुलिने मङ्गलगुणं भजेयं  
 रङ्गेशं कमलनयनं शेषशयनम् ॥ ४ ॥

*Ha! when shall I on the immaculate bank dwell,  
 Of the river Kāveri, with its placid waters, cool  
 And long stretches of groves fine and attain the lotus-eyed Lord,  
 Reclining, in its sandy beach, on His serpent-bed? ... (4)*

पूगीकण्ठद्वयसरसस्त्रिधनीरोपकण्ठां  
 आविर्मोदस्तिमितशकुनामोदितब्रह्मबोषाम् ।  
 मार्गे मार्गे पथकनिवहैरुञ्जयमानापवगां  
 पश्येयं तां पुनरपि पुरीं श्रीमतीं रङ्गधाम्नः ॥ ५ ॥

*May I be blest to see again the citadel lovely,  
 Of Lord Raṅganātha, on the bank of the river Kāveri,  
 With its waters, sweet and lovely and the arecanut trees tall,  
 Standing along; the birds that, in those groves, do dwell,  
 Chirp in vedic accents while the pilgrims, passing along, proclaim,  
 Here's the city grand, the true spring-board to heaven ... (5)*



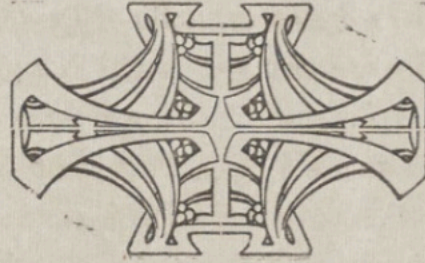
न जातु पीतामृतमूर्च्छितानां नाकौकसां नन्दनवाटिकासु ।  
रङ्गेश्वर! त्वत्पुरमाश्रितानां रथ्याशुनामन्यतमो भवेयम् ॥ ६ ॥

*O, Raṅgā ! I desire not to be a Deva, in the regions yonder,  
Intoxicated with the nectar from the gardens, gathered over there;  
Let me be just one of them, the dogs that wander  
Thro' the streets of your citadel great, the holy centre ... (6)*

असंनिकृष्टस्य निकृष्टजन्तोः मिथ्यापवादेन करोषि शान्तिम् ।  
ततो निकृष्टे मयि संनिकृष्टे कां निष्कृतिं रङ्गपते! करोषि ॥ ७ ॥

*Purificatory ceremonies they do perform on the false pretext  
That a dog, which but strayed afar, did actually enter  
The portals of your holy shrine; but, alas! I am here,  
Lowlier than a dog and yet, O, Lord! keeping so near;  
What atonement could you think of, I really wonder! .. (7)*

— S. Satyamurthi Ayyangar.



தொண்டரடிப்பொடியாழ்வார் அருளிச்செய்த

## திருப்பள்ளியெழுச்சி

கதிரவன் குண திசைச்சிகரம்வந்தணைந்தான்  
கணையிருளகன்றதுகாலையம்பொழுதாய்  
மதுவிரிந்தொழுகினமாமலரெல்லாம்  
வானவரசர்கள்வந்துவந்தீண்டி  
எதிர் திசை நிறைந்தனர் இவரொடும்புகுந்த  
இருங்களிற்றீட்டமும்பிடி யொடுமுரசும்  
அதிர் தலில் அலைகடல்போன்றுளதுஎங்கும்  
அரங்கத்தம்மா ! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே. 1

கொழுங்கொடிமுல்லை யின் கொழுமலரணவிக்  
கூர்ந்ததுகுண திசைமாருதம்இதுவே  
எழுந்தனமலரணைப்பள்ளிகொள்ளன்னம்  
ஈன்பனிநனைந்ததமிருஞ்சிறகுதறி  
விழுங்கியமுதலையின்பிலம்புரைபேழ்வாய்  
வெள்ளையிறுற அதன் விடத்தினுக்கணுங்கி  
அழுங்கிய ஆலையினருந்துயர்கெடுத்த  
அரங்கத்தம்மா ! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே 2

சுடரொளிபரந்தனசூழ்திசையெல்லாம்  
துன்னியதாரகைமின்னொளிசுருங்கி  
படரொளிபசுத்தனன்பனிமதிஇவனே  
பாயிருளகன்றது, பைம்பொழிற்கழுகின்  
மடலிடைக்கீறிவண்பாளைகள்நாற  
வைகறைகூர்ந்ததுமாருதம்இதுவே  
அடலொளிதிகழ்தருதிகிரியந்தடக்கை  
அரங்கத்தம்மா ! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே. 3

மேட்டிளமேதிகள் தனைவிடும் ஆயர்கள்  
வேய்ங்குழலோசையும்விடைமணிக்குரலும்

ஈட்டியஇசைதிசைபரந்தனவயலுள்  
 இரிந்தனசுரும்பினம், இலங்கையர்குலத்தை  
 வாட்டியவரிசிலைவானவரேறே!  
 மாமுனிவேள்வியைக்காத்துஅவபிரதம்  
 ஆட்டியஅடுதிறலயோத்தியெம்மரசே!  
 அரங்கத்தம்மா! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே. 4

புலம்பினபுட்களும்பூம்பொழில்களின்வாய்,  
 போயிற்றுக்கங்குல்புகுந்ததுபுலரி  
 கலந்ததுகுணதிசைக்கனைகடலரவம்  
 களிவண்டுமிழற்றியகலம்பகம்புனைந்த  
 அலங்கலந்தொடையல்கொண்டு அடியினை  
 பணிவான்  
 அமரர்கள்புகுந்தனர்ஆதலில்அம்மா!  
 இலங்கையர்கோன்வழிபாடுசெய்கோயில்  
 எம்பெருமான்! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே. 5

இரவியர்மணிநெடுந்தேரொடும்இவரோ?  
 இறையவர்பதினொருவிடையரும்இவரோ?  
 மருவியமயிலினன்றுமுகன்இவரோ?  
 மருதரும்வசுக்களும்வந்துவந்தீண்டி  
 புரவியோடுஆடலும்பாடலும்தேரும்  
 குமரதண்டம்புகுந்துஈண்டியவெள்ளம்  
 அருவரையனைநின்கோயில்முன்இவரோ?  
 அரங்கத்தம்மா! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே. 6

அந்தரத்தமரர்கள்கூட்டங்கள்இவையோ?  
 அருந்தவமுனிவரும்மருதரும்இவரோ?  
 இந்திரனையும்தானும்வந்திவனோ?  
 எம்பெருமான்! உன்கோயிலின்வாசல்  
 சுந்தரர்நெருக்கவிச்சாதரர்நூக்க  
 இயக்கரும்மயங்கினர்திருவடித்தொழுவான்  
 அந்தரம்பாரிடமில்லைமற்றிதுவோ?  
 அரங்கத்தம்மா! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே. 7

வம்பவிழ்வானவர்வாயுறைவழங்க

மாநிதிகபிலைஒண் கண்ணாடிமுதலா  
எம்பெருமான்மெய்ப்படிக்கலங்காண்டற்கு  
ஏற்பனவாயினகொண்டுநன்முனிவர்  
தும்புருநாரதர்புகுந்தனர்இவரோ?

தோன்றினன்இரவியும்தலங்கொளிபரப்பி  
அம்பரதலத்தினின்றுஅகல்கின்றதுஇருள்போய்  
அரங்கத்தம்மா! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே.

ஏதமில் தண்ணுமைஎக்கம்மத்தளி

யாழ்குழல்முழவமோடுஇசைதிசைகெழுமி  
கீதங்கள்பாடினர்கின்னரர்கெருடர்கள்  
கந்தருவரவர்கங்குலுளெல்லாம்  
மாதவர்வானவர்சாரணர்இயக்கர்

சித்தரும்மயங்கினர்திருவடித்தொழுவான்  
ஆதலில் அவர்க்குநாளோலக்கம்அருள  
அரங்கத்தம்மா! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே

கடிமலர்க்கமலங்கள்மலர்ந்தனஇவையோ?

கதிரவன்கனைகடல்முனைத்தனன்இவனோ?

துடியிடையார்சுரிசுழல்பிழிந்துதறித்

துகிலுடுத்தறினர்குழ்புனலரங்கா!

தொடையொத்ததுளவழம்கூடையம்பொலிந்து

தோன்றியதோள்தொண்டரடிப்பொடி

யென்னும்

அடியனை அளியென்றருளிடன்னடியார்க்கு

ஆட்படுத்தாய்! பள்ளியெழுந்தருளாயே.



தொண்டரடிப்பொடியாழ்வார் அருளிச்செய்த

## திருமலை

காவலில்புலனைவைத்துக் கவிதன்னைக்கடக்கப்பாய்ந்து  
நாவலிட்டுஉழிதருகின்றேம் நமன் தமர்தலைகள்மீதே  
மூவுலகுண்டுமிழ்ந்தமுதல்வ நின்நாமம் கற்ற  
ஆவலிப்புடைமைகண்டாய் அரங்கமாநகருளானே! 1

பச்சைமாமலைபோல்மேனி பவளவாய்கமலச்செங்கண்  
அச்சுதா அமரேறே ஆயர்தம்கொழுந்தே என்னும்  
இச்சுவைதவிறயான்போய் இந்திரலோகம் ஆளும்  
அச்சுவைபெறினும் வேண்டேன் அரங்கமாநகருளானே!

வேதநூல்பிராயம்நூறு மனிசர்தாம் புகுவரேலும்  
பாதியும் உறங்கிப்போகும் நின்றதில்பதினையாண்டு  
பேதைபாலகனதாகும் பிணிபசிமூப்புத் துன்பம்  
ஆதலால் பிறவி வேண்டேன் அரங்கமாநகருளானே! 3

மொய்த்தவல்வினையுள் நின்ற  
மூன்றெழுத்துடையபேரால்  
கத்திரபந்துமச்சுறே பராங்கதி கண்டுகொண்டான்  
இத்தனையடியராணார்க்கு இரங்கும் நம் அரங்கனாய  
பித்தனைப்பெற்றும் அந்தோ! பிறவியுள் பிணங்குமாறே.

பெண்டிரால் சுகங்களுய்ப்பான்  
பெரியதோரிடும்பைபூண்டு  
உண்டுஇராக்கிடக்கும்போதுஉடலுக்கேகரைந்துநைந்து  
தண்துழாய்மலைமார்பன் தமர்களாய்ப்பாடியாடி  
தொண்டுபூண்டமுதமுண்ணுத்  
தொழுமபர்சோறுஉகக்குமாறே! 5

மறம்சுவர்மதிளெடுத்து மறுமைக்கே வெறுமைபூண்டு  
புறம்சுவரோட்டைமாடம் புரளுபோது அறியமாட்டீர்

அறம்சுவராகிநின்ற அரங்கனார்க்கு ஆட்செய்யாதே  
புறம்சுவர்கோலஞ்செய்து புள்கெளவக்கிடக்கின்றீரே. 6

புலையறமாகிநின்ற புத்தொடுசமணமெல்லாம்  
கலையறக்கற்றமாந்தர் காண்பரோகேட்பரோதாம்?  
தலையறுப்புண்டும் சாகேன் சத்தியம்காண்மின்ஐயா!  
சிலையினால் இலங்கைசெற்ற தேவனேதேவனாவான். 7

வெறுப்பொடுசமணர்முண்டர் விதியில்சாக்கியர்கள்  
நின்பால்  
பொறுப்பரியனகள் பேசில் போவதேநோயதாகி  
குறிப்பெனக்கடையுமாகில் கூடுமேல், தலையைஆங்கே  
அறுப்பதேகருமம்கண்டாய் அரங்கமாநகருளானே! 8

மற்றுமோர்தெய்வமுண்டோ? மதியிலாமானிடங்காள்!  
உற்றபோதன்றிநீங்கள் ஒருவனென்றுஉணரமாட்டீர்  
அற்றமேலொன்றறியீர் அவனல்லாத்தெய்வமில்லை  
கற்றினம்மேய்த்தளநதை கழலிணைபணிமின்நீரே. 9

நாட்டினுன்தெய்வம்எங்கும் நல்லதோரருள்தன்னாலே  
காட்டினுன் திருவரங்கம் உய்பவர்க்குஉய்யும்வண்ணம்  
கேட்டிரேநம்பிமீர்காள்! கெருடவாகனனும்நிற்க  
சேட்டைதன்மடியகத்துச் செல்வம்பார்த்திருக்கின்றீரே.

ஒருவில்லால்ஒங்குமுந்நீரடைத்து உலகங்களுய்ய  
செருவிலேஅரக்கர்கோணச்செற்ற நம்சேவகனார்  
மருவியபெரியகோயில் மதிள் திருவங்கமென்னு  
கருவிலே திருவிலாதீர்! காலத்தைக்கழிக்கின்றீரே. 11

நமனும்முற்கலனும்பேச நரகில்நின்றூர்கள்கேட்க  
நரகமேசுவர்க்கமாகும் நாமங்களுடையநம்பி  
அவனதூர்அரங்கமென்னுது அயர்த்துவீழ்ந்தளியமாந்தர்  
கவலையுள்படுகின்றூரென்று அதனுக்கேகவல்கின்றேனே.

எறியும்நீர்வெறிகொள்வேலை மாநிலத்துஉயிர்களெல்லாம்  
வெறிகொள்பூந்துளவமாலை விண்ணவர்கோனையேத்த

அறிவிலாமனிச ரெல்லாம் அரங்கமென்றழைப்பராகில்  
பொறியில்வாழ்நரகமெல்லாம் புல்லெழுந்தொழி  
யுமன்றே 13

வண்டினம்முரலும்சோலை மயிலினம்ஆலும்சோலை  
கொண்டல்மீதணவும்சோலை குயிலினம்கூவும்சோலை  
அண்டர்கோன் அமரும்சோலை அணிதிருவரங்கமென்றா  
மிண்டர்பாய்ந்துஉண்ணும்சோற்றைவிலக்கி  
நாய்க்கிடுமினீரே. 14

மெய்யர்க்கேமெய்யனாகும் விதியிலாஎன்னைப்போல  
பொய்யர்க்கேபொய்யனாகும் புட்கொடியுடையகோமான்  
உய்யப்போமுணர்வினார்கட்கு ஒருவெனன்றுஉணர்ந்த  
பின்னை  
ஐயப்பாடறுத்துத்தோன்றும் அழகனார் அரங்க  
மன்றே. 15

சூதனாய்க்கள்வனாகித் தூர்த்தரோடுஇசைந்தகாலம்  
மாதராரகயற்கெணன்னும் வலையுள்பட்டமுந்துவேளை  
போதரெயென்றுசொல்லிப் புந்தியுள்புகுந்து தன்பால்  
ஆதரம்பெருகவைத்த அழகனார் அரங்கமன்றே. 16

விருப்பிநின்றேத்தமாட்டேன் விதியிலேன்மதி  
யொன்றில்லை  
இரும்புபோல்வலியநெஞ்சம் இறையிறைஉருகும்  
வண்ணம்  
சுரும்பமர்சோலைசூழ்ந்த அரங்கமாகையில்கொண்ட  
கரும்பினைக்கண்டுகொண்டு என்கண்ணினைகளிக்கு  
மாறே! 17

இனிதிறைத்திவலைமோத எறியும் தண்பரவைமீதே  
தனிகிடந்து அரசுசெய்யும் தாமரைக்கண்ணன் எம்மான்  
கனியிருந்தனையசெவ்வாய்க் கண்ணனைக்கண்டகண்கள்  
பனியரும்புஉதிருமாலோ | என்செய்கேன்  
பாவிடேனே? 18

குடதிசைமுடியைவைத்துக் குணதிசைபாதம்நீட்டி  
வடதிசைபின்புகாட்டித் தென்திசைஇலங்கைநோக்கி  
கடல்நிறக்கடவுளெந்தை அரவணைத்துயிலுமாகண்டு  
உடலெனக்குஉருகுமாலோ ! என்செய்கேன் ?

உலகத்தீரே ! 19

பாயும்நீரரங்கந்தன் னுள் பாம்பணைப்பள் ளிகொண்ட  
மாயனார் திருநன்மார்வும் மரகதவுருவும்தோளும்  
துயதாமரைக்கண்களும் துவரிதழ்ப்பவளவாயும்  
ஆயசீர்முடியும் தேசம் அடியரோர்க்கு அகலலாமே ? 20

பணிவினல்மனமெதான்றிப் பவளவாயரங்கனார்க்கு  
துணிவினல்வாழமாட்டாத் தொல்லைநெஞ்சே !

நீசொல்லாய்

அணியினர்செம் பானாய அருவரையணையகோயில்  
மணியனார்கிடந்தவாற்றை மனத்தினுல்நினைக்கலாமே 21

பேசிற்றேபேசலல்லால் பெருமையொன்று உணரலாகாது  
ஆசற்றூர் தங்கட்கல்லால் அறியலாவானுமல்லன்  
மாசற்றூர்மனத்துளாணை வணங்கிநாமிருப்பதல்லால்  
பேசத்தானாவதுண்டோ ? பேதைநெஞ்சே !

நீசொல்லாய்: 22

கங்கையிற் புனிதமாய காவிரிநடுவுபாட்டு  
பொங்குநீர்பரந்துபாயும் பூம்பொழிலரங்கந்தன்னுள்  
எங்கள்மால்இறைவன் ஈசன் கிடந்ததோர்கிடக்கை  
கண்டும்

எங்ஙனம்மறந்துவாழ்கேன்? ஏழையேன் ஏழையேனே 23

வெள்ளநீர்பரந்துபாயும்விரிபொழிலரங்கந்தன்னுள்  
கள்வனார்கிடந்தவாறும் கமலநன்முகமும்கண்டும்  
உள்ளமே ! வலியைபோலும் ஒருவனென்று

உணரமாட்டாய்

கள்ளமேகாதல்செய்துஉன்கள்ளத்தேகழிக்கின்றாயே 24



குளித்துமுன்றனலையோம்பும் குறிகொள்  
 அந்தணமைதன்னை  
 ஒளித்திட்டேன், என்கணில்லை நின்கணும்  
 பத்தனல்லேன்  
 களிப்பதுஎன்கொண்டு? நம்பி! கடல்வண்ணை!  
 கதறுகின்றேன்  
 அளித்தெனக்கருள்செய்கண்டாய் அரங்கமா  
 நகருளானே! 25

போதெல்லாம்போதுகொண்டு உன்பொன்னடி  
 புனையமாட்டேன்  
 தீதிலாமொழிகள்கொண்டு உன் திருக்குணம்  
 செப்பமாட்டேன்  
 காதலால்நெஞ்சம்-அன்பு கலந்திலேன், அதுதன்னாலே  
 ஏதிலேன் அரங்கர்க்குஎல்லே! என்செய்வான்  
 தோன்றினேனே? 26

குரங்குகள்மலையைநூக்கக் குளித்துத்தாம்  
 புரண்டிட்டோடி  
 தரங்கநீரடைக்கலுற்ற சலமிலா அணிலும்போலேன்  
 மரங்கள் போல்வலியநெஞ்ச வஞ்சனேன்,  
 நெஞ்சுதன்னால்  
 அரங்கனார்க்கு ஆட்செய்யாதே அளியத்தேன்  
 அயர்க்கின்றேனே. 27

உர்பரால் அறியலாகா ஒளியுளார், ஆணைக்காகி  
 செம்புலாலுண்டுவாமும் முதலைமேல்சீறிவந்தார்  
 நம்பரமாயதுண்டே? நாய்களோம்சிறுமையோரா  
 எம்பிராற்கு ஆட்செய்யாதே என்செய்வான்  
 தோன்றினேனே? 28

ஊரிலேன் காணியில்லை உறவுமற்றொருவரில்லை  
 பாரில்நின்பாதமூலம் பற்றிலேன்பரமமூர்த்தி!  
 காரொளிவண்ணே! கண்ணே! கதறுகின்றேன்  
 ஆருளர்களைகண்? அம்மா! அரங்கமா நகருளானே! 29

மனத்தில்ஓர் தூய்மையில்லை வாயில்ஓர் இன்சொலில்லை  
 சினத்தினால்செற்றம்நேர் க்கித் தீவிளிவிளிவன்வாளா  
 புனத்தழாய்மாலையோனே ! பொன்னிசூழ்திருவரங்கா !  
 எனக்கு இனிகதியென்சொல்லாய் ?

என்னையாளுடையகோவே ! 30

தவத்துளார் தம்மில்லேன் தனம்படைத்தாரில்லேன்  
 உவர்த்தநீர்போல என் தனுற்றவர்க்கொன்றுமல்லேன்  
 துவர்த்தசெவ்வாயினூர்க்கே துவக்கறத்துரிசனானேன்  
 அவத்தமேபிறவிதந்தாய் அரங்கமாநகருளானே ! 31

ஆர்த்துவண்டலம்பும்சோலை அணிதிருவரங்கந்தன்னுள்  
 கார்த்திரளனையமேனிக் கண்ணனே ! உன்னைக்கண்ணும்  
 மார்க்கமொன்றறியமாட்டா மனிசரில் துரிசனாய்  
 மூர்க்கனேன் வந்துநின்றேன் மூர்க்கனேன்  
 மூர்க்கனேனே . 32

மெய்யெல்லாம்போகவிட்டு விரிசூழலாரில்பட்டு  
 பொய்யெல்லாம்பொதிந்துகொண்ட போழ்க்கனேன்  
 வந்துநின்றேன்  
 ஐயனே ! அரங்கனே ! உன்னருளென்னுமசைதன்னால்  
 பொய்யனேன்வந்துநின்றேன் பொய்யனேன்  
 பொய்யனேனே . 33

உள்ளத்தேயுறையும்மலை உள்ளுவானுணர்  
 வென்றில்லா  
 உள்ளத்தேன்நானும்தொண்டாய்த் தொண்டுக்கே  
 கோலம்பூண்டு  
 உள்ளுவாருள்ளிற்றெல்லாம் உடனிருந்து அறிதியென்று  
 வெள்கிப்போய்என்னுள்ளேநான் விலவறச்  
 சிரித்திட்டேனே . 34

தாவிஅன்றுஉலகமெல்லாம் தலைவிளாக்கொண்ட  
 எந்தாய் !  
 சேவியேன் உன்னையல்லால் சிக்கனச்செங்கண்மாலே !

ஆவியே! அமுதே! எந்தனாருயிரணையஎந்தாய்!  
பாவியேன் உண்ணையல்லால் பாவியேன்பாவியேனே. 35

மழைக்கு அன்று வரைமுனேந்தும் மைந்தனே!  
மதுரவாறே!  
உழைக்கன்றேபோல நோக்கமுடையவர்வலையுள்பட்டு  
உழைக்கின்றேற்கு என்னைநோக்காதொழிவதே!  
உண்ணையன்றே  
அழைக்கின்றேன் ஆதிமூர்த்தி! அரங்கமாநகருளானே!

தெளிவிலாக்கலங்கல்நீர்சூழ் திரவரங்கத்துளோங்கும்  
ஒளியுளார் தாமேபன்றே தந்தையும்தாயுமாவார்  
எளியதோரருளு'மன்றே என் திறத்துஎம்பிரானார்  
அளியன் நம்பையல்என்றார் அம்மாவோ! கொடிய  
வாறே! 37

மேம்பொருள் போகவிட்டு மெய்மையைமிகவுணர்ந்து  
ஆம்பரிசறிந்துகொண்டு ஐம்புலனகத்தடக்கி  
காம்பறத்தலைசிரைத்து உன்கடைத்தலையிருந்து வாழும்  
சோம்பரைஉகத்திபோலும் சூழ்புனலரங்கத்தானே! 38

அடிமையிற்குடிமையில்லா அயல்சதுப்பேதிமாரில்  
குடிமையில்கடைமைப்பட்ட குக்கரில்பிறப்பரேலும்  
முடியினில் துளபம்வைத்தாய்! மொய்கழற்கு அன்பு  
செய்யும்  
அடியரைஉகத்திபோலும் அரங்கமாநகருளானே! 39

திருமறுமார்வ! நின்னைச் சிந்தையுள் திகழவைத்து  
மருவியமனத்தராகில் மாநிலத்துஉயிர்களெல்லாம்  
வெருவரக்கொன்றுசுட்டிட்டு ஈட்டியவிணையரேலும்  
அருவினைப்பயனதுய்யார் அரங்கமாநகருளானே! 40

வானுளார் அறியலாகா வானவா என்பராகில்  
தேனுலாந்துளபமாலைச் சென்னியாய் என்பராகில்  
ஊனமாயினகள் செய்யும் ஊனகாரகர்களேலும்  
போனகம்செய்தசேடம் தருவரேல், புனிதமன்றே. 41

பழுதிலாவொழு கலாற்றுப் பலசதுப்பேதிமார்கள்  
 இழிகுலத்தவர்களேலும் எம்மடியார்களாகில்  
 தொழுமினீர்கொடுமின்கொண்மின் என்று நின்னோடும்  
 ஒக்க  
 வழிபட அருளினாய்போல் மதிள் திருவரங்கத்தானே! 42

அமரவோரங்கமாரும் வேதமோர்நான்கும்ஓதி  
 தமர்களில்தலைவராய சாதியந்தணர்களேலும்  
 நுமர்களைப்பழிப்பராகில் நொடிப்பதோரளவில் ஆங்கே  
 அவர்கள் தாம்புலையர்போலும் அரங்கமாநகருளானே! 43

பெண்ணுலாம்சடையினாலும் பிரமனும் உன்னைக்  
 காண்பான்  
 எண்ணிலா ஆழியூழி தவம் செய்தார்வெள்கிநிற்ப  
 விண்ணுளார்வியப்பவந்து ஆனைக்கு அன்று அருளையீந்த  
 கண்ணரு! உன்னை யென்னோ? களைகணக்கருதுமாறே.

வளவெழும் தவளமாட மதுரைமாநகரந்தன்னுள்  
 கவளமால்யானைகொன்ற கண்ணனை அரங்கமாலை  
 துளவத்தொண்டாயதொல்சீர்த் தொண்டரடிப்பொடி  
 சொல்  
 இளையபுன்கவிதையேலும் எம்பிராற்குஇனியவாரே. 45



நம்மாழ்வார் அருளிச்செய்த  
திருவாய்மொழி  
7-ம் பத்து 2-ம் திருவாய்மொழி

\* கங்குலும் பகலும்

எழுசீர் ஆசிரிய விருத்தம்

கங்குலும் பகலும் கண்டுயி லறியாள்  
கண்ணநீர் கைகளால் இறைக்கும்,  
சங்குசக்கரங்க ளென்றுகை கூப்பும்

‘ தாமரைக் கண் ’ என்றே தளரும்,  
‘ எங்ஙனே தரிக்கே னுன்னைவிட்டு ’ என்னும்  
இருநிலம் கைதுழா விருக்கும்,  
செங்கயல் பாய்நீர்த் திருவரங் கத்தாய்!  
இவள் திறத் தென்செய்கின்றயே? 1

‘ என்செய்கின் றுயென் தாமரைக் கண்ணா! ’  
என்னும்கண்ணீர்மல்க இருக்கும்,  
‘ என்செய்கே னெறிநீர்த் திருவரங் கத்தாய்? ’  
என்னும்வெவ் வுயிர்த்துயிர்த் துருகும்,  
‘ முன்செய்த வினையே! முகப்படாய் ’ என்னும்  
‘ முகில்வண்ணா! தகுவதோ? ’ என்னும்,  
முன்செய்திவ் வுலகம் உண்டுமிழ்ந் தளந்தாய்!  
என்கொலோ முடிகின்ற திவட்கே? 2

வட்கிலள் இறையும் ‘ மணிவண்ணா! ’ என்னும்  
வானமே நோக்கும்மையாக்கும்,  
‘ உட்குடை யசுரர் உயிரெல்லா முண்ட  
ஒருவனே! ’ என்னுமுள் ளுருகும்,  
‘ கட்கிலீ! உன்னைக் காணுமா றருளாய்  
காகுத்தா! கண்ணனே! ’ என்னும்,  
திட்கொடி மதிள்சூழ் திருவரங் கத்தாய்!  
இவள் திறத் தென்செய்திட் டாயே? 3

\* இது கோயில் திருவாய்மொழி.

இட்டகால் இட்ட கைகளாய் இருக்கும்  
 எழுந்துலாய் மயங்கும்கை கூப்பும்,  
 'கட்டமே காதல்!' என்றுமூர்ச் சிக்கும்  
 'கடல்வண்ணா! கடியைகாண்' என்னும்,  
 'வட்டவாய் நேமி வலங்கையா!' என்னும்  
 'வந்திடாய்' என்றென்றே மயங்கும்,  
 சிட்டனே! செழுநீர்த் திருவரங் கத்தாய்!  
 இவள்திறத் தென்சிந்தித் தாயே? 4

சிந்திக்கும் திகைக்கும் தேறுய்கை கூப்பும்  
 'திருவரங் கத்துள்ளாய்!' என்னும்  
 வந்திக்கும், ஆங்கே மழைக்கண்ணீர் மல்க  
 'வந்திடாய்' என்றென்றே மயங்கும்,  
 அந்திப்போ தவுணன் உடலிடந் தானே!  
 அலைகடல் கடைந்தவா ரமுதே,  
 சந்தித்துன் சரணம் சார்வதே வலித்த  
 தையலை மையல்செய் தானே! 5

'மையல்செய் தென்னை மனம்கவர்ந் தானே!'  
 என்னும் 'மா மாயனே!' என்னும்,  
 'செய்யவாய் மணியே!' என்னும் 'தண் புனல்கூழ்  
 திருவரங் கத்துள்ளாய்!' என்னும்,  
 'வெய்யவாள் தண்டு சங்குசக் கரம்வில்  
 ஏந்துய்விண் ணோர்மதல்!' என்னும்,  
 பைகொள்பாம் பணையாய்! இவள்திறத் தருளாய்  
 பாவினேன் செய்யற்பா லதுவே. 6

'பாலதுன் பங்கள் இன்பங்கள் படைத்தாய்!  
 பற்றிலார் பற்றநின் ருனே,  
 காலசக் கரத்தாய்! கடலிடங் கொண்ட  
 கடல்வண்ணா! கண்ணனே!' என்னும்,  
 'சேல்கொள்தண் புனல்கூழ் திருவரங் கத்தாய்!'  
 என்னும் 'என் தீர்த்தனே!' என்னும்,

கோலமா மழைக்கண் பனிமல்க இருக்கும்  
என்னுடைக் கோமளக் கொழுந்தே. 7

‘கொழுந்துவா னவர்கட் கு’என்னும் ‘குன்றேந்திக்  
கோநிரை காத்தவன்!’ என்னும்,  
அழுந்தொழும் ஆவி அனலவெவ் வுயிர்க்கும்  
‘ அஞ்சன வண்ணனே!’ என்னும்  
எழுந்துமேல் நோக்கி யிமைப்பிலள் இருக்கும்  
‘ எங்ஙனே நோக்குகேன்!’ என்னும்  
செழுந்தடம் புனல்சூழ் திருவரங் கத்தாய்!  
என்செய்கேன் என் திரு மகட்கே! 8

‘ என் திரு மகள்சேர் மார்வனே!’ என்னும்  
‘ என்னுடை யாவியே!’ என்னும்,  
‘ நின் திரு எயிற்றால் இடந்தநீ கொண்ட  
நிலமகள் கேள்வனே!’ என்னும்,  
‘ அன்றுரு வேழம்<sup>1</sup> தழுவீநீ கொண்ட  
ஆய்மகள் அன்பனே!’ என்னும்,  
தென் திரு வரங்கம் கோயில்கொண் டானே!  
தெளிகிலேன் முடிவிவள் தனக்கே. 9

‘ முடிவிவள் தனக்கொன் றறிகிலேன்’ என்னும்  
‘ முவுல காளியே!’ என்னும்,  
‘ கடிகமழ் கொன்றைச் சடையனே!’ என்றும்  
‘ நான்முகக் கடவுளே!’ என்னும்,  
‘ வடிவுடை வானோர் தலைவனே!’ என்னும்  
‘ வண் திரு வரங்கனே!’ என்னும்,  
அடியடை யாதாள் போலிவள் அணுகி  
அடைந்தனள் முகில்வண்ணன் அடியே. 10

1 ‘ அன்றுரு மேழம்’ என்பதும் பாடம்.

முகில்வண்ணன் அடியை அடைந்தருள் சூடி  
 உய்ந்தவன் மொய்புனல் பொருநல்,  
 துகில்வண்ணத் தூநீர்ச்சேர்ப்பன்வண் பொழில்சூழ்  
 வண்குரு கூர்ச்சட கோபன்,  
 முகில்வண்ணன் அடிமேல் சொன்னசொல் மாலை  
 ஆயிரத் திப்பத்தும் வல்லார்,  
 முகில்வண்ண வானத் திமையவர் சூழ  
 இருப்பர்பே ரின்பவெள் ளத்தே.

11

